

HISTORY OF THE RESERVE.

Reservation of land by the Natives on the West Coast was first made in 1854 by the Ngaitoa Tribe, in whose deed of sale to the Queen, dated 13th December, 1854, of Waiponamu, occur these words—"This land we fully give up and make over to the Europeans when the homesteads for us and our children are laid out." £2,000 payment.

In the "Arahura Deed," by which "Poutini," on the West Coast, was sold by the local Ngaitahu natives, on the 21st May, 1860, the following words appear:—

"Otira tenei ano etahi wahi whenua mo matou i roto ki aua whenua ano konga pukapuka A me B aua whenua ki tenei pukapuka e mau ana-kihai i utu aua whenua." * * * * *

LANDS reserved from Sale for the Arahura Natives, West Coast, Schedule A, Lands Reserved for individual allotments. — And in translation.

Situation.	Area in Acres.	Total.
31, on the South bank of the River Mawhera or Grey, at the Pa.	Five hundred acres.	500

JAMES MACKAY, JUN.,
Assistant Native Secretary.

On a white population being drawn to the Grey District by the discovery there of gold in 1865, land along the river side on the Reserve became required for building purposes. For a short time the native owners of the Reserve made their own arrangements with persons offering to become tenants but difficulties appearing in the negotiations they availed themselves of the provisions of "The New Zealand Native Reserves Act, 1856," and placed the Reserve in the hands of the Governor.

See Order in Council 3rd February, 1856, *New Zealand Gazette* 17th February, 1856.

The Reserve was then surveyed for a town site, and building allotments were rapidly taken up on leases, for various terms, up to 21 years.

The area laid off in Town Allotments to the present time is 181 acres; the remaining 319 acres lie on a steep and densely-wooded hill, and are unsuited for building purposes.

See Mr. Mackay's letter of 15th January, 1872.

The gross amount of rent received from tenants to 15th January, 1872, was £22,022 1s. 1d., and the net revenue available for the purposes of the Trust, amounted, out of that sum, to £18,570 5s. 9d.

The following are the fixed annual charges:—

Salaries and Cost of Collection	£	s.	d.
Contributions to Borough Council	250	0	0
					280	0	0
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					£530	0	0

The present gross rental is £3,248 a year.

The total amount by the Borough authorities to protective works, *i.e.*, river embankment, was to 31st December, 1871, £12,580, to which, in connexion with street improvements, the Trust contributed £750.

From 1st July, 1871, to 27th June, 1872, the gross rental was £3,764 4s. 0d.

A very much larger expenditure will be required to form permanent and effective works along the river side, as the present are insufficient in height, and of too perishable a material.

This was written before the occurrence of the disastrous February floods. The total paid from 1st July, 1871, to 27th June, 1872, was £1,555 7s. 2d. for public works.

Limestone is, however, now being brought down from the hilly portion of the reserve in considerable quantities as material for the embankment, but much larger quantities, at a much greater expense, will be required.

Many of the sections into which the Reserve has been subdivided are sub-let at very high rentals, and have passed through several ownerships of the lease.

Owing to there being no adjacent lands similarly situated in respect to river frontage, or conveniences for building purposes, it is impracticable to institute a comparison that would be of any value in determining the actual value of the land.

Mr. Perkins, conveyancer of Greymouth, states that the best allotments on the quay, nearest the reserve, would not exceed at sale £2 per foot, the worst £1 per foot. This would include improvements, but it refers to the land lying westward of Boundary Street in a position that is very liable to injury by the overflow of the river.

Since this was written several houses in this locality have been swept away by a flood.