

THE QUEENSTOWN COURIER

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**Water-colour painting of the Rees homestead at
Kawarau Falls, by Sir William Fox about 1864**
Courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

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CONTENTS

- Page 4 Frances Rebecca Rees: Monologue and Letter by Rosemary Marryatt
- Page 8 Patrick Gantley, 1817-1896: Soldier, Gaoler, Publican by Marion Borrell
- Page 14 The Heenan Family's Time at Mill Farm, 1979 to 1989 by John Heenan
- Page 23 Early Routes through the Kawarau Gorge, and article by the *Otago Daily Times* own correspondent, 26 November 1866
- Page 28 The Morven Ferry Punt 1867-1880, historical panel by Pauline Lawrence
- Page 29 Whitechapel Flat Gold Mining Community, historical panel by Pauline Lawrence
- Page 30 Chairperson's Annual Report 2020-2021 by Marion Borrell
- Page 33 Advertisement for the Lakes District Museum & Gallery
- Page 34 Advertisement for Print Central
- Page 35 Queenstown & District Historical Society Information

Cover painting of the Rees homestead



Fox, William] 1812-1893:

Mr Rees Station, Lake Wakatipu & River Kawarau, Otago 1864?

Ref: WC-327. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/23211810

Frances Rebecca Rees

Monologue written and presented by her great-granddaughter **Rosemary Marryatt** at 'People From Our Past', April 2015.



William Gilbert Rees aged 26:
self-portrait sketched in July 1853 when in
Australia.

Lakes District Museum EP 3866



Frances Rees, drawn by William Rees
on the ship 'Equator', 6 October 1858.

Courtesy of Rosemary Marryatt

The trip from St John (which I believe is now to be called Kingston) to Queenstown Bay was very rough. Bob Fortune did his best at the tiller as he coped with a stiff northerly blowing down the Lake. Although feeling very nauseous, thankfully I wasn't sick, as I was cuddling my baby son, now five months old. At least this trip was short – just a few hours – nothing like that trip from England to New Zealand when I thought I was going to die. I was in my cabin for most of the voyage – 126 days.

But luckily William sketched me in the early part of the journey when I was feeling well. William said it was just a very bad case of morning sickness. He was partly right because our first child, Mary Rose Rees, was born in Dunedin on 14 May 1859, four months after our landing in the South Island of New Zealand. And now here I am, just 23 years old, having given birth to our third child, Cecil Walter Rees.

I'm glad William insisted that I spend the winter down at Dalvey Run, Pomahaka, after the birth of Cecil. I wish I had done this after the birth of our second child – a boy

– George Manning Rees. We were travelling back to the Lake from Dunedin when suddenly he sickened and died. We buried him at Invercargill. I cried for days.

My grief was made worse when a month later my brother John Gilbert was drowned near Wilkin's Station while bringing some milch cows across the Molyneux River. He was only 20 years old. That was a bad winter, my first at the Lake. I remember when I had left my petticoat on the washing line and next morning it was frozen stiff – it stood up all on its own!

How happy I am now bringing a healthy baby home to the Lake. Home! Yes, Lake Wakatipu is my home now. So different to the home I left just four years ago. My father's boarding school was always full of people – at least seven family members, a few servants, three resident teachers and anything up to a dozen student boarders. Albany House, Worchester, was always a hive of activity.

When my cousin William Gilbert Rees asked for my hand in marriage, I had no doubt in accepting even when he explained that we would be living of the other side of the world in New Zealand. I was 18 years old, and I thought what an amazing adventure was ahead of me. William was 32 and had already spent seven years managing sheep stations in Australia. On his return to England we married, and his plan was to settle in the South Island of New Zealand as a sheep farmer.

Looking back on my first six months in our new country, there were times when I just longed to be with my parents and brother and sisters. I was lonely, I was homesick. William was away for much of the time searching the hinterland of Otago for suitable sheep country and yet I vowed and declared that I would never return to England because I just could not face that horrible sea voyage again!

Anyway, here it is October and I am so looking forward to the summer. Days of hot sun. Days when Mary Rose and Cecil can walk down to the lake edge and paddle in the cool waters. Days when it is so quiet that the sound of Mr Flint's hammer hitting the iron nails as he builds the new cowshed, echoes around the mountains for what seems ages.

But sadly, William informs me that this life of tranquillity may not be for much longer. Only three months ago Jack Tewa (also known as Maori Jack) arrived at The Camp and showed William a sample of gold he had found in the bed of the Arrow River. William has decided we must build a new home where he feels his family will be safe if the Wakatipu becomes the site of a goldrush. In fact, native beech is being felled at the head of the Lake right now and from these trees, timber will be cut for our new home. This is to be across the Kawarau River where the river leaves the Lake.

Well, here I am finishing a letter to Louisa – Louisa Fleming was with us for a good part of last year. She was a great help to me in the house, but now I have Maggie.

Now, what have I written?

October 15th 1862

My Dear Louisa,

...We reached home ten days ago after being on the road nearly three weeks. I was heartily tired of it as you may imagine. We were delayed by the drays and then by the New River (which is now called the Oreti River) which was flooded, and to crown it all,

fancy my boxes were all upset in the middle of the New River. You never saw such a drying as we had. All my beautiful books just out from home all spoilt. I was dreadfully upset about it. Mr Rees saw the dray upset and when he came back to Mr Wentworth's he said, 'Well, Maggie, yours is the only box that has not been touched by water', so we did not open it. However, the box must have got wet before, for all the things were mildewed.

Dear baby is as jolly as ever, none the worse excepting that he has lost a little of his fat. He was very good but did not sleep so much in the cart. I rode after the first day to the foot of the Lake from Mr Wills' to Mr McKellar's, a distance of 32 miles. I was very tired with that ride. I cannot write as long a letter as I could wish. Mr Duncan will give you this

With kind remembrances to your mother and father,

Believe me, Your kind friend and well-wisher,

Frances R. Rees.

Epilogue by Rosemary Marryatt

Frances Rebecca Rees had five more children after Cecil Walter: three daughters were born at 'The Falls', Frankton, then the family left Queenstown in 1867 after Rees's main run, the Queenstown Run, was declared a gold field. Frances gave birth to another son and daughter at Otekaieke, in the Waitaki Valley where William was manager of 'Otekaieke' and 'Station Peak' sheep stations for Robert Campbell. After seven years, the family shifted again to Alexandra where William managed Robert Campbell's 'Galloway' sheep station.



(Burton Brothers, Lakes District Museum EP1044)

Frances outlived her husband William by 28 years. She passed away in her 88th year at Nelson, in the home of her daughter, Mary Rose Marsden, on 24th March 1926. She was buried alongside her husband at the Omaka Cemetery, Blenheim. The town of Frankton is named after her, and Mount Gilbert carries her maiden name.

The transition from tutor of language in an English boarding school to colonial wife, mother and head of a settler's homestead required physical strength, faith and strong will. Frances demonstrated all of these qualities as she adapted to coping with those pioneering days in Central Otago.

Disclaimer: The facts in this monologue come from historical sources, but the personality is in part constructed by the writer.

Wakarusa Lake

October 15th 1862.

My dear Louisa

Suppose you have thought I had forgotten my horse to write and let you know how he got through our journey. He reached home two days ago after being on the road nearly three weeks. I was heartily tired of it as you may imagine. He was delayed by the brays and then by the New River which was flooded, and to cross all fancy my boxes were all upset in the middle of the New River, you never saw such a crying as he had

Patrick Gantley, 1817-1896: Soldier, Gaoler, Publican

By Marion Borrell

While many people came to the goldfields when young and in search of adventure, some came after military careers. Perhaps they sought more peaceful, less dangerous lives. Well-known local examples were Albert Eichardt (Prussian), and Hugh Bracken (Irish). Another was Patrick Gantley who had spent twenty-one eventful and wide-ranging years in the Irish infantry.

Thirty years after he arrived in Queenstown, he told his story to L. Harris, a reporter from the *Otago Witness* (19 April 1894). It tells of the might of the British Empire exerting power in South Asia and quashing local dissent in a series of wars. The imperialists' sense of entitlement seems strange to twenty-first century readers.

The information in the following account comes from a long article which can be found on the Papers Past website: www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz.

The Soldier

Patrick Gantley was born in 1817 in County Mayo, Ireland and 'having a strong predilection for a military career, enlisted at the age of 20 in the famous 18th Royal Irish Infantry.' After training, he was sent to the regiment's headquarters in China, landing in Hong Kong in 1844.

He first 'smelt powder fired in anger' during the Canton campaign where forts along the river were captured without any loss of British soldiers. This occurred because the attack was timed for a great Chinese festival when the guards were less vigilant than usual. When his regiment blockaded all the approaches to the city of Canton, the men were ordered not to take any goods from a large store. 'Upon entering the store, heaps of dollars and Indian rupees were to be seen on a counter. Ascending a staircase, Gantley noticed a magnificently jewelled clock with a silver gong and heavy gold chain. Despite the certainty of receiving the lash from the provost-marshal if detected pillaging, he determined to secure it, but upon re-entering the room found that one of his comrades had been before him. As a solace for his loss, he took off his body belt which contained five pockets, and crammed each of them with dollars stowed on their edges. Scarcely had he securely fastened the belt around his body when the bugle call was heard to fall in.' The soldier who had taken the clock was questioned and denied doing so, but the clock which was hidden under his clothing struck an alarm, and he was caught. The clock was not returned to its owner, but was impounded and kept by the regiment in the orderly room. Such were the attitudes of the time.

Next the regiment was sent to India to the Second Sikh War in the Punjab, arriving in Calcutta in 1848 and proceeding up the Ganges in flat-bottomed boats. They reached the scene of battle of Chillianwalla after it was won, but Gantley was one of the guards of the Sikh princes Sher Singh and Chuttar Singh as prisoners of war in the state prison in Calcutta. After that he and 11 others escorted 22 convicts to Hobart, Tasmania. About two months later he set sail again for Calcutta taking 150 fresh horses for the cavalry.

By this time the Anglo-Burmese War had broken out.



18th & 80th Regiments of Foot, storming the Shwe-Dagon
Pagoda, Rangoon, 12 April 1852

Watercolour by John North Crealock, 1852

(National Army Museum, London)

The Royal Irish Regiment was rapidly deployed and took part in the capture of Rangoon in 1852, including the golden Great Dagon or Shwedagon Pagoda. Gantley said that an immense quantity of plunder was taken despite the orders not to pillage. On one occasion he and two comrades entered a fine villa-like residence intending to loot it, but the owner and his ladies received them so graciously, producing with wine and cigars, that they refrained, only to have other soldiers arrive who had no such qualms. Gantley told such stories with regret at his 'stupidity' and the lost opportunities.

At the end of the Anglo-Burmese War in 1853, he received his prize money, and the regiment returned to Britain, before going to the Crimean War which lasted from 1853 to 1856. The 18th (Royal Irish) Regiment of Foot took part in the assault on Sebastopol in 1855, and was said to have run amok upon first breaking into the town. Lieutenant-Colonel Clement Alexander Edwards (1812-1882), pictured below sitting towards the right with his cap on his knee, felt that discipline needed to be improved upon him taking command of the Regiment in March 1855.



Soldiers of the 18th Royal Irish Regiment in camp, Sebastopol, 1856.
 Patrick Gantley's name is not among those listed. How many dogs can you see?
 Photograph by James Robertson (National Army Museum, London)

From Crimea, Patrick Gantley went on to fight during the Indian Mutiny of 1857-58, 'with its attendant horrors.' This was an uprising against the rule of the British East India Company which functioned as a sovereign power on behalf of the British Crown, and is also known as the First War of Independence. Patrick was stationed for two years at Myshore near Bangalore where his wife Bridget was able to stay with him.

Having then completed his 21 years of service in the army, he received a good conduct medal with gratuity, the Burmese medal and clasp, a medal for the Indian Mutiny, and a life pension of 13 pence per day.

The Gaoler

In 1865, Patrick decided to come to New Zealand with Bridget and their two children, and became a constable in the Otago Mounted Police force which was established to enforce the law during the gold rush. He was by this time aged 47. Bridget was about 28.



Queenstown in 1869 (LDM EL4578)

For eight years he was the gaoler at Queenstown. The gaol consisted of a cell in the watch-house at the Police Camp near the site of the current police station. Judging by newspaper reports, no notable criminals occupied it during Gantley's time. However, he was stationed at the Clyde gaol at the time of the Clyde Gold Robbery of 1870. A constable, Malcolm McLennan, collaborated with the thief, George Rennie, a shoemaker from Arrowtown, by loosening the lock to allow the robber to break in and steal two boxes containing £13,000 worth of gold and bank notes which were to be sent with the gold escort to Dunedin in the morning. While this was happening, Patrick was asleep just across the yard of the police camp.

Queenstown work seems to have been more mundane, a far cry from military engagements. The news reports in the *Lake Wakatip Mail* provide glimpses of the life of the town in these early years. The licensing rules had to be enforced e.g. no playing of billiards after midnight at Eichardt's, nor selling of liquor after the stroke of midnight on Saturday. Drunkards were locked up, and most delightfully, townsfolk were charged when their animals strayed. Imagine geese fouling the Horne Creek, and cows ambling along Athol, Rees and Ballarat Streets. While Constable Gantley and his colleague were diligently charging local residents with allowing their goats to wander the streets, their own goats did too. One defendant explained that 'the cattle were an orderly lot of beasts; that they were turned out regularly on the common, and returned punctually in the evening to their stables or milking sheds in the town, without annoying anyone.' However, Magistrate Richmond Beetham and the Mayor took a dim view of allowing

stock to roam through the town, and fined first offenders 2s 6d plus costs 5s 6d. (*Lake Wakatip Mail* reports in November 1872)

One drunkard who was locked up later wrote a letter to the *Lake Wakatip Mail* protesting at being treated harshly by Gantley. See full letter on the next page.

Despite this complaint, when Patrick resigned from the police after eight years, at the end of 1873, the newspaper farewelled him appreciatively: *Constable Gantley, an old and faithful servant of her Majesty, leaves his employ this week. It is not our intention to laud the retiring officer with praise. His meritorious medals won in India and his recognised pension are records more powerful than anything we could say. What we desire to point out is that the department loses a man never frightened of work, who has done double duty as gaoler and constable, and who all the while, in carrying out his unpleasant duties, has rendered himself as little unpopular as possible. These are the very class of men the service can ill afford to lose. His resignation is a voluntary one, but this old officer seems to see no hope of any change in police management for the good.* (LWM 24 December 1873)

The Publican 1874 – 1896

Patrick had bought several sections in Queenstown when they became available in 1864, and had a house there. He sold these and bought the Pack Horse Hotel, which had been built in 1863 near Arthurs Point on the road between Queenstown and Arrowtown. After six months spent refurbishing and preparing, the hotel was ready for a grand opening on 12 June 1874 as advertised in the *Lake Wakatip Mail*.

SUPPER AND DANCE.

MR P. GANTLEY of the **PACK HORSE HOTEL**, Arthur's Point, having completed the improvement of this house, respectfully announces that he intends giving the long-promised **OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION,**

ON FRIDAY EVENING NEXT (12TH INST.),

when he trusts to see many old and new friends enjoying themselves on the occasion. Mrs Gantley will do everything to promote the comfort of lady visitors.

A Capital Supper! Capital Music! !

A cordial invitation to all.

Lake Wakatip Mail, 8 October 1873

COMPLAINT OF UNDUE SEVERITY

Sir,-

I am a laboring man; a stonemason's laborer. I earn my living as a general laborer. Last Saturday I left my work of attending the stonemasons for a job of bill-sticking for a Company. I managed, having to visit hotels, to get intoxicated. I lay down near the stonework I had assisted at as laborer. This was about 5p.m. I was some distance from the street, and was sleeping peaceably and quietly. There was nothing indecent about my attire. I awoke to my senses when "collared" by two policemen, who roughly hauled me to the lock-up. I was incarcerated therein until Monday morning. I had bail offered for me. It was refused.

No water was left in the cell during the night. In the morning, I asked for water, and was told by the constable's son not to make a noise. Was kept for two more hours in the morning without water. It was actual torture. It almost drove me mad, and the Town Creek just rushing past me. For two more solid hours after the boy came, I was thus mocked. I had nothing to eat all Sunday, except two pieces of bread, and two pints of tea. Constable Gantley said I was not allowed anything. They refused to allow me to send for any "tucker." They refused bail again.

On Monday morning Mr Beetham [the magistrate] fined me 10s, and this after my incarceration in a den unworthy of the name of being a gaol or lock-up. No blankets only a shred of woollen materials and pieces.

I do not object, Sir, to being fined for drunkenness. I do not see why I should have been locked up at all. My character is that of inoffensiveness. Yet I have had to endure all this, while squatters and gentlemen, as they call themselves, misconduct themselves far worse than I did on this occasion.

I ask you as a free and independent Press to let me recite this narration of what I conceive to be harsh and unjust treatment, in the hope that it may be productive of benefit to some fellow-sufferers hereafter.

- I am, &c.,

JOHN BYRNE,

An old East India Company's man.

Under the Old Soldiers Claims Act Patrick received 50 acres of land in the Catlins area, but remained in the Wakatipu, farming 200 acres of freehold land at Arthurs Point as well as being mine host of the hotel.



The Sportman's Arms in about 1877, by Herbert Deveril, 1840-1911

(Ref: PA7-46-36. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

The Sportman's Arms: As the road is fairly flat in front of the hotel, it was ideal for racing and other sporting activities. The Arthur's Point Athletic Sports Club organised annual sports days at New Year, with such competitions as quoits, 'putting the stone', wrestling, high jump, 'vaulting with pole', hurdles, catching greasy pig, tossing the caber, and sack race, as well as running races including a 'ladies handicap'. (Does the handicap refer to their long skirts and petticoats?) The finish line was right outside the hotel, making it 'a very convenient grandstand and booth'. The Gantleys changed the name to the Sportsman's Arms.

Patrick's other sporting interest was horse-racing at the Lake County Jockey Club at Frankton where the airport now is. His horse, Will-if-I-can, sometimes could, including winning the hurdles race in 1882.

The hotel was a family enterprise, no doubt including their growing family of four 'stalwart' sons and four 'handsome' daughters as they became old enough. In 1883 they added 'a suite of rooms which would be accreditable addition to any hotel in the country. This addition to the Hotel is plain, substantial stone structure.... There is a parlour facing the main road, and seven large airy bedrooms 14 x 12....' (LWM 16 March 1883) This was an expensive investment at £400. See the stone addition in the photo.



The Gantley Family outside the Sportsman's Arms (*LDM EP4318*)

The *Otago Witness* reporter concluded that in 1894 'the aged couple are enjoying a well-earned rest after having borne the heat and burden of the day' and 'the old veteran, still hale and hearty, delights in fighting his battles o'er again.'

Patrick died in 1896 aged 80, and Bridget in 1897 aged 60.

The Pub's Downs and Ups 1897-2021

Their son Francis took over the hotel, which he renamed Gantleys, and ran it until 1920.

Later the building fell into disrepair and was used to store hay, until in the 1960s it was rescued, restored and renovated to be reopened in 1970 as The Packers Arms, an award-winning fine-dining restaurant. Then it became Gantley's Restaurant. In 2018 it briefly became Marvell Grill. Now it is owned by local Cargo Brewery, and renamed Cargo at Gantley's Restaurant.

Sources and Acknowledgements

Newspapers accessed from www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz: *Otago Daily Times*, *Otago Witness*, and *Lake Wakatip Mail*

Sullivan, Jim two articles in the *Otago Daily Times*:

'Rich history obscured by name change and yet more burgers', 24 July 2018

'Gantley name etched in history', 6 April 2019

Lakes District Museum

National Army Museum, London for images

The Heenan Family's Time at Mill Farm, 1979 to 1989

By John Heenan

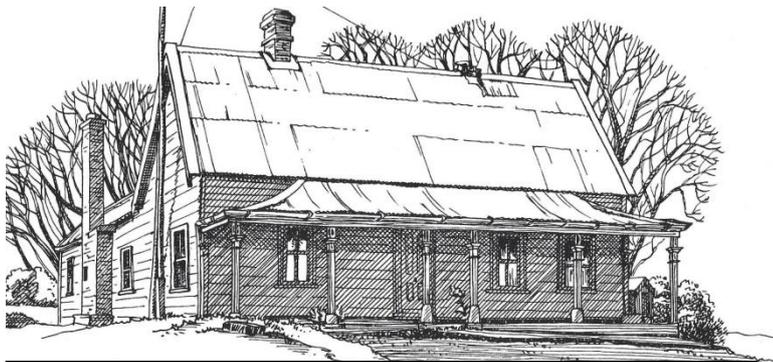
John and Margaret Heenan lived at Mill Farm with their six children in the ten years from 1979 to 1989. This article is based on an interview with them at their home in Arrowtown in 2005 by Elizabeth Macdonald for the Historical Society, with additional information written by John in 2021.

They were keen members of the Historical Society. John was on the committee from 1998 until 2006, and is particularly remembered for organising trips.

It all began with a walk up a creek

Margaret's parents, Ray and Kath Patterson, lived in Queenstown, and in about the mid-1950s built one of the first motels, Queenstown Motel, containing 10 units. My mother was a Buckham, so I had holidays quite often with Granny and Grandad where they lived on the site of the Brewery and Cordial Factory in Earl Street beside the lake.

After we were married in 1956, we settled on the farm near Mossburn. Our holidays



Drawing by Audrey Bascand in about 1970, from *Old Buildings of the Lakes District* by Marion Borrell.

were spent in Queenstown, and Margaret often looked after the motel while her parents went on vacation. After several years the motel was sold. We decided to look for a holiday house of our own, and bought 'Mill House' on Speargrass Flat Road. It had been the manager's house for the Wakatipu Flour Mill. We had many holidays there and became familiar with the Arrowtown area.

During one holiday in about 1970, our daughter went exploring up Mill Creek which flowed next to our house. About a kilometre upstream she found a waterfall that we had never heard of. Taking four-year-old Chris, I walked up to look and found a 120-foot waterfall. We could hear the water tumbling down, but couldn't see it because it was completely obscured by willows and tall broom-bushes. I climbed the steep gully, carrying Chris and pushing through the dense vegetation, to look for the top of the fall. When we got there, we found ourselves at 'Mill Farm' farmyard where we met Dick Hill. I noted how attractive the area was, but never dreamed that 10 years later Margaret and I would buy the farm.

In 1976 we decided to move to Mill House for a while to renovate it while an excellent young chap managed the Mossburn farm. He wanted to be our manager for three years, so we moved to the Arrowtown area, intending to stay for three years, and stayed for thirty.

In October 1979 we were nearly at the end of our three years away from Mossburn, when by chance we saw an advertisement in the *Otago Daily Times* for the sale of Mill

Farm. We went there just for a nosey, nothing more. With all the spring growth, the place was looking lovely. A couple of days later I was down at the Mossburn farm when a local businessman driving past dropped in and asked if I would like to sell it. I decided on the spot to sell, and to make an offer for Mill Farm.

And so we acquired Mill Farm, a beautiful property with many fine old trees including the avenue. Mill Creek, quite a substantial stream, flowed from one end to the other.

The Beginning of Mill Farm

Peter and John Butel, early arrivals to the Arrow from Normandy, at first leased and then bought the land in 1872. They established Mill Farm as an agricultural industrial estate, with the farmyard arranged in a square, as was done in France. They built a house, a large stone stable, stone implement shed, smokehouse for curing bacon, a workshop and a large flour mill powered by a big overshot wheel driven by water diverted from Mill Creek. The mill was a mass of shafts, pulleys and belts that worked all the machinery required to turn wheat into flour.

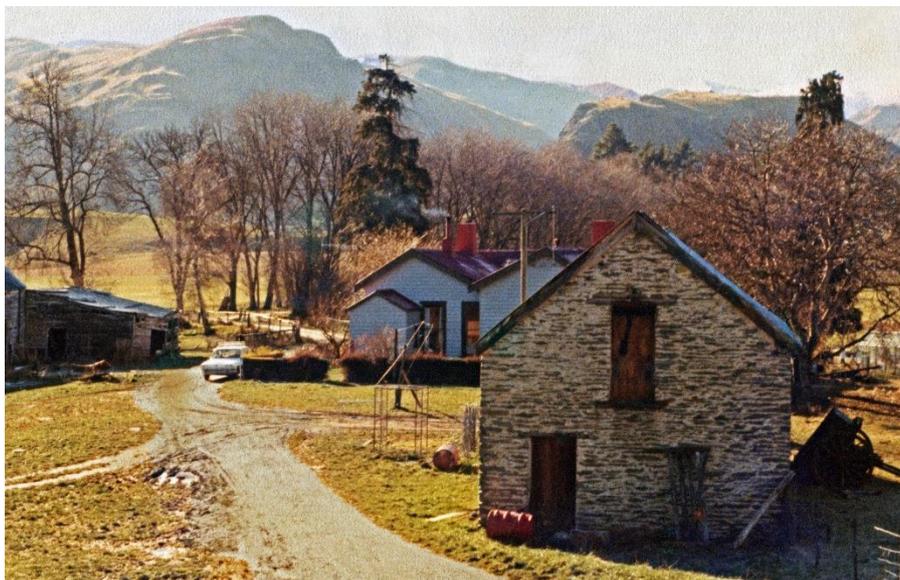
The Butel farm was quite an operation, growing wheat, milking cows and rearing pigs. Another side-line was supplying miners with equipment and supplies. When electric power was developed, they installed a generator. Mill Farm was a well-organised and successful business. In earlier times, the area was noted for growing high quality wheat with low moisture levels, and also for producing clover seed.

Owners of the farm after the Butels allowed things to deteriorate somewhat until the Hill family bought it in 1954. Fred and Marge Hill, then from 1970 their son Dick and his wife Mary, built up a very good farm with top-producing, well-irrigated pastures.

Life on the Farm

We bought 11 titles of approximately 200 acres in one block and a further block of 66 acres along Malaghan Road from Dick and Mary Hill in 1979. We leased another 70 or 80 acres of land down towards Lake Hayes, and a 45-acre block up on the hill across Malaghan Road bounding the Municipal Reserve. There was also land leased from Owen and Jessie Marshall. Total freehold was 266 acres and another 140 acres leased.

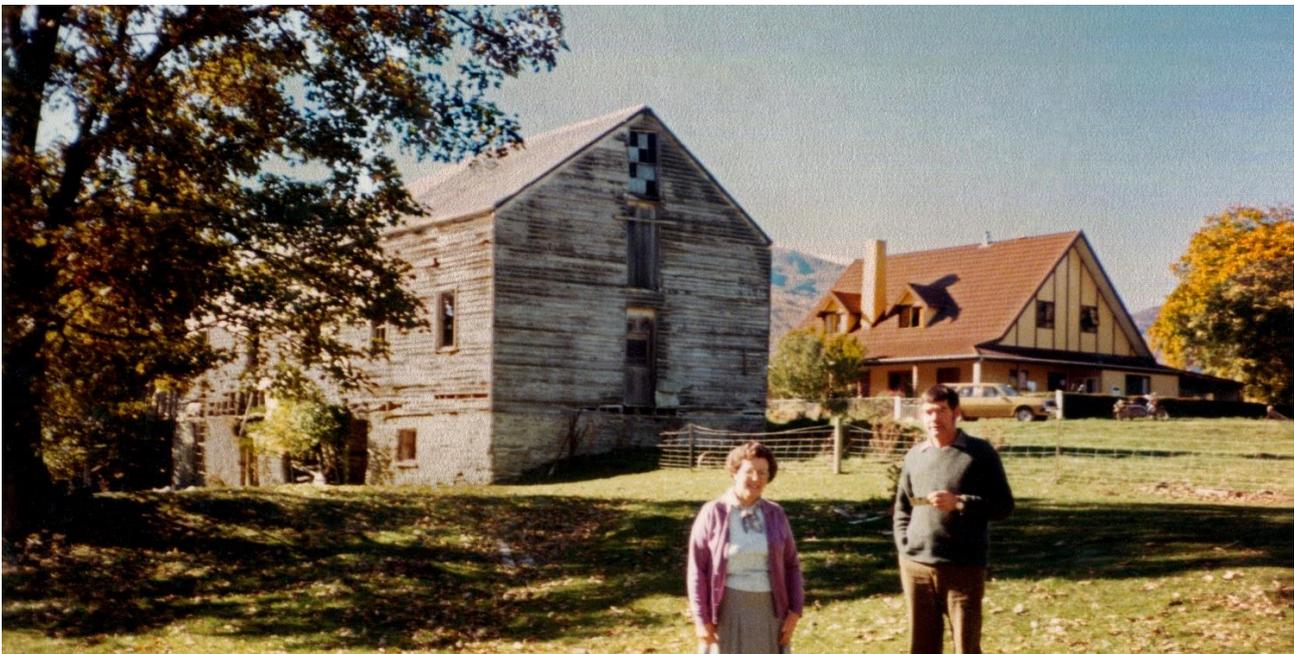
Part of the mill, the back of the old house, and the stone stable



Buildings

When we took over, the farm was in very good heart, but some buildings were dilapidated. The avenue of trees badly needed pruning, but was beyond me.

The original house had been replaced in about 1910 with a beautiful house which was still sound with solid piles. We reduced the floor size, took the 12-foot stud down to 9 feet, and built up another storey above. It has been modified quite a lot since then and is the present reception building for Millbrook Resort. The room where you walk in now was once our bedroom.



Top: The front of the old house
Bottom: Margaret and John, the mill, and their new house built over the old one.

The mill building was just about falling down. Beams had been taken out of it, the spouting was gone and the iron was ready to blow off. We straightened up the stone foundations, kept one end of it and straightened the wall. Eventually Millbrook took it down and rebuilt it. It is now the Mill Restaurant and Conference Centre. Millbrook has done a beautiful job on it.

The old stone implement shed included accommodation for workers at the right-hand end. Its back wall was particularly fine stonework. We raised the roof, and it has become the Hole in One Café.



The implement shed as it was ...
and in the process of alterations.



We had to build a shearing shed, as there wasn't one, and a hay barn. We were going to pull down the smithy and smokehouse as it was falling down, but an artist came along in the nick of time and was horrified at the idea, so we left it there and tidied it up.



Smithy and
smokehouse

Irrigation

The Arrow Irrigation Scheme created in the 1930s (see article in *Queenstown Courier Issue 105*, pages 18-28) enabled water to be piped across the farm. Before our time this was distributed by 'wild flooding'. The land isn't level, so they'd had to dig ditches and build little mounds – a skilled job. It was very labour-intensive and time-consuming to operate. We improved this by putting an underground pipeline right across the farm, and installed two small travelling irrigators which were kept going by excess water pressure pushing them along a wire attached to the end of the paddock. I had to go out sometimes at midnight to keep them going. It was always hot, so quite fun working with the water.

Not long after we came to the farm, the Ministry of Works decided they were going to close down the irrigation scheme. The farmers thought otherwise, and took it over. The history of their success in preserving the scheme is told in the *Courier* article.

Stock

At first we ran about 2000 Drysdale sheep, but fairly soon we cut down to about 1200 and had a few cattle, and grew a bit of feed.

Then we started deer farming which seemed pretty promising in the mid-1980s for about three years. We ran a small breeding operation. They were lovely animals to handle. Buying and selling stock at the astounding prices was exciting - breeding deer were worth \$1000 or \$1500 each. However, altered regulations for depreciation and taxation ended the big money, and deer farming declined. All the same, we managed to make money through it all.

The Viability of farming

During our first two years at Mill Farm, rampant inflation caused farm costs to rise by about 40%. Wool and meat prices hardly moved, and this made for financial difficulties. Concern about the future of farming caused us to sell part of the farm and to purchase

the Coachman's Hall in Arrowtown. This proved to be an excellent investment during the difficult times for farming in the mid-1980s when subsidies were removed.

Family and Community

Margaret: It was a wonderful place to bring up a family. The children loved it out at the farm. They spent all winter outside. Besides, there was the skiing and skating - the ice rink in Arrowtown (down just ¼ mile from the centre of town) was all lit up at night.

This was a really good community to live in. Arrowtown was the centre, and functions were held at the A&P showground at Lake Hayes. Arrowtown has grown a lot. There used to be just a couple of grocers and a hairdresser and butcher when we first came. Only about a dozen shops and two pubs and only one little restaurant on the main street, a tea-room. The Stone Cottage started after we came. Now (2005) we have a cinema. It's a beaut little town.

I joined the Institute [the Lower Shotover Country Women's Institute] and that was a really nice organisation. We used Lake Hayes pavilion for our meetings and did a lot of catering for weddings and other functions, and were quite renowned for that. This was 25 years ago. I had a very busy life what with the farm and the family and the Institute. We had one car and a farm truck to get around in.

We had a lovely garden. There were lots of walnut trees and the kids sold the nuts at the gate.

John: The schools were very good here. Wakatipu High School pupils did well, and got good jobs or tertiary education. By the time our kids were in the sixth form, those who had sent their children away to boarding school brought them back because the school was just so good. Keith Robertson was a wonderful headmaster. I was on the school committee for a number of years. There was a fuss with the Education Dept one year with accrediting for university entrance as the authorities reckoned the school was accrediting far too big a proportion of the pupils, but those not accredited were still gaining university entrance by sitting the external exam.

Margaret: We had a good ten years at Mill Farm.

Our rural view from the house



The End of Farming at Mill Farm

By the end of the 1980s we began to think of retirement and decided to sell by auction on site. There were no bidders on the day, but a suggestion emerged that the area was ideal for a golf course. Bob Charles was invited to assess the potential which was very favourable. A small group of developer financiers began planning a scheme to present to the Council. Negotiations with next-door landowners began, and also with prospective sources of capital. All this took a year, but we stayed with it because it seemed such an excellent use of the land.

When it was first mooted, I couldn't persuade people the golf resort was going to proceed. Walter Peak and some other proposals had failed, so people could not see it going ahead. But we believed it would be the most important event to happen to Arrowtown since gold was discovered. This has proved to be true, and now (2021) thirty years later there's a fine golf course and approximately 600 accommodation units, with employment for 200 people, all in such attractive surroundings.

Our association with Mill Farm was an interesting and happy one. We note with pleasure that a street has been named after us – Heenan Lane – and others after Jack Dagg and Owen Marshall both of whom also owned land purchased by Millbrook.

We're delighted with the success of Millbrook Resort.



The watermill has become the Millhouse Restaurant and Conference Centre, the implement shed has become the Hole in One Café, and the smithy-smokehouse now houses a gig and bellows and Smithy's Smoke House.

Early Routes through the Kawarau Gorge

In preparing material for the historical panels about the Morven Ferry (1867: see page 28) and the Kawarau Suspension Bridge (1880) which superseded the ferry (*Courier 104* p.32), we have been struck by the difficulties the early European arrivals encountered in negotiating the Gorge.

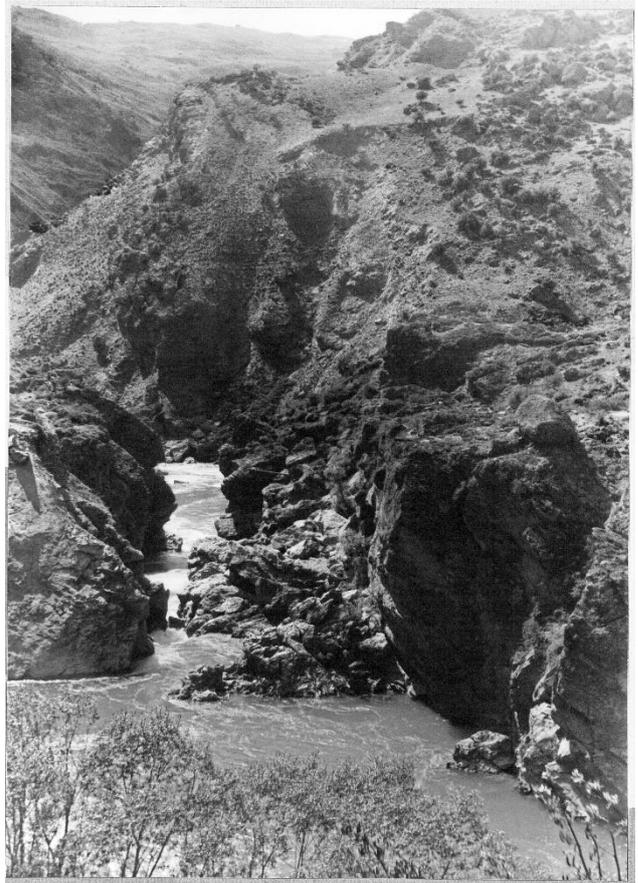
For centuries, Maori had come this way from the south and east. Their trails crossed the river via the Natural 'Bridge', Whakataorere, near Roaring Meg (or Kirtleburn). (*The Gibbston Story* by Anne Cook, Otago Heritage Books, 1985, and *The Banks of the Kawarau* by George Singleton, self-published, 2018)

For Europeans, bringing stock or wanting to use wheeled vehicles, the gorge proved at serious barrier. William Rees had intended to bring his first sheep this way in 1860, but as Alfred Duncan explained in his memoir, *The Wakatipians*, when the drovers explored for a route on the south side from Bannockburn to Nevis Creek, they were thwarted. Duncan himself went onto the natural bridge, 'where the rocks overhang the stream so far that one can jump across the gap, if the roaring torrent below is not too much for the nervous system.' The drovers turned back and took the much longer route via the Cardrona Valley.

The early miners also came up the true right (south) side and leapt across at the Natural Bridge.

Although Arrowtown and Queenstown became busy settlements in 1863, it was September 1867 before they could be reached by cart or coach from Cromwell through the gorge, starting on the north bank from Cromwell, crossing on a punt where Victoria Bridge was later built, and negotiating the formidable Nevis and Arrow Bluffs. The Morven Ferry punt was the final link.

Until then, walkers and horsemen used the arduous 'Gentle Annie' track on the north bank between Roaring Meg and the Crown Terrace. The following account published in the *Otago Daily Times* on 26 November 1866 and the *Otago Witness* on 1 December, conveys the experience of a group of riders on the Gentle Annie track.



Site of the Natural Bridge,
looking downstream from about 600 metres
above the Roaring Meg/Kirtleburn.

By J. Perry (LDM EL0541)

demanded her dues. Education should be within the reach of all, and of a class able to our varied social state. The confinement of the High School is a step in the right direction; but are we neglecting a more important element, namely when the education of girls made mandatory to that of boys? Can be established? For I remember the first wives and mothers of the next generation are of quite a social importance. It is not the province of the mother; and what is to be of greater interest to a parent as when his daughter, than to know that she is well educated and quite capable taking the responsibilities of her children. Are our legislators prepared to allow a new system of education to originate now when that character of the present and will be advanced very much? Of what service is a girl who only read and write, with a smattering of miscellaneous French, when English is so readily available of getting two or three papers, and reading the compilation of many? If the one flourish through the last new paths, she is considered quite uneducated, while at the same time she scarcely knows the value of a note. It is such fit to our own future national necessities? Can any one expect a man or woman to be useful and clever, if they are treated up by one of these superficial educational methods? The idea is absurd. Then, Mr Editor, will you kindly allow me to agitate this question, and if possible enable the children to obtain a good and education for their daughters as the mother that is now accorded to their sons. I am, &c., A. Cross.

A VISIT TO THE LAKES. No. I. THE ARROW DISTRICT.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.) The beautiful scenery coming from such a point at Skippers and the Arrow is second to none among the various scenic spots. I feel about our quarter (Dunedin) that I could not resist the temptation, so apparently occurred, of paying the price of the Lakes a visit. The 22 miles of the journey to the "Roaring Meg" was travelled with some degree of comfort, in a light four-wheeled coach, but the pass was most "dreadful" and the passages were long and dull. It was 1 o'clock A.M. when we left Boston Hotel in Otago, but it was a matter of five minutes to the first part of our journey. The Roaring Meg, as it is chiefly named, the Kikiduna, is a very rapid stream, in volume about 1/2 mile of water; it comes tumbling in foaming over rocky precipices at a great rate, and making a most tremendous din. Leaving the coach and mounting on a horse, a party consisting of seven or eight persons formed a goodly cavalcade. Our route was what might be termed a possible American, and we were along gently up and down the steep cliffs of the little track round the Great Arrow Hill, as I should name a pretty name, I suppose. This is a beautiful piece of ground, country, and scenery in Otago. The scenery is high mountains, with mountains and precipitous every side. Looking down from the top to the left hand, many hundred of miles, is the Kawarau River, which flows into white foam, as it rushes on along its rock-bound course. After getting well round the Arrow, and looking to opposite side of the Kawarau, via Basin Bluffs, which rocky precipices here formed the obstacle in the opening up of the main trunk road from Dunedin to Wakatipu. The blasting operations have been of a most formidable character, hundreds of tons of hard rock having had to be removed to form the roadway; but the difficulty has been skilfully overcome, and I am informed that a cart can now pass round the frowning precipice. Onward we go, up giddy heights and down rugged steeps, crossing deep gullies and ravines, which have been rent in the mountain sides by landslips. Judging from the great cracks in the surface, there must have been earthquakes on a small scale. Sometimes our track was in such close proximity to the Kawarau River that by one false step both man and horse would be launched into the abyss below.

After getting well round the Annie, and looking to the opposite side of the Kawarau, are the Nevis Bluffs, which rocky projections have formed the chief obstacle to the opening up of the main trunk road from Dunedin to Wakatipu. The blasting operations have been of a most formidable character, hundreds of tons of hard rock having had to be removed to form the roadway; but the difficulty has been skilfully overcome, and I am informed that a cart can now pass round the frowning precipice. Onward we go, up giddy heights and down rugged steeps, crossing deep gullies and ravines, which have been rent in the mountain sides by landslips. Judging from the great cracks in the surface, there must have been earthquakes on a small scale. Sometimes our track was in such close proximity to the Kawarau River that by one false step both man and horse would be launched into the abyss below.

We arrive at last at the Ten-mile shanty, and halfway between the Roaring Meg and Arrowtown. It is kept by a very honest hard working fellow—an old sailor, who, when not dispensing the good things of this life to weary travellers, employs his time cultivating a garden, or in ferrying passengers, by means of his ferry boat, across the Kawarau River. It must be a most monotonous life to live at this shanty, perched as it is in a little secluded hollow in the side of a steep mountain, and no sound meeting the ear but the eternal monotonous roar of the Kawarau, which flows swiftly along at its base. No neighbors within ten miles; and, except on mail days, which are only twice a week, but few people to be seen.

In answer to the second question, the declaration alleged that although they had signed an agreement to keep an iron mine situated on the claim, yet that the obligation did not rest upon them, when the plaintiff failed to supply the water, whereas employment could be found for the men on the claim. That this clause of the agreement had been carried out by them in the spirit and true sense of the clause, it is not necessary to say.

was short between Bay, and some space had by the end of the estimated falling the gully points, etc. he would addition to the of the and many, as well as American, progress to the largest to some sold after more of a small hill was would to 4 days, being from which is now or steam, and numerous sold in the middle of the year for the amount of the amount to be nearly 50 for the from 10 to 12 on all of Wellington, and he would be put on a very six shillings a hour in it in by during the last few and interest six years storage to with have each, the have been to be effected. In reply, the Government is to be five million dollars in silver. The British Government is approaching expedition of 200,000 men for the purpose of its French Army by the Coast Regt. America is necessary troops upon the frontiers of Mexico. The Express of Mexico is now. Princess Dagmar arrived here on the 24th ult., and today received. On her departure for O people expressed great loyalty. At the execution of attempting the life of the C. psychic demonstrations at A charge of Cavary was a several years. There is associated with the. In Japan, a war broke between Tyumen and Erzen Chash and has been followed by the of the Japanese and the Chinese, and there is great excitement. In consequence of the drinking water is to be sent. Great fresh snows since 70 miles of railway have been covered. There will probably be six weeks. SPAIN. Letters from Cadix, dated her, state that the English are, considered by Lord is in the neighborhood, away from London relative to a vessel by the Spanish navy flag.

demanded her dowry. Education should be within the reach of all, and of a class able to our varied social state. The confinement of the High School is a step in the right direction; but are we neglecting a more important element exactly when the education of girls made mandatory to that of boys? Can it be established? For I remember the first wives and mothers of the most generous are of quite as much importance, if not more so, than the education of the male sex; and what a life of greater interest to a young man when his parents, than to know that his wife is well educated and quite capable taking the responsibilities of her children. Ask our legislators to consider some system of education to secure some extent that education of the girl must and will be advanced very rapidly. Of what service is a girl who only read and write, with a smattering of miscellaneous French, when English is so readily accessible to her? Is it possible to suppose of getting two or three papers, and reading the compilation of news? If the man flourish through his own skills, she is considered quite uneducated, while at the same time she is scarcely more than a child. How can we do such fit to rear our future citizens? Can any one expect a man or woman to be useful and clever, if she are treated up by one of these superficial educated mothers? The idea is absurd. Then, Mr Editor, will you kindly allow me to agitate this question, and if possible obtain the columns to obtain a good education for their daughters as the motto that is now accorded to their sons. I am, &c., A. Cross.

A VISIT TO THE LAKES. No. I. THE ARROW DISTRICT.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.) The beautiful country coming from such a high and the Arrow is indeed such interest among the ex-Travelers. I feel about our quarter (Dunedin) that I could not resist the temptation, as opportunity occurred, of paying a visit to the Lakes. The 23rd of the journey to the "Rear" was travelled with some degree of comfort, in a light four-wheeled coach, but the pass was most "delicious" and the passages were long and dull. It was 1 o'clock when we left Dunedin Hotel in Otago, but it was a matter of five minutes to the first part of our journey. The River Waikaiti is a very rapid stream, in volume about half of water; it comes tumbling down over rocky precipices at a great rate, and making a most tremendous noise. Leaving the coach and mounting on a horse, a party consisting of seven or eight persons formed a goodly cavalcade. Our route was what might be termed a possible American, and we were along gently up and down the steep cliffs of the little track round the Great Lake. This is a beautiful piece of ground, country, and scenery in Otago. The country is high mountains, with mountains and precipitous every side. Looking down from the top to the left hand, many hundred of miles, is the Kawarau River, which flows into white foam, as it rushes down its rock-bound course. After getting well round the Arrow, and looking to opposite side of the Kawarau, the River Waikaiti, which really is a picture here. Several of the objects in the opening up of the track road from Dunedin to Wakatipu. Having operations have been of a considerable character, hundreds of tons of coal having had to be lowered from the roadway; but the difficulty has been skillfully overcome, and I am bound to say that our own road has been a very happy one. Several of the most beautiful and deep gullies and precipices, which have been cut by the mountain side. Judging from the great size of the rocks, there must have been no quakes or a small scale. In fact, the work was in such close proximity to the Kawarau River that by one false step men and horses would be hurled into the river below. We arrived at last at the Tirohanga shanty, and halting between the Bowyer Bay and Arrowshoals. It is kept by a very honest hard working fellow—an old sailor, who, when not dispensing the good things of his life to weary travellers, employs his time cultivating a garden, or in supplying passengers by means of his fiery boat, across the Kawarau River. It must be a most

In the absence of better accommodation these shanties are of great service. It is scarcely three years since a shanty was erected at the very summit of the "Old Man," the highest point of the Carrick Ranges, in the spot where now stands the middle shelter shed on the track from Alexandra to Campbell's Gully. The shanty proved a losing speculation, but it was the means of saving a man's life, who without its shelter, must have perished. The poor fellow and his two mates were lost in the snow. During the night, the latter died from cold; he, however, managed to hold out till morning, and reached the shanty in a most exhausted state.

Our cavalcade got once more in motion, and another ten miles of sinuous tracks, steep gullies, and precipices, brought us to the Arrow River. In dry weather, it is an insignificant stream, but in wet it is of considerable width. It was much swollen by the rains when we crossed, the water being above the saddle girths. After crossing the river, signs of civilization meet the eye in the shape of a line of telegraph posts; but instead of the wires being hung, they were lying on the ground in coils. The posts I learn have been erected over three years; but through want of funds, or energy, the Government had not completed what they had begun. It, however, seemed to me an extraordinary proceeding, that after having incurred so large an expense, so useful a work should remain unfinished. I suppose that the evil will be remedied some day, and that communication with the Lakes and seaboard by way of Dunedin, by both road and wire, will eventually be accomplished.

In answer to the second question, the respondents alleged that although they had signed an agreement to keep an iron constantly employed on the claim, yet that the obligation did not rest upon them, when the plaintiff failed to supply the water, whereas employment could be found for the men on the claim. That this clause of the agreement had been carried out by them in due spirit and true sense.

was short between Bay, and some space had by the end of the estimated falling the great, which would addition to the of the and many as well as American, suggests to the largest to some sold after more of a vessel till age would to 4 days, being from which is now or steam, and numerous sold in the within a few days of the arrival of the Emperor's army is also pointed, owing to the result. This movement that a new game will shortly meet at affairs of Europe. The Prussian Army made entry into Berlin on the 20th. A great banquet was given by the King and Queen of Prussia. The King was present, and during the day the army for the first time. The legislative body of Prussia has been dissolved by the King's decree on the 19th. The Emperor's army is now in the possession of the Kingdom of Saxony. The Emperor of Austria is now in the possession of the Kingdom of Hungary. The Emperor of Russia is now in the possession of the Kingdom of Poland. The Emperor of the Netherlands is now in the possession of the Kingdom of Belgium. The Emperor of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Balkans. The Emperor of the Kingdom of Italy is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Alps. The Emperor of the Kingdom of Spain is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Pyrenees. The Emperor of the Kingdom of Portugal is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Atlantic. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Netherlands is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the North Sea. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Black Sea. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Mediterranean. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Red Sea. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Indian Ocean. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Pacific Ocean. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the South Sea. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Antarctic. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Arctic. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the North Pole. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the South Pole. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Equator. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Tropics. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Desert. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Mountains. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Plains. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Rivers. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Seas. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Oceans. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the World.

ARRIVAL OF THE H WELLINGTON FROM (BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH) (The following appeared as a news item on November 26.) The Emperor's army is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Balkans. The Emperor of the Kingdom of Italy is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Alps. The Emperor of the Kingdom of Spain is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Pyrenees. The Emperor of the Kingdom of Portugal is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Atlantic. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Netherlands is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the North Sea. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Black Sea. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Mediterranean. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Red Sea. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Indian Ocean. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Pacific Ocean. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the South Sea. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Antarctic. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Arctic. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the North Pole. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the South Pole. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Equator. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Tropics. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Desert. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Mountains. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Plains. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Rivers. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Seas. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the Oceans. The Emperor of the Kingdom of the Ottoman Empire is now in the possession of the Kingdom of the World.

The Morven Ferry Punt

1867-1880

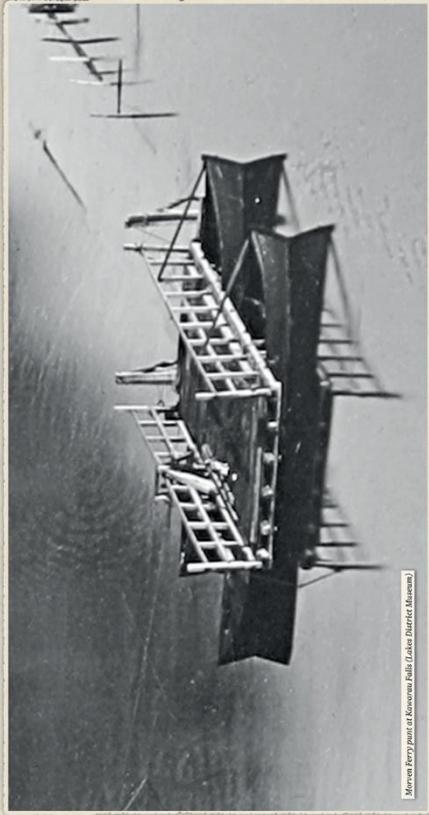
Dancing on the Deck

On 27 September 1867 “upwards of a hundred people, representing the Dunstan, Cromwell, Arrow and Queenstown districts, assembled to celebrate the opening” of the Morven Ferry. After many speeches, “dancing on the platform of the punt followed and was kept up with much spirit, the punt in the meantime being worked alternately across and recross the river.” A break in celebrations allowed “a team, loaded with goods for Mr Pritchard’s [Store in] Arrowtown to cross. Dancing was again resumed and kept up until a late hour.” (*Lake Wakatipu Mail*)

Benefits

This was a significant development in creating better access to the area. For the first time this punt along with the downstream punt (near the present Victoria bridge) enabled vehicle access from Cromwell to the Wakatipu diggings. Previously, the route required taking saddle horses on a hazardous track on the north side of the river.

The convenience and economic benefits of the new route were extolled. The possibility of more tourists coming to the area was noted. “The magnificent scenery of the Wakatipu will be a great source of attraction and those who have never seen the land of ‘mountain and of flood’ should avail themselves of the first convenient opportunity to do so.” (*Dunstan Times*)



Morven ferry punt at Kawarau Falls (Lake District Museum)

PUBLIC NOTICE

ON and after OCTOBER 1st, the CHARGES at MORVEN FERRY will be as follows:—

Each horse	1 0
Waggon	1 0
Dray	0 6
Buggy, horse, and one man	1 6
Buggy, 2 horses, and one man	2 6
Man and saddle horse	1 0
Foot passenger	0 6

Tonnage Free.

Cattle, sheep and pigs, according to agreement.

R. D. OWENS,
Proprietor.

Morven Ferry, September 11th, 1874.

Lake County Press, 18 September, 1874 (Lake District Museum)

Costs

Richard Owens, the operator, was subsidised £100 per annum by the Otago Provincial Council to keep charges reasonable. Despite this, complaints about the charges were frequently made.

Dangers

Conditions were often hazardous and floods often limited the service. In the 1878 floods, the river was seven metres above its normal level at the crossing. During floods it could take up to 75 minutes of hard work to get a coach and team across the river.

However, Richard Owens gained a reputation as a very capable ferryman. Sometimes horses and coaches had to be loaded separately. The horses were run into the water and made to jump onto the punt. Planks were laid from the landing to the punt and the coach was run onto the planks and pushed across them. Owens would be standing up to his waist in water.

During one crossing a horse jibbed and backed the coach into the water. The driver was swept away by the current. Owens went after him in a boat and pulled him out of the water unconscious, and it was two hours before he recovered. Bendix Hallenstein, the Mayor of Queenstown, who was a passenger on the punt, waded into the river and helped beach the rescue boat. The horse was injured and the coach damaged.

Final Days

The opening of the Kawarau Suspension Bridge in 1880 put the punt out of business. Later the punt operated at Kawarau Falls. It sank there in 1911.

Now there is no sign of where the punt operated at Morven Ferry, and no public road access. The area is private land. Please do not go there.



QUEENSTOWN
TRAILS TRUST



Queenstown & District
Historical Society
www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz



lake district
museum
& gallery
arrowtown



QUEENSTOWN
LAKES DISTRICT
COUNCIL

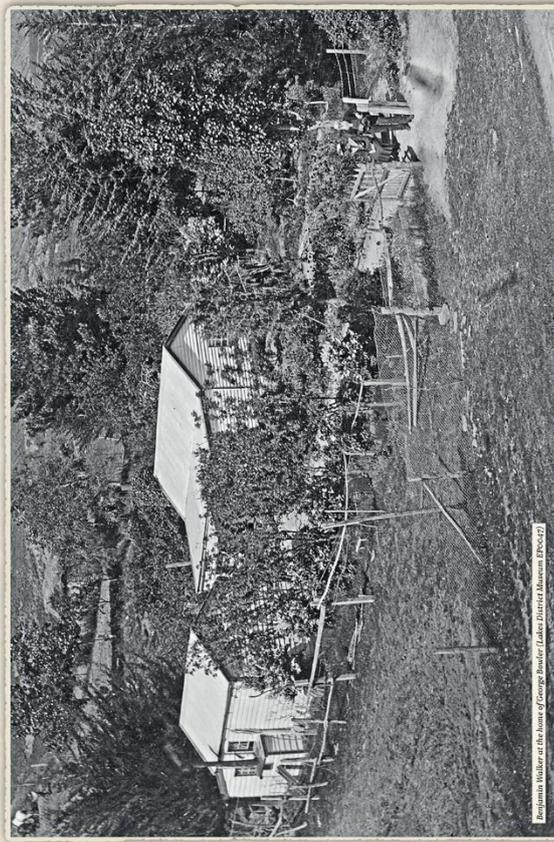


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DESIGN PRINT SIGNS

Whitechapel Flat Gold Mining Community

Very little evidence remains today of the gold mining at Whitechapel. Archaeological surveys record evidence of a reservoir; a large stacked ruin, two water races and a probable prospecting pit. By 1865, Whitechapel had been designated part of a goldfield. The sluicing methods used for mining required the building of water races and holding dams. In 1871 the *Otago Witness* noted: "At Whitechapel Flat enormous areas of ground had been taken up for sluicing operations; and two large and costly water races from the Arrow River, are in the course of construction."

A year later it reported that "the claims are said to be exceeding expectations." An 1873 Mining Wardens report refers to about 15 miners at work, using about 15 sluice-heads of water, with one party of miners finding 44 ounces (1.25kg) of gold in about a month. Life became easier when the bridge across the Arrow was completed in 1873. The residents were no longer dependent on horses to cross the river to reach Arrowtown. The children could also attend school in Arrowtown.

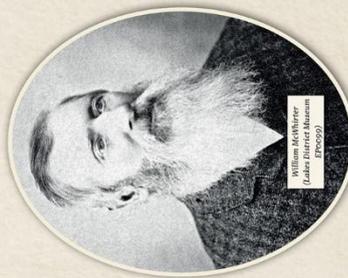


Benjamin Walker at the base of George Street, Lakes District Museum Precinct

Benjamin Walker

The life of Benjamin Walker, who resided here for about 30 years, provides snapshots of local events.

- In 1882 he stocked two dams with young trout. Two years later he was pleased to catch a trout measuring fourteen inches (35.5cm). Unfortunately a year later the *Otago Witness* recorded: "SHAGS.- These destructive birds are becoming either more daring or more plentiful. They have of late made their appearance repeatedly at Whitechapel Flat where Messrs Walker and McWhirter have a large dam, in which they have experimented with trout. The birds generally pay with their lives for their intention."
- In 1900 William McWhirter, a close friend of Benjamin for 37 years, was killed. It appeared that while working on his claim he undermined a large rock which gave way. The following day his body was found "crushed and cold."



William McWhirter (Lakes District Museum)

- In 1901 Benjamin "noticed that some voracious animal made free with his cabbages, growing in his securely wire-netted garden." The mystery was solved when some well-nourished rats were caught with "one of the culprits measuring 18 inches (45cm) from tip of tail to snout, and turning the scale at 1lb (450gms), which says a good deal in favour of vegetarianism." (*Otago Witness*)
- Six weeks later the *Otago Witness* reported the alarming consequences of a thunderstorm. About 60 metres of Benjamin's boundary fence were destroyed by lightning with posts splintered into matchwood. The lightning apparently struck "where neighbours live close together, and nearly a score of people were more or less affected, several of them remaining in an unconscious state for hours."
- The winter of 1901 brought harsh conditions. On 23 July the Lake County Press noted that "Mr Walker's thermometer registered 10 degrees (-23°C) below zero the other night." The widespread cold also affected local hotels where "the lemonade and soda water and even the beer turned to ice for a few days. Fortunately, the whiskey braved the storm." A week later the *Otago Witness* reported that the ice on the dams at Whitechapel was "a good nine inches (22cm) thick - thick enough to carry a loaded six-horse Yankee waggon."

A number of the settlers here were from Scandinavia and part of the area was known as Little Denmark. This small goldfield of Whitechapel provided at least a livelihood for several families for almost thirty years.



Queenstown and District Historical Society (2008) Inc.

Chairperson's Report for the Annual General Meeting, November 2021

For the year from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021

By Marion Borrell

Our efforts to promote and protect our local history continued steadily this year, as we monitored developments in the district, spread knowledge and enthusiasm through a range of communication methods, collaborated with an increasing number of other entities, and organised events for our members.

Our membership numbers are stable at about 200 memberships and 280 individuals.

Our financial position remains sound with about \$36,000 in hand. Our largest source of income is subscriptions, and we thank members for their support.

Promotion of Local History

Historical Panels Project

In 2018 we embarked on the project to create and donate information panels in widespread places where locals and visitors will see them. The panels are given to QLDC and DOC. To date we have made 10 panels at the total cost of \$7275.

In collaboration with the Queenstown Trails Trust we have completed the four panels we undertook for places along the trail. See pages 28 and 29. Further panels are planned.

Publications

- *Queenstown Courier Issue 104* contained writing by Ray O'Callaghan, Rita Teele, Simon Beale and Pat Rainey, Pauline Lawrence and Marion Borrell.

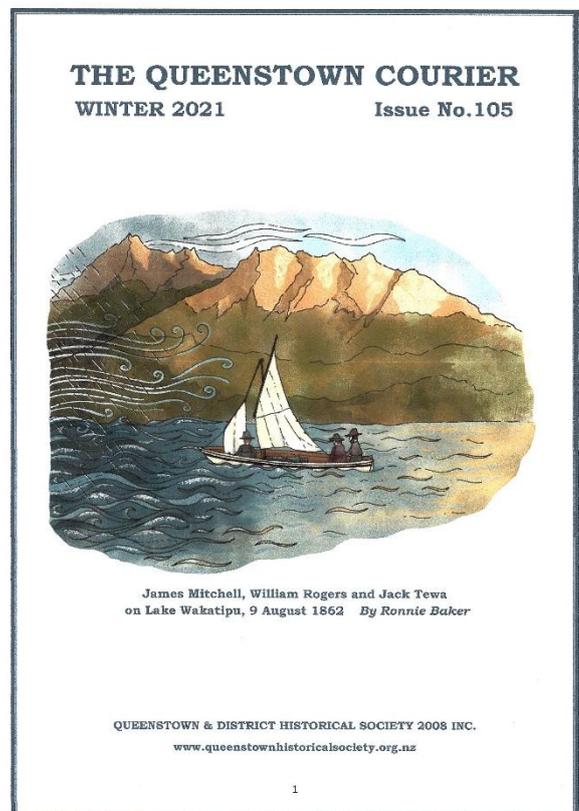
- *Queenstown Courier Issue 105* contained writing by Marion Borrell with paintings by Ronnie Baker, an article by Andrea King, and recollections of Doug and Hazel Boyd.

-Website

<https://queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz> experienced increased usage this year, with 7000 page-visits by 3,300 individuals.

- *Historic Places in Queenstown* brochure: We have given away 3,600 in the past 18 months through the Museum, the libraries, QLDC office, St Peter's Church and several tourist businesses.

- *Edith Cavell – a bridge and bravery* and *Stories of Wakatipu, Courier 100* by Danny Knudson continue to sell at the Museum.



Activities and Events from September 2020 to May 2021

We were fortunate to be able to hold all six events planned. It was gratifying to be able to present 'People From Our Past' with all the speakers who had been postponed by the lockdown in 2020. All events were well-attended. Our thanks to the many members and friends who contributed and assisted.

- September 2020: Memories of Cribbie Days. Denise Heckler (née Hunter), Owen Todd and Danny Knudson told the sagas of their family cribs in Arrowtown and Queenstown.
- November: Trip to Kingston. We picnicked at the Community Centre and heard the history and memories from local people, followed by an inspection of the Kingston Flyer which was in the process of restoration.
- November: AGM and part of the DVD *Journey to Lan Yuan* made by Toitū Otago Settlers Museum about the Chinese miners and their homeland.
- February: Trip to the Cromwell Heritage Precinct with local guides.
- April: 'People From Our Past'. See next page for photos.
- May: Cromwell before the Inundation. After viewing videos made at the time, members added their knowledge and stories.

Heritage Protection

We continue to monitor Resource Consent Applications and respond to any heritage matters that come to our notice.

The application for the 'Olive Leaf' building at St Patrick's Church in Arrowtown, was declined by QLDC. The proponents are appealing in the Environment Court, and the Society is a party to the appeal in support of QLDC.

Community Involvement

- Lakes District Museum: The very close relationship continues. Pauline Lawrence is our representative on the Museum Board. The archivist, Jo Boyd, is a member of our Board.
- We were consulted by QLDC Parks and Reserves regarding the development plan for Queenstown Gardens.
- Other entities with which we have been involved are Queenstown Trails Trust, DOC, Wakatipu Heritage Trust, No Leaf Inc., Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust, U3A Wakatipu and Community Trust South.

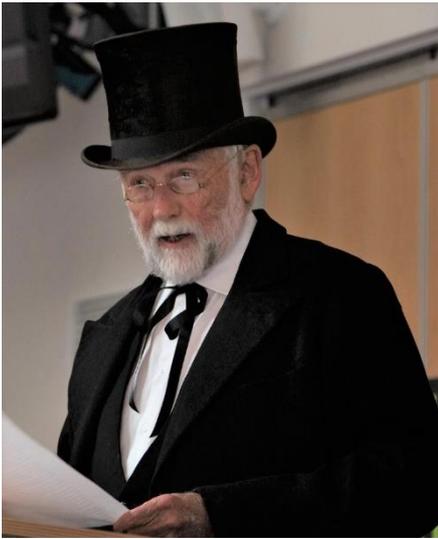
The Board

The Board members are Marion Borrell (chairperson), Denise Heckler (vice-chairperson and secretary), Ray O'Callaghan (treasurer), Patrick Beehan, Jo Boyd, Barbara Kerr, Pauline Lawrence, and Colin Macnicol.

Retirement of Gavin Jack

After 11 years as treasurer, Gavin has handed the books over to Ray. We owe a great debt to Gavin who has prudently managed our finances and guided us through the changes in banking systems and statutory requirements. His calm wisdom has been much appreciated in all our discussions and decisions. We wish him an enjoyable retirement.

The People from Our Past 2021



Donald Hay presented
by David Hay



Captain William
'Bully' Hayes
presented by
Blaise Barham



William and Eliza
Jenkins
presented by
Chris MacKenzie
and Cheryl Collie



Joan Cooke's words
read by her daughter
Jenny Buchanan



Henry Barker's words
Read by John Foster

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Queenstown & District Historical Society 2008 Incorporated

Our Heritage Today – For Tomorrow

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MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

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