

2. SELECTING THE "TENTHS."⁽¹⁾

In the meantime Mr. Tuckett and his assistants had not been idle, and in April, 1842, the town survey was completed and the town sections selected from the orders of choice drawn in England. The Native-reserve sections were selected by Mr. H. A. Thompson in his capacity as agent for the Bishop of New Zealand and his co-trustee, the Chief Protector of Aborigines. Mr. Thompson had been appointed in March by Governor Hobson to nearly all the Government offices in Nelson, including Police Magistrate, Postmaster, Sub-Protector of Aborigines, Collector of Customs, and eventually he was made Judge of the County Court.

The following is a list of the town sections selected as Native reserves from the choices drawn on behalf of the Natives: Nos. 5, 20, 21, 46, 47, 50, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 93, 144, 148, 152, 159, 162, 177, 191, 194, 198, 203, 205, 227, 229, 231, 233, 241, 244, 248, 253, 256, 261, 263, 265, 266, 267, 269, 283, 284, 294, 303, 305, 307, 344, 367, 382, 387, 406, 416, 417, 443, 521, 522, 529, 537, 551, 561, 575, 582, 583, 598, 608, 625, 626, 650, 706, 710, 718, 722, 768, 777, 778, 784, 797, 798, 828, 831, 855, 858, 860, 897, 905, 911, 926, 939, 941, 943, 945, 951, 953, 954, 956, 1051, 1084, 1088, 1091, 1092, 1096, 1099: total sections originally selected, 100.

The next task confronting the surveyors was to find 50,000 acres of accommodation or suburban land in the immediate proximity of the town. It proved a difficult matter. Notwithstanding the optimistic statements of Mr. Heaphy, the Company's draughtsman, it was found that in the combined districts of Wakapuaka, the Waimea, Moutere, and Motueka there were not more than 60,000 acres of land suitable for cultivation, and of these, according to Mr. Tuckett, only 14,000 could be described as good.⁽²⁾ It was "not until every nook and corner of accessible land within forty miles of the port had been taken up by the surveyors"⁽³⁾ that the 50-acre sections were available for selection, and many of these sections could hardly be classed as "suburban."

At the end of May, 1842, over seventeen hundred persons were crowded round the Town of Nelson, and not an acre of the country land had been distributed. It was not till the 21st August that the accommodation lands were open for selection, and another season was gone before the fern land could be got ready for sowing or swamp lands drained. All this was very annoying to the settlers who had paid in advance for their land, and they naturally blamed the Wakefield system of colonization, whereas the real cause of all the trouble was the fact that the surrounding country would not admit of the carrying-out of the Nelson scheme of settlement.

The selection of the suburban lands took place in August, and Mr. Thompson chose for the Native reserves the following sections:—

Moutere: Nos. 45, 69, 71, 73, 75, 84, 85, 137, 138, 144, 145, 147, 148, 151, 201, 202, 205, 206, 213.

Motueka: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 20, 21, 22, 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 36, 47, 48, 73, 74, 79, 80, 82, 92, 93, 111, 113, 117, 118, 122, 123, 124, 126, 127, 129, 132, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 157, 159, 160, 161, 168, 169, 183, 186, 187, 192, 199, 206, 207, 208, 221, 222, 223, 234, 236, 240, 241, 242, 253, 256, 260, 262, 263, 264.

In September Bishop Selwyn, who was paying his first visit to Nelson, gave general directions for letting the reserves. The principles upon which he conceived the Native reserves ought to be let were—

- (1) That the lands should be let not so much with a view to the largest immediate return as to the creation of a permanent and respectable property and to the general improvement of the settlement of Nelson:
- (2) That the length of leases granted should vary with the description of property proposed to be placed on the ground.

He recommended the following scale:—

- (a) Lease of seven years for gardens, without covenant to build; ground to be cleared and cultivated within two years; rent, 10 per cent. of value of allotment:
- (b) Lease for fourteen years, with covenant to build wooden houses to the value of seven years' purchase of the annual rent:
- (c) Lease for twenty-one years, with covenant to build brick or stone houses to the value of ten years' purchase of the annual rent:
- (d) Lease for seven years, renewable for further seven years if the tenants before the expiration of their term should have erected wooden buildings of the required value:
- (e) Lease for fourteen years, renewable for further seven years on the erection of brick or stone buildings of the value required above.⁽⁴⁾

Arrangements were also made by the Bishop for the erection of a small chapel and one or more dwellings for the use of the Natives, and for these purposes Captain Wakefield consented to advance £200 on the security of the Native town sections. A hospital for sick Natives and a boarding-school for Maori children were also contemplated.⁽⁴⁾

3. THE MASSACRE AT WAIRAU.

Having at last supplied the settlers of Nelson with their suburban sections, the surveyors were now faced with a much more difficult problem—that of finding sufficient land to cut up into 1,100 lots of 150 acres each. They had combed the district within a radius of forty miles for the accommodation sections, and it was now necessary to seek further for the rural lands. They went to Massacre (Golden) Bay, but this district could not supply half of the required number of rural sections, although Mr. Heaphy had talked airily of half a million acres. It became necessary to explore further, and in the opposite direction, for available land, and this led to the discovery of the Wairau Valley and ended in the shocking catastrophe which bears its name.

⁽¹⁾ The list of sections selected as Native reserves in Nelson, Moutere, and Motueka have been taken from Mackay's Compendium, Vol. 2, p. 265, and checked with original plans in the Lands and Survey (Head) Office.

⁽²⁾ Cowell to Earl Grey, 23/11/47: Correspondence *re* New Zealand Company; printed 1/7/52.

⁽³⁾ "History of New Zealand," by Alfred Saunders.

⁽⁴⁾ Bishop of New Zealand to H. A. Thompson, 6/9/42: Mackay's Compendium, Vol. 2, p. 267.