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E D W A R D B A I G E N T

A Pioneer Nelson Settler, Businessman, and Politician

A thesis presented in partial
fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of
Arts in History at Massey
University.

NEIL DOUGLAS NELSON
1981

PREFACE

Edward Baigent arrived in New Zealand almost 140 years ago, and except for a few months in Nelson, spent his entire life in Wakefield. Unfortunately neither Edward Baigent nor any of his children seem to have kept diaries, or been prolific letter writers. The information this thesis is based upon, does thus come almost entirely from early newspaper articles, diaries of Baigent's contemporary settlers, and old ledgers and journals, dating back to 1870, which were found by chance last year in the demolition of an old building on Baigents' Rutherford Street property.

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible if not for the willing assistance I have had from a number of people.

Special thanks must go to Mr John Bush, who began collecting information relating to the Baigent family several years ago, with the intention of eventually writing a family/company history. With characteristic unselfishness, Mr Bush passed on to me all the material he had accumulated, and I am extremely grateful for the initial help he provided.

To Mrs M. Palmer, a great grand-daughter of Edward Baigent, I also extend my special thanks. Mrs Palmer has always taken a great deal of interest in the Baigent family, and wherever possible, has been of great assistance to me.

Nelson is fortunate that early events were faithfully recorded by newspaper reporters almost immediately settlement was commenced. The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle which began in 1842 and continued until 1874, provided much valuable information on the early years of settlement in the Nelson Province. An almost complete file of this paper is available at the Nelson Public Library, and to the staff of the Library I wish to record my thanks.

Nelson's other two newspapers, The Colonist, 1857-1920, and the Nelson Evening Mail, 1866 to the present day, are stored at the Nelson Evening Mail Offices, and to the Lucas family, I extend my thanks for allowing me to spend many weeks going through these immaculately preserved papers.

Diaries and journals of early Nelson settlers also provided much valuable background for my thesis, and in this area, the staff of the Nelson Museum have always provided friendly and extremely helpful information. Special thanks must go to Mrs N. Russell, who spent several hours suggesting early diaries and journals which she felt would be of assistance, and always were. To Mr Steven Bagley, Director of the Museum, and Mr Maurice Watson, for his excellent photographs, I am also very grateful.

To my supervisor, Professor W.H. Oliver, I wish to record my sincere thanks. Professor Oliver's useful criticism and helpful suggestions have proved of considerable assistance in the writing of my thesis.

For the typing of this thesis, all credit must go to Miss Margaret Denby, and to her I extend my thanks for an excellent job.

After having written and re-written this thesis some six times, the task of proof-reading becomes very difficult, and to Mr John Harvey, I am indebted for the thorough job he did on the train journey to Auckland.

Finally, I wish to thank the company of H. Baigent & Sons Limited, particularly Mr Harry Baigent, for the assistance they have given me in the writing of my thesis.

To all the above people, plus the many others with whom I have talked, I wish to record my sincere thanks.

N.D. NELSON

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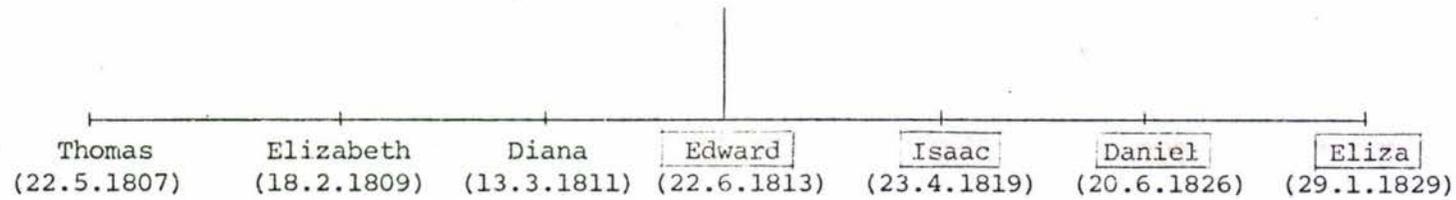
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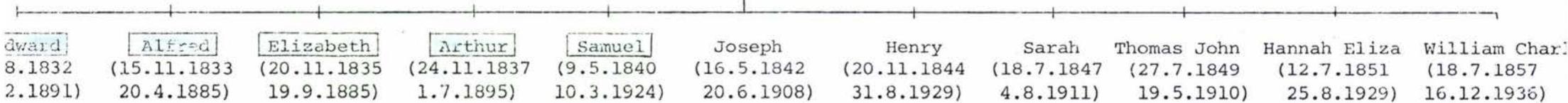
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Edward Baigent : Brief Family Tree

Thomas Baigent m. Dorothy Anne Coule

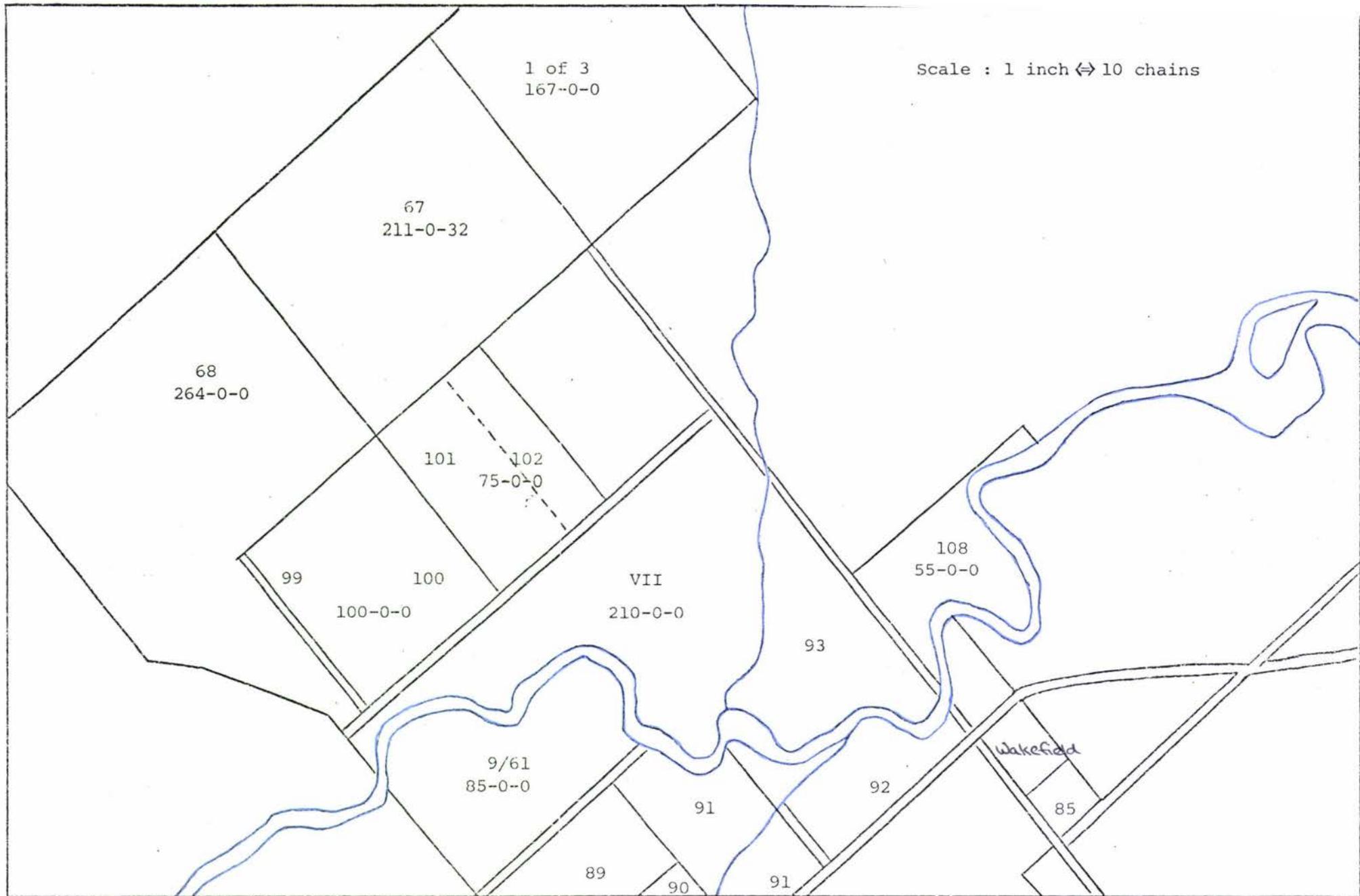


m. Mary Ann Hern



Came out to New Zealand

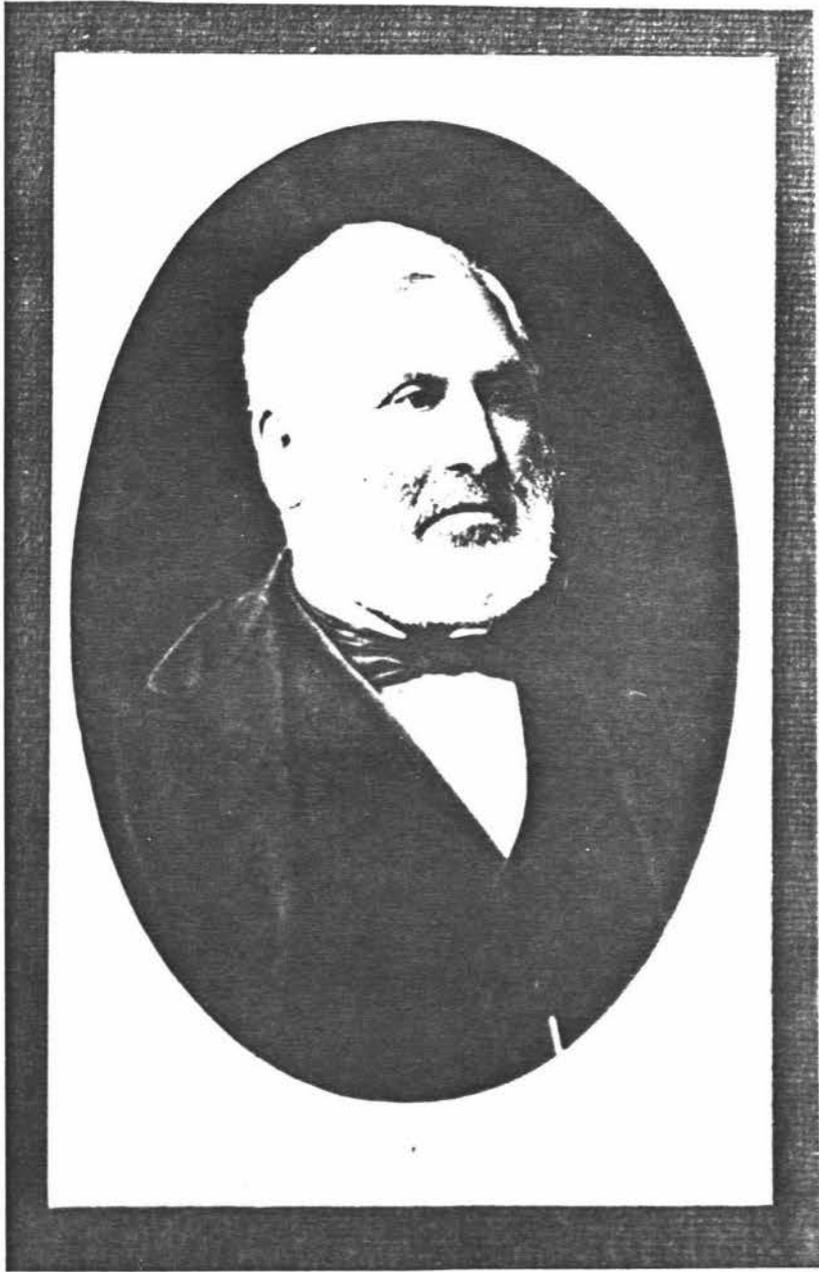
Born in England



SURVEY MAP SHOWING PROPERTIES EDWARD BAIGENT OWNED DURING THE 1870s.

C H A P T E R I

From Windlesham to Nelson



Edward Baigent. About 1870.



Mary Anne Baigent. (1868-1870)

Edward Baigent was born on 22 June 1813 in the small village of Windlesham, Surrey, the fourth child of Thomas and Anne Thomas Baigent, born in 1782, married his wife Anne (possibly Coule), probably sometime in 1806, as their first child, Thomas was born in May 1807. Six further children followed; Elizabeth 1809, Diana 1811, Edward 1813, Isaac 1819, Daniel 1826, and Eliza 1829. Of these seven children, the last four were later to emigrate to New Zealand.

It seems likely that Thomas and Anne Baigent were staunch supporters of the Church of England. The baptism of Edward on 31 July 1814, by the Reverend Thomas Snell, is entered in the Register Books of the Windlesham Parish, and to all appearances, Reverend Snell was a close friend of the Baigent family. In 1841, when Edward applied to the New Zealand company for a free emigration passage, Reverend Snell stated "I have known him from a child". (1)

The extent of Edward Baigent's education is uncertain, although it is unlikely he received any more than a basic elementary schooling. As he admirably demonstrated later in his life, however, Baigent possessed considerable abilities in a number of different fields. It is probable that Baigent served an apprenticeship as a sawyer fairly early in his life, as this was the skill he brought to New Zealand.

Edward Baigent married Mary Ann Hern, probably in 1831, their first child (Edward) being born in August 1832. Mary Ann was a few months older than Edward, who was only eighteen when the marriage took place. Their second child, Alfred, was born in November 1833, with Elizebeth, November 1835, Arthur, November 1837, and Samuel, May 1840, also being born before Edward and Mary Ann emigrated to New Zealand.

It appears that the main reason which prompted Baigent and his family to emigrate in 1841, was the difficult conditions prevalent in England during the 1830's. For a man with only limited skills, even more limited finances, and a wife and several children to support, prospects were hardly encouraging. There was little chance, nor likelihood of any real material

improvement in either conditions, or circumstances in England. On the other hand, emigration to one of the new colonies offered a chance of real improvement to those who were prepared to invest the time and effort.

By the middle of 1839, New Zealand was receiving considerable publicity, mainly from the New Zealand company, which had, in May, already despatched Colonel William Wakefield in the Tory to buy up as much land as possible. (2) The Company's publicity described New Zealand in glowing terms. All possible adversities were conveniently ignored by the company. New Zealand was depicted as a country of grassy plains, fertile soils, natural harbours, and unlimited economic opportunities. (3)

To what extent this publicity influenced Baigent in his decision to emigrate is impossible to say. On 14 October 1841 however, Baigent completed a "Form for persons desirous of obtaining a free passage to New Zealand". This application was supported by testimonials from Thomas Snell, Rector of the Windlesham Parish, and also from his employer, John Usborne.

On the application form, Baigent and his wife are stated to be thirty years of age, although in 1841, Baigent could only have been twenty-eight. Whether this understatement of age was an error, or deliberate, is uncertain. On an official form submitted to him by the New Zealand company, Thomas Snell wrote, "I think Edward Baigent is a very proper person to receive the boon of a free passage to New Zealand. I have known him from a child." (4) Usborne, Baigent's employer added that Baigent had "lived with me eight years". To the question "Do you think he will prove a valuable settler?" Usborne answered, "I do". (5)

In the face of this encouraging testimony, Baigent's application was duly granted by the company. The few weeks which subsequently followed, must have been hectic ones for the Baigent family. The testimony from Reverend Snell is dated 10 November 1841; the Clifford was boarded on 13 December. Despite what must have been somewhat hastened preparations, Baigent arrived in New Zealand admirably equipped to meet the conditions with which he was confronted. Included in the Baigent family stores were a cast-iron gang-saw frame,

two pitsaws, six mill-saws, six circular saws, a circular spindle, and large quantities of belting, files, and tools of all kinds.(6)

The vessel the Baigents emigrated to New Zealand in was the 460 ton Clifford, commanded by Josiah Sharp. Passengers boarded the ship on 13 December, but she did not sail from Gravesend until seven days later. It is fortunate that the Surgeon-Superintendent aboard the Clifford, Thomas Hughes, kept a diary, as it is from this that details of the voyage are known. (7)

The Clifford carried a total of 189 persons; 148 emigrants, 13 cabin passengers and 28 crew. Included amongst the cabin passengers were Reverend Charles Saxton, and his brother S.W. Saxton, who was to keep an invaluable diary of the first decade of settlement in Nelson.

The first week of the voyage was evidently very rough. Hughes described the vessel as "pitching tremendously". For people who had in all probability never experienced a sea voyage previously, it must have been little short of terrifying.

On 31 December 1841, Hughes entered in his diary, "Mrs Baigent to have a pint of porter daily in consequence of great debility, being also advanced in pregnancy".(8) As the weather improved, however, so too it seems did the spirits and general health of the emigrants.

The Baigent's youngest child, ten month old Samuel, was next to suffer. In early January 1842, Hughes described him "in bad health... having breakings out in the face and the appearance of cachexy". In the same entry, Mr Baigent was said to be suffering from seasickness and "often kept to his bed".

As the Clifford entered the equatorial regions, the only complaint seemed to be of the heat. Emigrants from England were hardly used to the high humidity and temperatures in the high eighties.

In early February, Mrs Baigent took ill. In his diary for 10

February, Hughes described her as "being threatened with abortion". "Suitable medicines and reginer" were ordered. After several days of infirmity, Mrs Baigent slowly improved.

The strange and inadequate diet (although dietary inbalance was probably most serious) aboard the emigrant ships was probably hardest on the children. Three of the Baigent children, suffering from what Hughes described as "impetiginous eruption of scalp and face", were put on a diet of one pound of flour twice weekly. Within a further week, all five children were being given fresh meat.

By the middle of March, any novelty or attraction the voyage to New Zealand may have held had obviously disappeared. Hughes entered in his diary on 17 March 1842, "people appear very sick of the voyage and most anxious to see land once again". A few days later, Hughes commented, "I find the majority of the emigrants very selfish and abominably lazy..."

After recovering from the illness which very nearly resulted in the miscarriage of her child, Mrs Baigent once again became of concern to Hughes. By the middle of April, the surgeon evidently thought that the birth of her child was imminent "... Mrs Baigent's confinement is expected to take place hourly". Despite the concern of Hughes, the child was not born until nearly a month later.

Land was finally sighted on 26 April 1842, no doubt a welcome sight to sea weary emigrants, eager to begin life in their new country. Because of unfavourable winds, it was not until 3 May, however, that the Clifford sailed into Port Nicholson. The initial reaction of most emigrants who viewed the infant settlement was one of overt disappointment. J.W. Barnicoat, an earlier visitor to Wellington, who also settled in Nelson, commented "the whole country is very hilly, and all not lined with wood seems very barren. But however fertile, its unevenness would prevent its being cultivated."⁽⁹⁾ Another description by Alfred Saunders, who emigrated aboard the Fifeshire, undoubtedly summarised the feelings of many; "we all pulled long faces at the sight of the dreadfully rugged country we saw on each side of us... no less than six wrecks of small vessels were going to pieces on the rocks."⁽¹⁰⁾

Those who settled in Wellington certainly found it vastly different from the rosy picture drawn by the New Zealand company.

The Clifford stayed in Wellington for only two days before continuing on to Nelson, anchoring off the Boulder Bank on 10 May 1842. Hughes' first impression of Nelson was considerably more favourable than Barnicoat's or Saunder's of Wellington "... we are all delighted with the appearance and account of the settlement." (11)

Within three days all the emigrants had been landed ashore, thus ending a voyage which had taken 151 days (21 weeks, 4 days). The voyage of the Clifford was a very successful one. On the whole, health had remained good on board the vessel, and it must have been a very satisfied Thomas Hughes who entered in his diary on 13 May 1842, "I have the gratification to hear that no ship has landed her emigrants in better condition, better satisfied, or with so few casualties!" (12) (only one child perished on the voyage). Sadly the return voyage to England was not so successful. The Clifford, sailing via Java and India, went aground on a coral reef in the Straits off Singapore. (13)

8

W. 744 N. 3.

Clifford

Register No. 4450 Date 11th Oct. 1861

FORM for Persons desirous of obtaining a Free Passage to New Zealand, to be separated from the other side, filled up and, sent (free of Expense) to the Secretary of the New Zealand Company, No. 9, Broad Street Buildings, London.

The same Form will do for a Man and his Wife, and their Children under Fifteen.

Name of Applicant	Surname	Christian Name	Wife's Christian Name	In the Column write the Names of all Parties included in the Application, giving each Parent and each Child a separate line.	In the Column write each one's age at the last birth-day	State whether unmarried, or had the marriage.
	Baigent	Edward		Edward Baigent	36	70
				Edwards Baigent	20	0
				Edward Baigent	9	0
				Edwards Baigent	5	70
				Edwards Baigent	6	70
				Edwards Baigent	4	70
				Edwards Baigent	1	70
Name and Address of some late Employer, with the time the Applicant worked for him.				John W. Osborne Woodley Lived with me eight Months		
Name and Address of the Congregation or Ministry, at which the Applicant is a Member.				St. Andrew's Church, Middleham		
Name and Address of a Physician, or Surgeon, to whom the Applicant was of Health at the time of his last Examination.				W. H. Hall, Surgeon Middleham		

Immigration forms of Edward Baigent.
Application form for people "desirous of
obtaining a Free Passage to New Zealand...."

REGISTER, No. 4450

NEW ZEALAND HOUSE,
Broad Street Buildings,
11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

REVEREND SIR,

Edward Baigent of Middleham

has referred to the Directors of the New Zealand Company to you for his moral character. They will thank you, briefly, to state at foot, whether, in your opinion, he is a proper person to receive the boon of a free New Zealand.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

W. H. Hall

SUPERINTENDENT OF EMIGRATION.

This Rec. Middleham

Nov 13 1861

I think Edward Baigent is a very proper Person to receive the boon of a free Passage to New Zealand. I have known him from a child.

Thomas Sells Pastor of Middleham

C H A P T E R I I

The Early Months in Nelson : May 1842 - February 1843

After the cramped life aboard the Clifford, the emigrants were undoubtedly glad to once again be on firm land. Any false illusions which may have been held, were, without question, rapidly dispelled, as the newly arrived settlers surveyed the unfamiliar surrounds. Despite the very favourable climatic conditions in the first half of 1842, by May Nelson had many problems, possibly the most serious of which was that of health. Barnicoat in May 1842 commented on the prevalence of diarrhoea, "especially amongst the recent settlers". The diarrhoea was attributed to dietary changes and "to the sudden and great change in the mode of living from that on board ship." (1)

Only two days after going ashore, Mrs Baigent gave birth to a son in the building used as a hospital. Joseph Baigent, born 15 May 1842, is believed to have been the seventh pakeha child born in the Province.

The land situation in Nelson in the middle of 1842, was somewhat unsatisfactory for the newly arrived settlers, as no sections were available for nearly a year after the first emigrant ship arrived. Because there were no titles to the land, settlers began building huts and whares wherever they could. Thomas Magarey, who arrived aboard the Fifeshire, described the situation as it was in Nelson; "We had to build houses, squat upon land for this purpose, for the town was not yet surveyed." (2) Baigent however, was not content merely to squat on the land; he wished to obtain some form of title; Being anxious to get a section of land instead of squatting, two days after landing I took a ramble with David Clark up the Maitai to the end, crossed a low saddle into the Brook Street valley. After selecting an acre in the middle of the valley, I made enquiry of Mr Richardson the agent, if it was to let. It being so, I entered into an agreement for the same, on certain conditions, this being the first lease ever entered into in Nelson. (3)

Although Baigent undoubtedly investigated part of the Maitai Valley, it is unlikely he walked up "to the end".

Immediately after completing the building of a whare on this piece of land, Baigent, along with two of his sons, succumbed to some form of fever. In his own words, "we lay side by side for two months not expecting to live". (4) It appears the

fever, as well as being serious, was also common, proving in some cases fatal. Baigent noted the wife of the Reverend Charles Saxton "died of the same complaint." (5) Fortunately for Baigent, his wife speedily recovered from her confinement, and was able to capably look after her husband and sons. For Mrs Baigent, those two months must have been a time of considerable anguish and worry. Certainly the Baigent family's beginning in their new country was anything but auspicious.

By the time Baigent recovered, David Clark, whom he (Baigent) had known for many years "as a steady honest hard-working man." (6) had virtually completed the building of a four room cob house, the whare which Baigent built initially being only intended as temporary accommodation.

Evidently Baigent must have had some capital when he arrived in Nelson, for not only was he able to employ Clark, but also at least one other man; "I let a ditch to Stratford to dig on one side of the land for £ 5...." (7) With only limited capital, Baigent could clearly not afford to continue paying other men, without establishing his sawmilling business; "Having now recovered from my illness, I began to see I had made a mistake, as it was my intention to settle in the bush as soon as I could obtain a section suitable for my sawmill.." (8) With the initial high price of timber in the settlement, it was obviously desirable for Baigent to begin sawing as soon as he possibly could. Such was the shortage of timber in Nelson, that, in July 1842, imported shingles and timber from Van Dieman's Land were finding a ready market.

After investing fifty sovereigns in building a house, the expenses of preparing the land, paying doctors bills, and the general cost of living in Nelson, Baigent's capital was obviously rapidly disappearing. The situation Baigent found himself in was, however, shared by many others in the infant settlement.

With no legal title available for the land until early in 1843, settlers were loath to move out onto land and spend money developing it, when there was no guarantee they would obtain title to it. Thus the majority congregated in the town, using up their limited and valuable capital. Initially the situation was not too serious, as there was a considerable

demand for labour, but as the number of newly-arrived emigrants rose, so too did the competition for employment, ultimately resulting in a fall in wages and widespread unemployment. Thus the spirit of overt optimism which permeated Nelson society in early 1842, ("... of all who have yet been landed from the Fifehire, the Mary Ann, and Lord Auckland ... none save a few women and one man who is sick remain dependent upon the company for a roof; and with the same exception all are equally independent for their supply of food")(9) slowly gave way to a mood of disquiet and alarm. Whilst the Editor of the Nelson Examiner remained optimistic - "in a word our progress and our prospects are most cheering" (10) - other observers were not; "The state of things at Nelson is disheartening, there is no money in circulation, consequently many labourers are unemployed, excepting by the company.. scarce any capitalists have come out, and very few purchasers of land... The state of affairs certainly is discouraging at present and I fear with little prospect of its mending as yet..."(11)

After several weeks inactivity, Baigent began searching for suitable timber to "saw by hand". He initially selected some trees on a section by the present Normanby Bridge, offering the owner £40 for the timber, which was declined. At this time, timber was selling for 25s per 100 feet. Baigent next approached J.W. Saxton who had a section near the Sugar Loaf in Brook Street valley, and "wishing to build I made him an offer for the supply of timber at 25s per 100 feet delivered there which was agreed to".(12) Saxton, in his diary on 29 August 1842, confirms this when he mentions that Baigent was "cutting wood for house".(13) The securing of a contract to supply timber was by no means the end of Baigent's difficulties; There being no way of getting the timber from the town bush, and the end of the valley being a perfect swamp and quite impassable, I purchased two trees in the valley opposite to my section, one for £4 and the other for £3 12s, of the company's agent, and at once made a pit and cut the trees for a part of the order. There being no more trees available in the valley, we made a track up a valley running to the left of Brook Street, in which there was a fine bush (14)

We set to and cut the rest of the order and at the same time let the delivery to Tunnicliff and S. Harwood at 5s per 100, to take it to the building site on their shoulders. Having completed the order which came to about £70, I engaged to cut a house for Mr Wells at Wakapuaka.(15)

Although Baigent had the machinery to establish a rudimentary water-powered sawmill, until he secured suitable land it was not practical to assemble the plant.

It seems likely that until the establishment of Captain Thoms sawmill in Motueka, which began sawing about the middle of 1843, all the timber cut in Nelson was pit-sawn. This mill, which operated for only a short period, was capable of producing 20,000 feet of timber per week, some of which in 1844 was exported to Tasmania.

Pitsawing was an extremely laborious means of converting logs into timber, no more laborious, however, than the task of manhandling the cumbersome logs onto the pits. The absence of any practical form of transportation (of logs or sawn timber) in the early period of the timber industry, did, as Simpson points out (16), place a very high premium on the accessibility of timber trees.

Baigent's last job in Nelson was a contract to supply timber for a cottage in Selwyn Place, for the cutting of which he was paid 9s per 100 feet. By the end of 1842, the price of timber had fallen by more than fifty percent, to about 12s per 100 feet, and so Baigent began looking in earnest for a site on which to establish his sawmill.

It seems likely that during his stay in Nelson Baigent took on work other than pit-sawing timber. Road-building seems one probable source of employment, as J.W. Saxton mentions in November 1842, that he "saw Baigent and heard from him that Mr Tuckett had been so large in his demands on them that they could not undertake the road on such terms." (17) It is probable that Baigent began his study of the country areas, in an effort to secure a suitable sawmill site, in early 1843, as he refers to the strike against the New Zealand company by the workers in Nelson; "... we saw the company's men coming down the valley two and two having struck for the wages promised to them before leaving England. The strike appears to be general and on my tramp around the country I found the whares generally deserted." (18)

According to Ruth M. Allan, the workers went on strike on 16 January 1843, but returned to work two days later. (19) This

strike was the culmination of several months of dissatisfaction and frustration at the lack of employment in Nelson, caused essentially by the absence of capital and the presence of too many labourers.

On foot Baigent set out to explore the country areas; I set out and after a long and weary tramp I arrived at the Moutere entrance; the tide being up I could not pass and having lost all my food in passing through some thick scrub, I thought it wise to return. I took the track up the valley till I came to a large valley and arrived at the whares built for the road men but found noone there. I crossed several vallies and spurs till I fortunately found a surveyor's line leading down Redwoods Valley, apparently straight for Destruction Hill, on which Richmond Church now stands. I crossed the Waimea River and was brought up by a large lagoon, which caused me a considerable deviation. I made a fresh start for Richmond, and was again stopped by a large swamp, but after getting the cramp by wading, crawling on my hands and knees under tutu bushes and other hindrances, I found myself straight on the tutu? line to Richmond. As I approached Stoke I saw a fire where the roadmen had made their whares, on reaching it I found one of the company's men named Oxley who had just arrived to go to work after the strike. He gave me some tea and wished me to stay all night, but being very wet and ragged I decided to go on and arrived at home at one in the morning. On knocking at the door I heard my wife say "Thank God you are returned: and I was equally glad to get home". (20)

Presumably this was Baigent's first real introduction to travelling in the country areas. It is difficult to visualize how onerous a task movement was in the early days of settlement in New Zealand. Outside the main centres, there were very few roads, and bridges were virtually non-existent. Even the smallest creek often proved an insurmountable obstacle when in flood whilst the largest rivers presented a constant threat. Without roads or bridges any form of movement became a major undertaking.

Samuel Stephens, one of the early surveyors in the Nelson region, commented on another problem which added to the difficulties of travel.

"One of the most unpleasant drawbacks to the country is the fern which so universally covers the land everywhere on both rich and poor soils. It forms an almost impenetrable barrier to those who wish to explore the country beyond their own doors ... we often meet with fern ten and twelve feet high..."(21)

After his rather less than successful study of the Moutere area, Baigent made enquiries about the Waimea region. Hearing of several settlements around Foxhill, Baigent embarked with

a party of others to look at the area. On passing through Wakefield however, Baigent saw a section (number 92) which he thought would be admirably suited for his purposes; on

making enquiries in Nelson, I found it belonged to Captain Wilson, and that he was willing to let it to me, reserving five acres at one end for Mr Hubbard. After paying another visit to the place and having a good look round and finding everything suitable for my purpose, I made an agreement to take the place which was signed on 9 February 1843. Having now secured a first rate site with every prospect of a good road, the company having started five gangs on the road, one at Stoke, one at Richmond, one in Maddox Bush, one at Lower Wakefield, one at Upper (Wakefield?). I felt sure before I was ready with my mill, the roads would be passable(22)

The purchase from John Henry Wilson, described as "commander on the retired list of the Indian Navy of the Honourable East India Company," (23) was made on a scheme of deferred payments. An interesting feature of the agreement is that Baigent undertook

"to erect and build on the said piece or parcel of land or ground, hereby demised, and complete and finish ready for habitation within two years of date hereof, one good and substantial house the value of which shall be not less than one hundred pounds, with chimneys, windows, doors and the necessary fittings, etc, etc." (24)

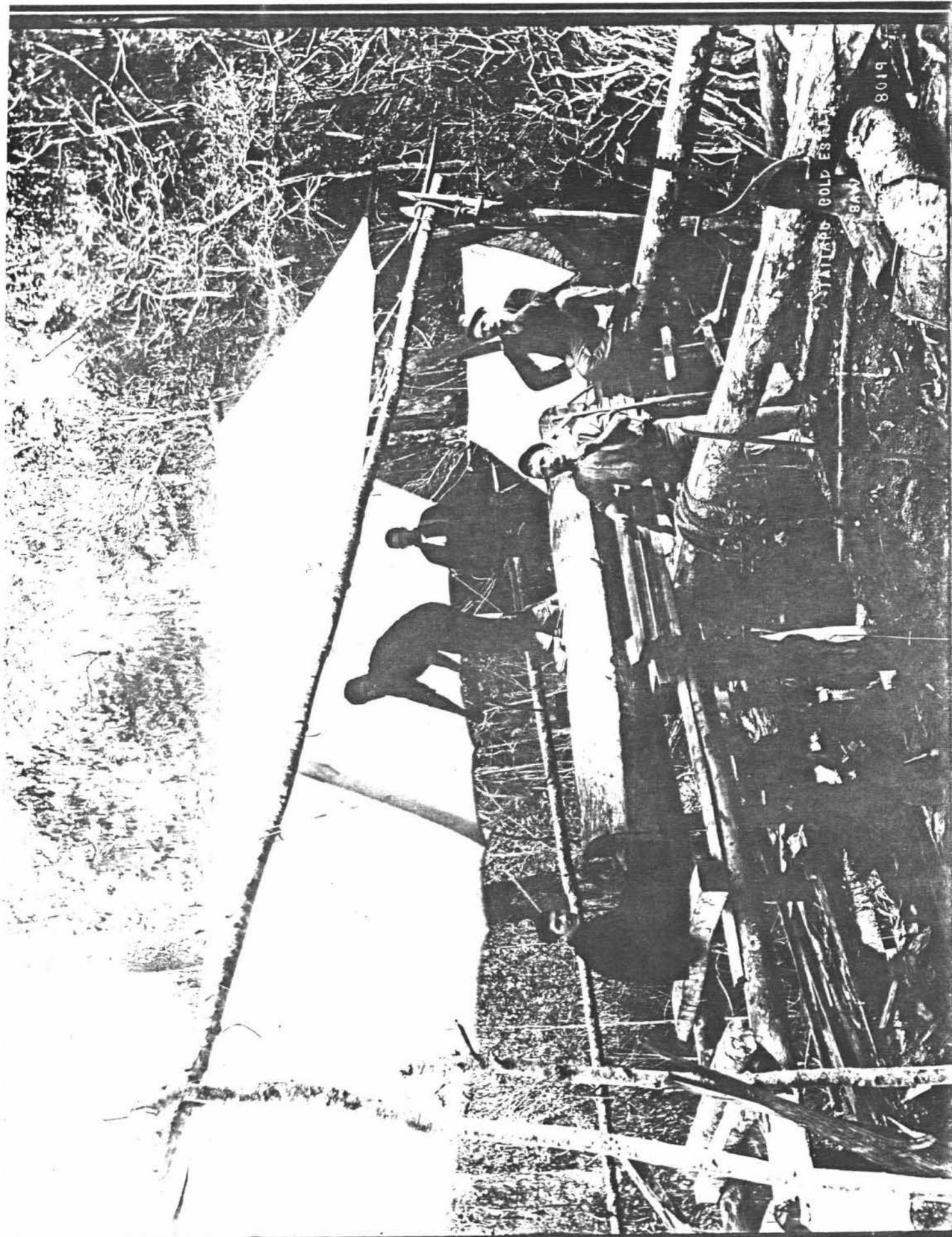
According to Ruth M. Allan, such an agreement was not uncommon in this period, (25) the most likely reason, being an attempt to counter speculation, which was a major problem in colonial settlements.

Several reports (26) state that upon the purchase of this land, the Baigent family immediately shifted out to Wakefield. This however, is unlikely. More probable is that initially only Baigent and Clark moved to Wakefield, whilst their families remained in Nelson. Several weeks of busy activity took place on the Wakefield section following the purchase;

Having arrived on the land our first object was to build a whare, next to dig a pit and saw boards for our houses, one for Clark of weather-boards with a board roof, and a small one for myself of cob of two rooms 10 feet square with boarded roof. This done, we had to see about a mill-lead and dam. By making a dam-head and sinking a water-course I found I could bring the water from the Eighty-eight valley stream by means of a lead for about two chains with plank sides to guard against floods. My next work was to build a water-wheel and fix my circular saw to the best of my judgement. When complete I found my wheel was far too small, not being powerful enough to drive the saw at more than half, but still I could cut a good deal by sinking a pit and breaking down the logs by hand. About this time Capt. Wakefield paid me a visit, complemented me on my perseverance and promised to send me up some seeds. (27)

With these preparations made, the time had come for the families of Clark and Baigent to move out to Wakefield. With the help of a cart borrowed from the N.Z. Company, both families were soon settled in their new homes.

By late March in 1843, nearly 300 persons were settled in the Waimea District, the majority of whom were engaged in agriculture, although sawyers, carpenters, shoemakers, bakers, as well as many others, were also included in the numbers. (28)



Pitsawing timber in the Taitapu Gold Estate in about 1890. The first timber Edward Baigent cut in Nelson and Wakefield, was pit-sawn.

C H A P T E R I I I

Down to Business : Wakefield 1843-1853

Progress in the Waimea was rapid. In July 1843, the Nelson Examiner commented "there is now a considerable village, containing many well-built substantial houses. The quiet of the wilderness is not only broken by the sound of the axe, the saw, the whistle and call of the ploughman, but the ring of the anvil is also heard there".(1)

The nature of the land generally discouraged rapid development. Much of the area south of the Wairoa River was covered in dense forest, totara, white pine, and matai, which, whilst proving a boon to the early sawmillers, hindered their agricultural counterparts.

All the western hills were clothed with light forest, with some large trees. Pigeon Valley was blocked with another pine forest with many forest giants, as was also the case towards Wai-iti, and into the mouth of 88 Valley.(2)

Heavy bush was not the only obstacle to road building and land development. Much of the Waimea plain was covered with fern and scrub, with large areas of swamp, particularly around Stoke, Richmond, and Appleby. Samuel Stephens, one of the original survey party, described with feeling "the swamps and rivers that have so often to be waded through".(3) In his memoirs, Thomas Magarey also comments on the difficulty of travelling through swamps "from two to six feet in depth", (4) which either had to be crossed or circumvented. The geography of the Waimea area did thus confront the early pioneers with obstacles which severely challenged their skills and ingenuity.

Having settled into their new surroundings, the spirits of the Baigent family were soon dampened by news of the Wairau "Massacre", in June 1843. The effects of this incident upon the morale of the settlers must have been little short of devastating. Considerable concern was experienced by those in outlying areas who believed attack by the Maori to be imminent. "The women were in the greatest alarm, fearing that the natives would come round the Top House and attack the out settlers at Foxhill, and the men equally down-hearted," (5) said Baigent. For several weeks the prospects of the Nelson settlement looked to be in grave doubt, and confidence and optimism were dealt a severe blow. Magarey commented that "the terrible event took away the appetite of the people," (6) while Stephens no doubt echoed the sentiments shared by many; "The Wairoa Massacre and contingent

circumstances have cast such a gloom on our prospects, that few of us would be disposed to remain here if they had any better opening elsewhere, or the means to return to England." (7)

Despite the large numbers who settled in and around Wakefield, the settlement initially did not flourish. The main obstacles to progress were a lack of capital, and a lack of farming knowledge. With insufficient capital to develop their land, settlers welcomed the offer of employment by the New Zealand Company. Utilizing a system of piece work, men were employed on road building, and other similar works, whilst generally being left ample time to develop their land. The chance of employment was gratefully accepted by many, for as Baigent commented, "this was a boon I did not expect, and it furnished us with our rations and monthly wages which was a great saving to my purse". (8) There is little doubt that the employment and subsequent wages paid by the New Zealand Company saved the infant settlement from early disaster. By the end of 1843, the company had spent £16,000 on public works wages in Nelson, and early in 1844 was still paying out wages at the rate of £1,200 a month. (9) With the New Zealand company suffering serious financial difficulties, retrenchment was, however, ultimately inevitable. Rates of pay were gradually decreased, and by the middle of 1844, the Nelson office of the New Zealand company was on the verge of bankruptcy. (10) With public works employment no longer available, the community was thus thrown upon its own resources.

In the months prior to its collapse, company officials made available seed to the settlers, advising them to cultivate as much land as they could, perhaps foreseeing the disastrous effects the demise of the company would herald. Despite these good intentions, the effects were disastrous. The immediate result for large numbers was hardship and hunger. Baigent commented that "... many suffered extreme distress and want, some to my knowledge, digging up their potato cuttings, others collecting sow thistles and wild swedes in the river..." (11) Fortunately the forests provided an abundance of wild life, which helped supplement the diets of many families, pigs and wild birds being particularly common.

Those who had taken the advice of the New Zealand company

and planted crops, were, according to Baigent, "prepared to some extent to meet the position by having some corn and potatoes which they could use...."(12)

Families possessing corn and other grains were now forced with the equally serious problem of having no way of converting their corn into meal. Baigent was finally able to put to good use the small water-wheel he had made after first settling at Wakefield;

Mr Kerr of Waimea West had a small hand flour-mill with a small part of French Bur stones about fourteen inches across nicely fixed on a frame with handle to turn it and also a small dresser. I managed to purchase this and by putting a small shaft with a cog wheel and an iron socket to connect it with the little water-wheel. I soon had it ready for use, and by fixing the dresser to the end of the building by a small pulley on the spindle and one on the shaft with a rope, I could both grind and dress at the same time. No one can tell you how thankful the people were for this little convenience, for small as it was, it would grind a bushel an hour. It was attended by my two sons, I myself taking it occasionally. It was strange to see the men bringing their grist to grind, some with a peck, some with half a bushel, and very few with more than a bushel.(13)

It is possible, and in fact probable, that this was the earliest power-operated flourmill in the Nelson district. The water-wheel was originally built for the sawmill, with the flourmill being added sometime in 1844. The charge for grinding grain was one shilling per 80 lb bag. The primitive mill proved a boon to the surrounding settlers who travelled long distances, often carrying 60-80lb of wheat and other grain to be crushed into meal, pure flour at that time being unprocurable. In these days, the sawmill was usually operated during the day whilst the flourmill operated at night. As Baigent comments; "many a night did I work till twelve o'clock at the little mill".(14)

The wages which Baigent obtained from the New Zealand company, and the revenue from his grist-mill, enabled him to begin making improvements to his sawmill. Realising the original water-wheel was too small, Baigent's initial task was "to build a larger and more powerful wheel with a long shaft having a seven foot spur wheel at each end, one for the two vertical and the other for the circular saw..."(15) The erection of a larger wheel made necessary the enlargement of the water lead (which Baigent had earlier bought from the 88 Valley Stream). The task of deepening and widening the

lead took Baigent nearly two years to complete, but "when done, it answered my purpose for many years".(16)

The improvements which Baigent made to his sawmill were spread over many months. In November 1845, the Nelson Examiner reported that Baigent had "just completed a most excellent breast-wheel (his former one being too small) and fixed some upright saws. He also contemplates adding considerably to his flour mill, by getting out a pair of large stones from granite, of which there is some very excellent in the neighbourhood". The article concluded by commenting, "This man's perseverance well entitles him to the reward which awaits his labour, and for which he appears contented to wait with cheerfulness".(17)

It seems likely that the bulk of the timber Baigent cut at his original mill was utilised around the Wakefield area, for there is no mention of him transporting timber into Nelson until late in 1846.

The wages of men whom Baigent employed in the building and working of his mill, were frequently paid "in kind", labour being exchanged for timber, potatoes, meat and other goods. Such an arrangement no doubt admirably suited both parties, and was widely used in Nelson during the 1840s due mainly to the serious shortage of cash in circulation.

The larger and more efficient mill, ready to begin production early in 1846, worked both a circular and vertical saw, and was capable of cutting 100 feet of timber per hour. With the increased production of his new mill exceeding local demand, Baigent was now confronted with the problem of how to transport the timber from his mill into Nelson.

Although a road had been completed to Richmond by March 1843, it did not reach Wakefield until nearly two years later. Even when completed, the road did not solve the problems of timber transportation. For many years the early roads were unsatisfactory for anything other than light traffic, particularly in the winter months when they frequently became little short of bogs. Compounding this problem was the absence of any bullock drays in the district until later in the 1840s. Thus in 1846, the only alternative for Baigent was to transport

his timber by water.

Having completed his new mill, Baigent found himself indebted to a Mr Perry of Nelson, who had supplied him with iron and other materials to the value of £35. Baigent agreed to pay Perry in timber, delivered in Nelson at 4s 6d per 100 feet, and so began preparations to raft the timber;

I built a raft of boards about 18 feet long, 8 inches deep and four feet wide, placing the boards one on the other with three battens across the top and bottom, lashed with flax at the ends. This done we pushed the raft into the waste lead with a long pole, an axe, and a cross cut saw on board, and the men throwing the vertical and circular out of gear, and giving the wheel a full flow of water I floated down the lead into the river, and in three weeks mostly up to my knees in water, I cut a passage through all the blockages about twelve feet wide down to Waimea West Village, a distance of about six miles. We then built a number of rafts like the one I had been using and when they were all in the river, made a start with four hands to guide them in their course, taking two days to reach the port at the mouth of the Waimea River. When the tide was down we had to undo them and build them into one raft about 20 feet square, and five feet deep, with a strong warp and an anchor and then were ready for the trip to Nelson. Having obtained the services of a boatman named Styles to take us in, we ran on a snag which delayed us till next tide, before we could get off. When we landed in Nelson I paid my bill on the very day Mr Perry sailed for Wellington, and was lost with all hands in the French Pass. (18)

According to J.W. Saxton, Baigent employed a group of carters to raft his timber to Nelson, "... the carters found that he could not float the red pine and then demanded 2s per 100 which he was obliged to give ..." (19) Although Baigent does not make this clear, there were obviously several men employed in the operation, and it is quite likely that some were carters.

To glance at the Wai-iti River today, it seems hardly possible that timber could be successfully rafted into Nelson. In the 1840s however, the Wai-iti apparently carried considerably more water than it does today.

Despite this method of transportation being less than completely successful, Baigent rafted two further loads. The second contract, to supply several thousand feet at 4s 6d per 100 feet, to a Mr Schroeder, was completed without incident, although "every raft got stuck either on snags or on the sands, which always lost us a tide". (20)

The third raft which Baigent brought down, was not however, so uneventful, "My last raft I let to Messrs Sigleys and Burn. Being too late for the tide they had to anchor at the Oyster Island for the night. A heavy thunderstorm delayed them till the tide had turned and they were too late to round the rock, and a heavy gale was rising." (21)

Baigent, who was present on the beach watching the proceedings, foresaw the potential danger, and secured the services of the harbour pilot boat; "we were soon out and fixed to the tow-rope, but the surf still increasing, the three boats seemed to have no effect on the raft and at last the towline broke." (22) The raft was quickly abandoned and the boats assisting ran for shelter. Luckily the raft did not break up as expected, but was swept ashore intact;

Fortunately the tide had not turned, or I should have lost all as it would certainly have gone to sea. All we could do now was to save the boards from drifting away, and when the tide was down, we rebuilt the raft, and the next tide got it safely into the harbour. This was my last attempt to carry timber by water, and for all this I did not receive a single pound in cash, but was paid in pork, flour and shop goods. (23)

In all, Baigent rafted some 40,000 feet of timber into Nelson, each raft consisting of 2000-3000 feet.

By 1847 a bullock team had become available to transport timber, and so Baigent gave up rafting the timber, a method which although not always successful, certainly provided much excitement and drama. The early "bullock" team, owned by a Mr B. Lines, did according to Baigent, consist of "... a cow and a black bull, with which he made two trips a week to town, taking 700 or 800 feet at each trip. Soon after this, cattle and drays were more largely imported, and bullocks, cows, and drovers could be bought." (24)

Baigent comments that the availability of wagons to transport the timber into the Nelson market, resulted in an increased price "... the increased demand for timber in Nelson soon doubled its price." (25)

Even with the availability of bullock wagons to transport timber (and other goods) the condition of the roads was still a serious problem. Baigent commented;

The greatest drawback now was the want of roads, and I used to make it a rule to go round of an afternoon

to get the men to turn out for a day to patch up and repair the roads so that the carts could get along. I always found the settlers perfectly willing to help as it was for the good of all.(26)

Although water powered sawmills were considerably more efficient than pitsaws, and did much to revolutionize the New Zealand timber industry, they were still very primitive. A description of Baigents' early mill is of great interest, as it demonstrates clearly how resourceful a mill owner had to be in the days when even iron was very scarce.(27)

As mentioned earlier, Baigent brought with him from England a considerable amount of sawmilling equipment, including saws, spindles, files, and belting. Much of the sawmill, however, had to be built up using only local materials and ingenuity.

The water-wheel, which consisted virtually entirely of wood, due to the scarcity of iron, was built around an axle composed of a 14-16 inch square shaft of Totara. (or in some cases Matai). Both ends of the axle were rounded by chisels, and iron bands shrunk around them to avoid splitting. Both ends were then centrally bored to take square iron gudgeons which were driven into the borings, thus providing an axle. The gudgeons were approximately two feet long, and were cut from three inch square iron bars. To tighten the gudgeons, long iron wedges were driven into the wood between the iron bands and the gudgeons, additional wedges being driven in when any slackness appeared. The square sections of the gudgeons that would seat in the bearings carrying the wheel, were then roughly rounded off with cold chisels and finished by filing against the slowly revolved axle. The arms of the waterwheel were morticed into the wooden portion of the axle, while the rims and boxes were also morticed together, well wedged and then pinned right through with AkeAke or Black Maire dowels. No nails were used in the construction of the wheel, although liberal use was made of flat iron strapping at most joints.

All bearings were made of wood, the timbers used being exclusively Ake Ake and Black Maire. A good supply of spare bearings was always kept on hand, these bearings being carefully shaped and bored, then soaked until required in a barrel of whale-oil. After being in use for a while, the bearings developed a bright glass-like surface, and would generally

last for years.

As petroleum lubricants had not been discovered, the universal lubricant was whale-oil on all bearings, and tallow on the skids. In the summer, once a barrel of whale-oil had been opened, the remainder would go rancid. Mr L.E.H. Baigent once recalled his father saying, "if you followed your nose, it would always lead you to a sawmill." (28)

Where bolts were unavoidable, they were laboriously made out of square sectioned rods, the sections to be threaded being just heated and hammered as near round as possible, then more accurately rounded by revolving against a file. The thread was then marked on the bolt by slowly turning the bolt against a file held on an angle, the markings then being cut into the bolt by cold chisel and finished off by filing.

The "nuts" were first heated, then punched through with a drift of the correct size, after which they were again heated and gradually worked onto the threaded ends of the bolts. Great care had to be taken in only cutting a little each time, and in unscrewing the nut before it seized on the bolt. Obviously each nut and bolt was very much individual, and the nuts were certainly not interchangeable.

The early belting which Baigent brought out from England, was three inch gutta-percha (a form of rubber belting) which was joined by melting the broken edges. This form of belting was, however, somewhat unsatisfactory. It was necessary to keep the gutta-percha covered, otherwise it could melt, and thus stretch in the sun. After the initial trials of the gutta-percha, a bullock hide belting was used.

Fresh hides were nailed upside down on the mill floor, and covered with a layer of wood ash. Constant trampling worked the ash into the hide and after a few weeks the hides were scraped clean. The hide was now "tanned", and ready for belting. All belting was double ply, the strips of hide being carefully matched for uniformity of strength and stretch. Once matched the belt was sewn through with copper wire, and narrow laces of hide. No glue was available, and any workman who could produce a belt which would run fairly evenly was considered "quite useful". In some cases flax ropes were used for belting.

Unfortunately, because of their tendency to stretch, they were of little use other than for very light drives.

Due to their thickness and untensioned condition, the early circular saws revolved very slowly. It was a standing joke amongst mill workers that a man could run around a tree faster than the saw revolved. The saws, which had relatively short "flan" type teeth, had a cutting edge which ran the full length of the tooth front, ending in a needle point. This needle point tooth would not stand up to any "bone" or "flint" in the timber, and any such logs were immediately discarded. Timber was expendable; saws were not. Similarly, only selected trees were felled, and no log above the first limb was taken.

Once trees had been felled, they were debarked in the bush to make them skid more readily, and also to avoid clogging of the saw teeth with bark. The dragging of the logs was generally done with bullock teams.

As areas of bush were cut out, and mills relocated, improvements were made. The early mills were entirely dependent, however, on their sole source of power, water. If rivers or streams dried up during periods of drought, the mill came to a standstill. Such an occurrence was not uncommon. In March 1846, J.W. Saxton reported Baigent's mill being idle through a lack of water. (29)

By March 1850, Baigent had eight men employed at his sawmill, which normally worked six days a week. The normal working day consisted of ten hours, although in the winter months the day was from the time of "can see" to that of "can't see".

Wages paid in the first decade varied considerably, much the same as the fluctuations in the prices of timber. The determining factor with regard to wage levels was labour availability. In the first few months of settlement labour demanded a high price, there being a labour shortage. By the end of 1842, however, there was a labour surplus, and so wage levels correspondingly fell.

By February 1845, wage levels had stabilised, agricultural workers receiving about 10s per week, whilst mechanics and other (semi) skilled labourers demand 18-21s per week.(30) Wage levels rose steadily thereafter, and by 1852 trade labour was receiving between 5-6s 6d per diem.(31)

The first decade of Nelson history saw a considerable fluctuation of timber prices, generally corresponding with similar fluctuations within the economy as a whole. In 1842, before sawmilling had become widely established, imported and locally pitsawn timber was commanding 25s per 100 feet. Within three years, however, the price had fallen to only 5s per 100 feet.(32) After this slump, the price began to rise, reaching 10s per 100 feet in August 1850, and 20s per 100 feet in July 1853.(33)

By February 1845, there were three water-powered sawmills operating in the Nelson Province, one in Motueka, (owned by Captain Thoms), one in Waimea West (Hugh Martin) and Baigents at Wakefield.

The transition from pitsawing to water-powered sawmilling signalled a major development in the timber industry. With the increased production of timber, came the beginnings of an export trade. In February 1845, the Nelson Examiner reported that, in 1844, 180,000 feet of sawn timber had been exported to Van Diemens Land.(34) During 1845, considerable quantities of timber continued to be shipped to Hobart, as well as to other Australian markets, and also Tahiti. Although the market was well established, the industry was seriously hampered by irregular shipping, and in August 1845, the Examiner reported that there was sufficient sawn timber and spars available to load "4 or 5 good sized vessels".(35) It was directly because of the shipping shortage that Thoms Motueka mill virtually came to a standstill, it being considered "useless to cut timber when no vessels can be obtained to convey it away...."(36)

Despite these problems, exports of timber from Nelson steadily grew during 1845-46. Prospects for a valuable and continuing export trade looked promising. As the Nelson Examiner commented in January 1846; "There is likely to be a considerable demand immediately for sawn timber for shipment to the neighbouring colonies, and sawyers will therefore do well to get a stock by then, as more will be required than can be possibly got

ready".(37) This optimism was justified, for in 1846, 168,120 feet of sawn timber worth £497, and spars and staves worth a further £131-10-0 left Nelson.(38) Timber accounted for more than twenty percent of Nelson's total export trade in 1846.

The extent of Edward Baigent's involvement in this export trade, is uncertain. It seems probable that the timber he rafted to Nelson late in 1846 was the first he had (in any quantity) supplied outside the Wakefield area. It is thus unlikely that he became involved in any timber exporting until after this date.

Exports of timber from Nelson reached a peak in 1847, when more than 330,000 feet was shipped overseas. This rapid growth fell away in 1848, however, when exports slumped to only half the figure of the previous year, and by 1849 the overseas timber trade had virtually ceased. Details of timber exports from Nelson, both to overseas countries and other New Zealand colonies, up until 1853, can be seen in Table 1.

The decline in timber exports at this time appears to have been caused by a decrease in local timber production, rather than in overseas demand. Bell, in his report upon the Nelson settlement in 1849, noted that the only manufacturing decrease of any importance "is in the number of sawmills, and this has happened unfortunately at a time when the demand for timber is larger than it has been for years...."(39) Bell was, however, confident that the trade would soon increase, concluding that "the prospects of trade in this place are brighter now than they have been for some years."(40) His confidence and optimism was not immediately rewarded. In 1850, only 23,000 feet of timber was exported, and in the following year, timber did not even feature in Nelson exports. At this time, only two sawmills were mentioned in the annual Nelson statistics; those of Baigent and Martin.(41)

The reasons for the decline in the number of sawmills working, and the corresponding fall in timber production in the late 1840s, were due to several factors. Much obviously depended upon local demand, which it seems fluctuated considerably. After problems associated with the transportation of timber to markets in the mid 1840s, sawmillers were perhaps reluctant to erect large mills. The slump in timber prices, after the

initial boom in the early 1840s, was also a contributing factor, although by the late 1840s prices had again risen.

Following the decline in timber exports in the late 1840s and early 1850s, timber once again featured prominently in Nelson exports in 1852, when 130,000 feet left the port. This trend continued in 1853, when the export figures eclipsed those of 1847. Prospects for a future export trade again looked extremely promising, and the Nelson Examiner reported the erection of three further sawmills in 1853, one steam and two water-powered. (42)

According to a Nelson Evening Mail report in 1928, (43) the name Glen-iti (which Baigent gave to his homestead) is mentioned in the late 1840s, with regard to the export of timber. Although this report cannot be confirmed, there is no reason to disbelieve it, as being one of the leading sawmillers in the province, it would be surprising if Baigent had not been involved.

During the first decade of his residence in Wakefield, Baigent was involved in work other than sawmilling. Farming must have taken up a considerable amount of time, especially in the first few years. According to the Nelson Census of 1849, Baigent had 20 acres of land fenced, 5½ acres cultivated, 5 acres in grass, ½ an acre in orchard, and a further 5½ acres cleared. Baigent was also listed as owning 16 cattle and 2 pigs. (44) With the difficult conditions experienced in the mid 1840s, and the shortage of money in circulation, the development of the farm was as important as that of the sawmill.

In 1844-45, there was a considerable demand for staves, and, in August 1845, Baigent became involved in a stave contract, at Sandy Bay, through which he lost £15. It appears likely that Baigent let out a contract for the supply of staves, as a Mr Schroedar refunded the money which Baigent lost. (45)

Although much of the Wakefield district was, as mentioned earlier, initially covered in forest, large areas were within a few years destroyed. In March 1846, Saxton described Wakefield as "squalid and wretched, quite languishing, and the same destruction of timber...." (46) whilst a few months later, Baigent "complained feelingly of the injustice of

allowing squatting and cutting down trees", and "the havoc and burning of Maddox's Bush".(47)

Building was another area in which Baigent was extensively involved, particularly in his first few years in Wakefield. In April 1849, Saxton reported Baigent as agreeing to erect a stable for him, consisting of four stalls, a hay loft, and a shingle roof, for the sum of £30. Baigent was to provide all the materials except transport costs and the brick foundation.(48) Baigent also erected several other buildings in the Wakefield area, most notable of which was St. John's Church, which is still standing today.(49)

For several years, the lack of a bullock team posed serious problems for Baigent. In April 1847, Saxton offered to sell Baigent four bullocks at £12 each, on the security of his mill.(50) Baigent declined this offer, But in July 1849, he finally did buy his own team for the sum of £22.(51) (It would seem almost certain that this team consisted of only one pair of bullocks).

During the 1840s, Baigent gradually added to the area of land he owned. In September 1849, Saxton mentioned that Baigent had bought a section for £40, and in January 1850 recorded that he (Baigent) had taken two more sections which would "supply him and his sons and the mill with wood for their lives."(52) By this time, Baigent had 155 acres of land suitable for milling which, commented Saxton, "to himself and his sons should be a fortune."(53)

In 1850-51, Baigent had the distinction of providing the timber for the building of the Nelson Cathedral, which was opened by Bishop Selwyn on Christmas Day 1851. According to Henry Baigent,(54) it took ten bullock teams to transport the timber from Wakefield to Nelson, each trip taking two days. Only small loads could be transported on account of the poor roads.

During his first eight years at Wakefield, Baigent made numerous trips into Nelson, as well as to other localities. It seems probable that most of these journeys were made on foot, as it was not until February 1851 that he bought his first horse. According to Saxton, from whom Baigent bought

the horse, he was no longer able to "bear the walk down to Nelson from Wakefield". (55)

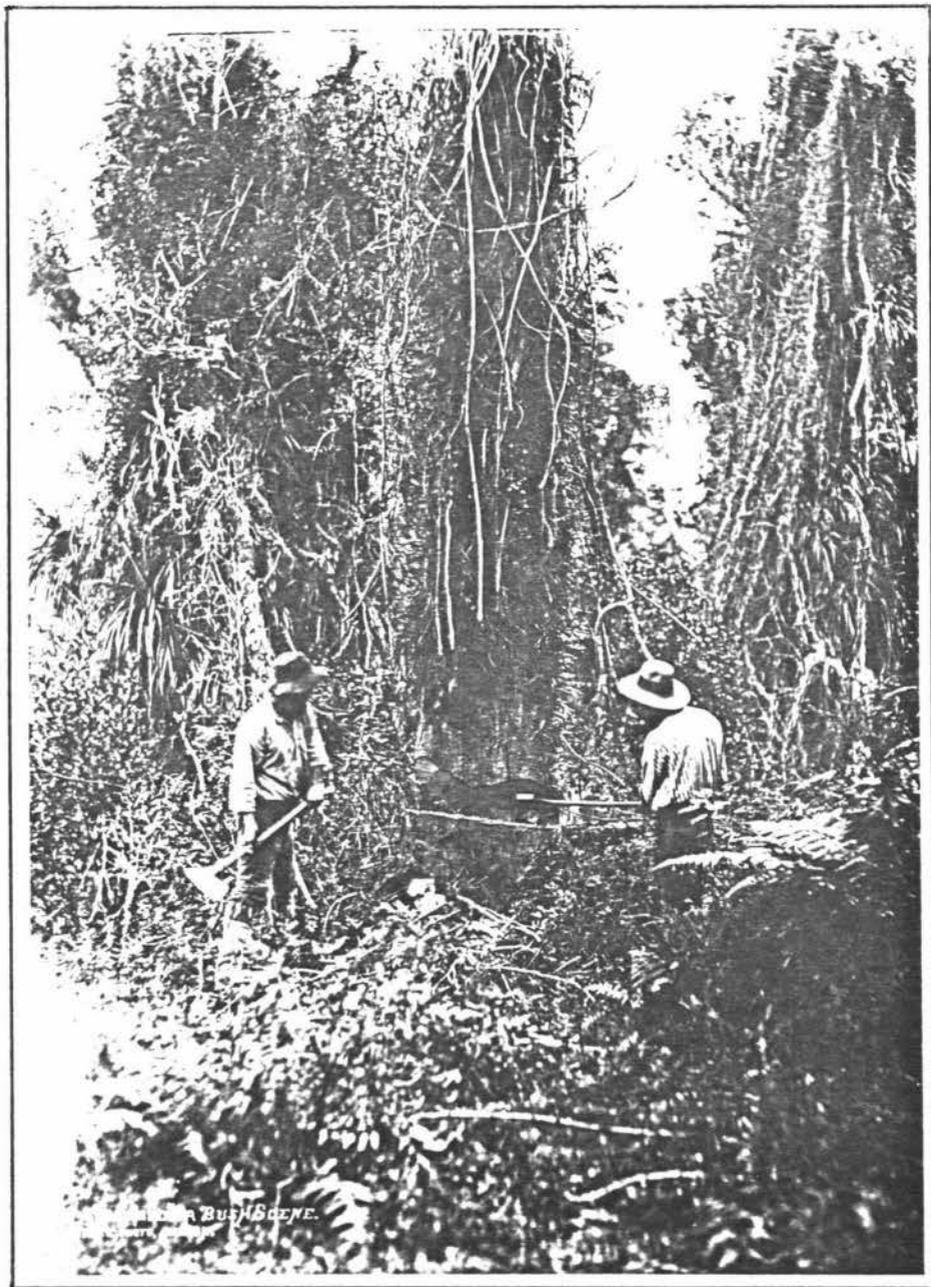
By 1853, Baigent was well established as both a flour and sawmiller in the Wakefield area, and his future prospects looked encouraging. After settling in the district only ten years previously, Baigent had become one of Wakefield's leading citizens. It was the affairs of his district which were to absorb much of Baigent's time in the years to come.

TABLE ONE.

EXPORTS OF TIMBER FROM NELSON
1844 - 1853

Year	Exports from Nelson	Value £	Coastal Trade
1844	180,000		
May 45 1845 Apr 46	271,549	£961-7-0	
1846	168,120	£497-0-0	
1847	332,850	£976-0-0	82,000
1848	160,000	£544-0-0	94,402
1849	15,000	£50-0-0	98,500
1850	23,000	£87-0-0	87,000
1851	-	-	80,000
1852	130,000	£610-0-0	29,800
1853	369,890	£4,092-0-0	

All figures except those for 1853 from The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle. Annual statistics were published in the newspaper. The figures pertaining to the coastal trade refer to trade with other New Zealand centres; exports from Nelson refer to trade with Australia and other "over-seas" colonies.



During the nineteenth century virtually all trees were felled by hand.

C H A P T E R I V

Involvement in Local Affairs.

Edward Baigent features prominently in the history of the Wakefield District. Besides his political involvement in the Provincial Council, and House of Representatives, Baigent was in addition, an active participant in local affairs. Considered the founder of St. John's Anglican Church, Baigent was the moving force behind the establishment of the Waimea South Mechanic's Institute, a long serving member of the Waimea District's Road Board, a representative of the Lower Wakefield Educational District, and closely involved with the Waimea South Volunteer Rifles, and the Wakefield Cricket Team.

In view of this widespread involvement in the affairs of the District, it is hardly surprising that Baigent is commonly referred to as the "Father of Wakefield".(1)

In the Province of Nelson, education was, from the arrival of the first group of settlers, regarded as one of the top priorities. Under the terms of purchase, a proportion of the revenue from land sales was to be devoted to education, and developing other amenities in the settlement. Although this never occurred, due to the unfinancial position of the New Zealand Company, Nelson did successfully organise the first system of public schools in New Zealand. The organisation of education, before the Provincial Council came into operation, fell largely upon the Nelson School Society, and the British and Foreign School Society, the aim of both groups being the establishment of an elementary school which will be open to the children of all without regard to the religious opinions of their parents, in which no sectarian views whatever shall be taught and that the Bible, when read, shall be read without note or comment.(2)

The two societies, which merged, gradually extended their operations, and by 1854 controlled nine schools.

It was Edward Baigent's wife Mary Ann, however, who established the first school in the Wakefield District. Baigent suggests that his wife opened the school to divert the attention of the children away from the horrors of the Wairau "Massacre"; "... the poor little children were running about wild and ragged, expecting to be eaten up by savages. I suggested to my wife to divert their attention by opening an infant school, to which she agreed."(3) Education was obviously of concern for Baigent, as he had six children in 1843, (with a further five to follow) and many of his neighbours also had large

families. Each child attending the school was charged twopence per week, and after the Rev. Mr Reay heard of Mrs Baigent's effort, he agreed to subsidise the school with a further twopence a head.

The Baigents' whare, which doubled as the schoolhouse, soon became too small for the purpose;

The attendance in less than three months became so many that our little room was too small for the accommodation of the children wishing to attend. At the same time, a gentleman of Education had squatted on a piece of unsurveyed land where the present school stands, with the intention of opening a store for the district. He not being very successful in his object, myself and others thought it a good chance to offer him the care of the school in his own house. (4)

According to L.R. Palmer who wrote a history of St. John's Church, the "gentleman of education" referred to above, who became the first school-master in Wakefield, was John Thomas Smith. (5) Baigent, in his history of the early days in Wakefield and Nelson, states however, that he invited a Mr Wilkinson to take charge of the school, promising to do all he could to help. Wilkinson agreed to the request, and, if Baigent is correct, took up the local position of school-master.

The problem next confronting the people of the Wakefield area was to raise sufficient funds to retain their schoolmaster. Following an approach to Rev. Reay, the then clergyman of the province, the minister agreed to pay £12-10-0 per annum out of the church funds towards the support of the school. The remainder of Wilkinson's salary was paid by local donations of food, and in some cases money.

Wilkinson proved a success as master of the Wakefield school, until he was no longer able to control the pupils. His decision to leave the district resulted in the closure of the school for several months. Following the departure of Wilkinson, the position of schoolmaster was offered to a Mr J.T. Smith "a person very much respected by the old settlers, who had been manager of the company's store, and having had the duty of serving out the rations, had become very well known and popular." (6)

Before Smith took up his position, the school-building was offered to the Church, but before the property could be purchased, it was necessary to obtain security for the land upon which the building stood. Church officials approached the New Zealand Company agent, Mr Dillon Bell, and he gave to them the block of land in question.

After securing the title to the land upon which the school stood, Rev. Reay asked Mr Dillon Bell for a piece of land for the site of a Church, a request to which Bell acquiesced. With the land for a Church being acquired, settlers in the Wakefield District were now asked for their assistance. Local residents responded generously with gifts of timber, labour and cash towards the building of the Church, repairing the schoolhouse, and building a schoolroom. The remainder of the cost was defrayed by the Bishop of New Zealand out of Church of England funds, amounting to about two hundred pounds.(7)

It is generally believed that the design for the Church was drawn up by Mrs Reay, wife of the minister. Baigent states that Mrs Reay was the architect, (8) although it is probable that Mr Charles Heaphy, the noted early surveyor, helped Mrs Reay in her design. To confuse the issue even further, the Nelson Examiner report upon the opening of St. John's stated that the plans were "prepared under the direction of Rev. C.L. Reay." (9)

The building of St. John's was duly begun on its prominent site overlooking the village of Wakefield. Edward Baigent superintended the erection of the Church, which, with the help of two carpenters, Messrs J.P.Horn and Rush, was framed in his garden. With the frame completed it was carted to the Church site, where the foundations had been prepared by other local men. According to Baigent,

"the carpenters wages were 3s 6d a day, labourers 2s and 2s 6d, and the shingling was done by Mr Jessop at 2s 6d per square, for labour only. Mr Stallard of Nelson made and framed the windows..."(10)

The total cost of the Church was £111-5-9, of which, besides his labour, Baigent contributed £5 worth of timber. The building of the church was very much a local effort, and reflected the community spirit and religious zeal of the early pioneers.

The first public service at St. John's was held on Sunday, 11 October 1846, when it was opened by the Rev. .L. Reay. The Nelson Examiner reported that although the building was not yet completed, "when finished it promises to be one of the most ornamental constructions in the settlement." (11)

With the completion of the Church, attention was once again focused on the educational facilities of the area. It was desired that both a day and Sunday school be opened in connection with St. John's. Bishop Selwyn made available money for the purpose and so it was decided that a new building should be erected for the school, and additions made to the old one so as to provide accommodation for the schoolmaster and for boarders. Mr J.T. Smith took charge of the new school which was erected in 1848 at a cost of £70, and soon had a large number of pupils, including several boarders from Nelson. The attendance of boarders at the Wakefield school, raises some doubt as to whether the school was under the control of the Nelson School Society. It seems unlikely pupils would have come from Nelson to attend the Wakefield school, unless the syllabus offered was different from that of the society schools. A number of schools, Church and private, did remain outside the societies control, and it is possible that St. John's school was one of these.

After obtaining legal title to the land on which the Church and school stood, part of the land was accidentally sold by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, the Hon. C.A. Dillon. Although the school committee informed Mr Dillon of his mistake, nothing was done until Sir George Grey visited Nelson, and the matter was brought to his notice. To solve the problem it was decided that the Church should select another Block of land of similar size as near to the Church as was possible. The job of selecting the Block of land was given to Edward Baigent and he chose a 9½ acre section adjoining St. John's.

With the departure of Mr J.T. Smith from the Wakefield school, (12) a Mr John Squire took over the position of schoolmaster. With the passing of the Nelson Education Act in March 1856, attendance numbers increased to such an extent that the Church school was no longer large enough.

Rather than spending money enlarging the Church school-house, it was decided to erect a larger public school on a new site.(13)

Thus schooling which began in the Baigent's own primitive where in 1843, with Mrs Baigent as the first teacher, gradually expanded to include far larger numbers, under a more efficient system. Primary education was one of the first subjects the Nelson Provincial Council concerned itself with. A commission was established in 1855 to study the question of education in the Province, and the recommendations of this commission were embodied in the Nelson Education Act of March 1856. Under the terms of this Act, every householder was levied a uniform rate of £1 per annum, and a further 5s per annum for each child attending a school. Nelson was the only Province to introduce compulsory taxation for the purposes of education.

The Province was divided into educational Districts, each of which elected a committee of nine to superintend the working of each school. Edward Baigent was a member of the Lower Wakefield committee for many years, and he served as their representative on the Central Board on at least one occasion.(14)

The Nelson Educational legislation was used as a model by other provinces, and the New Zealand Education Act of 1877 owed much to the Nelson system.

In 1855, Baigent was one of a deputation of four who travelled to the Moutere area to visit the Rev. Thomas Adolphus Bowden, and invite him to become the first resident clergyman of the Waimea West and Waimea South districts.(15) After some deliberation, Bowden acquiesced to their request and he settled at Brightwater, where a Church was to be built. Baigent was elected to the St. Paul's Anglican building committee, and according to Hollis Hill, gave generous supplies of timber for the Church construction.(16) In the building of the Church parsonage, Bowden reported that "Mr E. Baigent and Hugh Martin (of the Gorge) both sawmillers, promised liberal contributions in timber.(17)

St. Paul's Church was opened for public worship on 9 August 1857. Baigent continued to play a prominent role in the affairs of St. Paul's, serving as its representative on the Archdeaconry Board, and also at the first diocesan synod

held in 1859, and according to Hill, retained his interest in St. Paul's Parochial District until his death.(18)

Baigent was also closely involved with the Wesleyan Chapel at Spring Grove, and when it was opened in April 1858, he acted as Chairman. In the speech he made, Baigent stated that when he looked back sixteen years to when he arrived, "he discovered abundant cause for gratitude. When he landed here the country was a desolate wilderness; now it was a fruitful field. Such an assembly, on such an occasion, in such a place as this, he considered as on evidence of the Divine authenticity of our faith."(19) This speech reflected Baigent's own religious faith, which was shared by a large proportion of the early settlers in the area.

Despite his involvement in the two Brightwater churches, Baigent's main interest was in St. John's. Baigent was evidently one of the more wealthy members of the Parish, for when donations and subscriptions were called, his name was always well to the fore.

Late in 1864, it was decided to extend St. John's church, and subscriptions were opened to raise the money needed. A total of £104-17-6 was pledged, including a 15 grant from the Church Extension Fund, £10 from Rev. Francis Tripp, and £5 from Baigent.(20) In July 1865, the work was commenced, with Baigent acting as superintendent of works. The cost of lengthening the Church came to £63-10-0, with a further £14 being expended on new seats. At the same time as the extensions, the Church gable was lined, and the paths were gravelled. According to Palmer, Baigent was the mainspring of the effort, and "he was thanked for his persevering and energetic efforts in restoring and enlarging the Church....."(21) In recognition of his services, two side pews were erected, one for Edward Baigent, and the other for the Churchwardens.

In 1875, Edward Baigent was elected Treasurer of the Building Committee for the parsonage, which was completed at a cost of over £360, of which Baigent contributed £10. The builder of the house was Amos Baigent, son of Edward's brother Isaac, who had emigrated to New Zealand in 1852.

Upon the completion of the parsonage, a subcommittee, including Baigent, was established to examine the Church, and make an estimate of the repairs which were needed. By 1876, St John's was thirty years old, and, from all reports, had taken on a somewhat dilapidated appearance. It was not until 1880, however, that repairs were carried out, with Baigent donating half of the shingles and timber needed for the renovations.

Support for St. John's steadily grew during the later half of the nineteenth century, and, in the Church minutes for 1884, it is noted that monthly Church Services had begun to be held at Pigeon Valley, where Baigent "had kindly lent a small building for the purpose." (22)

In 1887, the final major structural alteration was made to St. John's. With Baigent's approval "the East Wall of the Church was moved, and a ten foot extension made to the Chancel". (23) At the Annual General meeting of parishioners in July 1888, Baigent was thanked for the work and materials he had contributed towards the Church enlargement.

In an account of Edward Baigents' life by a Rev. J.H. Honeywell, who evidently knew him well, the Rev. gentleman commented:

I have passed many pleasant hours in his company in New Zealand, and have been much interested in his reminiscences of Bishop Selwyn, whom he accompanied in many of his excursions, and whom he carried on his broad shoulders through the Pacific surf, on a memorable occasion at Motueka, near Nelson, when the Bishop landed there on one of his Episcopal journeys. He often stayed at Mr Baigent's house when visiting the neighbourhood of Wakefield for confirmation and other business. So also did Bishop Hobhouse ... and Bishop Suter ... has been with so often at Mr Baigent's, and listened with much interest to the accounts given with much fire and graphic force of the old days of the colony. (24)

Edward Baigent's involvement in St. John's extended much further than the donation of money and materials. Baigent served 34 terms as a church vestryman between 1857-1892, and was still serving in this position at the time of his death. Baigent represented St. John's on the Archdeaconry Board in 1856-1858, and also served as synod representative from 1867-1869, and again from 1876-1879.

Baigent's involvement in St. John's was a personal one, as he was obviously a man of deep religious convictions. During his life at Wakefield, he unselfishly gave generous amounts of time, materials and money to St. John's. Considering his widespread involvement in Church activities, it is thus, hardly surprising that Baigent holds, as Palmer says, such a conspicuous place in the history of St. John's.

As a sawmiller, Baigent took a great deal of interest in the condition of local roads. Baigent commented that groups of local men frequently spent a day repairing roads so that they could be used by carts and wagons.(25)

Under the Country Roads Act, Baigent was first elected to the Roads Board, for the Waimea District, along with four others in July 1858. He was re-elected in the following year along with Messrs Barnicoat and Kerr. In August 1859, a public dinner was held at Wakefield to thank Edward Baigent "for his valuable and gratuitous services as a member of the Roads Board," (26) even though he had at this point been a member of the Board for only fourteen months. Speaking at the dinner, attended by 30-40 guests, Baigent stated that from the commencement of settlement in the area, he had given his utmost attention to the subject of roads. Baigent expressed concern that Waimea South had not received the assistance from the Government, which he believed the district deserved. He claimed that for every shilling received from the Government, before the Provincial Council was established, local residents had given a pound in voluntary labour; "... had it not been for those voluntary services.... the roads would not be in the satisfactory state they were now in and very possibly (there would be) no road at all." (27) Even after the establishment of the Provincial system of Government, local subscription and labour was frequently necessary to form or improve roads and bridges. In June 1862 the Nelson Examiner reported a meeting at Waimea South to consider the necessity of erecting a bridge over the Wai-iti River.(28) At the meeting local residents were asked for their financial help to enable the building of a bridge. Such a request was not uncommon during this period.

To raise revenue for roading works, the Waimea Districts Road Board imposed a levy of 1d in the pound upon all lands and tenements within the District. In 1864, Edward Baigent was

forced to pay £8-1-6 to the Board, being the fourth largest land owner in the Waimea South District. (29)

Baigent continued to be re-elected to the Road Board and at a Board meeting at Wakefield in June 1865, he supported a resolution to establish a separate Road Board in Waimea South. Baigent claimed that he had travelled 1700 miles to the meetings of the Board, and over 11,000 miles in inspecting and setting out work for the Board. (30) It appears however, that this resolution lacked widespread support, for separate road-board sub-districts were not formed until some years later.

The raising of funds for road development and maintenance was obviously a major problem for the Road Boards. Besides levies on lands and tenements, revenue was raised through toll gates, and bars placed at strategic points on main roads. The first Highways Act was passed in the Nelson Provincial Council in 1856, being amended in 1858, and again in 1863. Eventually these were presented in the form of the Nelson Highways Act of May 1872. (31) There were clauses in the Act dealing with obstructions on roads, ditches and drains, regarded as a danger to health; and an unusual clause relating to the injury of roads through shading;

If any road shall be injured by the shade of any hedges or trees, and the sun and wind are thereby excluded from such highway to the damage thereof... the owner or occupier shall be liable to a penalty, not exceeding five pounds. (32)

The main object of the Act, however, was the setting up of toll gates. A uniform scale of charges was established. "For every sheep, lamb, pig or goat, 1/2d; every ox or head of neat cattle 2d; every horse, mare, gelding, ass or mule 3d; every gig, cart, dray or other vehicle drawn by one horse 6d...." (33) Under the Act, clergymen, Government Officers and funeral processions were all exempt from the tolls. It was this exemption clause which caused much controversy, particularly regarding Government Officers, who it was felt were abusing their privilege. Five days after the Act was passed, Edward Baigent presented to the council a petition signed by 750 residents "praying that the exemption clauses should be repealed." (34) Despite the widespread discontent, however, no immediate changes were made.

In 1872, the Roads Board levy was reduced to three farthings in the pound upon all lands and tenements. As the largest land-

owner in Waimea South, Baigent was levied £8-10-6. (35)

By July 1873, when Road Board elections were once again held, the Waimea Road District, in compliance with the wishes of Ratepayers, had been divided into six sub-districts. Baigent was duly elected member for Spring Grove, and was later chosen as Chairman. At the time these elections were held, the Roads Board Levy had been further reduced to only 1/2d in the pound upon all rateable lands and tenements within the district. Despite the fifty percent reduction in the levy since 1864, Edward Baigent was levied £9-12-6 in the Wakefield District, £2-1-0 in the Spring Grove District, and £1-15-0 in the Dovedale District, reflecting the large areas of land he had accumulated. (36)

Baigent was re-elected to the Waimea Roads Board as a member for Spring Grove for the last time in July 1874, losing his seat two years later to William White, by 14 votes. (37) To what extent Baigent's defeat in the Roads Board election reflected a loss of popularity is difficult to ascertain. Obviously the fact that he was defeated signifies clearly that his popularity was not as universal as previously. At the time of the 1876 election, Baigent was serving his District in the House of Representatives in Wellington, and it is possible that the people of Waimea South felt he was no longer capable of effectively carrying out both jobs.

For nearly two decades, Baigent served on the Waimea District's Road Board, travelling thousands of miles in the course of his duty. To some extent Baigent's interest in the Roads Board was closely associated with his business interests. Without satisfactory roads his sawmilling business was seriously affected. Nevertheless Baigent did give up much of his time to ensure that roads in the Waimea area were maintained in a reasonable condition, something which benefited the whole District.

The Waimea South Mechanics Institution held its first meeting at the Church school in Lower Wakefield, on 20 July 1853. A management committee of eleven was formed, including Edward and Alfred Baigent, with Edward being elected Treasurer. According to the rules and regulations of the Institution, the society was formed "for the purpose of mutual instruction and the general cultivation of literature and science". (38)

At the July 1853 meeting, a call was made upon the public for subscriptions, and it was moved "that the committee be empowered to use their discretion in the rejection of any books of a doubtful character.... and are requested to reject all those of an infidel tendency." (39)

At the first Annual General meeting of the Institution in November 1854, it was noted that £43-19-10, had already been pledged towards the erection of a building, a committee for which was formed, including Edward Baigent. In March 1855, the Nelson Examiner mentioned that Baigent had subscribed £12 towards the Institution. (40) The building of the Waimea South Mechanics Literary Institution was opened at 2.00p.m. on 17th July 1856, being attended by some one hundred persons. The Chairman paid a well merited tribute to Mr Baigent "to whose exertions the success of the Institution is mainly attributable and to whose liberality they were indebted for a gift of two acres of land, on which this building had been erected." (41)

The rules and regulations of the Institution stated that ordinary members under 21 years of age were to pay a subscription of 1s6d per quarter, plus an entrance fee of 1s6d, whilst ordinary members over 21 years of age paid 1s6d per quarter, and an entrance fee of 2s6d. Subscribers of 10s per annum were made Honorary members. (42).

In November 1856, Edward Baigent was elected Chairman of the Institution, and he also served in the position of Treasurer for many years. Alfred and Isaac Baigent also feature prominently in the early history of the Institution, and in 1864 it is entered that subscriptions were paid by Eliab, Joseph, Amos, Edward, Samuel, Isaac and Henry Baigent.

The Waimea South Mechanics Literary Institution represented an important step in the social and cultural history of the area, becoming the favourite meeting place of many locals.

It can be seen thus that Edward Baigent played a prominent role in local affairs - Church, educational, and roading, giving generously materials, finance, expertise, and time, to establish institutions which the people of the area today are still benefiting. In each of the institutions which Baigent helped establish, he was personally involved, particularly in the case of St. John's

Church, the Baigent family being staunch supporters of the Anglican faith. An indication of Baigent's standing in the local community, can be seen from the number of committees and Boards he was elected to. Edward Baigent was both a respected and popular figure in Wakefield and Waimea South.

C H A P T E R V

Provincial and National Politics

In view of Edward Baigent's widespread involvement in local affairs, it was hardly surprising that he extended his interests to the political arena. The year 1853 signals a watershed in Baigent's life, for it was in this year he was first elected to the Nelson Provincial Council, beginning what was to be a long career in provincial politics.

Following the passing of the Constitution Act of June 1852, (1) which created a two tier political system, in the form of provincial councils, and a General Assembly, a Committee of 32, including Edward Baigent, was established in the Waimea Electoral District to "watch over the registration of the District and to suggest fit and proper persons to represent it in the House of Representatives." (2)

Once electoral boundaries had been defined, the next step was the drawing up of the electoral rolls, which was carried out between 15 April and 15 May 1853. In June 1853, Edward Baigent was nominated as a candidate for Waimea South in the Provincial Council elections. Baigent accepted the nomination and began preparing for the election which was to be held on Thursday 18 August 1853. Baigent comfortably won a seat in the Council, polling twice as many votes as the second candidate J.W. Saxton, who was also elected.

The election of 1853 was characterised by widespread bribery through the offering of "free beer" to entice voters; "Men, women and children were to be seen in a state of helpless intoxication," (3) reported Alfred Saunders, who was a staunch supporter of the Abstinence Society. The Corrupt Practices Prevention Act of 1858 did much to ensure that a repetition never occurred.

In being elected to the fifteen man Provincial Council, Baigent joined select company, which included doctors and barristers. According to H.F. Allan, "of the fifteen who composed the first council, at least ten were entitled by birth and education to be called in the parlance of those days, 'gentlemen'." (4) It is hardly surprising thus, that Baigent and other members "chosen solely for their honesty and good works, were outshone in debate by the brilliance of the professional men." (5) Although other men in the council may have been more erudite, Baigent was elected by the people of Waimea South for his "honesty and good works", and when voting took place for the Provincial Council on 14 October

1857, Baigent once again topped the poll.(6)

In his first few years as a member of the Provincial Council, Baigent confined himself to those subjects with which he was familiar, such as roading and other matters, particularly involving his own electorate. In January 1862, Baigent was re-elected for a third term without opposition.(7)

The question of a railway in the Nelson area occupied considerable time in the Provincial Council during 1863. Many public meetings were held to discuss the topic which generated much debate. The proposed railway from Nelson to Four Rivers Plain (Murchison) obviously had many advantages, the greatest of which was that it would have provided an all-weather link, unlike the majority of existing roads. Baigent's reaction was initially one of caution, emphasising that he would only give his support for a railway, if some good could be derived from it. Within a few months however, Baigent had come out firmly in favour of establishing a rail system, arguing in the Provincial Council that the value of timber which could be brought out of country areas, justified its existence; "If a railway were made to the Big Bush, it would pay to cut the timber there and bring it into town. I think it would pay to put a railway down purposely to bring timber into Nelson."(8) Baigent's support was undoubtedly partly motivated by his business interests, which would have greatly benefited from the establishment of a railway. Other Councillors, however, did not share Baigent's optimism regarding the timber potential, despite his obvious experience in such affairs. The question of a railway in the Nelson area thus lapsed for several years.

In October 1865, Edward Baigent was re-elected to the Provincial Council for the fourth time, reflecting the high esteem in which he was held in his electorate. At a meeting following his re-election, Baigent commented on the large areas of land within New Zealand which could be made available for settlement if roads were established. He pointed out that until these areas were opened up by roads, they were of little value. Baigent was later to speak several times on this subject in the House of Representatives.

Despite the fact that his calls to establish a railway were ignored, Baigent maintained his support, arguing that "... a

railway was very necessary for communication with the inland country, and ... (that) Nelson would be nothing but a small village if it had not a ready road for the country produce".(9) Baigent claimed that if the Province was to develop, a railway was a necessary prerequisite.

In June 1867, Baigent announced his intention of offering himself as a candidate for the Waimea's for the General Assembly elections, after having been several times requested to put himself forward. In being nominated for the House of Representatives, Baigent was described as "a fearless and fair politician who had risen by his own industry and perseverance."(10) In seconding the nomination of Baigent, a Mr Horne said, "It was objected that Mr Baigent was a man of plain speech, and only of ordinary education, but he was an honest man, and honesty was but poorly heard in the councils of the nation ... Mr Baigent had a plain and honest tongue, and only meddled with matters he had a practical knowledge of."(11) In accepting the nomination, Baigent stated that "he had always confessed he had not the ability necessary to go to the Assembly, and the electors knew it, but he would at least give an honest vote...."(12) Baigent went on to state that he would resist any invasion of provincial institutions by the General Government, a stance which he was to maintain throughout the ensuing provincialist-centralist debates.

Polling for the Waimea Seat took place on Friday 27 June 1867, with Baigent being elected with a comfortable margin.(13) The Editorial in The Colonist, acknowledged Baigent's success, saying "we give every credit to Mr Baigent for honesty of purpose, and the fact of his election, shows the personal respect in which he is held in the locality...."(14)

Baigent joined the House of Representatives in Wellington at a time when opinions over the provincialist-centralist issue were becoming increasingly polarised. Only a few weeks after being sworn in, Baigent made a speech in the House, in which he clearly defined his position regarding provincial and central institutions;

There was a general feeling amongst members for a reduction of expenditure, which the country also desired, while the Government seemed inclined to go as far as they could, he was opposed to further borrowing. The question had arisen as to whether the General Government was to have control, or the Provincial Governments were any longer to exist....

two parties had sprung up, one on the side of the General Government and another on the side of Provincial institutions. He maintained that the Provinces were the people of New Zealand. No sooner had the General Government met than a sort of suspicion arose. They said "we must take some of the power from the Provinces". They took away from them bit by bit, until the Provinces came down to nothing at all. He contended that the Provincial Councils had proved themselves the most useful bodies in New Zealand.... Let the General Government take their own peculiar duties upon them and the Provinces would take theirs. The Provinces did not waste their money. They would do their business cheaper than it could be done for them.... The Provinces in his opinion were able to carry out the work properly belonging to them.... the best thing the Government could do was to go back to The Constitution Act, resume their old duties, and leave the rest to the Provinces, who if they have to manage their own funds, would soon learn to be economical. (15)

Baigent's concern was not confined to the debate over where political power should lie; and he openly supported a reduction of taxation. According to Baigent, taxation on the necessities of life, such as coffee and timber, were imposing a considerable strain on the "great bulk of people". Under the system as it existed, Baigent claimed that the poor man paid as much in tax as the rich. Instead of a tariff on most common goods, Baigent favoured some form of income tax, a thought considered progressive in 1867. To help solve New Zealand's £7 M debt in 1868, Baigent supported a universal land tax, which he believed would also help stop land monopoly. Such proposals were greeted with consternation by the large land holders who would have been hard hit by the imposition of such a tax. Baigent firmly believed that merchants and the wealthy land owning classes should pay taxes in proportion to their wealth, arguing that they benefited most from the development of steam and postal communications, and other similar schemes.

In his first term in the House of Representatives, Baigent spoke on only a few occasions, concerning himself almost solely with the affairs of the Nelson-Westland area. The position in which Baigent found himself in 1867, was, in all probability, very similar to that in 1853, when he first entered the Provincial Council. If the majority of members occupying seats in the Provincial Council were there due mainly to their "birth, education or soundness of character," (16) the situation in the House of Representatives was little different. Although there is no indication that Baigent was overawed by his situation, there is little doubt that he must have felt somewhat

out of place, particularly in the first session he attended.

Although Baigent did not initiate any progressive or notable legislation during his first session in the House, his services were recognised by his supporters in his Wakefield constituency. At a dinner held in Baigent's honour in November 1868, the Chairman, Mr J.W. Barnicoat, said he "felt Mr Baigent had represented his constituents admirably in the House," stating he had "always found his proceedings marked by plain, straight-forward business ability and tact, and by sound straight-forward and hearty honesty. Mr Baigent, "continued Barnicoat, "was one of the earlier settlers who had fought their rough battles of the early days of this settlement, and had acted well, and had fought himself well up, until he had attained the position which he now occupied, the highest the district could bestow." (17) In replying to the comments made by Barnicoat, Baigent expressed concern at the difficult position New Zealand was at that time in. He believed it would "take time and deep and anxious consideration to discover by what means it was to be rescued out of its numerous difficulties." (18) Baigent also commented on the provincial-central issue, stating that Provincial Governments were now hanging in the balance. Although many wished to see the Provincial system abolished, Baigent was firmly in favour of it being maintained. Baigent's support of the Provincial system was shared by the members of his constituency.

By the end of 1868, New Zealand was "in a very critical position," facing a sharp depression. Following the costly land wars, several Provincial Governments were in financial difficulties; land sales had slumped; prices for the two main export earning commodities, gold and wool, had dropped; credit was difficult to obtain, and business had stagnated; farmers incomes and Government spending on public works had declined. (19) In short, "the prosperity that had characterised the early 1860s had disappeared." (20)

Despite Baigent's support for the Provincial institutions, and a belief that the Stafford Ministry of 1868 wished to abolish the system, he did not approve of separating the Government of the two Islands, firmly believing that "union was strength".

In November 1869, Baigent was re-elected to the Provincial Council for a fifth term, once again topping the poll in the Waimea South electorate. (21) At a pre-election meeting, Baigent stated that had not a determined stand been made in the House of Representatives to prevent the destruction of Provincial institutions, which he maintained "had done good, and would yet do good - the late Government of the colony would have destroyed it and crippled the power of the real working man of the colony to take charge of their own local affairs." (22) If, continued Baigent, the attempt to overturn the Provincial system had been successful, the electors "would not now have been called to elect councillors." (23)

In May 1870, a no-confidence motion was introduced in the Nelson Provincial Council by David Luckie. Baigent seconded the motion, "that the Government of this Province, as at present constituted does not possess the confidence of this council." (24) In speaking to the motion, Baigent stated that;

Although it was a painful position in which this motion sought to place the gentlemen of the Government, when the country saw and felt the mismanagement of the last few months, it was necessary to do something to remedy the evil. The Government and especially the Superintendent, did not possess the confidence of the Council or the Province. The Superintendent did not go about sufficiently, and did not know the country well enough, or what it wanted(25)

Baigent concluded. Despite Allan's claim that the debates over the motion "compare most favourably with those of ten years earlier", (26) the motion was lost by only one vote, when the Speaker voted to the negative. Obviously thus, there was widespread discontent with the performance of the Government.

By 1870, depression had brought difficulties to many people in New Zealand. In June 1870, Julius Vogel, the Colonial Treasurer, presented to the House of Representatives a financial statement in which he outlined what he believed to be the main needs of New Zealand; an extensive programme of immigration and public works, (27) in the form of roads and railways. Vogel's proposals led to much debate, both in favour, and against. In a speech to his Waimea South constituents in October 1870, Baigent said of Vogel's scheme ".... after calm deliberation, we saw that there was a great deal of good in the scheme, and when it was reduced to a more moderate form it was felt that it would advance the true interests of the country". (28) Baigent's change

of stance upon the issue of borrowing - he venomously spoke out against it in 1867, was caused by the serious depression which was affecting New Zealand at this time. He obviously shared Vogel's belief that an influx of capital was required to lift the country from its depressed state.

Vogel's proposals brought to the fore, once again, calls for the establishment of a rail system in the Nelson Province. Baigent retained his support of seven years before, arguing that ".... Nelson would not prosper until it had a good road through the country", believing that no road "was so good, or would pay so well as a railroad between Nelson and the West Coast". (29) In support of the scheme, Baigent pointed out the advantages of railway communication in the quick conveyance, over a long distance, of commodities which it would not pay to take by other means.

The issue over the railway was temporarily put aside as the electors of Waimea South once again went to the polls to elect their representative to the House. Baigent based his campaign on his proven record, and it appeared until the morning of the nomination that he would be re-elected unopposed. The defeat of Mr Joseph Shephard in the Nelson electorate (where the election was held prior to that in Waimea South) led, however, to his being brought forward as a candidate for the Waimeas. The final result of the election in February 1871 was that Shephard defeated Baigent by 149 votes to 91. Facing considerable criticism over his tactics, it was later pointed out in Shephard's defence that he had in fact been solicited to stand for the Waimea District before he announced himself a candidate for Nelson. The outcome of the election, and bitterness associated with it, did, however, lead to a somewhat acrimonious relationship between Shephard and Baigent in future years. The defeat of Baigent in the Waimea election did represent a somewhat paradoxical situation. The voters of the district who returned Baigent to the Provincial Council on six occasions, and to the House of Representatives in 1867, and again in 1876, did, in 1871, not consider him the best candidate.

The debate over the railway again surfaced towards the end of 1871. At a public meeting in Wakefield, Baigent announced his full support of the railway, stating to the audience "not only would they be able to bring ten times as much, but they

would bring it twenty times as quickly. It was impossible," Baigent continued, "to compete with our neighbours in business without either seaboard carriage, or railway, and the absence of a long land carriage had always been found a great drawback to the prospects of that district. The country was languishing for want of means of internal traffic," (30) he concluded. In support of his argument, Baigent stated that for the last twenty years, his outlay in labour and carriage had averaged £1200 per year, and had he possessed the means of conveying a full cargo of timber to Nelson, he would be able to employ fifty men, rather than fifteen, as he did then. "There were millions of feet of good timber accessible, if only the means of cheap and expeditious carriage could be secured for it," reasoned Baigent. "... Ships were constantly arriving in New Zealand from America and Norway freighted with timber, and we have it on the spot, and yet cannot turn it into account." (31) Despite the obvious benefits that a rail system would bring to the Province, progress was slow, as the Nelson Representatives in the General Assembly lobbied their cause. With widespread support, the railway was finally given the go-ahead, being opened in February 1876. (32)

Baigent was re-elected to the Nelson Provincial Council in November 1873 for a record sixth term. Only two other Nelson politicians, J.W. Barnicoat, and J.F.A. Kelling, both representing Waimea East, share this rare distinction. Such a record shows clearly the respect Baigent commanded in his electorate.

As a politician, Baigent represented Nelson in a wide variety of ways. In 1874, when a special settlement was established at Karamea, on the rugged West Coast of the South Island, Baigent accompanied the first group of settlers, to study locations suitable for sawmilling, much of the area being heavily timbered.

Late in 1875, elections were once again held for the House of Representatives. In the Waimea Electorate, Edward Baigent once again clashed with Joseph Shephard. Baigent, who was nominated by an old friend, Mr Robert Boddington, was described by him as a "gentleman who had served them in many capacities, and though he might not have received so good an education as Mr Shephard,.... had received a thoroughly practical one." (33)

With the 1875 election following the controversial passing of the Abolition of Provinces Act, it was expected that much campaigning would centre around this issue. Morrell states emphatically that the 1875 general election was fought on the issue of the abolition of the provinces. Somewhat surprisingly, however, neither Baigent nor Shephard dwelt on the Abolition question. Although there is little doubt that Baigent still supported the Provincial system of Government, he based much of his election campaign around the issue of land sales. Baigent was firmly against the continued sale of waste lands; "they should only be let on long leases, and the lessee should have full power to sell or demise but the land should again revert to the people". (34) With regard to Native lands, Baigent stated that many years before he had "suggested to Sir Donald McLean that no land should be sold, but leased for 99 years, a suggestion for which Sir Donald had thanked him." (35) Baigent's views on leasehold were considerably advanced for 1875, preceeding Rolleston's much discussed ideas by several years, whilst also bearing certain similarities to the lease-in-perpetuity scheme adopted in 1892.

During one of his campaign speeches, Baigent also commented on immigration, suggesting that all immigrants should be nominated by friends residing in the colony, and that the plan of sending out "scratch" lots should cease.

The Waimea election promised to be an absorbing one, with local papers taking a close interest in the events. The editorial in The Colonist just prior to the election stated:

In the Waimeas, Mr Baigent, who has held the seat in parliament previous to the one recently closed, tries his strength with Mr Joseph Shephard. Both are good men; but we fancy Mr Shephard's hold in the Waimeas is too strong at the present moment for his seat to be in danger, even from a more formidable foe than he meets in Mr Baigent. (36)

Despite the build up, polling day passed without incident. The Nelson Evening Mail commented "we never could have believed that an election, especially at the present political juncture, could have passed off so quietly, so apathetically...." (37) In the final result, Baigent defeated Shephard by the narrow margin of twelve votes.

Newspaper editorials which followed the election were scathing in their summary of not only the election, but also the attitude of the voters, and even the successful candidate.

In a lengthy article, the Editor of the Nelson Evening Mail commented:

Mr Shephard has gone down before his old opponent Mr Baigent. The victory is not much to be proud of for anyone who was in the district on polling day could not fail to see that to the electors generally, it was a matter of the most supreme indifference who was returned ... in addition to the apathy that was so plainly observable on the part of those who did vote, not half, or nearly half of those who were on the roll, took the trouble to go to the poll at all. If the late member was unpopular, the new one may regard himself as equally so, for the few votes which gave him his majority might easily have been counter-balanced on the other side had a little trouble been taken. (38)

Turning his attention to the newly elected representative, the Editor offered Baigent some thoughtful advice:

And now Mr Baigent, a word with you. You have undertaken a very heavy responsibility; are you quite sure you are equal to it? You said that you came forward merely in order to give such of the electors as wished for it, an opportunity of recording their votes against Mr Shephard. You have been unexpectedly successful. You may have formed opinions on the large questions with which you will have to deal, or you may not. Nobody knows, for you have never taken the trouble to enlighten your constituents. You have got in it may be said, by a fluke, but beware how you deal with the trust confided in you. Your honesty no one doubts, your ability to fill the position in which you are placed, a great many do. It is for you to prove to them that they are mistaken. (39)

It is possible that Baigent did in fact only enter the election to provide an alternative candidate. If this was the case, the final result may well have come as somewhat of a surprise to him. In conveying his thanks to the electors of the Waimea District following the election, Baigent admitted that he had not set forth any policies or principles. This fact alone would suggest that Baigent's entry into the election may have been unintentioned.

Baigent's second term in the House of Representatives passed off in similar manner to his first. The two main areas where he continued to vigorously campaign, were for the extension of the Foxhill railway, and the opening up of the Collingwood-Aorere area. Baigent made two speeches in supporting the development of road and rail links in the Collingwood District, stating that if the Aorere Valley was opened up, 20,000 acres of land would be available for occupation. He claimed that the revenue from land sales would be sufficient to pay the cost of developing a road system. As well as the settlement value of the land, Baigent

also stressed the mineral value of the district, in the form of coal, gold, silver and marble.

At a later date, Baigent spoke in favour of establishing a telegraph system with the Collingwood District, claiming that such a system was vital to the interests of industry in the area, particularly the many sawmills which traded extensively with the Canterbury and Wellington areas. Despite the strong case Baigent presented in favour of the District, the motion to establish a telegraph system was lost.

The other area in which Baigent concerned himself was the Railways Construction Bill. Baigent continued to press for the advancement of the Nelson-Foxhill line to the West Coast. He claimed that Nelson had been cut off from the Public Works Scheme; "we are looked upon as the Siberia of New Zealand; our people are treated as exiles and outcasts; and we are abandoned by the Government." (40) Despite Baigent's hope that the railway would be extended southwards to connect with the West Coast, his dream was never fulfilled.

In August 1879, Baigent announced his intention not to offer himself again for re-election, "... I find that the infirmities attended upon old age prevent my getting about the district as formerly to enquire into your wants which I consider every representative should do." (41) With Baigent retired, his close rival Mr Joseph Shephard was duly elected unopposed.

By 1879, Baigent had served six terms in the Nelson Provincial Council, and two terms in the House of Representatives. Being a staunch supporter of the Provincial system, its abolition must have come as a great disappointment to him. He had for many years campaigned for Provincialism, claiming that it was best suited to carry out the tasks delegated to it. Increasing age, and a decline in health, both contributed to Baigent's retirement, which ended a notable contribution to Nelson politics, and particularly to the people of the Waimea area, whom Baigent represented for so long.

CHAPTER VI

Business Years 1853 - 1890

By the mid 1850's, the Nelson sawmilling industry was entering a period of transition. Forest areas surrounding the site of Nelson rapidly disappeared in the early years of settlement, and as the township expanded during the 1840's, sawmillers were forced to travel further afield to find trees suitable for milling.

Edward Baigent was one of the first sawmillers to establish his business in the country. Whilst large areas of suitable forest were available in the surrounding districts, this was initially of little help to the sawmillers, due to the problem of transportation. The effect of this problem upon Baigent has already been outlined, and it was this inability to get cargoes to the port, as much as the lack of regular shipping, which caused such fluctuations in the timber export trade.

Despite his involvement in provincial and national politics after 1853, Baigent's flour and sawmilling business continued to expand, due mainly to the help from his sons, some of whom were later to become equally prominent in the Nelson timber industry.

The enlargements and modifications made to his sawmill in 1845-46, fulfilled Baigent's requirements until the early 1860's, when a third mill was erected on a new site across the Wai-iti River.(1) In conjunction with his new water-powered sawmill, Baigent added a modern flourmill, to meet what was an obvious demand for custom flour-milling in Wakefield. Flour-milling was evidently a profitable business, for Alfred Saunders, who began his large mill at Brightwater in March 1855, claimed in his journal to have earned £1600 in the first six months of operations.(2) The saw and flourmill, erected in 1862, was the last time Baigent used water power in his milling operations.

As the introduction of waterpower for milling purposes had revolutionised the New Zealand timber industry, so too did the advent of steam. When Baigent built his first steam powered sawmill in the late 1860's (probably 1868), steam had been in widespread use for many years. Simpson (3) mentions a steam powered sawmill owned by a Mr Catchpool, which began operations in September 1841, in the Wellington area. This mill was, however, an extremely early example of steam power, and preceded many water powered mills. Baigent was by no means the earliest to

change from water to steam power in the Nelson Province. In August 1853, the Nelson Examiner reported the importation of a steam sawmill from Melbourne, and by 1862, Bow Brothers had erected a steam sawmill in Takaka.(4) In June 1863, The Colonist reported a steam sawmill owned by Messrs Myles and Co. in operation up the Wairoa Gorge. This mill was apparently one of the most modern in New Zealand, and was capable of producing about 1000 cubic feet of sawn timber per diem.(5) By 1865 there were also steam sawmills in operation in Wakefield, and in the Havelock area. Thus steam had, by the late 1860's, virtually replaced water driven mills as the main source of power. The advantages of steam power over water, were amply demonstrated, when in the late 1860's, Baigent was forced to close his flour and sawmill, constructed in 1862, due to a falling water supply.

With the erection of the steam powered mill in (probably) 1868, Baigent abandoned his flour milling operations. According to a report in The Colonist, a Mr Campbell had erected "a more pretentious mill", and Baigent "felt it no longer necessary to accommodate his neighbours".(6) After this date, Baigent confined all his attention to sawmilling.

Baigent's first steam engine was a ten horse power engine of 60 pounds pressure, which proved far superior to the low powered water-wheel. Whilst whale oil was the universal lubricant on all bearings in the water-powered mill, the cylinder and steam chest of the steam engine were lubricated with tallow. Heat from the engine liquified the tallow which was placed in a large cup on the top of the steam chest. According to L.E.H. Baigent (7), it was part of the duties of the engine driver to climb up the ladder fixed on the side of the boiler every half-hour, and by operating a small lever on the side of the tallow cup, feed about a teaspoon of liquid tallow into the steam chest, from where the steam carried it into the cylinder. The tallow apparently did a reasonable lubricating job, the main trouble being that the engine heat decomposed some of the tallow, releasing an acid that scored the faces of the slide valves and let steam past. This necessitated refacing the valves with a piece of broken file whenever the trouble became serious. This ten horse power steam engine drove a succession of mills in Pigeon Valley, and was still in use at the time of Edward Baigent's death, being operated at 40 pounds pressure.

An unusual distinction held by Edward Baigent, is that he was the first person to formally exhibit New Zealand timber overseas. In 1862, Baigent entered some sawn native timber at the London Exhibition, for which he received a medal.

In the late 1860's, Edward Baigent opened a timber yard in Nelson. It appears that initially the yard was located on the corner of Collingwood and Hardy Streets, where a section was leased from Mr Charles Harley, a prominent Nelson brewer. Under the terms of the agreement, a copy of which still exists, the section was leased for a period of one year from 14 May 1869, for the sum of twenty pounds, payable half yearly. According to L.E.H. Baigent, the yard was located on the North Eastern corner of Collingwood and Hardy Streets.(8) Baigent's yard did not remain on this site for very long, however, being moved to the present site in Rutherford Street (Waimea Road) probably sometime in 1870.

The Rutherford Street yard began on a small scale, under the management of Henry Baigent, being supplied with timber from Edward Baigent's steam sawmill in Pigeon Valley. It seems likely that a planing shed was added to the Pigeon Valley mill for in the 1872 Nelson Almanac, Henry Baigent advertised "good well cut timber from Pigeon Valley Steam saw and Planing mills."(9) In addition to sawn timber, Baigent also offered flooring, lining and rusticating "on reasonable terms".

The bulk of the sawn timber output from the Pigeon Valley mill was sold through the Nelson yard. In 1870, of a total cut of 274,418 board feet, 192,901 feet was sent into the Nelson yard, and in the following year 193,548 feet, out of 269,194, was transported into the Rutherford Street business. The timber, consisting predominantly of totara, and white pine, was transported into the yard by means of bullock drays. Edward Baigent owned an acre of land in Church Street which was used as a bullock paddock, and his eldest son, Edward Jnr, used to drive the dray. The opening of a timber yard in Nelson must obviously have been of considerable help to Edward Baigent in marketing his sawn timber. From an 1869 ledger, the following prices were taken:

Totara	15s per 100 feet
White Pine	8s 6d ' '
Red Pine	12s 6d ' '
Rimu	9s ' '
Shingles	17s per 1,000
Battens	7s 6d per 100

Prices for timber at Edward Baigent's Nelson Yard, 1869.

NB: Although it would be assumed Red Pine and Rimu would be the same timber, different prices were quoted.

During the 1870's the Nelson yard gradually expanded in size. In an 1878 advertisement in The Colonist, Henry Baigent offered "timber of every description dressed timber of every kind or width to 24 inches. Totara and Red Pine, Doors, Sashes, Sash Frames, Mouldings etc etc, in stock, or made to order Totara Shingles (sawn) Box Timbers, and a large supply of fruit cases (whole and half cases) for the coming season at Reduced prices." (10)

The prices for doors and sashes were as follows:

Doors 2" x 7' x 3' Half Glass	31s
2" x 6'10" x 2'10" "	30s
Sashes 24" x 18" Glass	21s
30" x 18" "	22s 6d
36" x 18" "	24s 6d

Prices for Doors and Sashes, Nelson Yard 1880-81.

Thus a considerable amount of diversification occurred in the Baigent business. Despite the fact that the Nelson yard was managed and operated under the name of Henry Baigent, the business was owned by his father, Edward, until he made a gift of it to Henry in 1882.(11)

In 1873, the name Baigent became associated with the timber industry in the Takaka area, when Thomas John (Edward's youngest son, born in 1849) entered into a sawmilling partnership with his elder brother Henry. Although they operated under their own names, it seems almost certain that Edward Baigent provided the

capital which enabled the establishment of the Takaka mill. This mill cut for many years in the Upper Takaka area, which was heavily wooded with Totara, Matai, Rimu, White Pine, Miro and other native timbers. Most of the timber produced was shipped through Waitapu to Henry Baigent's Nelson yard. In the three years 1875, 76, 77, more than 200,000 feet of timber was shipped to the Rutherford Street yard annually.

It appears that the Takaka mill was larger than the Wakefield one, as in the mid 1880's, an average of nearly 400,000 feet of timber was produced annually. A list of prices at the Takaka business for 1882 shows clearly how the price of timber fluctuated during the second half of the nineteenth century:

Totara	12s per 100
White Pine	5s ' '
Red Pine	8s ' '
Rimu	6s ' '
Shingles	17s 6d per 1,000
Fruit Cases	7d each
Hop Poles	30s per 100

Prices of Timber at the
Takaka Mill 1882

The prices quoted for fruit cases and hop poles clearly demonstrate that both had emerged as important industries in the Nelson Province by the early 1880's.

During the nineteenth century, sawmilling was frequently closely associated with pastoral farming, particularly the running of sheep. As areas of bush were milled, the land was often turned over to sheep, which formed a profitable sideline for the mill owner.

In the course of his life in Wakefield, Baigent acquired a considerable land area. The majority of land he did purchase was bought initially for sawmilling, and once cleared was converted to pasture. During the 1850's, Baigent received three crown grants of land in the Wai-iti region, and a further grant in 1863. By April 1864, when the Waimea District's Road Board imposed a levy of 1d in the pound upon all lands and tenements within the

District, Baigent had land worth nearly £2,000. Within ten years, the value of Baigent's landholdings had increased to £6,444, demonstrating clearly the large areas he had acquired. In the New Zealand "Domesday Book", the 1882 Freeholders of New Zealand, Baigent was listed as possessing 1,732 acres in the Waimea area (valued at £7,420) 52 acres in Collingwood (valued at £104) and properties in Nelson worth £850, making his total landholdings worth £8,374. In the Pigeon Valley-Wakefield District, some of the sections Baigent owned were numbers 67, 68, 85, 92-96, 98-102, 180, 1 of 3 and rural Section VII.

By 1890, much of Pigeon Valley was owned by either Edward Baigent, or one of his sons or nephews, particularly Henry, Joseph, Charles and Samuel, all of whom had properties either in or surrounding the valley.

As well as becoming a major landholder, Edward Baigent also became a large sheep-owner. Under the terms of the 1878 Sheep Act, every owner of sheep had to deliver a written return of sheep numbers, and pay a yearly rate of 2s per 100 sheep. Following the passing of the Act, sheep numbers were annually recorded in the Journals of the House of Representatives. The following table shows clearly how important sheep farming became to Edward Baigent;

1879	810
1880	900
1881	798
1882	780
1883	1098
1884	699
1885	790
1886	829
1887	790
1888	N.A.
1889	N.A.
1890	959
1891	890

Sheep Numbers owned by
Edward Baigent 1879-1891

(Figures from A.J.H.R.)

Baigent's sheep flock of 900 in 1880 was one of the largest in the Nelson District, (which included Collingwood and the Buller) with only seventeen farmers having greater numbers. Although perhaps large by local standards, by national standards Baigent's flock was relatively small. In the Hawkes Bay District, more than one hundred farmers had flocks larger than Baigent's in an area where a large flock could consist of 60,000 sheep. The Nelson District was not one of New Zealand's leading sheep areas.

Sawmilling for Edward Baigent was thus closely associated with extensive pastoralism, which became a source of considerable revenue. In 1887 wool sold at the Wakefield farm realised £117, and in the following year £163, selling for 9½d per pound in 1887, and 10½d per pound in 1888. The sheep carried on his various properties also represented a considerable investment. In 1890, the price of ewes varied between 5-6s and that of wethers between 9-10s. Sheep farming was also of major importance on the Takaka properties, and formed a not inconsiderable part of the annual revenue.

The timber export trade which began so promisingly in the early 1850's (see Table 2) did, unfortunately, continue to fluctuate, as it had done in the first few years of settlement. The record export figures of 1853 were not seriously challenged for some fifteen years.

The greatest singular problem facing sawmillers in the Nelson Province was undoubtedly that of transportation. Confronted by this problem, it is hardly surprising that Baigent spoke so fiercely in support of a railway when he was elected to the Provincial Council. Despite the large lobby in favour of a rail system, it was not until 1876, however, that the first part of the line to Foxhill was finally opened. Thus for three decades after he first settled in the Waimeas, Baigent had no reliable means of transportation to get sawn timber to Nelson, for either local market or export.(12)

Whilst timber production and exports in Nelson remained stagnant, those in Marlborough and Havelock surged ahead. Sawmills in these areas were built on the Coast, allowing ships to come right in to load their cargoes. Tramlines into the bush fed the mills with a steady supply of logs, and timber production

spiralled. In 1866, nearly 3.5 million board feet was shipped at Havelock, with exports in one month later reaching 600,000 feet. (13) In the year ended June 1872, nearly 2.2 million feet, worth in excess of £11,100 left from Picton, and more than 3.6 million feet, worth over £20,000 from Havelock. (14) By 1873 there were six mills at work in the Pelorous area, capable of cutting 7,000,000 board feet of timber a year.

It appears that Nelson sawmillers were unable to compete with their Marlborough counterparts. In April 1878, The Colonist reported that there was a great demand for timber in Wellington, and expressed hope that local millowners would avail themselves of the opportunity of shipping timber from the port. (15)

It was hoped that the advent of a rail system in Nelson would open up the outback areas and result in a rapid increase in timber exports. Unfortunately this was not to be the case. Despite claims by Baigent in November 1871 that if he had possessed the means of conveying a cargo of timber at a time to Nelson, he would be able to employ fifty men instead of fifteen, (16) it appears that the opening of the line had little real effect on timber production, or the general carriage of goods from the Waimea area into Nelson. Despite the availability of a railway, the majority of goods from the Waimea District continued to be conveyed to Nelson by means of bullock drays. The Colonist, in 1881, stated that it had been proven in many instances that road traffic was cheaper than by rail. (17) People in the District who had done without a rail system for three decades were not only expected to suddenly abandon local carters, but also to pay more for what was, in all probability, an inferior service. Thus despite the high hopes held for the railway, it did, in reality, prove something of a disappointment.

It appears likely that Edward Baigent erected a further sawmill in Pigeon Valley, sometime in 1881. At a sawmill auction held at Takaka in April 1881, it is recorded that Baigent purchased the engine and plant for £380, as well as other parts of the mill, including a heavy timber jinker, and a light timber wagon. Although Baigent had a mill located in Takaka, the Nelson Evening Mail stated that he intended "moving his new purchase to Wakefield". (18)

During his life at Wakefield, the two most serious threats faced by Baigent were those of floods and fires. In the early years of settlement, when roads were often little more than dirt tracks, floods could, and frequently did, cause major damage. Baigent's main threat came from the Wai-iti River, on the banks of which he established his early mills. In the early 1860's he was forced to build up significant protective works to avoid losing his mill. As well as threatening his sawmill, the Wai-iti also eroded much of his farmland. Rev. Honeywell states that in the late 1880's several floods took upward of 100 acres of Baigent's best land, apparently a not uncommon occurrence. (19) Sawmills were frequently cut off by serious flooding, which often washed away bush tramlines, thus halting production for long periods.

More serious than flooding, however, was undoubtedly the risk of fires. Established in isolated areas, fire was a constant threat to sawmills, particularly after the widespread introduction of steam power, which increased the likelihood of fire, more than in water powered mills. Mills also came under considerable danger from the frequent bushfires which continually raged out of control, destroying many thousands of acres of valuable bush. It appears that despite the risk of fire, Edward Baigent did in his long business career escape relatively lightly, suffering only one serious recorded fire, early in 1888. The Colonist described this fire as "one of the most destructive that has ever occurred in the district". (20) Raging for several days, a large area of Baigent's bush was destroyed in Pigeon Valley, and around the Wai-iti hills. There is no record, however, of Baigent losing his mill.

The economic depression which affected New Zealand during the 1880's had a very serious effect on the already stagnant Nelson timber trade. In October 1887, The Colonist mentioned that the timber trade in the Wakefield area was very dull, "The principal sawmills have stopped working for some time past, and the hands are paid off. This is regretted as many of our settlers chiefly depended on this once flourishing industry for a living." (21) Baigent was undoubtedly seriously affected by this depression, being probably the largest sawmiller in the district. The effect on him and other local sawmillers was perhaps lessened by the fact that their primary markets were

local, and not in other New Zealand centres, or overseas. The considerable diversification within the Baigent business would also have lessened the effect of the depression.

The only evidence of Edward Baigent being directly involved in the overseas export of timber came in a speech made in a debate over the railway question in 1863, when he claimed to have sold Totara for export to Australia at 22s per 100 feet.(22) In view of his widespread involvement in all facets of the timber industry in the Nelson Province, it would be surprising if Baigent was not involved to some extent in the export of timber. Considering the problems of transportation and shipping, and export figures which show clearly that Nelson was not prominent in the export of timber, it seems unlikely, however, that his involvement was anything but minor.

By the late 1880's, the sawmilling business Edward Baigent had established in the early 1840's had become one of the largest and most diversified in the Nelson Province. The transition from pit-saw milling to water-power and then to steam power, saw great changes in milling operations, numbers employed, and timber production. Perhaps the most important feature of Baigent's sawmilling business was the gradual diversification which occurred, particularly after the establishment of the Nelson yard in the late 1860's. As well as producing shingles and battens, Baigent offered doors, sashes, mouldings, flooring, lining and later, fruit cases, and hop poles, to meet the demand as these industries emerged. By 1890, however, Edward Baigent's involvement in the business he had developed had virtually come to an end.

EXPORTS OF SAWN TIMBER FROM THE PORT OF NELSONTABLE 2

Year	Sawn Timber (exports)	Value (£)
1843	10,000 ft	50 - 0 - 0
1844	180,000 ft	-
1845	271,549 ft	961 - 7 - 0
1846	168,120 ft	497 - 0 - 0
1847	332,850 ft	976 - 0 - 0
1848	160,000 ft	544 - 0 - 0
1849	15,000 ft	50 - 0 - 0
1850	23,000 ft	87 - 0 - 0
1851	-	-
1852	130,000 ft	610 - 0 - 0
1853	369,890 ft	4092 - 0 - 0
1854	19,000 ft	140 - 0 - 0
1855	-	-
1856	-	-
1857	-	-
1858	-	-
1859	-	-
1860	-	-
1861	2,500 ft	20 - 0 - 0
1862	9,550 ft	117 - 0 - 0
1863	36,000 ft	250 - 0 - 0
1864	-	-
1865	-	-
1866	-	-
1867	-	-
1868	209,700 ft	1134 - 0 - 0

Figures are taken from Statistics of New Zealand for various years. These statistics were compiled from official records. Other figures are taken from The New Zealand Colonial Blue Books . The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle, and The Colonist.

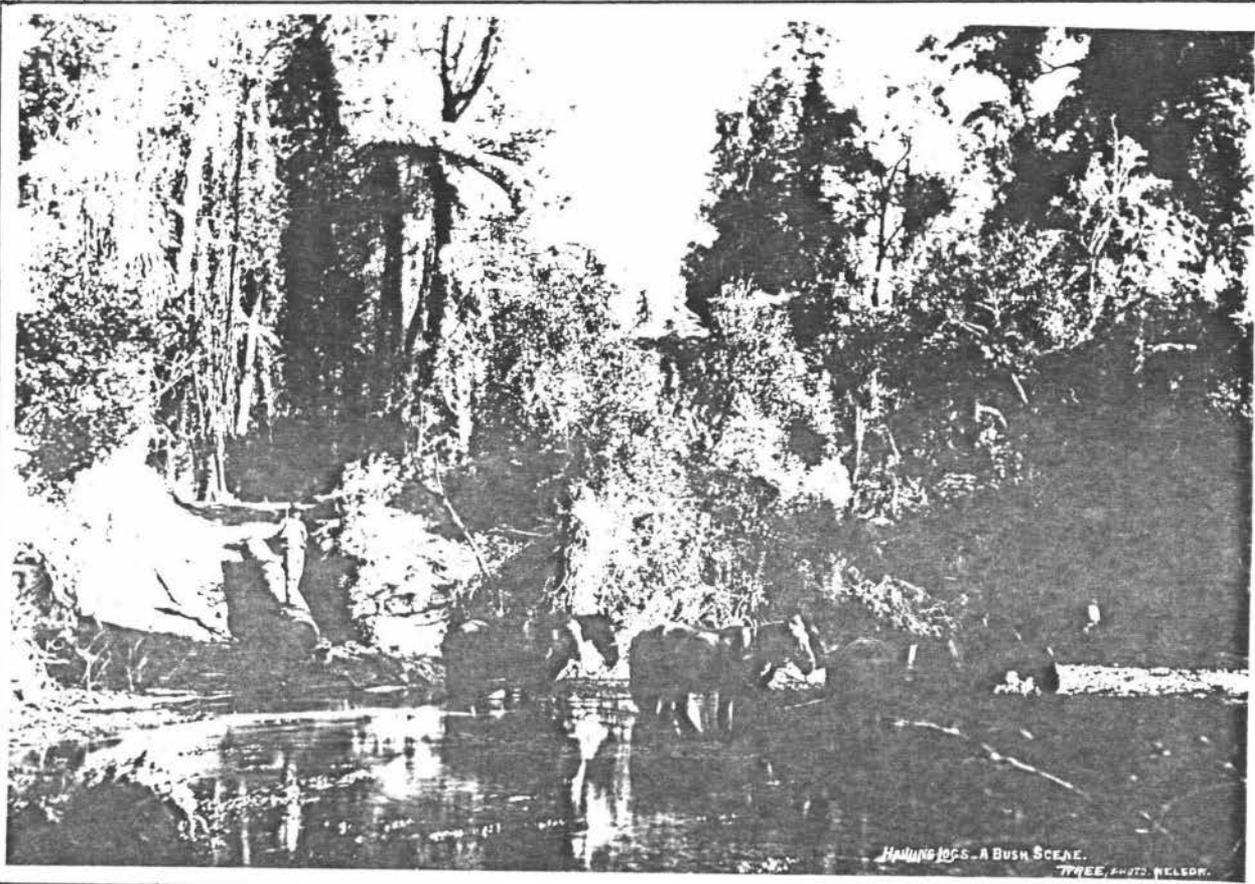
PRICES OF SAWN TIMBER IN NELSON

TABLE 3

Year	(per 100 feet) Price of Timber
1842	25s (largely imported/locally pit sawn)
1843	12s
1844	6s
1845	5s
1848	5s 6d
1850	10s
1852	8-12s
1853 April	13-16s
1853 June	20s
1853 Dec	14s (a)
1854	18-20s
1855 June	23s
1855 Nov	20-21s
1856	20-22s (b)
1859	12-16s
1862	15-20s (c)

- (a) Fall in price due to depreciation in the price in neighbouring colonies.
- (b) Imported timber from Van Diemens Land
- (c) Rimu 20s/Totara 19s/White Pine 15-16s

NOTE: These prices are mainly taken from those quoted in newspapers of the day. Obviously they are grossly simplified, making no allowance for the variation of different types of timber. They do however reflect the general price trends.

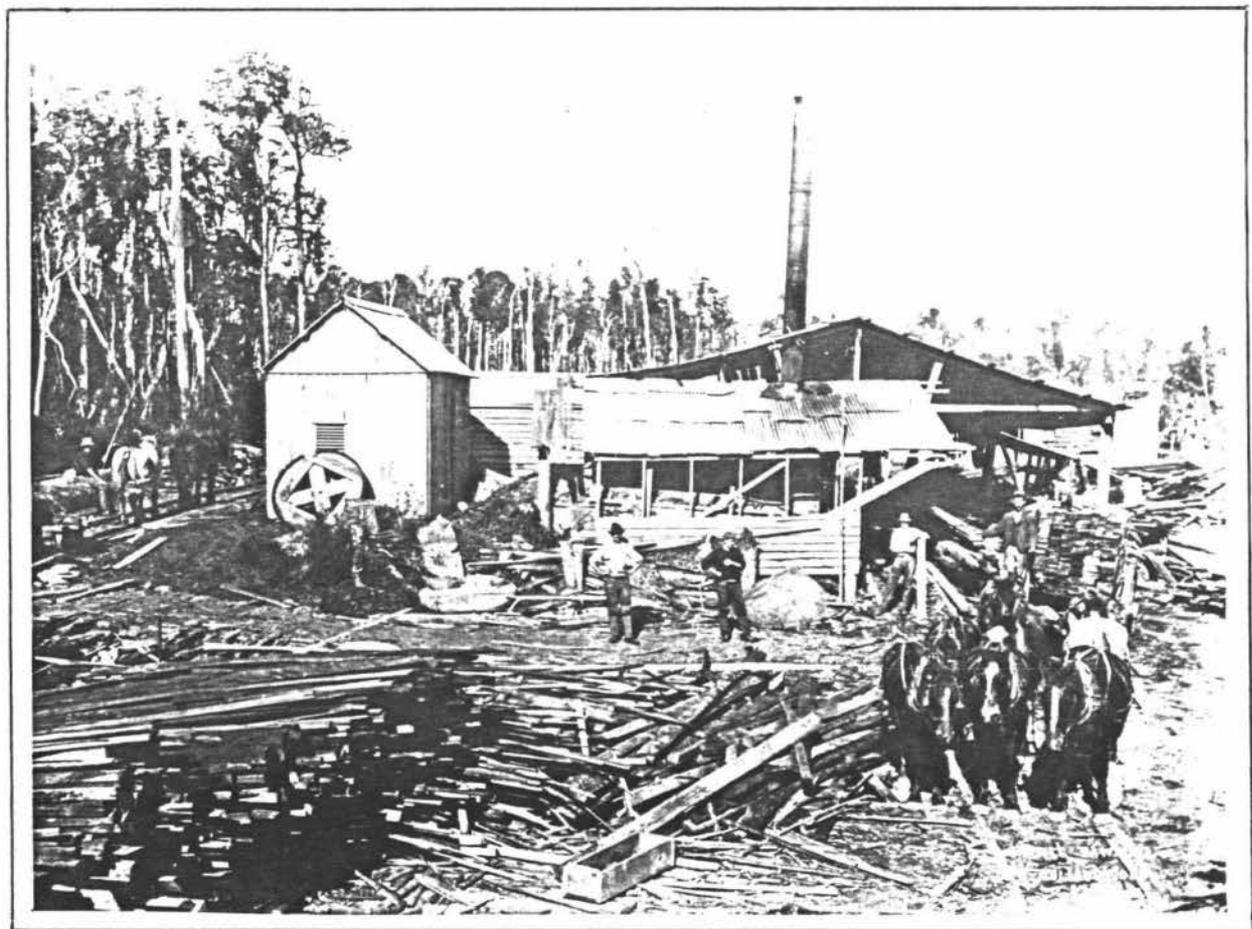
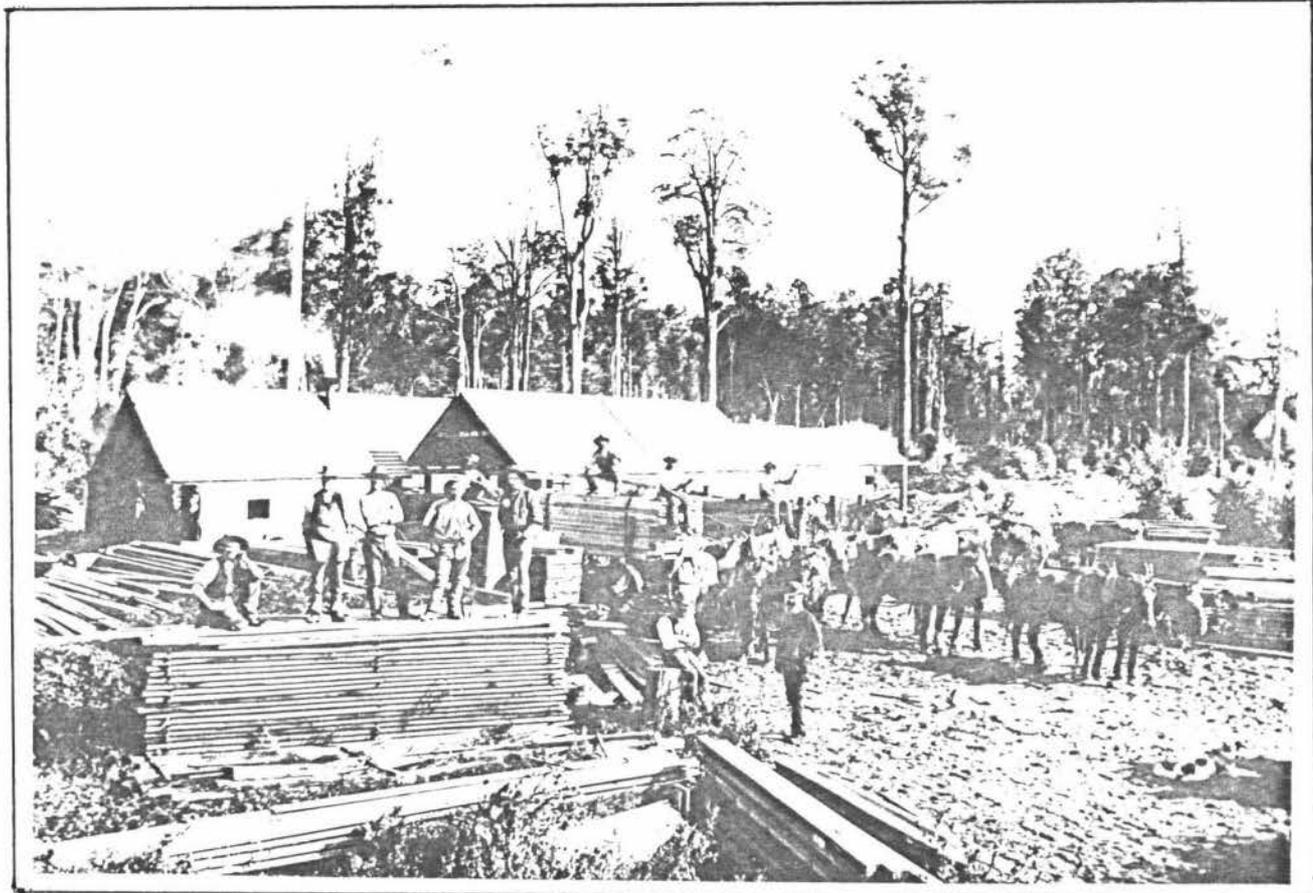


Hauling Logs - A Bush Scene. TREE PHOTO COLLECTION WOOD 1909.

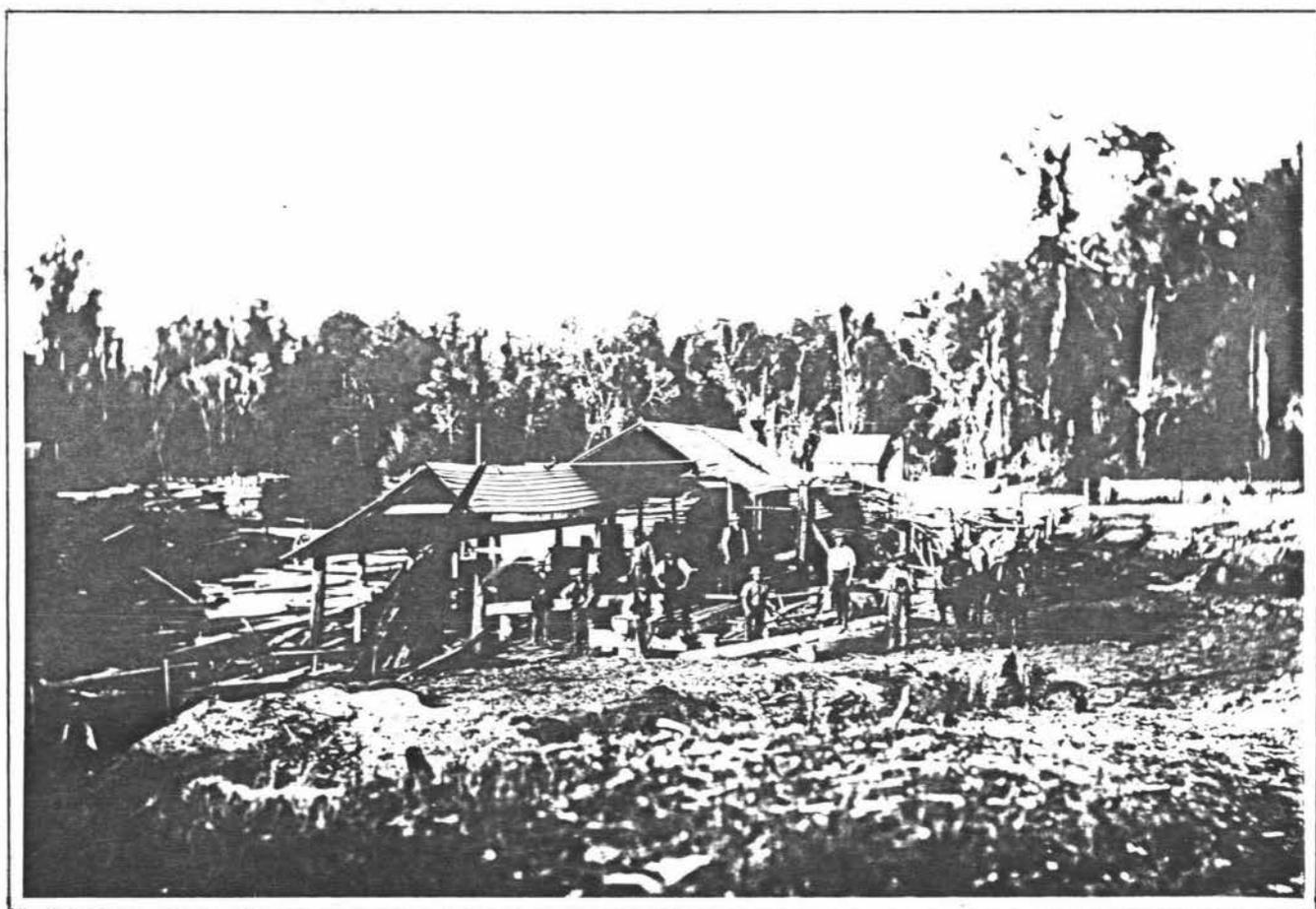
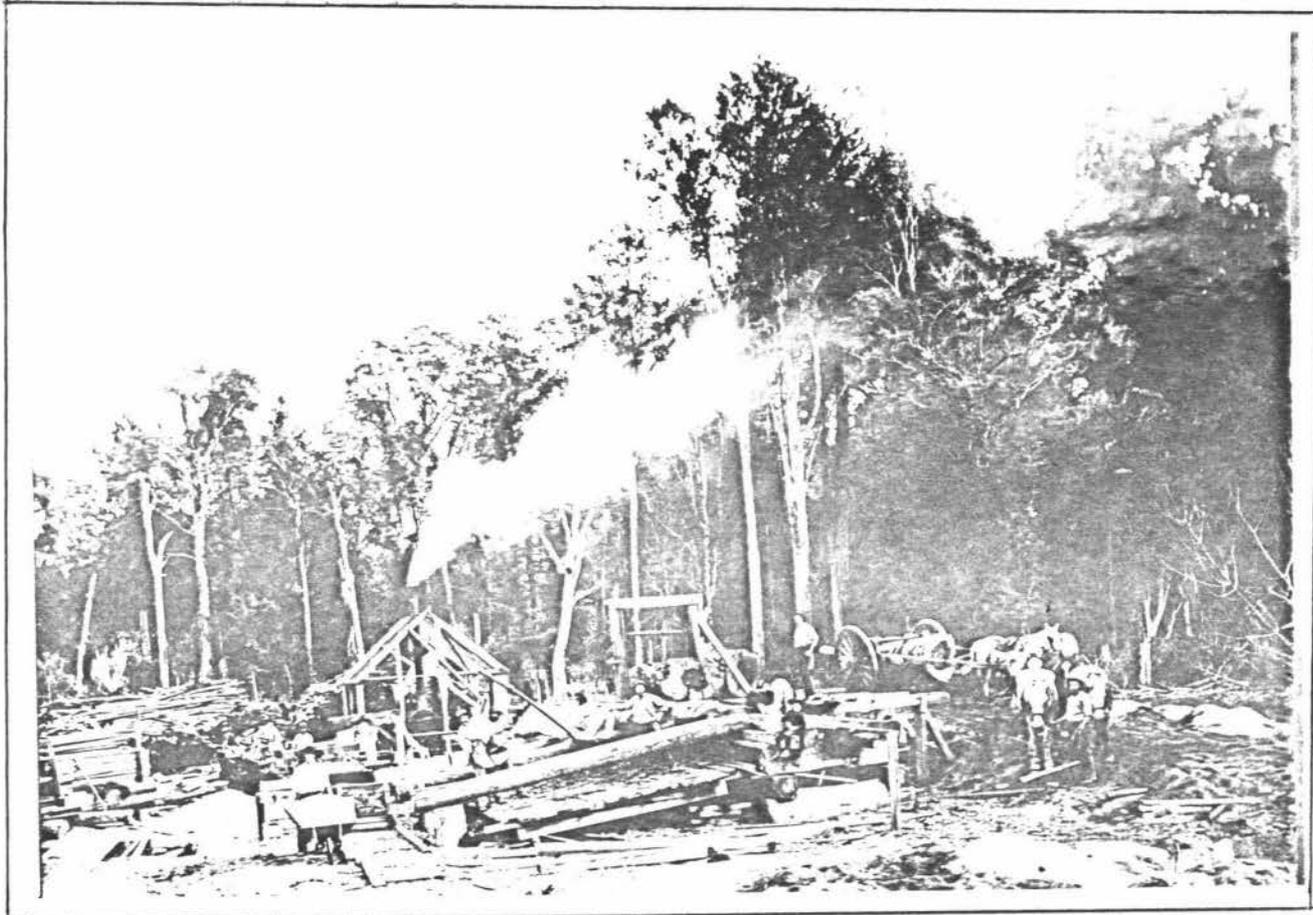


LOG HAULING, BONNY DOON, BRISBANE. TREE PHOTO COLLECTION WOOD 1909.

Two examples of log hauling. In the upper photo, a team of six horses is employed in hauling a log. The second photo shows an early steam hauler operating in the Bonny Doon area. A horse is used to haul the logs along a tramway to the mill.



Two steam operated sawmills in the Takaka area, in the period 1890-1910. The upper photo depicts William Baigent's mill, and the second Grant's mill in Collingwood. Horse teams are much in evidence.



Sawmills of a more temporary nature. The upper photo shows another of William Baigent's mills in the Takaka area, whilst the lower photo is unidentified.

CHAPTER VII.

Conclusion

Despite increasing age and declining health, Edward Baigent retained his involvement in local affairs, as well as his business interests, until the late 1880's. During this decade, Baigent's sons gradually assumed greater control of the various business affairs. However, although Baigent relinquished much of his control, he kept a strong interest up until his death in November 1892.

Of Edward Baigent's eight sons, five were to spend most of their working lives engaged in the timber industry. Arthur and Samuel both worked in their father's sawmill in Pigeon Valley for long periods before taking up farming in the Wakefield area, and Henry, Thomas, and William, the three youngest sons, spent their whole lives in the timber business. It was these three who established a mill in the Riwaka Valley in 1889, and also entered into sawmilling partnerships in the Takaka area. After years of toil and labour establishing the largest sawmill and timber business in the Nelson Province, it must have been gratifying for Edward Baigent to know that upon his death, the business would carry on in such capable hands.

Towards the end of his life, Baigent was seriously affected by a form of paralysis which made it virtually impossible for him to travel around the district as he had previously done. To Baigent this must have been particularly frustrating for he had always taken such a close interest in the affairs of the district. The Rev. Honeywell relates that despite the paralysis, Baigent still insisted on attending Church meetings, "It was sad", commented Honeywell, "to see the man who used to be able to speak in Parliament without any effort, now choosing his words and framing his sentences with difficulty." (1)

Honeywell spent much time at the house of Mr and Mrs Baigent and evidently knew the couple very well. His description of the procedure adopted by people visiting the Baigent home, gives a somewhat humorous picture of them.

He had some strange ways and used to amuse us much by always insisting on sitting in a room apart from his wife, except at meal times, though he lived on the most affectionate terms with her. In the farmhouse which was more like an Italian villa than anything else, he thus used to sit in state, surrounded by his books, accounts, etc; with the door open into the little hall, through which he used to hold conversations with Mrs Baigent, by no means in a whisper. The etiquette which was always

followed in the house whether for relations, friends or strangers (some of them distinguished ones) was for the visitors first to call on Mrs Baigent in her sitting room and remain till she forwarded you on by a servant to Mr Baigent's apartment. On leaving you were expected to look in again at Mrs Baigent's room, who usually had a cup of tea made ready to the interval. He and she were both people of commanding presence....(2)

When Honeywell left New Zealand in 1891, he realised the Baigent's both had only a short time "longer in this life", and parted from them both with much sorrow, "knowing that I should never again see them on earth." (3)

Mary-Ann Baigent died on 3 November 1892. Mrs Baigent was a very popular figure in the Wakefield community, which she had served so well during her life there. According to The Colonist, Mrs Baigent "took a lively interest in those by whom she was surrounded and by her gentle, motherly and sympathetic nature won the affections of the people in the district." (4) Mary-Ann Baigent was obviously possessed of considerable strength and courage. To leave her home and family with five young children, travel across the world on a small unfamiliar vessel, and then settle in a veritable wilderness, required much of both. With the birth of a further six children after they had arrived in Nelson, Mrs Baigent obviously had little time for leisure. With her husband working long hours, the task of raising the large family must have fallen almost entirely on her. That she lived until her 81st year is a further indication of her strength.

At the time of his wife's death, Edward Baigent was himself very ill, and he died only six days after Mary-Ann, on 9 November 1892. Following his death, The Colonist was lavish in its praise.

In the early days he did yeoman service for the young colony; he did much to advance the Provincial District and as an employer, he not merely commanded the confidence of those who worked for him, but he also gave material assistance in the development of the district. Both in business and privately he was looked upon as a generous man, and kindly withal, for not only was he ever ready to assist those less fortunate than himself, but to do so in such manner as to confer the utmost advantage. (5)

The funeral of Edward Baigent was one of the largest ever seen in the Wakefield District, with many attending from Motueka and Nelson. It was estimated that 250 people walked behind the hearse to St. John's Church, which was scarcely large enough to accommodate all present. In a brief address during the service,

the Rev. W.C. Baker, eulogised the public and private character of the man who had been the father of the place and related in gratitude to his memory incidents of the early history of the Church in this district, which graphically portrayed the living interest that Mr Baigent had been enabled to take in things pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the people of the district so long ago and at a time when there was not so great a cloud of witnesses. (6)

Edward Baigent was laid to rest next to his wife Mary Ann, on Saturday, 12 November 1892, on the gentle slope overlooking the township of Wakefield. For a couple who had shared so much for so long, it was perhaps fitting that they should die so closely together. On the headstone of Edward Baigent's grave were printed the words "in their death they were not divided".

During the last few months before his death, Edward Baigent must often have reflected upon the dramatic changes which had occurred in the Nelson Province since his arrival in May 1842. When Baigent and his family landed in Nelson, Wakefield did not even exist. The difficulties of travelling by foot through swamps, fern and rivers, have already been outlined in an earlier chapter. For many years Baigent travelled virtually everywhere by foot, and after settling in Wakefield, Mrs Baigent frequently walked into Nelson to bring out provisions. The lack of roads and bridges often made even the shortest journey extremely hazardous. By 1890 however, rivers were bridged, roads were reasonably well formed (for at least light transport) and there was even a rail link between Nelson and the Waimeas.

Changes in the character of the land in the Wakefield-Nelson area must also have given Baigent much to reflect upon. In 1842, virtually all the open land was covered in either forest or fern; by 1892 both had largely given way to pasture. Perhaps the greatest change for Baigent, however, was the gradual evolution of sawmilling techniques. When Baigent established his first saw-pit in Nelson in 1842, only a few hundred feet of timber could be laboriously produced each day. If the introduction of water powered mills signalled a major development in the timber industry, that of steam mills was even more dramatic. Steam powered mills were not as dependent upon a constant supply of running water as their water powered counterparts, and thus could be located away from streams and rivers. Large water and steam powered mills enabled the production of thousands of feet of sawn timber daily.

The fifty years Baigent spent in Nelson was a period of enormous and constant change in which he witnessed the transformation of large portions of the district.

Edward Baigent was certainly not forgotten by the people of the district after his death. At a vestry meeting of St. John's Church in February 1893, it was proposed and seconded "that the vestry gratefully acknowledges the material help rendered by the late Edward Baigent to the cause of the Church of St. John's, as a member of the congregation, and as a trustee from the founding of the Church." (7) Following this motion which was carried unanimously, it was further proposed "that a memorial be erected in the Church to the memory of the late Mr Edward Baigent...." (8) A subscription list was opened and an ornate stained glass window was installed in the chancel of the Church. At a later date, a marble tablet was placed on the wall of the Church bearing the inscription,

"In affectionate remembrance of Edward Baigent
Born June 22 1813, Died November 9, 1892".

There is little doubt that Edward Baigent is well remembered in the Wakefield and Nelson Districts. When the Wai-iti Bridge at Wakefield was opened in April 1885, Edward Baigent, who, with his wife Mary-Ann, was given the honour of being the first to cross the bridge, was referred to as "the patriarch of the district", (9) a title with which few would disagree, even today.

As one of Wakefield's pioneer settlers, Edward Baigent was admired and respected by the great majority. Throughout the almost half century Baigent spent in the Wakefield area, he maintained a genuine desire to assist his fellow settlers, and this is reflected in his involvement in St. John's Church, the Waimea Roads Board, the Wakefield School, and the Waimea South Literary Institution.

As a member of the Nelson Provincial Council, Baigent represented his electorate honestly and diligently. The fact that he was returned to the Provincial Council six times show the high esteem and regard the people of Waimea South held Baigent in. Perhaps the greatest political mistake Baigent made was in allowing himself to be elected to the House of Representatives. In the smaller sphere of local politics, Baigent was unquestionably successful, being intimately familiar

with the area. In Wellington, however, Baigent was undoubtedly out of his depth. Although capable, he was not a brilliant politician, and his shortcomings as a member in the House of Representatives are amply demonstrated in the few speeches he did make. The fact Baigent was not re-elected to the House of Representatives after his first term perhaps reflects that the people of Waimea South realised that Baigent was not the best man to represent them in Wellington. It seems surprising that Baigent allowed himself to be re-elected to the House of Representatives in 1876, but, as suggested, it is likely that he only allowed his name to go forward to provide an alternative candidate, not expecting to win the election. Despite his rather indifferent political record, Baigent must still be regarded as an eminently successful pioneer and businessman.

For settlers to succeed in mid-nineteenth century New Zealand, they needed to be both resourceful and practical. If success is measured by the attainment of social standing, Baigent succeeded with distinction. If success is measured by how one stands in history, his success was even greater. Perhaps Edward Baigent's greatest success however is the business which still flourishes nearly 140 years after he first cut timber in Nelson, a fitting tribute to his achievements.

FOOTNOTES.

CHAPTER ONE: From Windlesham to Nelson

1. Reverend Thomas Snell. Testimony to Edward Baigent on official New Zealand Company reference form - dated 10 November 1841.
2. Tyler, Warwick, *The New Zealand Company*, in New Zealand's Heritage, part 12, p.331.
3. Ibid.
4. Reverend Snell. Official New Zealand Company reference form.
5. Form for persons desirous of obtaining a free passage to New Zealand. Dated 14 October 1841
6. Baigent, L.E.H., *Brief history of the firm of H. Baigent & Sons Ltd, Nelson*, p.1 (undated).

According to Ruth M. Allan, (Nelson, A History of Early Settlement, 1965 p.110) each emigrant was allowed half a ton weight, or 20 cubic feet of baggage free of charge. Each man also had to provide the tools of his trade.

7. Hughes Thomas, *Surgeons Log of the Ship Clifford, 1841-42*, Nelson Museum. Hughes, born in 1807, was the surgeon - superintendent aboard the Clifford.
8. Hughes 31 December 1841.
The quotations used in the next six paragraphs are also taken from Hughes log-book, referring to the following dates; 9 January 1842, 10 February 1842, 14 and 21 February 1842, 25 March 1842, 19 April 1842.
9. Barnicoat, J.W., *Barnicoat Journal 1841-1844*, 7 February 1842 p. 30. Nelson Museum.
10. Saunders, Alfred, *Reminiscences*, A. Fragment of the Diary Alfred Saunders kept on the *Fifeshire*, P.305, Nelson Museum.

11. Hughes, 10 May 1842
12. Ibid. 13 May 1842.
13. The Clifford left Nelson on 22 June 1842, and her loss was reported in the Nelson Examiner, 11 February 1843.

CHAPTER TWO: The Early Months in Nelson, May 1842-February 1843.

1. Barnicoat, 1 May 1842, p.52
2. Magarey, Thomas, Thomas Magarey's Memoirs, p.18, Nelson Museum.
3. Baigent, Edward, Description of early years in Nelson and Wakefield. Dated December 1891, p.1.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.p.2
9. The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle, 19 March 1842 (hereafter referred to as The Nelson Examiner).
10. The Nelson Examiner, 10 September 1842.
11. Stephens, Samuel, Letters and Journals, Volume 1, 27 December 1842, p.105
12. Baigent, Edward, p.2.
13. Saxton, J.W., Diary 1841-1851, Volume 1, p.16, 29 August 1842.
14. This was presumably the Maitai Valley.

15. Baigent, Edward, p.2
16. Simpson, Thomas E., Kauri to Radiata : Origin and Expansion of the Timber Industry of New Zealand, 1973, p.211
17. Saxton, Volume 1, 17 November 1842.
18. Baigent, Edward, p.3
19. Allan, Ruth M., Nelson, A history of Early Settlement, Reed, 1965, p.188
20. Baigent, Edward, p.3
21. Stephens, Volume 1, p.73
22. Baigent, Edward, p.3-4
23. Biographical notes of Edward Baigent. Author unknown.
24. Ibid.
25. Allan p.211
26. Family history is rather uncertain on this point, although Edward Baigent himself reports that the families followed after preparatory work had been done by himself and Clark.
27. Baigent, Edward p.4
28. The Nelson Examiner, 25 March 1843

CHAPTER THREE: Down to Business - Wakefield 1843-1853

1. The Nelson Examiner, 8 July 1843
2. The Nelson Evening Mail, 23 May 1928
3. Stephens, Volume 1, p.123-24 30 January 1843
4. Magarey, p.35, 3 May 1844

5. Baigent, Edward, p.4-5
6. Magarey, p.21
7. Stephens, Volume 2, p.216, 11 December 1843
8. Baigent, Edward p.4
9. Allan, p.354
10. Ibid. p.361
11. Baigent Edward, p.5
12. Ibid.p.8
13. Ibid.p.8-9
14. Ibid.p.4
15. Ibid.p.5
16. Ibid.p.5
17. The Nelson Examiner, 29 November 1845
18. Baigent, Edward, p.5-6
19. Saxton, Volume 2, 16 November 1846, p.249
20. Baigent, Edward p.6
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid. p.9
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.

27. The following description comes from notes written by Edward Baigent's grandson, the late Mr L.E.H. Baigent.
28. Baigent, L.E.H. p.2
29. Saxton, Volume 2, 20 March 1846
30. The Nelson Examiner, 15 February 1845
31. Blue Book for Province of New Munster, 1852, National Archives.
32. The Nelson Examiner, 15 February 1845
33. The Nelson Examiner, 24 August 1850, and 30 July 1853
34. The Nelson Examiner, 15 February 1845
35. The Nelson Examiner, 30 August 1845
36. Ibid.
37. The Nelson Examiner, 17 February 1846
The use of the word "colonies", can in this context be somewhat misleading. In this case however, it is presumed "colonies" refers to Australia etc, rather than Wellington, Auckland etc.
38. The Nelson Examiner, 27 March 1847
39. Bell, F.D. Report and Notes Upon the Nelson Settlement for 1849, p.9. Nelson Museum
40. Ibid. p.13
41. The Nelson Examiner, 1 February 1851
42. The Nelson Examiner, 3 September 1853
43. The Nelson Evening Mail, 27 October 1928
(From an article on early Wakefield history by Mr E.W. Hodgson).

44. Nelson Census, 1849, (photocopy of original). Nelson Museum.
45. Saxton, Volume 2, 30 August 1845
46. Ibid. 20 March 1846
47. Ibid. 16 November 1846
48. Ibid. Volume 4, 3 April 1849, p.43
49. The building of the Church, and Baigent's role in Church activities, will be discussed in more depth in a following chapter.
50. Saxton, Volume 3, 10 April 1847, p.42
51. Ibid. Volume 4, 27 July 1849, p.77
52. Ibid. 7 September 1849, p.95, & 18 January 1850, p.134
53. Ibid. 7 March 1850, p.142
54. The Nelson Evening Mail, 22 November 1894
55. Saxton, Volume 4, 10 February 1851, p.191

CHAPTER FOUR: Involvement in Local Affairs

1. Honeywell, Rev. J.H., Mr Edward Baigent Lately of New Zealand, Notes written after death of Baigent, p.3.
2. Allan, H.F. The Nelson Provincial Council, Nelson Historical Society Booklet, 1974, p.38-39.
3. Baigent, Edward p.7
4. Baigent, Edward, Letter to the Commissioner of Crown Lands in Nelson, written 22 November 1860. National Archives L.S.-N 1/10, No.60/157
5. Palmer, L.R. St. John's Anglican Church, 130th Anniversary History, 1846-1976, p.7

6. Baigent, Edward, p.7 & 8
7. Baigent, Letter to Commissioner of Crown Lands p.3
8. Baigent, Edward, p.7
9. The Nelson Examiner, 24 October 1846
10. Baigent, Edward, p.7
11. The Nelson Examiner, 24 October 1846
12. According to David Strachan (who was a son-in-law of Henry Baigent) Smith was a teacher, and he also used to preach. Strachan states Smith returned to England, but came back "practically a ruined man. He was quite changed. He had got into bad company at home". Strachan goes on to say that Smith did not take up teaching again, but took to drink, and later died in jail.
13. According to Palmer, (p.14) this is the present site of the Wakefield school.
14. The Nelson Examiner, 2 November 1865
15. Bowden, T.A., My Life in New Zealand: Reminiscences of T.A. Bowden, p.101, Nelson Museum.
16. Hill, Hollis, St. Paul's Anglican Church, Brightwater Centenary History 1857-1957
17. Bowden, p.104
18. Hill, p.
19. The Colonist, 23 April 1858
20. Records of St. John's Church, Church Minutes, Diocesan Office, Nelson.
21. Palmer, p.20.

22. Church Minutes, July 1884, Annual General Meeting.
23. Palmer, p.45
24. Honeywell, p.1
25. Baigent, Edward, p.9
26. The Colonist, 16 August 1859
27. Ibid.
28. The Nelson Examiner, 21 June 1862
29. The Colonist, 5 April 1864
30. The Colonist, 27 June 1865
31. The Nelson Evening Mail, paper clipping, "Looking Back III"
"Toll Bars on the Roads", date unknown -- probably about
1948-49.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. The Nelson Examiner, 13 July 1872
36. The Colonist, 7 October 1873
37. The Colonist, 6 July 1876
38. Waimea South Mechanics Institute, Account Book, Rule
No.1 (in possession of Mr Don Hutchinson, Wakefield)
39. Ibid, 20 July 1853
40. The Nelson Examiner, 3 March 1855
41. The Nelson Examiner, 23 July 1856

42. Waimea South Mechanics Institution, Rules and Regulations.

CHAPTER FIVE: Local and National Politics

1. More specifically an Act to Grant a Representative constitution to the Colony of New Zealand, which became law on 30th June 1852. For further details on the Constitution Act, see Morrell, W.P., The Provincial System in New Zealand, 1852-1876
2. The Nelson Examiner, 30 April 1853
3. The Nelson Examiner, 1 October 1853
4. Allan, F.H.p.15
5. Ibid.
6. The Nelson Examiner, 17 October 1857
The election took place on 14 October. The results were Baigent 72, Saunders 6,, Simmonds 50.
7. The Colonist, 3 January 1862
Baigent, Saunders, and Simmonds were all returned unopposed.
8. The Colonist, 4 August 1863
9. The Colonist, 31 October 1865
10. The Colonist, 25 June 1867
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. The Colonist, 2 July 1867, The Nelson Examiner, 2 July 1867, The Nelson Evening Mail, 28 June 1867
Baigent 99, Shephard 71, Kelling 32
14. The Colonist, 2 July 1867

15. New Zealand Parliamentary Debates. Second Session of 4th Parliament, 13 August 1867-10 October 1867. Speech made 6 September 1867.
16. Allan, H.F. p.15
17. The Colonist, 6 November, 1868.
18. Ibid.
19. Dalziel, R. "The Public Works Era" in New Zealand's Heritage, Part 37, p.1009, and Oliver, W.H. The Story of New Zealand p.117.
20. Dalziel, p.1009
21. The Colonist, 23 November 1869
Baigent 106, Shephard 86, Simmonds 73.
22. The Colonist, 16 November 1869
23. Ibid.
24. The Colonist, 18 May 1870
25. Ibid.
26. Allan, H.F. p.31
The debates of "ten years before", which Allan refers to, occurred in a similar test case against the Superintendent, over, originally, mining leases in Collingwood. Charles Elliot moved the adoption of an address to the Governor, requesting him to dissolve the council in order to allow the electors to decide. This led to the above referred debates, in which Alfred Domett and David Munro figured prominently. The address was adopted 11 votes to 10, but when it was communicated to the Governor, he refused to interfere.
27. Dalziel, p.1009
28. The Colonist, 4 October 1870

29. Ibid.
30. The Nelson Examiner, 8 November 1871
31. Ibid.
32. The Colonist, 10 February, 1876
The Nelson-Foxhill railway was opened on 29 January.
The first journey carried invited officials, completing
the 19 mile distance in 1 hour, 14 minutes and 55 seconds.
33. The Colonist, 25 December 1875
34. Ibid.
35. The Nelson Evening Mail, 24 December 1875
36. The Colonist, 30 December 1875
37. The Nelson Evening Mail, 5 January 1876
38. The Nelson Evening Mail, 8 January 1876
39. Ibid.
40. New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, Third Session of
6th Parliament, 22 October 1878.
41. The Nelson Evening Mail, 11 August 1879

CHAPTER SIX: Business Years 1853-1890

1. The site of this mill was Noel Baigent's present property,
on the right hand side of the Pigeon Valley Bridge,
adjacent to the river.
2. Saunders, Alfred, *Reminiscences*, p.339.
3. Simpson, p.219

4. The Nelson Examiner, 27 August 1853, and 1 March 1862
5. The Colonist, 2 June 1863
This mill, employing 12, was powered by 2 engines. An unusual feature of the mill was a reversible motion in the sawbench, which made it unique in New Zealand. The mill's output of 1,000 ft³ per diem, was the equivalent of 12,000 super feet.
6. The Colonist, 10 November 1892
7. Baigent, L.E.H., Brief History of the firm of H. Baigent & Sons Limited, p.3-4
8. Ibid. Baigent is less certain however of the year the yard was opened in Nelson. In the same "Brief History", he suggests the date 1860. In the obituary of Mr Henry Baigent in The Nelson Evening Mail on 2 September 1929, it is suggested the yard opened in 1865. In some rough notes on the early history of Edward Baigent's operations in Nelson, L.E.H. Baigent states that the Nelson plant opened in 1869-70. Cleave, in his 1898 publication, Industries of New Zealand, wrote "about 30 years ago Mr Henry Baigent opened a branch timber business in Nelson for his father". The only firm evidence is, however the copy of the original lease between Harley and Baigent signed in 1869. The writer feels this is the most probable date the yard was opened.
9. Lucas's Nelson Almanac and Year Book for 1872
Advertisement page (xxviii)
10. The Colonist, 14 January 1878
From this advertisement it is obvious that Henry Baigent had added a joinery to the Nelson yard. The advertisement for fruit cases would indicate that a significant fruit industry was well established. The production of fruit cases was later to become of major importance for Baigents.
11. This date is taken from Cleave, Arthur, Industries of New Zealand, p.212 Auckland 1898

12. Although Baigent had his own timber drays, these could only transport a very limited amount of timber, and roads were frequently impassable in bad weather.
13. The Colonist, 23 April 1867, and 25 October 1870
14. The Colonist, 21 February 1873
15. The Colonist, 27 April 1878
16. The Nelson Examiner, 8 November 1871
17. The Colonist, 14 September 1881
18. The Nelson Evening Mail, 30 April 1881
19. Honeywell, p.3
20. The Colonist, 7 January 1888
21. The Colonist, 13 October 1887
22. The Colonist, 4 August 1863

CHAPTER SEVEN: Conclusion

1. Honeywell, p.3
2. Ibid. p.2
3. Ibid. p.4
4. The Colonist, 4 November 1892
5. The Colonist, 10 November 1892
6. The Nelson Evening Mail, 14 November 1892
7. St. John's Church Wakefield, Minute Book 1875-1900. Vestry Meeting 21 February 1893.

8. Ibid.
9. The Colonist, 7 April 1885

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