

(4) *Creation of a Borough: Reefton*

A petition was received by His Excellency the Governor-General and referred to the Local Government Commission praying that the Town of Reefton, which is at present administered by the Inangahua County Council, be created a borough. An inquiry was held in Reefton into the prayer of the petition on the 4th February, 1948.

Prior to the inquiry the Commission inspected the whole of the area of the proposed borough. The petitioners prayed not only that the actual Town of Reefton should be included in the proposed borough, but that the borough boundaries should be extended through obvious rural areas for some five miles so as to include several mining properties. In the course of the evidence the only justification the petitioners could find for the inclusion of this mining property was that certain Reefton people worked in these mines. Further, it was argued that the rates from these mines should justly be given to the proposed Reefton Borough rather than to the Inangahua County, despite the fact that to include these mines involved an extension of the boundaries to include large areas of rural land. The case for the petitioners was that, in general, Reefton had not been satisfactorily administered by the Inangahua County. As will appear in the sequel, we have not, up to the moment, been called upon to adjudicate on this particular point.

If the whole of the area proposed by the petitioners had been included in a borough, there is little doubt, as was shown by the evidence, that the Inangahua County would have been unable to carry on. The petitioners did not establish their case that this rural area and the mines should be included in the borough, and in an interim decision given at the conclusion of the inquiry the Commission decided that the rural area and the mines would not be included in the borough, even if it was ultimately decided that one should be constituted.

It was then agreed between the parties that the petitioners would consider whether, in the circumstances, they would proceed with the proposal to form the built-up area into a borough, and the inquiry was adjourned *sine die*. One question for consideration by the petitioners was whether, from such a small area, sufficient revenue would be forthcoming to provide for borough administration. Inangahua County, which had opposed the petition, agreed to consult with the petitioners, who were to inform the Commission whether, in the light of the changed circumstances, they desired to proceed with the petition. To date no further communication has been received from the petitioners, and it therefore must be assumed that they have decided not to proceed.

(5) *Alteration of Boundaries: Feilding Borough*

Two petitions were received from the ratepayers in two different parts of Feilding Borough praying for the exclusion of the areas described in the petition from the Feilding Borough and their inclusion in the County of Oroua, on the grounds that the areas were unsuitable for residential development, that they were, in fact, farm lands, and that they were more suitable for county control. The Feilding Borough indicated that it was opposed to the petition, and was supported in its attitude by the Oroua County Council. The hearing of the case opened in Feilding on 27th February, 1948, when a day was occupied in hearing the case for the petitioners. Their case was, briefly, that part of the land under consideration had on occasions been offered for subdivision for urban building purposes but had not been sold, this indicating that it was not desired for house-building; that the land was not served as adequately as other parts of the borough with borough amenities; that even after the application of the Urban Farm Land Rating Act, 1932, the land as farm land was still more heavily rated than other farm lands in the vicinity which were under the control of the Oroua County Council; and that the town was developing in directions other than those in the areas of land subject to the petitions. The whole question of the prospective development of the Borough of Feilding requires further investigation, and to this end the hearing was adjourned until early in the 1948-49 financial year.