

first acquaintance with this district in 1851-2, who says: 'I remember on meeting a gentleman who had been round the East Cape in a small vessel, asking him if he knew anything of the Hourede. "Oh, yes", he replied, "I called in there in the schooner. We sailed into a big swamp and landed in the bottom of a little gully. On climbing up an immense hill, and looking over the surrounding expanse, we saw nothing but a long sand spit with the Pacific Ocean on one side and an everlasting swamp backed by snowy mountains on the other." But I said surely there must be fine country somewhere about there. "No such thing, the dry land is all sand and fleas, and the water all salt and stinking bog water."

He modified this afterwards by saying that there were some clay cliffs, but Captain Rhodes had bought them for a bale of blankets and a few muskets, to settle a whaling station on.

99. At page 37 there is what purports to be a description of the place by Mr. W. B. Rhodes, as published in the *New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator* of 24th April, 1841. This, however, is only an extract, and, unfortunately, it omitted all reference to the point that was exercising the minds of the members of the Commission of 1920.

100. To remedy the omission, the following is a full copy of Mr. Rhodes' article, and to show what was *not before* the 1920 Commission I have underlined [*printed in bold type*] that which is included in Mr. Dinwiddie's paper and was before the 1920 Commission:—

[Extract from *New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator*, Saturday morning, April 24th 1841]

The Editor of the *New Zealand Gazette and Wellington Spectator*.

SIR,—

I am induced to send the following description of a district in the North Island known only to a few Europeans in consequence of an observation in your paper a short time since, wherein you expressed a desire to receive communications of the kind. **The district described is known by several names though most familiar to Europeans is the name of McDonald's Cove.** Many pronounce the name Awridi, but Aoriri, the name I use is sanctioned by the Missionaries.

The nearest point of the district to Port Nicholson is distant about sixty miles. I have commenced with the bearings and latitude as likely to be useful. Commencing at Cape Turnagain in latitude 40° 33' South, from thence continuing along the coast around Cape Kidnappers to a white cliff bearing from the latter North West by North in latitude 39° 24' South bounded on the East partly by the sea and Hawkes Bay, on the North by a line West South West from the said cliff 20 miles into the interior, on the South by a line West from Cape Turnagain (and also by the New Zealand Company's Lands) 20 miles and bounded on the Westward by a line parallel and distant twenty miles from the Main direction of the coast, cutting off the Headlands and connecting the two last mentioned points parallel with the boundaries on the coast, estimated at 880,000 acres more or less.

The roadstead is sheltered from the prevailing winds and there is a good anchorage in eight fathoms of water at one mile from the shore. At the entrance of the River in the proper channel there is three fathoms water; and, immediately passing the bar, it dips to seven and nine fathoms, shingly bottom. The entrance of the River is generally smooth and the ebb tide of fresh water runs out at the rate of seven miles per hour which renders it rather dangerous for vessels swinging to their anchors unless due caution is used. The river shortly loses itself for a time in a large shallow lagoon, nevertheless there is a channel towards the South into a cove or natural dock, sheltered from all wind and out of the influence of the tides, the depth of water in the cove I did not ascertain, I was informed by the natives that numerous small coasting craft, and amongst others the cutter Harriett, Captain R. Barrett, anchored in the cove. One large American Whaler requiring water and refreshments once anchored in the river, thus proving that **this place would answer as a sea port second to Port Nicholson.**

The pa is built at a small island at the entrance of the river a few yards from the mainland. Immediately about the south entrance of the port the land is low and swampy with the exception of one headland which, and the low island where the native pa is built and an island adjoining, would be eligible for the site of a sea port town but **I should recommend the principal settlement to be placed about ten miles inland on the banks of a river communicating with the port, being near the centre of a fine alluvial valley, apparently surrounded with hills of moderate elevation containing probably about 200,000 acres of grassland, mostly clear of fern and with the exception of some tutu bushes already to put the plough into without any preparatory expense in clearing.** There are three large groves of fine timber in this flat sufficient for all purposes of building and fencing &c. I have seen no place to equal it in New Zealand for depasturing sheep or cattle, and, from its proximity to Port Nicholson, being only distant viz. (The Port) 120 miles by the valley of the Hutt and the commencement of the district as mentioned before sixty six miles, it must become of great importance, and will be a great acquisition as a grazing and agricultural district to the important settlement of Port Nicholson and metropolis of Wellington.