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AN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF SETTLEMENT AND  
LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL IN THE MANAWATU

1840-1891

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of the Requirements for the Degree of  
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### Abstract

In historical geography the relationship of human agency to landscape change in the settlement process of colonial lands is an important factor. The analysis of perception and image in the development of new landscape scenes is useful in that it attempts to understand subsequent human activities by looking at the attitudes of individuals and groups to a particular environment. In so doing the desire for change is explored. The use of an Official/Popular approach to settlement and landscape appraisal offers some particular insights into the process of deforestation and land development in the nineteenth century Manawatu. Between 1840 and 1891 the bush landscape of the area, a feature which dominated hundreds of thousands of hectares, was removed. This reflected a desire on the part of not only the settlers for cleared farming lands, but also appraisals on the part of both Provincial and Central Government which favoured rural settlement. The active support given settlement schemes by Government, in particular from 1870, helped fulfil Official appraisals that the bushlands could be successfully occupied and developed.

The appraisals of the forest lands from both Official and Popular stances represented a bias which favoured rural settlement. Subsequently, the main settlement period from 1870 was marked by major land clearance operations and with it large scale timber wastage. Overall the forest was considered enormous, its timber almost inexhaustible, and a barrier to successful settlement. This attitude was sustained even when the forest vegetation had been largely replaced by the domesticated scene.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Abstract	i
Acknowledgement	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures and Tables	iv
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Landscape Perception and Image	1
1.2 The Official/Popular Appraisal of Environment	3
1.3 Sources	4
1.4 Outline	5
2 THE ISOLATED MANAWATU	
2.1 Settlement Prelude	7
2.2 Image Creation and the New Zealand Image	8
2.3 The New Zealand Company and the Manawatu	13
2.4 Land Transactions of the Wellington Provincial Government	18
2.5 Pre 1870 Settlement	23
2.6 Conclusion	26
3 THE IMPETUS FOR ORGANISED SETTLEMENT	
3.1 Organised Settlement	28
3.2 Scandinavian Settlers	28
3.3 Manchester Block Settlers	36
3.4 The Settler Image of the Forest	44
3.5 Conclusion	47
4 LAND, PROGRESS AND THE FOREST BARRIER	
4.1 Introduction	49
4.2 Government/Settler Relationship	50
4.2.1 Deferred Payment	51
4.2.2 The Isolated Landscape	54
4.2.3 The Bush Landscape	55
4.2.4 The Physical Landscape	57
4.2.5 Legislation and the Farm Ideal	59
4.3 Local Perceptions and 'Progress'	62
4.3.1 Landscape Admiration	66
4.3.2 The Desire to Burn	67
4.4 Conclusion	78
5 CONCLUSION	80
BIBLIOGRAPHY	87

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURE	PAGE
2.1 Settlement Location in the Manawatu	14
2.2 Forest Extent in Manawatu, 1860	17
2.3 Manawatu Land Blocks	20
2.4 Copy of J.T. Stewart's Sketch Map of the Ahuaturanga Block	22
3.1 Foxton-Palmerston Communications Links	34
3.2 Plan of Manchester Block	38
4.1 Manawatu Location of Lands Opened for Free Selection, 1890; Unoccupied Native Land, 1892; Mercantile Timber Species, 1896	71
TABLE	
2.1 Manawatu Settlers, 1868	25
4.1 Bush Fire Reports, <u>Manawatu Evening Standard</u> , 1885	69

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Landscape Perception and Image

An individual's environmental preference, or why some landscape scenes are preferred over others, Appleton (1975, 1-2) has asserted is itself a subject as old as human experience. He refers to the period of Homer and the timeless satisfaction found in Virgil's word pictures of the Compagna, and the Greek and Roman poets who felt a powerful attraction to a nature whose subjugation was symbolised in the tamed landscape of garden, field and vineyard.

Appleton (1975, 24) distinguishes between attempts made to understand and explain the phenomena of our visible surroundings, the physical understanding of the world, and with understanding environmental or landscape preferences by groups. In this study the concern is with the way the Manawatu bush landscape was seen by nineteenth century observers, and their attitudes to subsequent land development. It is in Appleton's latter category, where the concern is with appraisals of the landscape by groups, that the realm of bushland perceptions and the reaction of the nineteenth century settler to the milieu of the Manawatu falls.

While Appleton introduces "the problem" of landscape by asking what and why we like about it, Tuan (1974, 59-63) relates the growth of individual and group preferences for particular environments to specific factors. He points to biological heritage, upbringing, education, employment and physical surroundings as moving forces behind this. At the level of group attitudes Tuan portrays the concepts of culture and environment as overlapping. When they possess varying values, individuals or groups in a particular landscape can see a different world. To exemplify this distinction Tuan (1974, 63) introduces the concept of the "Native" and the "Visitor". The "Visitor" has a viewpoint in observing landscape. It is simple and easily stated. The "Native" though has a complex attitude derived from his immersion in the totality of

his environment. He expresses this only with difficulty and indirectly through behaviour, local tradition, lore and myth. While the colonial settlers in America typically viewed the wilderness as a threat, those followers of European Nature-Romanticism admired the Natural scene (Tuan, 1974, 63).

At the pioneering fringe, as the early Manawatu was, the explorer and settler meet with novel events. The confrontations, Tuan writes, serve to magnify a people's cultural bias. Migrants thus see a new environment through eyes that have adapted to other values. Tuan (1974, 66) refers to a contrast between Spanish and Anglo-American appraisals of New Mexico as a potential area for settlement. While the latter groups remarks were disparaging to the area's potential, the Spanish view favoured settlement and found much to enthuse over in the landscape.

Human ideas are a necessary factor in landscape change. It is human experience that moulds human ideas (Cosgrove, 1979, 66-69). In this view while human ideas mould the landscape, it is experience of space and place that moulds human ideas. Suggested here then is something similar to Tuan's idea of cultural influences upon landscape perception. As cultural values became established by background life in society, the way in which an individual will see his world, and judgements he will make about aspects of it, will be influenced by his previous experiences. Cosgrove continues that experience in society leads to shared representations of reality and thus with unlinked groups there is room to allow for separate development of shared images. Different groups could thus see, as in Tuan's example of appraisals of New Mexico, the same landscape and assess it differently. The concept of landscape image is something which Meinig (1979, 165-187) in an American context has also examined. His contention is that within groups certain landscape depictions can be powerfully evocative because they are understood as being a particular kind of place, rather

than something precise. Meinig referred to the New England village, which is widely assumed to symbolise the best of community. It is an idealised version of an actual landscape.

## 1.2 The Official/Popular Appraisal of Environment

In the field of historical geography relatively few of the works which relate to the settlement process have dealt with the relation between the way colonial lands were seen by various contemporary groups and subsequent settlement. Powell's The Public Lands of Australia Felix is one which has, in a broad study, examined this relationship. In this volume he established that distinct 'Official' and 'Popular' viewpoints were of fundamental significance to the understanding of the management of the public lands. Powell considered the Official viewpoint was obscured by a recurring image, and 'the man on the land' was forced to work within a legislative as well as physical and economic environment. Such is the pattern observed in the local region, although on a smaller scale. Settlement occurred at two distinct levels. Locally where decisions were made by those actively undertaking the settlement process and externally where decisions were made at Government level, which directly affected the settler. In both these levels the image of the land was influential in decision making. The settler sought answers for day to day problems faced in the bushland Blocks while Government looked for ways to help facilitate the overall occupation and development of the region.

In the Manawatu, separation of individuals and groups into 'Official' and 'Popular' categories, similar to Powell's assessments, is possible. Their interplay allows for the examination of attitudes to the unoccupied Blocks within the Manawatu and land development there. By focusing on the bush landscape, which by and large

covered the bulk of the unoccupied areas in the local region, an opportunity is provided for the examination of responses to a typical feature of the nineteenth century New Zealand landscape, the forest vegetation. Emigration to New Zealand, as noted by Johnston (1981, 19) "allows a unique study to be made of the relationship between information use and appraisal of new landscapes." The use of the phrase "New Zealand bush" in describing the landscape is itself indicative of a perception and a symbolic image. Johnston (1981, 19) noted that the term was widely used by authors attempting to stress a distinctive and unique vegetation cover. Initially, she considers, the settlers and visitors during the early years of colonisation from 1839 to 1855 used 'bush' when describing the dense vegetation cover with which they were unfamiliar and which differed from the English wood of forest. In the Manawatu initial exploration by New Zealand Company agents noted the luxuriant forest cover and laid the basis for later organised settlement initiatives. An underlying theme in this study is that of the role of man in the evolution of land development in the Manawatu.

### 1.3 Sources

Prior to the advent of a district newspaper in 1877, more general works applicable to the area were used to provide local, personalised material. Of these, T.L. Buick's history Old Manawatu proved useful in that it was a near contemporary work in which the author was in the later part a first hand observer. The works by Bradfield and Petersen similarly provided a useful overview of the region's history and development, while Davies and Clevely's Pioneering to Prosperity, 1874-1974 provided some insight into life in the early Manawatu. Various surveyors reports on the district supplement the more general works. Of these the records and maps of J.T. Stewart are of particular value in providing official, reliable documents and survey maps. Stewart remained in

Government employ locally for 40 years up to the late 1800s. The appearance in 1877 of the Manawatu Times newspaper followed by the Manawatu Evening Standard two years later, supply useful information for the second half of this work.

Of the various Government publications the British Parliamentary Papers (BPP), Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR), and the Wellington Provincial Council Journal of Proceedings (WPCJP) are the major sources. These supply detailed information covering district surveys, public works and immigration. Along with the New Zealand Parliamentary Debates (NZPD) and the New Zealand Statutes they were referred to as a means of establishing contemporary Government policy and its application to the Manawatu.

#### 1.4 Outline

For the purpose of this study the Manawatu region is seen as the area situated north of the Horowhenua Block, south of the Rangitikei river and west of the Tararua and Ruahine ranges, thus approximating mid-nineteenth century perceptions of it. Following the abolition of the Provinces in 1876 the Manawatu County came into existence. While this gave a defined boundary to an area called the Manawatu, these boundaries have through time continually altered. The County today bears little resemblance to that of 1876 owing to subdivisions.

The time sequence 1840 to 1891 provides coverage of the pioneering phase of settlement in the area. The date 1840 is significant in that it marked the initial exploratory trips up the Manawatu river by E. Jerningham Wakefield. It was after this visit that the New Zealand Company became involved in attempts to settle the region. For the main part though, the study concentrates on the period after J.T. Stewart's 1859 surveys of the area. These followed the purchase by Government agency of land

Blocks from Maori ownership. It was only after 1859 that large scale immigration and occupation of the region became a reality, and it marked both Provincial and Central Government involvement in settlement schemes. By 1891 the landscape of the Manawatu had undergone irrevocable change. The forests had become a remnant, except on the ranges. In that year as well the railway through the Manawatu Gorge became a reality. While road linkages in the area date from earlier time, it was the railway which offered the best opportunity for long distance travel and transport. In the nineteenth century setting it seems generally agreed that railway was the most significant communications link (Warr, 1964, 131; Petersen, 1973, 161). With established lines to Wellington and Wanganui, any effective barriers to trade, travel or communication were removed.

The role of the New Zealand Company, its exploration and attempt to purchase land in the region are examined in Chapter 2. This leads on to early 'Official' appraisals of the Manawatu and settlement activities up to 1870. This provides a setting for the building of contemporary Government attitudes towards land development in the forest landscape. In Chapter 3 the initial sponsored immigrants, who arrived in the early- and mid-1870s, are dealt with, and their relationship with Government explored. The importance of these organised schemes on land development and later settlement of the Manawatu is significant. Chapter 4 deals with the subsequent Official/Popular relationship from the later 1870s until 1891. The role of Government in settlement and local attitudes towards the forest landscape as it diminished are dealt with in relation to the farm ideal, which it is considered was an important concept in relation to the land development which occurred in the region. The desire for land was an important factor in the occupation of the bushland Blocks. The concluding chapter then attempts to analyse the overall Official/Popular relationship and the role of these groups in the landscape change which occurred through the study period.

## 2. THE ISOLATED MANAWATU

### 2.1 Settlement Prelude

The forests of the Manawatu were the traditional grounds of several Maori tribes. Chief among these prior to the move of Te Rauparaha to Kapiti Island were the Rangitane. The life style remained traditional in character until well into the nineteenth century. Swamp-lands and forest, the dominating features of the interior, were apparently able to support several thousand people (Esler, 1964, 43). The arrival of Te Rauparaha and his Ngati Toa people brought important changes to tribal settlements. The Ngati Toa became the dominant tribe and by right of conquest claimed the land. While Te Rauparaha settled on Kapiti Island the Rangitane and others were reduced to subservient peoples (Owens, 1972, 3).

With Te Rauparaha's unchallenged dominance the disrupting effects of the Musket wars in other parts of New Zealand were avoided. The resultant peace made for a quick, unimpeded economic and social transformation of the tribes. By the 1850s much Maori economic activity was directed to Europeans (Owens, 13). European settlement was occurring slowly, mainly it seems from drift from the main settlement at Wellington. People were finding their way into the bush and riverside pas along the West Coast. One of these was Stephen Charles Hartley, reportedly the first European to be shown the Papaioea, a natural clearing which was to become the site of Palmerston North (Bradfield, 1964, 2). Hartley introduced the first horse, sheep and cow to the Manawatu. His interest in several small trading vessels operating from Wellington to the Manawatu river resulted ultimately in the use of the river for transport. In general the Maori were prepared to lease land to the early wanderers (BPP, Vol. 7, 1851, 237). Thus the basis of trade and settlement was starting slowly, but with very small numbers involved. Throughout this period there was missionary activity. Frequent early visitors were Octavius Hadfield, Samuel Williams and Richard Taylor (Owens, 1972, 14).

This was the prelude to the first organised settlement efforts.

## 2.2 Image Creation and the New Zealand Image

The effect of available information in colonial promotion on both attitude formation and the rate and nature of migration flows has long been recognised (Cameron, 1974, 57). The promotion of a colony such as New Zealand with the publication of pamphlets, circulars, periodicals and books was indicative, says Johnston (1977, 62), of a desire to create rather than satisfy a demand.

In focusing specifically on pamphlet and journal articles, Cameron (1974, 60) noted that a major avenue for information distortion was misinterpretation of official reports. While it is difficult to distinguish between 'wilful' and 'innocent' distortion, the main concern for those writers involved with colonial promotion was to make their descriptions readable, familiar and interesting. Thus they included editorial and personal views and attitudes. Subsequently available information from official reports was carefully selected, reorganised and occasionally embellished.

In the mid-1830s there appears to have been some general interest in Britain about New Zealand. Articles on the benefits of emigration plus accounts of experiences in North America, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand appeared in The Times and Glasgow Herald (Johnston, 1977, 61). In this period the New Zealand Company has, according to Johnston (1977, 60), been recognised as the principal specialised agency for information dissemination about the country. In this setting the Company extolled the merits of this country as a place for settlement. E. Jerningham Wakefield wrote regular articles on New Zealand for the Company which were published in local and national newspapers. He had also personally negotiated with editors of some of the small papers for continued insertion of New

Zealand news (Johnston, 1977, 61). The New Zealand Company therefore guaranteed New Zealand some British coverage and was thus the major avenue for the fostering of an awareness and image of the country. The Company had appointed over 90 agents throughout England, Scotland and Ireland concerned with emigration and land sales. Also offered by the Company were visual displays of paintings, panoramas and an exhibition of curiosities in their London office (Johnston, 1977, 60).

A significant form of distortion used by the New Zealand Company was the assumption that features specific to certain areas were common to the whole of New Zealand. In Britain New Zealand was claimed a favoured land, a land of promise and one destined to become "the Britain of the South", one in which landowners could not fail to succeed or make profits (Johnston, 1977, 63-65). Prior to and concurrent with initial settlement of the country, the Company had attempted to familiarise migrants with the nature of New Zealand. They created images that suggested it was a land covered in a luxuriant green, tropical like vegetation that was largely either forest or fernland (Johnston, 1981, 19). The emphasis of material was on the attraction of emigrants rather than description of the country.

Shepard (1969, 1) contends that the ideal world of the Englishman was that it be fruitful and productive. Their cultural background supported the ideal of the domesticated scene. The promotion by the Company certainly played on New Zealand's agricultural potential. Most of the guides and pamphlets were subdivided into sections with specific accounts of features such as climate, vegetation and soil. Accounts of the physical features relied on general descriptions and emotive terminology.

The tropical luxuriance and height of the vegetation cover were assumed by all writers to be proof of soil

fertility and evidence of a climate favourable to growth and agricultural development (Johnston, 1979, 160). Many recruits by the Company were farm labourers. There was little attempt to provide details of possible areal differentiation in soil type or quality, that the soil must be fertile was an unquestionable fact (Johnston, 1979, 161).

The reliance upon visual assessments of soil fertility, primarily the height of vegetation, led to several conceptions about soil quality. In general forests and forest land were considered more fertile than fern land, which was further subdivided in terms of possible fertility on the height of the fern. Grasslands were considered less fertile and were frequently classified as bog or marsh. These contentions were widely accepted (Johnston, 1979, 162). Areas of native grassland were thus not evaluated very highly by the pamphlet writers, despite being generally located on extensive tracts of level land. Johnston concludes that having searched the more accessible literature and after listening to the promoters an intending emigrant would have been encouraged to believe that the soil of New Zealand was extremely rich and extraordinarily productive, extending throughout the country, from coastline to mountain peaks and being capable of producing abundant crops (Johnston, 1979, 162).

Scenes recalling home were important to the English emigrant. Shepard (1969, 3) quoting Thomas Cholmandely stated that:

"Englishmen preferred pastoral country in the image of some great gentleman's seat with its fine domestic grasses, its clumps of graceful trees and lack of underbrush."

The familiarity and compatibility of New Zealand to the English settler was one of the techniques employed in much of the promotional literature. Like other articles of New Zealand Company literature, Ward's Information Relative

to New Zealand was highly promotional and intended for immigrants (Ward, 1975). Of New Zealand Ward wrote:

"There is probably no part of the world which presents a more eligible field for extension of British enterprise, or a more promising career of usefulness to those who labour in the course of human improvement than the islands of New Zealand."

(Ward, 1975, 1). Dieffenbach, an employee of the Company stated:

"It is natural that in the selection of a new colony in a distant region, a preference should be given to a country the climate and other circumstances of which are in some degree analogous to those of the native land of the colonists ..."

(Dieffenbach, 1843, 1). When comparing New Zealand's climate with that of Great Britain he considered it similar, but superior when compared to Britain's other colonies such as Australia.

In praising the advantages of New Zealand, potential disadvantages received scant coverage. The mosquito and sandfly had not been heard of as being an annoyance wrote Fox (1842, 12). There was considerable downplaying of any problems settlers may encounter with Maori populations whose lands the settlers would occupy. When considering the attitudes to the settlement of a large body of Europeans on lands removed from Maori ownership Ward (1975, 73) considered:

"... Their cordial reception of the missionaries and their ready intercourse with British settlers and others concerned in trade and shipping for many years past, appear to place beyond doubt the desire they entertain to welcome British settlers amongst them."

Charles Heaphy was another associated with the New Zealand Company who found the country praiseworthy. He also viewed the land as being "... of the richest and most fertile nature ...", despite having appeared sterile at a distance (1842, 2). On the soils of New Zealand Heaphy continued:

"This rich, fertile soil accompanied with a moist atmosphere and mild climate had every requisite for the successful practice of all European agricultural and pastoral pursuits. Experience had shown that all kinds of grain, vegetables and fruit grown in England would flourish equally as well in New Zealand ..."

On the forests his view was that bushland clearance would not be prohibitively expensive and could be achieved cheaply, confidently and with success (74-76). Heaphy was also convinced forest cover was indicative of the more productive land.

Having heard reports of extraordinary soil fertility and luxuriant vegetation cover, many of the settlers expressed some dismay at the barren appearance of much of the coastal landscape and grass covered valleys (Johnston, 1979, 163). It seems though that for those emigrants who settled in the more heavily wooded areas, that they remained convinced of the fertile nature of the soil. Appraisals made in the first year of settlement relied for the most part, as the images of the literature had suggested, on the appearance and height of vegetation. After the experience of a complete growing season more specific and realistic assessments of soil fertility were made, and for practical reasons many of the settlers farmed the fernland since it could be ploughed and cleared easily. This assumption of the superior nature of the forest land seems to have maintained, though tempered, after initial settlement (Johnston, 1979, 164). The practical difficulties of land clearance of the forested areas transformed other more easily cleared lands into

desirable blocks. Johnston concludes that "... in examining the appraisals in light of the images promoted in the literature it is evident that the measures used by the settlers to assess soil fertility were similar to those found in the promotional literature", and that "... for the most part ... the descriptions and images promoted by the New Zealand Company became the expectations and images of the emigrants before arrival" (Johnston, 1979, 164).

### 2.3 The New Zealand Company and the Manawatu

Charles Heaphy and E. Jerningham Wakefield both visited the Manawatu on their journeys of exploration for the New Zealand Company. In their subsequent writings they praised the Manawatu. Wakefield saw the land as being of "level and fertile character and abounding with the finest timber" (Wakefield, 1975, 152). Heaphy considered this expedition, which explored the land to the north of the Tararua range, lying about the Manawatu river, to have passed over "... one of the finest portions of New Zealand" and that the area possessed "... many facilities for becoming an important agricultural and pastoral station" (Heaphy, 1842, 12-13). Also suggested was that any difficulties of communications with the north and interior to have been exaggerated. Yet those who attempted settlement prior to the establishment of a communication network found transport difficult. One of the McEwan's, settlers at Karere in 1868 (Fig. 2.1) wrote that his horse when travelling from the Rangitikei floundered through the mud up to its girth. The mosquitoes were mentioned in early writings as a terrible scourge. Harry McEwan commented "there were just two seasons in the year then; the mud season and the mosquito season" (Bradfield, 1956, 21-22).

E. Jerningham Wakefield did however report enthusiastically on the area to Colonel William Wakefield,

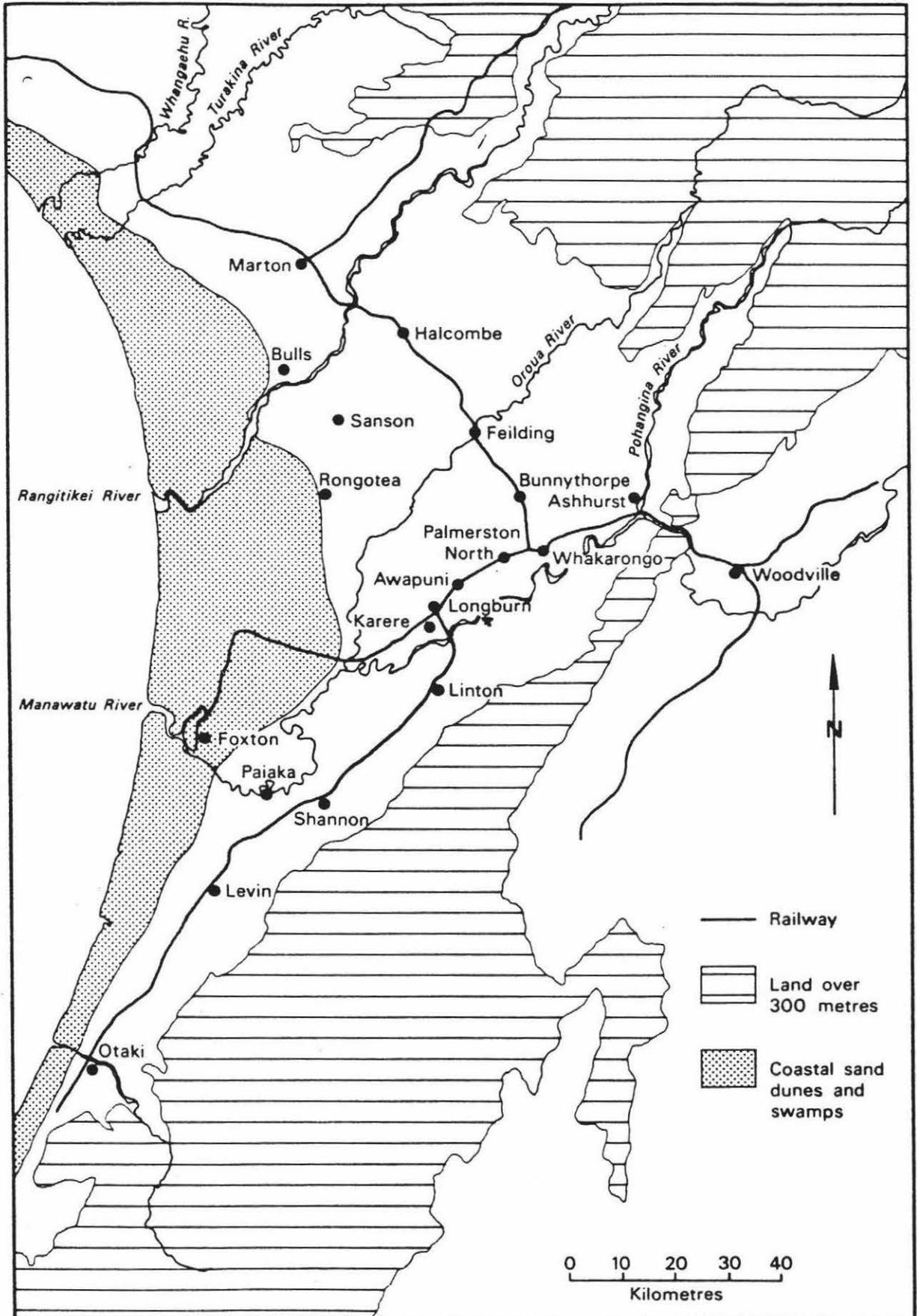


Figure 2.1 Settlement Location in the Manawatu (New Zealand Heritage, p. 1223).

principal agent of the New Zealand Company. Subsequently the Colonel entertained a proposal of the Ngati Raukawa, a tribe in alliance with the dominant chief Te Rauparaha, to sell part of the Manawatu lowlands. In 1841 Governor Hobson had waived the Crown's pre-emptive rights in favour of the New Zealand Company over lands in Wellington, Taranaki and Manawatu (Sinclair, 1969, 91). A conference was subsequently held at Otaki where 25,000 acres (10,125 hectares) of the district was purchased by the Company for 900 pounds in goods. Immediately a preliminary reconnaissance was made by William Mein Smith. The main survey party under Charles H. Kettle followed. Immediately upon arrival in Port Nicholson in early February 1842, a Mr Brees, chief surveyor to the New Zealand Company, and a number of cadets were dispatched to assist Kettle in his survey. In his summary of the report on the Manawatu Kettle had written:

"... the immense quantity of available land still on the Manawatu, the value of the River as a communication line and its applicability to the purposes of machinery must render it a most valuable possession."

(BPP, Vol. 2, 1884, 174)

Despite this optimism the acquisition of land in the Manawatu by the Company did not proceed smoothly. Kettle only just completed his survey when the New Zealand Company became involved in disputes concerning the title which they believed they had acquired to the country surveyed. Agents of the Company began to find themselves in difficulties with both Maori and colonist (Holcroft, 1977, 2). The Company it seems had acted too quickly. Maori landowners who had sold broad areas for a few trade items were beginning to demand repossession. Chiefs in the Manawatu began to make it clear that they wished to repudiate the sale of land to colonists in Wellington. The dispute became serious enough to demand intervention from London. Hobson had now decided that under the Treaty of Waitangi

all purchases from the Maori must come under review (Sinclair, 1969, 70-77). He therefore refused to grant a title for the Colonel's purchases until a Commissioner's judgement had been pronounced on them. William Spain was appointed Commissioner to investigate land claims and took up his post in 1842. Governor Hobson had informed Wakefield that the Government would sanction any equitable arrangement he might make to induce Maoris who resided within certain limits to hand over possession of their habitations, but there was to be no use of force or compulsory measures for their removal. To yield possession of their "habitations" Spain commented meant their pa's and enclosed grounds, not fresh purchases of thousands of acres as occurred in the Manawatu. Acting on Spain's report, Hobson declared all purchases after 30 January 1840 as void and that the Maori owners were to receive compensation (BPP, Vol. 5, 1843-'5, 112). The Company was allowed to keep only 900 acres (3,645 hectares) (BPP, Vol. 5, 1843-'5, 106).

Spain's decision had traumatic effects. The New Zealand Company was already in difficulties. Their scheme for settlement had to be abandoned. Of the 900 acres granted the Company only 400 acres (162 hectares) were taken up. Of this a Captain Robinson acquired 200 acres (81 hectares) and John and Thomas Kebbell the other 200. Robinson walked overland from the Hawkes Bay and began life in the lower Manawatu as a trader. The Kebbell brothers began operations as pioneer sawmillers, a venture which was not successful. They had hoped to derive a profit from cutting and shipping the timber down the river. Timber was easily accessible along the banks for about 30 miles (46.3 kilometres, Fig. 2.2). Although nothing like the Company had intended eventuated the township of Paiaka (Fig. 2.1) was founded. In 1855 however Paiaka was hit by an earthquake that terminated the settlement (Buick, 1903, 149). The Kebbells' mill was destroyed and they decided to move. The principal traders moved to Te Awahou, ten kilometres down the river. This was to become the town of Foxton (Fig. 2.1).

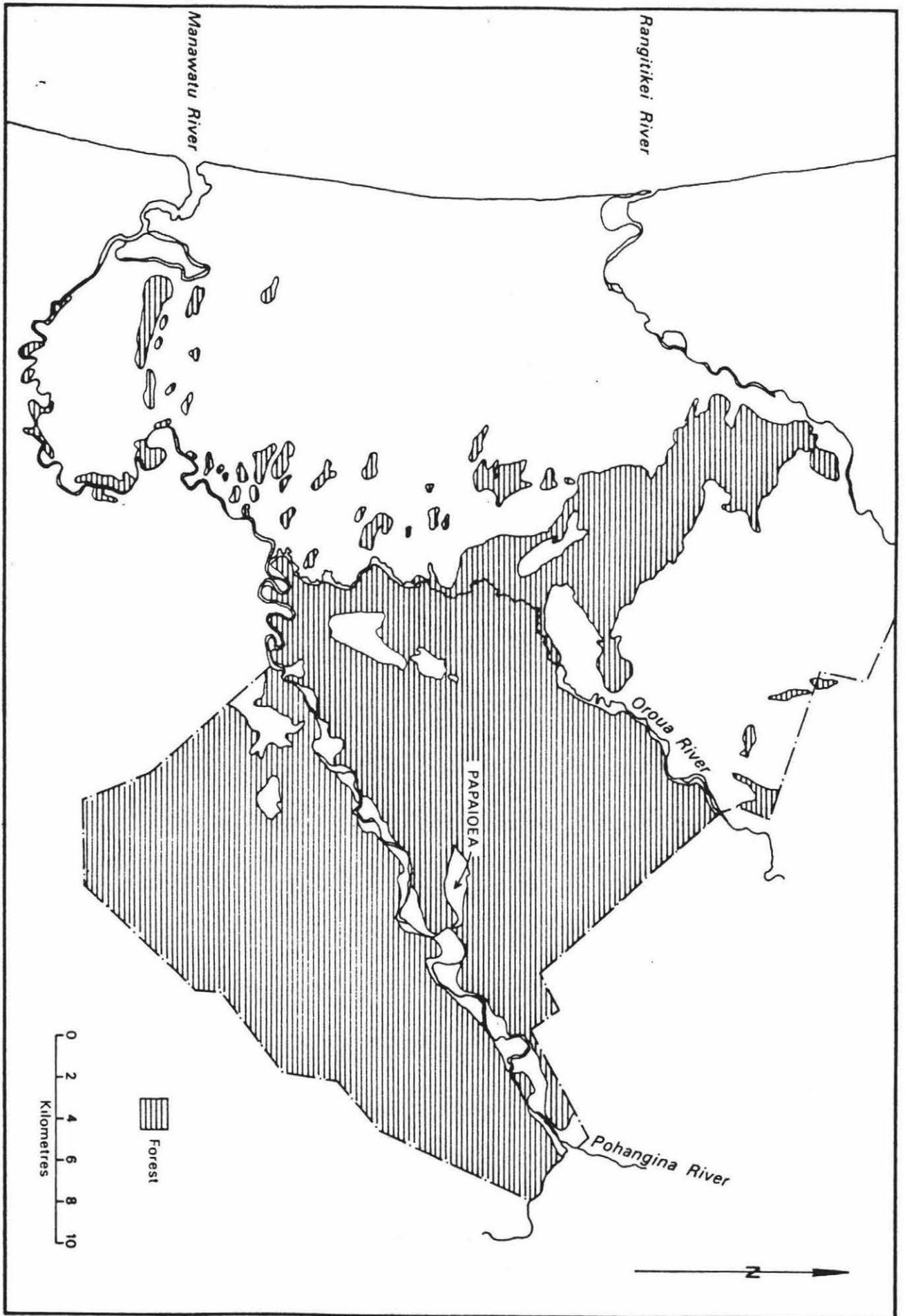


Figure 2.2 Forest Extent in Manawatu, 1860 (Esler, 1964).

With the disappearance of Paiaka the influence of the New Zealand Company in the Manawatu finished. In the future the Government would enforce pre-emptive rights. With the virtual failure of the Company's scheme communication was to remain difficult and the region isolated until Government assisted settlement began. From the 1850s to the 1870s the only viable means of access to Wellington was to sail down the coast in one of the small, periodic cutters. Tramping down the beach was the alternative. There were no roads through the bush and any overland journey was difficult. Within the Manawatu, the main avenue of travel was by canoe on the river. In 1851, according to the Reverend James Duncan, there were about 70 Europeans of all ages in the Manawatu and the population remained very small for the next two decades (Bradfield, 1964, 3. Saunders and Anderson ed.). Without the influence of Government agency settlers did not move into the bush blocks of the Manawatu.

#### 2.4 Land Transactions of the Wellington Provincial Government

An indirect consequence of the New Zealand Company's propaganda was the expectation of land on arrival. Johnston (1977, 64) quotes one emigrant referring to the promises laid out by the Company within its pamphlets and handbooks as:

"Promises made to the emigrants in Plymouth by the Company's agents for the purpose of getting them on board without trouble - and which they knew could never be fulfilled."

The Company was responsible for the transport of 16,000 emigrants from Britain, a number in excess of the capability of their settlements holdings (Osborne, 1970, 343).

The phase of limited settlement was unlikely to last. Sinclair (1969, 77) has noted that the New Zealand Company had recruited settlers and sold in advance land it hoped Colonel Wakefield would buy. Settlers who had arrived to find their land unsurveyed learnt from Spain that much of it still belonged to the Maori. Land was desired and successive land sales prepared the way for change. The area known as the Te Awahou Block (Fig. 2.3) was that most desired by the Superintendent of Wellington Dr Featherston and his executive for many years (Buick, 1903, 155). This Block extended from the mouth of the Manawatu River for 50 kilometres along its banks and comprised some 37,000 acres (14,985 hectares). The river mouth provided access to the region by ship. The Te Awahou Block was purchased in 1858 from the Ngati Raukawa for 2,500 pounds. The first purchase of land in Manawatu by the Provincial Authorities was, it seems, perfectly satisfactory to all. Foxton township (Fig. 2.1) was being laid out, the European population having reached about 100 (Buick, 1903, 157).

Almost immediately following the Te Awahou sale overtures were made by the Rangitane chiefs for the sale of the adjoining block known as Ahuaturanga (Buick, 1903, 157; Fig. 2.3). This Block included the pear shaped clearing in the bush, some 150 kilometres from the river mouth which the Maoris called Papaioea (Fig. 2.4). It was a partially scrub covered area of 600 acres (243 hectares) (Bradfield, 1962, 63). J.T. Stewart commenced preliminary surveys of the Te Awahou and Ahuaturanga Blocks in 1858 under instructions from Native Department head, Donald McLean. The latter Block, comprising 250,000 acres (101,250 hectares) was the more significant. Stewart was shown the Papaioea clearing by a chief Te Hirawanu, and marked it on his survey plans as "a good site for a township" (Buick, 1903, 157; W.P.C.A.P., Session 14, 1868). Also included in his survey, though purchase had not been negotiated, was the Oroua Block of 20,000 acres (8,100 hectares) which bordered the western side of the Ahuaturanga Block.

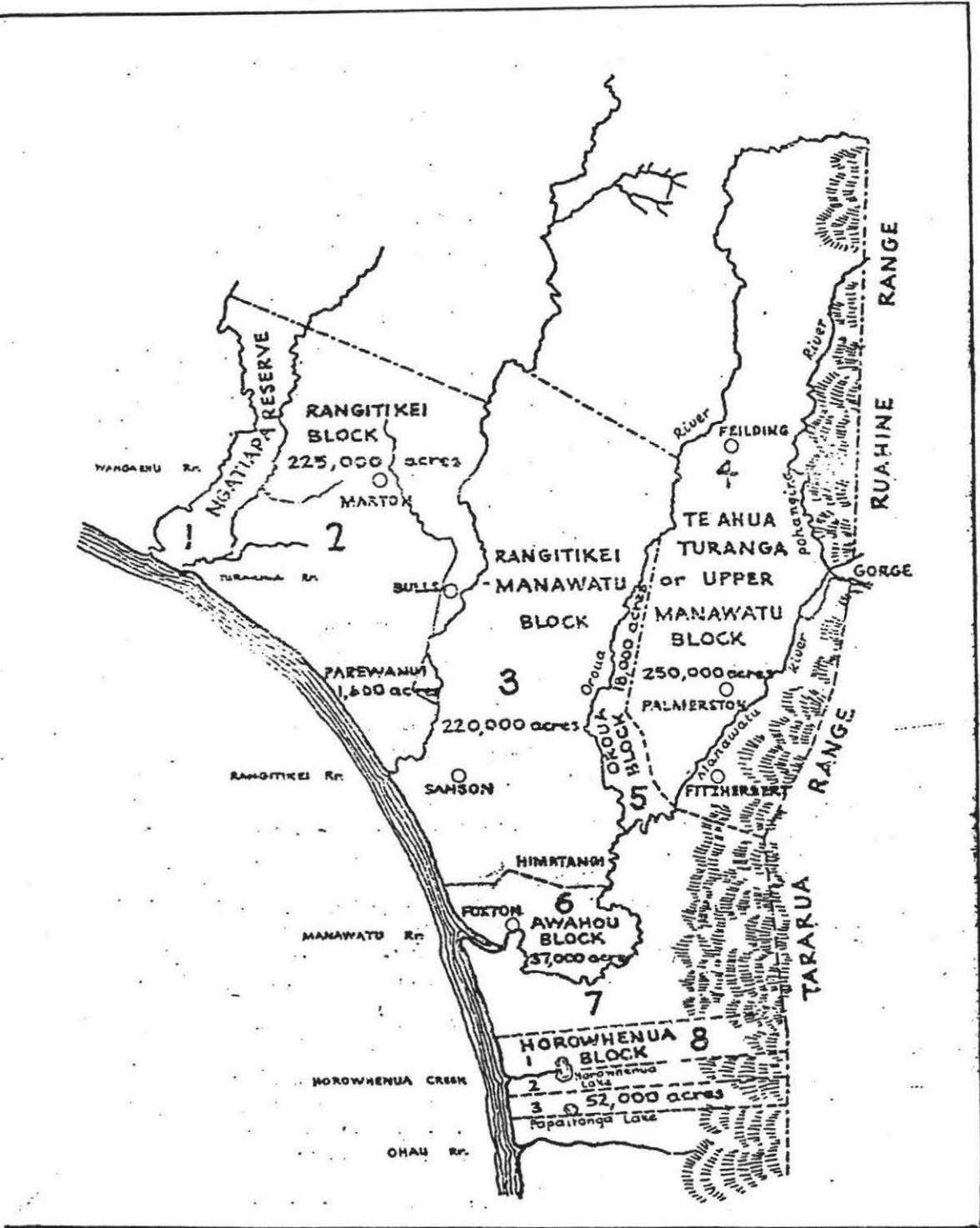


Figure 2.3 Manawatu Land Blocks (Petersen, 1973, 42).

The landscape, being heavily bushed and dotted with large swamps (Fig. 2.4), restricted the movements of the surveyors to the river margins of the Manawatu, Oroua and Pohangina rivers (Petersen, 1973, 52). Completed in 1859 Stewart's survey was the first major environmental assessment of the interior of the Manawatu. Kettle had only passed up the river in his New Zealand Company survey. Stewart's survey was to be the prelude to further detailed surveying of the area.

The other dominating Block of the Manawatu, the 220,000 acre (99,100 hectares) Rangitikei-Manawatu Block was of variable nature, with large tracts of forest but including lightly scrub covered areas (AJHR, 1870; Al.B; Fig. 2.3). The scrub covered and open country was considered to be suitable for quick conversion to pasture (Owens, 1972; 15). Across the Rangitikei river, the north-west boundary settlements were established in the early 1850s with the Rangitikei Block having been purchased in 1849. A few individuals had crossed the river into the Manawatu and were leasing holdings from the Maori to run cattle on unfenced country. The Provincial Government's interest in this area culminated in the purchase of the Block in 1864 from the Ngati Apa, Rangitane and Ngati Raukawa for 25,000 pounds. Of this sum the Ngati Raukawa received 10,000 pounds. This acquisition did not proceed without problems. It was not agreed upon with unity by the three tribes who claimed association with the land. Central Government was concerned with volatile Maori-European relations and did not enforce the matter further. In a despatch from Sir G. Bowen to the Earl of Grenville, K.C., dated November 17, 1869, this theme promotes itself:

"... About seven years ago the fertile block of land lying between the Rangitikei and Manawatu rivers, nearly a quarter of a million acres, was purchased for the sum of 25,000 pounds from the Ngati Apa tribe by Dr Featherston the Superintendent of the Province, acting on behalf

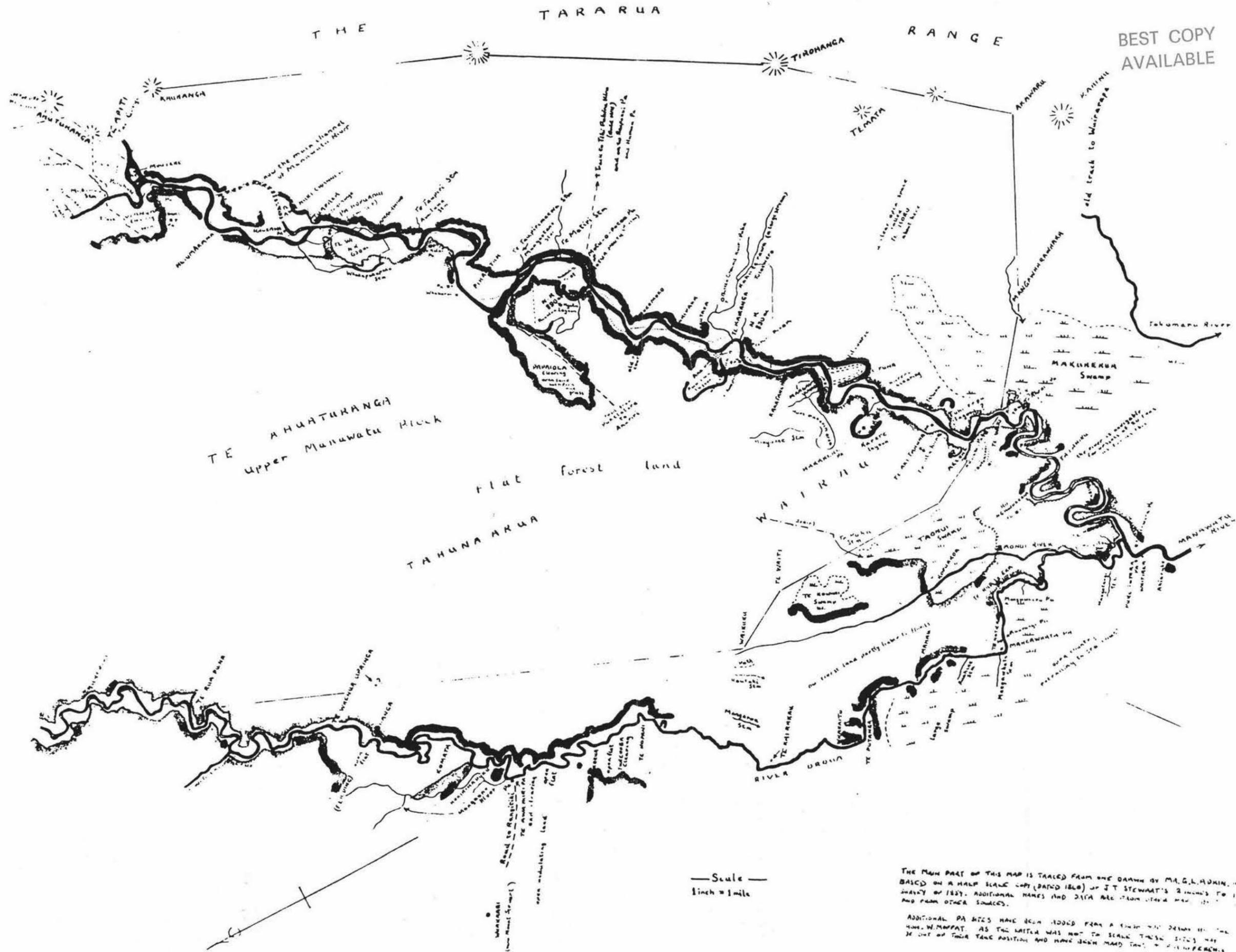


Figure 2.4 Copy of J.T. Stewart's sketch map of the Ahuaturanga Block (Palmerston North Public Library).

THE MAIN PART OF THIS MAP IS TAKEN FROM ONE DRAWN BY MR. G. L. HODGKIN, IN NOV 1851, BASED ON A HALF SCALE COPY (DATED 1850) OF J. T. STEWART'S 2 INCHES TO 1 MILE SURVEY OF 1827. ADDITIONAL NAMES AND DATA ARE FROM OTHER MAPS OF 1851 AND FROM OTHER SOURCES.

ADDITIONAL PA SITES HAVE BEEN ADDED FROM A SKETCH BY DEAN IN 1851 AND FROM W. MAPPAT. AS THE LATTER WAS NOT TO SCALE THESE SITES MAY BE OUT OF THEIR TRUE POSITION AND HAVE BEEN MADE THIS WAY FOR CONVENIENCE.

L. Williams' Survey

of the Crown. The sale was objected to by some of the Ngati Raukawa tribe. They grounded their title chiefly on conquest alleging that 50 odd years ago they conquered the land from the Ngati Apa's. The Colonial Government abstained from pushing matters further in the Manawatu after the consequences of the sale of 800 acres in Taranaki, in spite of protest from a dissident minority of Native claimants. Specific Awards to the amount of 6,200 acres were made to dissentient claimants who had refused to concur in the sale. Subject to this reservation the Rangitikei-Manawatu Block has been passed to the Crown, to become a valuable part of the Provincial estate and thrown open for European settlement" (AJHR, 1872, G40).

These were by no means the end of land transactions. While most of the Manawatu had been acquired by Europeans, smaller Blocks still remained in Maori ownership. The Horowhenua Block was not purchased by the authorities until 1886 when the Wellington-Manawatu Railway Company was buying land for their line from Wellington to the borough of Palmerston North. However with lands acquired and areas partitioned by survey, the scene was set for the beginnings of settlement.

## 2.5 Pre 1870 Settlement

Following the authentic purchase of land Blocks in the Manawatu, J.T. Stewart was given authorisation over the area's development and promoted to Chief Engineer. His plan for the acquired Blocks was that a portion of the timber country be thrown open for sale simultaneously with the lower township (Foxton), and smaller lots near the port. The township in the upper block (Palmerston North) would form a centre for the timber district and a tramway to the river was to be constructed as the

surveys proceeded (WPCAP, Session 14, 1866). Without a transport infrastructure timber, the only marketable commodity of the interior in quantity, could not be moved. The survey of the upper and lower Blocks proceeded in this manner. Settlement was opened up once the survey of allotments was completed.

Surveying of a specific Block was not in itself to herald an immediate influx of settlers and the opening up of the Manawatu. This was to require an organised approach and Government support in the form of loans and services before any settlement of significance would occur. Sections in the Ahuaturanga Block were offered for sale in the Land Office at Wellington in 1867. From the southern boundary as far as Te Matai these sold freely. Further inland towards Raukawa (Fig. 2.1) interest in purchase and possible settlement tended to taper off. The heavily bushed nature of the interior, its isolation and remoteness at that time would not have been conducive to settlers. As Petersen (1973, 63) noted, "the driving of survey pegs and sale of town sections did not mean the foundation of a new town". Until 1870 the occupiers of the clearing and its surrounding lagoons, swamps and forest were to remain the habitat of the indigenous fauna and a number of wild pigs.

There were a few settlers in the region outside of Foxton and its environs. Buick (1903, 289) lists the total population of the Ahuaturanga area at 32 in 1868 (Table 2.1). Some were residing in natural clearings while one or two had apparently begun the effort of clearing the rainforest to make way for a home. The population of the Manawatu remained piecemeal and fragmentary, and the bush intact, despite the efforts of the early settlers, until the organised settlement schemes were activated. Firstly the Scandinavians and later those that joined the venture the Emigrants' and Colonists' Aid Corporation formed under the Duke of Manchester and incorporating the services of Colonel

Feilding as agent, gave a considerable impetus to settlement. The settlers in these schemes were to make the initial real assaults on the bush proper.

Table 2.1 Manawatu Settlers 1868 (Buick, 1903, 289).

Locality	Settlers
1. Manawatu	D. Rowland, M. Hamilton, R. Reardon, E. Reardon, M. Cullin, G. Mends, L.G. West, H. West, D. Monrad, John Munroe, J. Sly, P. Stewart, W. Watson, G.T. McEwan, D. McEwan, H. McEwan, T. McEwan, A. McEwan, G. Brenner, J. Marshall, R. Stanley
2. Ngawhakarau	H. Eastman
3. Awapuni	P. Marshall
4. Fitzherbert	H. Engels, C. Shute, A. Coborough
5. Rangitikei Line	R. Ross
6. Te Matai	J.T. Dalrymple
7. Raukawa	G. Richard (sen.), W. Waugh, A. Grammar, W. Cummings

## 2.6 Conclusion

Something that seems clear from the actions of the settlers who came to the Manawatu is that there was a definite desire for farmland. The actions of the settlers were deliberate, and their bush burns and drainage operations were seen as an attempt to break in the land for farming. In this the bush burn proved to be the least expensive method of partially opening up the land. The Supplementary Publication of the Manawatu Evening Standard of 1937 recorded that the lands of the district had proved to be of great fertility, but had two drawbacks. They were extremely heavily timbered and in a most sodden state (Billens and Verry, Official Souvenir, 1887-1937).

With the bush burn many acres could be cleared for farming at one time. Referring to the denseness of the bushlands and the settlers reaction to it Bradfield (1956, 21-22) wrote:

"... no wonder they were so ruthless, especially with fire which could do more in a day to clear areas needed for cropping and grass, than a dozen or more men could do in a month with axes."

For the early bush settlers though, virtually the only income sources were sawmilling and Public Works schemes. Most of the settlers produce had no, or at least only a very limited market (Bradfield, 1956, 24). Even for timber, transport made its sale prohibitive until the rough tracks were improved to roads and the tramways and railways built providing a means to the outlet at Foxton. Prior to the arrival of Scandinavian immigrants in the 1870s substantial land development had been hindered by the difficulties associated with early travel. Overall the bush landscape remained largely intact. When the Scandinavians arrived there existed only a few

cut tracks through the bush to the outside world.  
Travel to Foxton was at best difficult, and in winter particularly so as tracks became unusable bogs due to rain.

### 3. THE IMPETUS FOR ORGANISED SETTLEMENT

#### 3.1 Organised Settlement

The Central Government in the 1870s, particularly under the direction of the Vogel administration, actively sought the settlement of land throughout the country. To help facilitate this, large scale immigration was encouraged. The Manawatu region offered large tracts of unoccupied forest land and with Government actively promoting settlement it is not then surprising that it initiated and aided the beginnings of large scale occupation of the areas lands. Prior to the arrival of immigrant settlers, the region still remained very much in its original state. The Scandinavian settlement in the Ahuaturangi and the Emigrants' and Colonists' Aid Corporation's effort in the Manawatu-Rangitikei Block were the first two ambitious settlement schemes to succeed in the area. The former was begun by Government. The second was planned in England, but was the recipient of official sponsorship. It was intended that both the immigrant groups settle in the Manawatu region and to that extent an infrastructure was put in place by Central Government to ensure their success. In each case Arthur Halcombe was the primary Government agent to oversee the planning of the settlements. The only previous scheme to these in the Manawatu had been the failed attempt of the New Zealand Company.

#### 3.2 Scandinavian Settlers

The first land sales in the Manawatu occurred in 1866. Initial interest was slight with few arrivals prior to the Scandinavians in 1871. When sections were offered in Palmerston North for sale in 1866 and 1867 most of the purchasers were Wellington based speculators with few buying with the intention of settling (Matheson, 1871, 18). Matheson contends the Wellington Provincial Government established the township of Palmerston North with the idea of encouraging farmers to take up land and bring it into

production, yet the idea did not meet with the success hoped for. The Provincial Treasury had insufficient funds to construct all-weather links with the inland areas, and without these there was little likelihood of development. Onus was placed on the settlers themselves to develop communications. For the settler to arrive in the area and get established was a major effort. What the Manawatu did offer though was land.

The first Scandinavian settlers in the Manawatu were the Monrad family, from Denmark, who took up land at Karere (Fig. 2.1) in 1866. Monrad, a former Danish Premier, had ties with New Zealand Government figures, including Dr Featherston the Superintendent of Wellington Province. Monrad had, however, come to the country independent of immigration schemes. On his arrival in New Zealand Monrad had been warmly welcomed by Sir George Grey (Tribune, Centennial Issue, 1970, 76). Whether he actively promoted New Zealand on his return to Denmark in 1868 appears unclear (Matheson, 1971, 32) but he remains as one of the initial pioneers of the forest region.

In 1870 the Government had decided on recruiting immigrants from Scandinavian countries and agents were sent to Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Buick (1903, 305) considers Scandinavians were desirable as they were a people used to woods and forests, and "would furnish the exact material for the subjugation of the wilderness as reigned in the Manawatu". As a group they did in fact survive and live in what was an isolated forest interior. The sudden impetus to settlement in the Manawatu provided by these people has been related by Matheson and Sinclair to the national programme of immigration and public works commenced by the Central Government in 1870 (Matheson, 1971, 19; Sinclair, 1969, 153). Acting on the recommendations of the Colonial Treasurer, Julius Vogel, the Central Government borrowed large sums of money from overseas and sponsored the introduction of selected immigrants from Europe, thereby overcoming shortages of finance and manpower which had restricted the developments planned by

Provincial Government. The Central Government aimed at opening up new land for settlement by creating a national network of roads and railways.

The report by the Government agent, Arthur Halcombe, on the intended site for the Scandinavians is recorded by Petersen (1973, 70-72):

"We found that the immediate neighbourhood of the town of Palmerston presents all the desiderata for the successful location of such a body as are being introduced.

The site of the town itself is an open dry clearing of a few hundred acres entirely surrounded by bushland... From Palmerston to the navigable head of the Manawatu River, a place called Ngawhakarau, is a distance of nine miles along which an extremely good road, almost a dead level, has been formed... Having in view the immediate occupation of that block of agricultural country, and the demand for totara timber for building purposes which will consequently arise there is no doubt that a considerable timber trade will spring up with Palmerston as soon as a means for its conveyance should have been provided..."

Commenting Petersen noted the dry clearing of the settlers became flooded during the winter; the area reserved for the Scandinavian settlement was heavy bushland and swamp, not part of the Papaioea clearing (Fig. 2.2) which was the site of Palmerston North. Petersen states that J.T. Stewart, who was in charge of surveying and roading of the Manawatu, had foreseen that there would be trouble for settlers owing to the swampy nature of the land. The improvements envisaged in the report did not occur until they were completed by the settlers themselves.

The inducement process conducted by Government agents to encourage emigration is indicated by Matheson (1971, 33)

who referred to a Norwegian settler, A.H. Ihle:

"... It was between July and September 1870, that an agent advertised in a Norwegian paper for 18 strong families to emigrate to New Zealand. But what we had heard of this country made us doubtful. But the agent said 'There are no man-eaters there now. You will find the Maoris a nice race of people', which proved to be correct.

And what are the conditions, we asked. He said 'It will cost you nothing and you will get ten acres of land, your own freehold property.'

And what sort of work are we to do? 'Oh, the same sort as you are doing on your own land - bush felling, road making, farming, bridge building or anything you can put your hand to ...'"

After his recruitment, Ihle and his family left Norway on October 5th, 1870, for England and then New Zealand.

Once in New Zealand the immigrants were transported to Foxton and then to site of Palmerston North. Again Ihle gives an impression of what was involved for the Scandinavians:

"... In the evening of February 15th, 1871, we arrived in Palmerston from Foxton and a hard day's work for us it was, as we had to carry our children most of the way.

On our arrival we stayed at the Palmerston Hotel, which consisted of only four or five rooms. The women and children slept on the floor inside the house and the men on the verandah. We had not lain there long before the mosquitoes came to welcome us to New

Zealand and Palmerston in particular, so there was not much sleep for us.

In the morning we were ordered to go to Awapuni where the Government had erected a tent for the 18 families to live in ... We built huts on our sections. Owing to the heavy flooding of our lands, we agreed to send a man to Mr Monrad (sen.) and ask him to write to Government about it ...

... Palmerston was a wilderness: all standing bush except a bit of a clearing. In this part there was manuka, flax and scrub..."  
(Matheson, 1971, 33)

It was 18 weeks before the settlers got work but the Government did supply provisions in the interim, payable for on commencing employment.

Another to come in the early 1870s was a man named Johansen. His impressions, as recorded by Bradfield (1962, 10-11), have a similarity to Ihle's. On reaching Palmerston Johansen found one house, the hotel. Johansen remained there overnight but could not rest because of the mosquitoes. In the morning he was informed he was in Palmerston township, but all he could see was fern and cabbage trees on one side and dense bush on the other. He obtained a horse to make the journey to Awapuni, but the animal was unable to carry him that far owing to mud which was up to its girth. Reminiscing in 1909 Johansen was recorded as saying:

"Where there are good roads now there was nothing but bush, supplejack and mosquitoes."  
(Bradfield, 1962, 11)

The land clearance operations and public works entered into by the Scandinavians did though have a marked impact on their area of settlement. In May 1872 the Palmerston correspondent of the Wellington Independent

reported:

"... the district, which a year ago only numbered some half dozen plodding and almost broken-hearted souls, now is peopled by upward of 300 souls. The township now presents to a stranger some appearance of civilization and travellers cannot but remark on the difference in Palmerston now to what it was only 12 months ago."

Writers of early Manawatu history - Petersen, Buick, Bradfield, Holcroft and Mulgan - all place emphasis on the role played by the Scandinavians in the agricultural development of the bush clad interior. Similarly it was with their arrival that metalled roads began to replace muddy tracks and the construction of the Palmerston-Foxton tramway commenced (Fig. 3.1).

While their actions could be construed as a healthy pioneering spirit, the sudden burst of progress which accompanied the sponsored emigrants was as much as not a matter of personal necessity. They had little option to go elsewhere, and in reality had to undertake many of these ventures in order to make long term habitation possible. A daughter of an early settler, Matilda Montgomery, who had come to the district with the Snelsons in the 1870s, is quoted by Warburton (1954, 16) as saying that if only it had been possible she would have gone to Wellington.

Isolation was a reality in the district. Passage to this country had been arranged free by Government, but there were no return tickets. Another reality for these settlers was indebtedness. Each family was allocated 40 acres (16.2 hectares) of land to be purchased at one pound per acre. Payment was by instalment over a five year period. The Central Government had paid the full cost of each family's passage, but the immigrants were charged for their stay in Wellington, their transport to Palmerston and for tools and provisions. Matheson puts

LINE OF ROAD. Foxton to Gorge  
 — joining Line to Napier —

ALSO

TRAMWAY Foxtown to Palmerston.

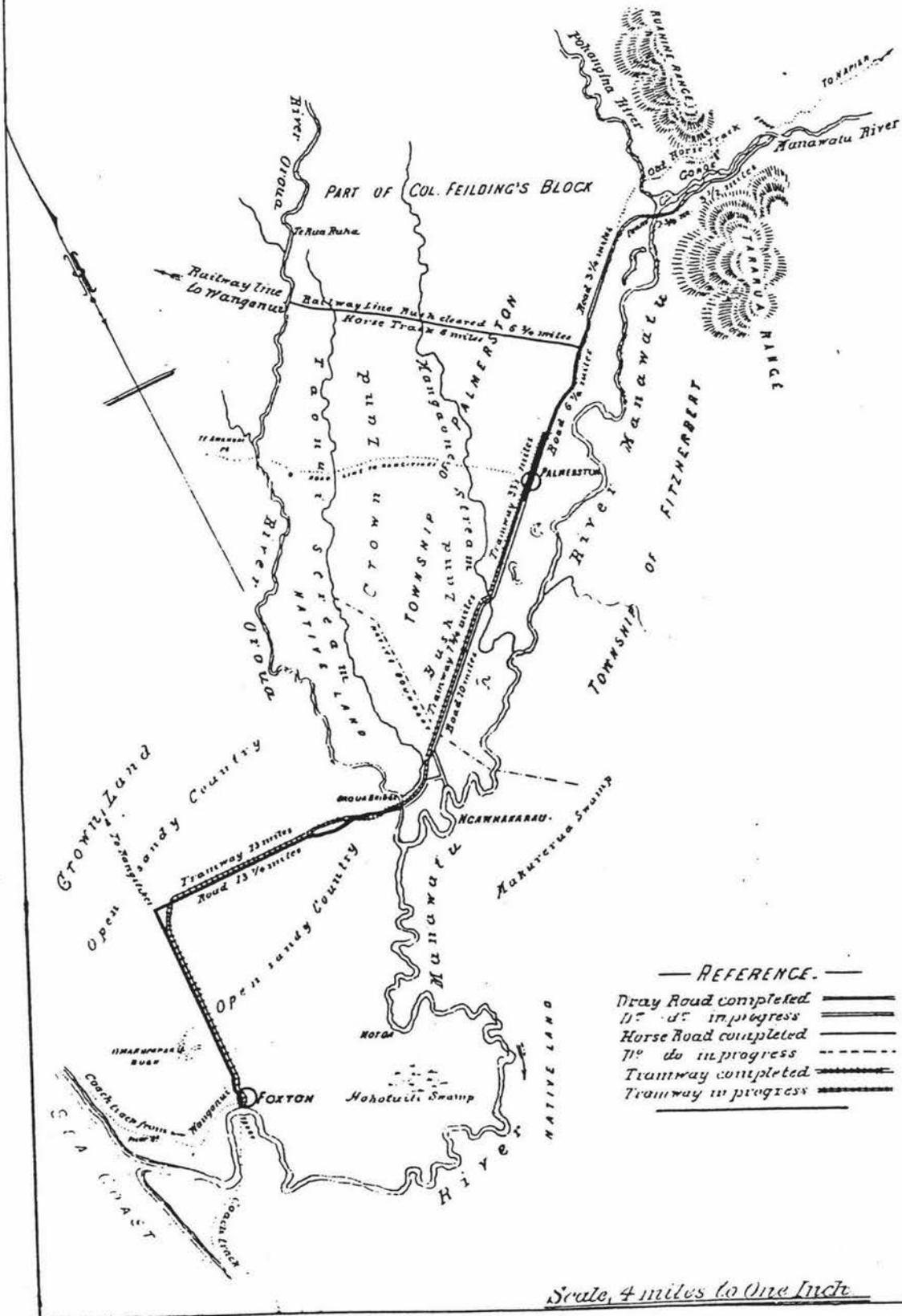


Figure 3.1 Foxton-Palmerston Communication Links (A.THR. 1872. D6).

the initial indebtedness of each family at approximately 14 pounds. This was repaid by deductions from their wages once they were in Public Works employment (Matheson, 1971, 32). It is difficult to imagine the Scandinavian settlers being able to remove themselves from the Manawatu.

A second party of Scandinavians were directed to Whakarongo (Fig. 2.1), four kilometres east of the Papaioea clearing. They arrived at Foxton on April 8, 1871, and were allotted land on the same terms as the first party except that only 20 acres (6.1 hectares) went to each single man. By July they had been visited by a Government Official who remarked that good progress was being made on land clearance of their sections and in assistance with Public Works.

Indebtedness was not a new problem in the Manawatu. Recorded in the New Zealand Parliamentary Debates in 1869 is the failure to pay rents by run holders in the Rangitikei-Manawatu Block. There had been falls in the prices for wool and stock, also the value of the runs had reduced. It was reported that the leasees had been anxious to pay their rents but had not been able to. As each year passed there was added difficulty. Some had finished in bankruptcy (N.Z.P.D., Vol. 5, 1869, 421-422).

Making a profit in the 1860s and 1870s from farming was difficult. The Scandinavians initially made a living as much by employment in Public Works as by any other means. Existing was difficult and a reality faced by early pioneers in the Manawatu. Government agents, such as Halcombe, saw the lands as potentially magnificent (Petersen, 1973, 70), but for the settler they were difficult. The 1875 Official Handbook of New Zealand praised the Scandinavians efforts:

"Scandinavians and Norwegians make good colonists. With few exceptions they are frugal, temperate and industrious... the instalments of payment for their land in the majority of cases have been

regularly met... The result is now seen in the cleared fields and numerous two and four-roomed slab cottages which dot the road line."

Progress the Scandinavians were seen to be making. That their efforts were praised seems indicative of a perception favouring an open, cultivated and tamed landscape. On the worth of this landscape in the early 1870s a Norwegian settler, G. Hansen, was quoted by Bradfield (1956, 24):

"... In the early days the land was of no use to us. If they (the settlers) grew anything in the way of produce there was no sale for it. If it wasn't for Government Works in Palmerston North, I don't really know what these early settlers would have done ..."

### 3.3 Manchester Block Settlement

The significance of the Manchester Block Settlement was that it was chiefly responsible for the subjugation of the bush landscape in the Manawatu-Rangitikei Block. Again it was an organised settlement scheme which provided the impetus for large scale settlement and landscape change of part of the Manawatu forest interior. Like the Scandinavians the settlers came as sponsored immigrants, this time recruited in the British Isles, and again with preconceived images of the landscape.

In 1871 Colonel the Honourable H.W.A. Feilding was sent out to New Zealand by the Emigrants' and Colonists' Aid Corporation under the chairmanship of the Duke of Manchester. He was to investigate with a view to the procurement of land suitable for settlement and had prior to his arrival in Wellington visited Eastern Australia. According to Gibson (1936, 13) Feilding "met with scant encouragement" in Australia. Forewarning the New Zealand Government of his pending arrival and intentions



farm labourers, mainly from the agricultural districts of Buckinghamshire and Middlesex (Mulgan, 1939, 281; Gibson, 1936, 25).

The Corporation had A.F. Halcombe as agent in New Zealand. He was responsible for the reception and welfare of immigrants. Halcombe also prepared bulletins outlining prospective conditions for immigrants. One of these, dated 1873, is recorded by Davies and Clevely (1981, 6-9):

"... The New Zealand Government gives free passages to the nominees of the Corporation and is pledged to find work for a current 200 labourers on the formation of a railway right through the land or on public works within ten miles of the Block. The Corporation makes suitable preparations for the reception of the immigrants out here; and will give them a right to take up suitable blocks of land at a very light rental, and with a power to purchase at a moderate rate at the end of from three to six years.

As the land belonging to the Corporation contains a large quantity of sawing timber which is very valuable and for which there is an unlimited demand; and as in addition to the main railway line formed by the Colonial Government the Corporation itself is incurring a large expenditure on internal roads through the Block, I do not hesitate to say there is not the slightest fear of any scarcity of well-paid labour for many years to come; indeed as I have over and over assured my Directors, I could find ample work for 500 men were such a number placed on the Block ...

Having myself resided for 20 years within two miles of the Block referred to, in a well settled agricultural district called the Rangitikei, I am able to say the climate of the country is all that can be desired; no excessive heat in summer, nothing

like drought, and in winter neither snow nor more frost than is sufficient to make ice the thickness of a penny piece.

I can also affirm from the same long experience that if any man is sober, industrious and thrifty he may be an independent freeholder of a comfortable farm from 100 to 200 acres within ten years of his landing in the Colony ...

Arrived at their destination our surveyor will at once indicate the position of each man's holding, which he could immediately occupy and build a rough home upon, while his wife and family were remaining in the depot; and as soon as ever he was ready to go to work, the work would be ready for him ... any good man may rely on making from six shillings to ten shillings per diem ...

Food is cheap and abundant and there is no difficulty in getting supplies of any kind at very reasonable rates... I had the almost entire organisation, control and practical working under the Colonial Government of several Scandinavian settlements not very far from the Manchester Block. They have been more than successful ...

From my 20 years experience in practical farming in the neighbourhood I can say without hesitation that for the man without capital, bushland, such as the major part of the Company's land is, is by far the most profitable ..."

Halcombe's bulletin promotes the areas possibilities. The image of the land as land for farming is indicated. This portrayal is selective, presumably deliberately so. There is no indication of costs likely to be incurred by immigrants in settling. The promise of employment is made, but no indications to the extent of hardship involved with the work in the bush blocks. Halcombe failed to mention the problems to be faced with wet winters, any

discomforts, and the mosquitoes. A later and different impression on developing bush blocks is indicated by a contemporary newspaper:

"... for a man who has no money to take up bush land is simple folly. He merely weds himself to a life-long struggle with want and misery."  
(Manawatu Evening Standard, March 26, 1885)

The first immigrants arrived in New Zealand in January 1874. Halcombe arranged for their journey from Foxton to the Manchester Block to be completed in two parts, the first to Palmerston North where the Corporation had built a depot. The second and more arduous stage was onto the site of Feilding town (Fig. 2.1), a small clearing in the forest. Gibson (1936, 26) noted this journey as difficult owing to the lack of any formed road, "which in wet weather became almost impassable." These first settlers were housed in bell tents and put to work building huts. After only six weeks there were 233 persons on the Block with more awaiting shipment.

The reactions of the settlers to their new home was unfavourable. Davies and Clevely (1981, 12) record that:

"Arrangements in the Manchester Block for the reception of the immigrants were not as far advanced as had been hoped. It was not a very encouraging sight, particularly after the glowing prospects Mr Halcombe had earlier held out."

Referring to the settlers Gibson (1936, 27) wrote:

"... They candidly admitted afterwards that the real was different from the imagined. Used to neat, domesticated little sections of rural England, they found the damp forest, the mud tracks, the bridgeless streams, comparative isolation and rude virginity of

the district to which they had come extremely depressing."

Feilding town, being located near the junction of the Kiwitea and Oroua rivers, was in a basin and swampy. It was here the new immigrants had to face their first winter. The land quickly became a quagmire, new immigrants arriving at the time being placed in appalling conditions. As well as contending with the wetness and bog there was the continual annoyance of insects. J.T. Stewart in his surveys is reported to have been forced to retreat from a bush area near the Oroua river on one occasion "on account of mosquitoes" (Matheson, 1971, 17). Insects were an unpleasant accompaniment to bush settlement. Gibson (1936, 27) recorded that in Feilding: "Mosquitoes abounded by night, blowflies by day, while flies abounded night and day."

In a report by Halcombe to Government on progress made by the Emigrants' and Colonists' Aid Corporation in the colonisation of the Manchester Block, dated 7th April, 1874, he recorded:

"... Tried to locate 'Duke of Edinburgh' immigrants at once on country sections of land and set them to build temporary habitations out of materials at hand. But a few days proved that such a course be fatal to prosperity of settlement and with large number to deal with settlement under these circumstances be impossible.

Firstly - all available land be taken up and be quite impossible to put people into bush before lines were cut.

Secondly - separation of people made supply almost impossible as well as their concentration of any work.

Third - their ignorance of character of

materials at command, their unhandiness, and want of tools and fact that only one workman available to build a shelter per family made it impossible to erect decent houses in reasonable time. Separation means isolation ... people lost their way in moving about and thoroughly dispirited.

Utter ignorance of character of land made them select worst or be discontented with best sections. Saw nothing but insurmountable difficulties ... great discontent and long discomfort to people ..."

(WPCAP, Session 27, 1874)

In another report Halcombe stated there was "difficulty dealing with settlement of immigrants entirely unfit to deal with bush country ..." (AJHR, 1877, H29).

Halcombe's concern and the problems confronting the settlers is recorded by Petersen (1973, 189), who notes a report by him:

"... the difficulties of the winter of 1874 can only be appreciated by those who had the responsibility of overcoming them. Although every possible effort was made to hasten house building, its progress was unavoidably slow, and the season being an unusually wet one, the discomfort to large families living in tents and huts without fireplaces was very great and many of them remained in Palmerston or removed elsewhere."

As with the Scandinavians, the Corporation immigrants were in debt on arrival at their settlement site. Upon reaching Feilding they owed for their journey from the Palmerston depot and rations of 30 shillings per family. At Feilding they were supplied with tools, cooking utensils and food, all a charge against future earnings. Permanent two roomed cottages on one acre of land were built for the settlers. They had the option to buy these

or move to a larger country section. Finance was made available for purchasing stock and to work the holdings (Clevely, 1953, 16). From the weekly wage of one pound, repayment was to be met as well as living expenses. Once on the Manchester Block the immigrants were then met with commitments.

Perceptions of the forest were constrained by efforts to develop the land to the domesticated scene. The settlers image of the bushlands was based on the promotional image of this landscape which in reality was different and forced them to struggle to achieve. Admirative views of the domesticated, cultivated scene as opposed to the forest landscape were resultant of the needs placed on them to develop the land. The Emigrants' and Colonists' Aid Corporation's aim had been to settle the Manchester Block and this image was borne out by the efforts of the settlers.

### 3.4 The Settler Image of the Forest

To the nineteenth century settler the forests of the Manawatu region were both a resource of value in themselves and a barrier to land clearance and agricultural development. Palmerston North was established in the middle of a large area of forest. Timber was important to the early settlement (Arnold, 1976, 115-119). It provided the only export income of value from the Manawatu's interior. Before it could be tapped, permanent communications had to be established with the coastal port of Foxton. The first all-weather link was the tramway built between 1871 and 1873. This gave considerable stimulus to the sawmilling industry. With the opening of the line many thousands of feet of timber were moved to Foxton for shipment that would otherwise have been burnt.

The first sawmill in the Palmerston area secured the Government contract to supply the rails for the tramway in

early 1871. To fulfill the obligation the contractors, Mason and Bartholomew, had to import a steam engine, the haulage of which from Ngawhakarau overland was hindered by winter conditions. Once the tramway was completed totara (*Podocarpus totara*) was initially exported to other parts of the Wellington Province and later further afield. Matheson (1971, 36) quotes a visitor to the town on the subject of timber in 1874:

"... the inhabitants of Palmerston live on timber. Of course they don't eat timber, but the proceeds. The Palmerston Steam and Sawmill is distant about a mile on the east side of the township and it produces a large and regular supply of timber which is conveyed to Foxton for export by steamers to Wellington and elsewhere. The tramway runs right up to the mill.

... It produces about 500 feet of timber daily."

While stating Palmerston North survived on timber alone belittles all other activities in the area it does emphasise from the view of the outsider the very significant proceeds of the trade.

In June 1879 the Manawatu Times reported there were 23 mills operating in the Manawatu district, of which 20 were located between Halcombe and Palmerston, beside the then completed railway. First impressions of the inland forests were of their vastness. The Official Handbook of New Zealand in 1875 considered the forest as almost inexhaustible. With the felling techniques of the time limited to handsaw and axe there was probably years more milling available than occurred. Within three decades of 1875 the timber industry in the Manawatu had virtually finished (Esler, 1978, 19). While the timber industry provided employment and income, the majority of forested land was burnt for farmland.

Within the scope of landscape perceptions of this period then, several images emerge. There was an awareness of value in the timber of the forests. There was in apparent contradiction admiring concepts of the forest. Of this Warburton (1954, 56-58) states:

"... the fire forest trees, which so heavily clothed the surrounding country, charmed and fascinated the new arrivals in the Manawatu. In writing to their relations at 'Home' they told of the lovely bush smell. The bush was lively with native birds ... as long as there was bush they were familiar to the early settler... Some of the smaller birds were very tame and friendly ... the fantails were known as the bushman's friends. The bush was also enlivened with the bright red kakas and the small green parakeets were plentiful too. Sometimes a stray huia or two might be seen ..."

Monrad also admired the forest (Matheson, 1971, 32). Overriding this theme though there were the constraints placed on the settlers to develop land. Faced with day to day problems of gaining an income and official desires for the settlement of the Manawatu the domesticated landscape dominated other perceptions. Both of the contemporary Palmerston North papers, the Manawatu Times and the Manawatu Evening Standard carried advertisements which sought contractors for bush clearance. These were most common between March and August. What admiring views there were were fleeting and do not appear as commonplace.

Milling operations in general supplemented more general land clearance bush-burn techniques. The concept of retention of the forest for more complete utilisation is not found in literature relating to the land development of the Manawatu. The perception of the need for open land to farm and cultivate was the perceived reality of those who successfully cleared the Manawatu of its forests.

The dichotomy between admiration of the bush landscape on one hand and the active removal of it on the other can then be related to the desire to clear land to achieve the farming lifestyle. Arnold (1976, 125) referred to nineteenth century forest utilisation as representing a dynamic reinforcement of other biases favouring rural development. Whether the removal of the forest was inevitable or not the concept that the landscape be developed does appear as a strong and consistent theme. In this official constraints, in particular Government supportive moves to aid the settlement of forest lands, seem to have had a significant influence upon the local perceptions, which is notable in the way both the sponsored immigrant groups approached the Manawatu bush landscape. Both groups worked actively to clear the landscape and produce the domesticated scene. The overall image of the forest was that it was not desirous.

### 3.5 Conclusion

Both the Scandinavian and Manchester Block settlers were Government sponsored. As such they had little idea of the real conditions into which they would come. In both cases it seems clear that the conditions of bush life encountered by them were difficult. In the case of the Scandinavians their call to Bishop Monrad and the Government about conditions they faced indicate by action an uncertainty of the realities of their situation. For the Manchester Block settlers Gibson (1936, 27) records their feelings of their surrounds as different from what had been imagined prior to arrival. Both groups had come with the promise of land and new opportunities. Government desires were for easy, quiet possession and settlement of the Manawatu. The farm it seems was an idealised form to which the endeavours of the settlers were directed, and a direct influence upon their perception of the bush landscape. For the Scandinavian and Corporation arrivals their perceptions of the bush landscape were to an extent

conditioned. They were living within legislative as well as physical and economic constraints. Official perceptions were overlaid on the man on the land. The Governmental image of the forests was influential upon individual settler perceptions.

#### 4. LAND, PROGRESS AND THE FOREST BARRIER

##### 4.1 Introduction

The initial pulse to the settlement of the Manawatu bush lands was initiated through the agency of sponsored settlement. While the first New Zealand census of February 1871 does not refer to any inland settlements, the towns of Feilding and Palmerston both appear in the subsequent 1874 census with populations approaching 200 (N.Z. Census, 1871, Table No. 4; March 1874, Table XIX, 18). The first settlement of a large part of the bush landscape was through organised attempts to place individuals in what was an isolated region. Subsequently the continuance of policy towards land settlement still required outside support: incentives and structures to prevent either a stalling or slowing of. The structure of subsequent settler/government relationships is a significant point to be considered. Incentives through deferred payment gave those without capital the opportunity of land.

In the Manawatu the period of 1875 to 1891 is one characterised to an extent by Small Farm Associations and Special Settlements. It is contended that they were a tool for land development. The abolition of the Provinces in 1876 placed the settler more directly under the influence of Central Government. Roads Boards, Drainage Boards, County and Borough Councils became the lower tier of Central Government policy than the previous Provincial Government structure had been.

#### 4.2 Government/Settler Relationship

Facilitation of settlement of unoccupied areas such as the Manawatu interior had been a concern of the Wellington Provincial Government prior to its abolition in 1876. The Waste Lands Act and Special Settlement Act were two contributions of Provincial Government of which the intent was continued by Central Government.

The Wellington Waste Lands Act, 1870, and Amendment, 1871, allowed the Province's Superintendent, with the advice and consent of the Provincial Council, to set aside for sale unoccupied land to which the Native Titles had been extinguished. Under the Amendment cancellation of reserves was permitted by proclamation. The Wellington Special Settlement Act and Amendment, 1874, allowed for the sale of land on deferred payment, set apart out of the wastelands of the Crown in the Province. Terms of sale limited one person's purchase to no less than 40 acres nor more than 200 acres in any one Block, with an application and deposit of 20 per cent of the price to be submitted to the Commissioner of the Province prior to purchase. At the conclusion of two years from the time of purchase a report was made on the extent of fulfilment of conditions by the purchaser under the license granted. After a favourable report or appeal the buyer repaid a further 20 per cent of the price and followed this again after the third, fourth and fifth years. The general price laid out for land in the 1871 Act was between 20 and 40 shillings per acre (NZS, 1870, No. 53; 1871, No. 18, No. 77; 1874, No. 23).

The important principle, deferred payment for land, became accepted. This gave the opportunity to individuals and associations to buy land for little capital input. The obligations sought by the authorities in deferred payment lands as well as being indicative of Official landscape perceptions for the cultivated, domestic scene, tied by legislation those seeking such lands to that landscape image.

#### 4.2.1 Deferred Payment

Deferred payment remained part of land policy into the 1890s (AJHR, 1890, C1). With blocks of land available for purchase via the means of deferred payment, Small Farm Associations were fostered with members becoming shareholders to raise the initial deposits required. From 1874 to 1891 Small Farm Associations undertook much of the settlement in the Manawatu interior. Of the town districts Halcombe, Feilding, Bunnythorpe, Palmerston, Fitzherbert, Marton, Ashhurst, Sandon, Karere and Kīwitea all fostered Small Farm Associations. They all aimed at purchasing land and placing individuals upon it. This was land made available by Government. Deferred payment encouraged the fast occupation of bush land blocks and prevented any possible slowing of settlement in that landscape which was both expensive to develop and still largely isolated. Government had initiated settlement in the forest lands of the district, and this involvement continued the initial official response to the bush landscape.

A local impression about the deferred payment system is recorded in the Manawatu Times, March 10, 1877:

"... The action of the Government in setting apart a block of land in close proximity to Palmerston for occupation on the deferred payments system, is one which cannot fail to give general satisfaction to residents in and around the district... The chief difficulty in connection with the deferred payment system seems to rest in the fact that the improvements and money are required from the settlers almost if not simultaneously."

Within the Manawatu local interest in lands on deferred payment is indicated by several reports in the Manawatu Evening Standard. On March 2, 1882, it recorded:

"... We see that the first list of 100 names for the Sandon-Carnarvon Small Farm Association was filled up on Friday. A second list has been opened up with 20 names already upon it ... If the second list of 100 names fills up in sufficient time the Association will be able to choose two blocks of 20,000 acres adjoining one another ..."

On March 10, 1882, the Manawatu Evening Standard:

"... The Marton Small Farm Association is going ahead rapidly. 62 names have been received for the first list, this being enough to cover application for 10,000 acres."

The Manawatu Times also noted the progress of Small Farm Associations. On February 17, 1877, it reported:

"... At the sale of sections on deferred payment in the Sandon township, 36 sections ranging from 116 to 200 acres each, were applied for and deposits of one-fifth the purchase money paid thereon to the amount of 1,664 pounds ..."

Judged from these newspaper reports there was interest in the acquisition of land on deferred payment. A contemporary perception of the deferred payment system and Special Settlements appeared in the Manawatu Evening Standard, April 29, 1885, written by Job Vile:

"... I say that without the aid of some such scheme as that promulgated by Mr Ballance, these forests would under the administration of the Waste Lands Boards be blocked up for years, to the disadvantage of the community and the country generally.

No other scheme of settlement in forest country would be likely to work as well as this."

Overall interest in land on deferred payment and the Special Settlement idea was sufficient to see a substantial increase in the areas made available by Government. In this Manawatu characterised interest elsewhere. On June 11, 1885, the Manawatu Evening Standard reported:

"... Although the Land Act only permits 100,000 acres to be set apart for Special Settlement purposes, the applications for such settlements already received would require 250,000 acres to meet them. The Minister of Lands, in the Consolidated Lands Bill which he intends to introduce, will ask Parliament to sanction a large extension of the Special Settlement area..."

The general theme of these articles is one that indicates interest. Special Settlements and Deferred Payments lands in the Manawatu by and large were located in unoccupied bushlands. Locally they were significant in placing settlers in the bushlands.

The interest shown tends to point to an attitude that leads to a view that land purchased on deferred payment was a reasonable, realistic way to obtain land. Like the Manchester Block settlers and the Scandinavians, those that undertook to obtain land on deferred payment had their commitments and costs. Land made available on deferred payment was unoccupied and generally bush covered. Requirements for land clearance equated to Government conception of the material improvement of the land. Together with the finding of 20 per cent payment and a residency requirement, this tied the hands of the settler.. Necessarily the settler by Government requirement had to undertake certain activities; they had to undertake bush clearance and pay off a debt. Their realities were thus to an extent already shaped. The kind of license requirement the settler needed to fulfil is indicated in a report in the Manawatu Times, January 10, 1877:

"... The Gazette of Thursday last contains ... a proclamation reserving for sale on deferred payment 48 sections of land in the Sandon district, varying in extent from 82 to 200 acres. The time of payment extends to five years, a house at least ten pounds in value to be built, and one-tenth of the land to be cleared, cropped or laid down in grass during the first two years. There are 35 sections of from 200 to 300 acres, which can be applied for on the same day as the above mentioned - namely on Tuesday, the 13th February next, at the Land Office, Wellington.

The upset price is, in all cases, one pound per acre."

Deferred payment certainly gave an opportunity for people with little capital to obtain land. A reality of the time though was that payments had to be met, improvements had to be made, these to satisfy Government inspection. Failure to do so equated to forfeiture of that worked for.

#### 4.2.2 The Isolated Landscape

That things did not always go well for the settler, and that basic occupation and fulfilment of requirements was not always easy is evident from contemporary newspaper reports. The Manawatu Times of July 11, 1877, recorded:

"... It is of vital importance to the townships in the Manawatu and other districts, not only that blocks of land in the immediate neighbourhood of these townships should be thrown open for selection upon deferred payments, but that roads should be made to and through such blocks."

Isolation was a significant barrier to settlement. The presence of the Manawatu forests transformed relatively short real distances into long time journeys. Effective

links to bush blocks facilitated settler activities when they existed. Where they did not life was more difficult behind a forest barrier. Isolation affected the Scandinavians who had no effective means of communication until the building of the Foxton tramway, and also the Manchester Block settlers who initially suffered through the lack of road or rail communications. Bush land clearance is noted by Petersen (1973, 89) as closely following the lines of communication. The isolation problem is referred to by the Manawatu Times in a report dated April 14, 1877:

"... All the sections in the Kiwitea Block, situated in the back country between Feilding and Halcombe town, have been taken up and nearly every section in it is now being cleared. The men clearing there, however, suffer under the great disadvantage of having no roads leading to their places, and considerable hardship is endured."

#### 4.2.3 The Bush Landscape

Not only was the forest itself problematical, but the nature of the forest was also. Wetness characterised a large part of the land. Esler (1978, 57) refers to the large amount of the Manawatu which was swamp land, nearly ten per cent of the total area, but the rain forest itself was also wet. Drainage was a significant problem which compounded the difficulties of daily life. The Scandinavians and the Manchester Block settlers had themselves been affected by this factor. The Scandinavians had been flooded in their first winter, while the site of Feilding township had become water-logged during its first winter. Petersen (1973, 217) summarised the plight of the settlers as being in "... a land of mud, misery and mosquitoes." That wetness was a barrier is further evidenced in the writings of Buick and Bradfield. Buick (1903, 296) recorded the journey of two early settlers, James Linton

and his wife, through the Manawatu as one of "mud and misery". Bradfield (1956, 21) thus recorded the journey of Harry McEwan to Palmerston North in 1866:

"... Harry found the bush track from Awahuri to Palmerston in a terrible state, his horse floundering through mud up to its girth. The horse showed signs of giving in and when he got near Longburn he turned his horse adrift in a small clearing, took his saddle, bridle and swag and tramped through the bush to the family whare..."

The problem of wetness is a theme which appears consistent throughout the study period. October 31, 1877, the Manawatu Times recorded:

"... It is a subject of complaint that the block of land recently surveyed in the neighbourhood of Karere for sale by the deferred payment system is unfit for settlement by reason of its extreme wetness... Mr Monrad says he has good reason to believe that the land could be drained into the Oroua river. The Chief Surveyor replies in a memo that there is no fund from which moneys can be drawn for the work of drainage referred to..."

A special vote to the House to drain the Karere Block is quite beyond the reins of hope at the present time... in consequence the intending purchasers of the Karere Block will in common with many other people have to suffer the heart sickness of hope deferred ..."

Another Special Settlement recorded as having wetness problems was the Douglas Special Settlement, around Rongotea. Before subdivision of it Buick records that it was required to have a drain cut through the block (1903, 374).

It was in this setting that settlers were required by Government to fulfil the requirements of their license,

or suffer forfeiture. Official Government views on land development acted as a direct influence upon the settler. The populist stance as regards the bush landscape was affected by regulation. Populist perception in the post Provincial period was conditioned by the constrained realities of the need to clear land, to pay instalments and to avoid default. Some admiring impressions of the natural landscape were recorded but these are comparatively rare in the contemporary literature. Petersen (1973, 92) refers to Monrad's joy at the natural landscape and how it differed for the indebted Scandinavians who considered their need was to clear land:

"... The heavy tasks of felling tress, rooting out stumps and the building of roads demanded all their energies and attention..."

Similarly landscape admiration is referred to in the Manawatu Times, January 24, 1877, which noted the "beautiful scenery" of the Manawatu Gorge. For the settlers under deferred payment, the work needed to satisfy their license, work that was like that of the Scandinavians and equally physically demanding conditioned them to the need to clear land. The admiring views of a visitor to the natural landscape did not satisfy their requirements.

#### 4.2.4 The Physical Landscape

Government regulations, and thus official perceptions of the bush landscape were utilitarian. Policy was favourable to expanded settlement, particularly under Vogel. These regulations placed the settler in a situation where he too by necessity was utilitarian in outlook. Through the laws governing deferred payment, in particular the need to improve land, the Government installed an ideal for farmed land. Official perceptions were an agent acting upon populist actions and perceived realities. Necessities placed on the settler through deferred payment included those of payment and land improvement. In the

Manawatu interior land clearance was a needed action. That this was never an easy task is witnessed by contemporary articles. Several reports in the Manawatu Evening Standard of 1885 provide evidence of some of the problems faced. January 5, Kiwitea correspondent:

"... if the bad weather continues much longer, the settlers who have bush to burn will be great losers. Some hundreds of acres have been felled this year and there is a large quantity left unburnt from last year. A few weeks of dry weather are much needed to render the bush fit for fire."

March 11:

"... Owing to the recent heavy rains the bush fires in Kiwitea have been put out and burns are not very good again this season in that locality..."

While weather could be an influential factor in land clearance operations there was also the danger of accidents in the bush, as recorded by the Manawatu Evening Standard on August 28:

"... While Mr Rowles was walking to the bush in Kiwitea with an axe in his hand the other day, he tripped against a stump and fell with his thigh on the blade of the axe, inflicting a very nasty cut about two inches deep."

The weather and difficulties of the work were factors which had to be confronted by the bushland farmer. Life was not easy. Added to this were the license requirements under the deferred payment laws. If the settler did not meet these requirements then he stood to lose a great deal. While deferred payment gave access to land, it also constrained the settler.

While the Government structure and laws are considered important to Manawatu bushland perceptions,

significance it seems should be given to the general policies of Government in the mid-1870s under the Vogel administration. Vogel borrowed what was for the time a large amount of money for the purposes of expanding public works throughout the country. The Land Laws and deferred payment helped those without capital to aspire to land ownership. In the Manawatu public works opened unoccupied areas to settlement; public works helped to facilitate settlement and were thus significant. The degree to which this area was perceived as relying on public works expenditure is suggested by the Manawatu Times of March 31, 1877:

"... We have often listened to very lugubrious prognostications as to the future of Palmerston. This township has been characterised as a mushroom growth... And such to some extent has been the case. Palmerston has undoubtedly risen upon public expenditure..."

Commenting on Vogel's borrowing the Manawatu Times further stated on February 28, 1877:

"... The borrowing proclivities of Sir Julius Vogel are to New Zealand what the gold fields are to Australia; both have furnished occupation and promoted immigration and both have proved a vast impulse of progression.

... These remarks are relevant to the condition of Palmerston in as much as what has been said of the whole country is true of this particular part..."

#### 4.2.5 Legislation and the Farm Ideal

Judged by its Land Laws it appears the Government gave support for the sale of land in a way that those with limited resources could afford, or at least believed they could. The intent of the Land Laws with requirements

under deferred payment for land improvement, and Public Works policies seems clear. From this there is a consistent theme that can be seen in the attitude of Government towards land development throughout the country and in the particular case of the Manawatu to the bush landscape. That is, Government direction was towards the offering on lenient terms land for development as farm land. Through deferred payment and Special Settlement Associations, Government in the Manawatu area encouraged the occupance of bushland blocks and their conversion to farm land. Indicative of Government attitude is a report in the Manawatu Evening Standard, January 13, 1885:

"... Messrs G.F. Hawkins, London, and A. Burr waited on the Minister of Lands today in reference to the formation of a Special Settlement Association in the district. Mr Ballance explained the concessions allowed, viz. whereas the average area applied for by each member must not exceed 100 acres, but that members might arrange for lesser areas for individual selectors, say 75 or 50 acres. He expressed himself most anxious to assist the formation of these associations by every means in his power, as his great object was to get people on the land as the surest element of future prosperity."

As far as land policy is concerned consistency in approach through this period is evident by Ballance's expression of the importance of settlement of the land. In this his views maintain a theme expressed in the mid-1870s through Vogel's Immigration and Public Works policies. Government initiated settlement in the Manawatu forest lands via the Scandinavians and subsequently helped sustain it. The role of Government was considered in the Centennial issue of the Tribune (Tribune Centennial Issue, 1970, 101):

"... The activities of the Central Government brought permanent settlers and industry. It was Vogel's scheme of Public Works and

Immigration which opened up the Palmerston North for close settlement..."

The Land Laws made land improvements compulsory. Bushland blocks were sold to individuals under the condition that they work to develop them. The onus was placed on the individual settler to clear the land. The significant point as seen here is that those blocks made available by Government were intended to become settled farming areas. In this the Government helped to foster the ideal of the small farm; in this it implemented the images fostered by the New Zealand Company who had actively promoted and sold the country to individuals based on its supposed agricultural potentialities and the opportunity of freehold land. The blocks subsequently sold by Government were sold to be individual going concerns from which people were to gain an existence. The ideal of the farmland livelihood was supported. The Public Works policy facilitated these endeavours in the Manawatu by providing the necessary infrastructure and increased population; it enabled local and export markets to develop. Improved communications to the outside world gave the possibility for cheaper movement of goods inwards and out of the district. Development of local markets is evident by a desire for a local flour mill as witnessed by the Manawatu Times in a report dated March 31, 1877:

"... Hitherto very little has been done in the way of agriculture, but a considerable area of timbered land has through the past several years been cleared. There has been unfortunately very little encouragement offered to the settlers for the promotion of cereals, owing to there being no local market... One of the great desiderata for this place therefore is a flour mill... We therefore hail with great satisfaction the proposal of Nannestad and Co. to establish a flour mill in Palmerston..."

Incoming money from Government sources, in association with Government policy encouraged the development of the farming industry. In this way it is considered that official perceptions idealised the concept of the farm, and that official perceptions actively pushed local populist perceptions towards this stance.

Locally in the Manawatu area individuals did support the deferred payment ideas. This is shown by the number of Small Farm Associations which formed during this period. The Government gave the opportunity of farmland and this was sought after by those who purchased through deferred payment. Having purchased the individual was in the position of being constrained within the terms offered. They accepted a reality of developing bushland blocks into farms. In this way, it is considered, their perceptions were shaped by their necessities. Bushland perceptions, it seems, became ones of toiling to subjugate the forest. Constraints fashioned individual actions which affected perceptions. The nature of the Official/Popular relationship thus was a significant factor in the way the settler approached and viewed the Manawatu bush landscape. The settler, through Government, was made to operate within a defined framework.

#### 4.3 Local Perceptions and 'Progress'

Official perception of the Manawatu's bushlands as wastelands and the sponsorship of its occupation were important factors in the development of local perceptions leading to the growth of the farm ideal. Locally settlers actively worked to achieve the farm ideal and actively wasted the timber resource in the process. One of the sponsored and popular images of the 1870s, that of inexhaustibility of the timber resource, seems significant in this. Considered opinion was that wholesale land clearance would not endanger the timber industry. Timber, while becoming more difficult to obtain nevertheless still predominated on the surrounding ranges. In relation to the farm image there was not a totality of opinion

favouring its development at the expense of timber wastage. There was an awareness of the value of the resource and the advantages in maintaining some timber areas in the long term, but sentiments or perceptions favouring a more managed system of land development apparently were swamped by local desire to change the landscape. The image of a farm and grassed pasture as opposed to forest was a popular perception; something that individuals should be thankful for because it marked progress. Progress was a justification in itself, proof of an undeniable right, that contemporary land management was correct and was in the general good.

On March 14, 1877, the Manawatu Times recorded:

"... The smoke that encircles our township by day and the lurid flames by night tell of the advent of March - a month fatal to our sylvan giants. Huge gaps are being made in the bush and from almost any point of the compass may be seen rising columns of smoke spreading themselves in fantastic cloud wreaths and not infrequently descending upon the town itself. From this it would appear that our settlers are availing themselves to the privileges of the season and although the smoke may inconvenience us and the charred avenues offend the eye we must accept all thankfully as a march of local progress..."

As far as the article is concerned, progress was intimated by the burning of the bushlands. Local progress was a legitimisation for bush clearance and local settlement. Another article in the Manawatu Times, January 13, 1877, written by a Feilding correspondent further deals with the legitimisation of opening land for settlement:

"... What a fine view one gets of the surrounding country after leaving Feilding on the road to Halcombe. In no place that I have seen in the colony is there anything that pleases me so well, the thought that gives it special charm being

that the extent of open country everywhere around, gives promise that the time is not far distant when many thousand people will find homes..."

On the theme of settlement problems the Manawatu Evening Standard reported on January 29, 1885:

"... The Manchester Block, and Manawatu in general have been somewhat retarded in their progress... on account of the settlers not being able to burn the felled bush, thousands of acres of which are lying unburnt, and of course, unproductive which means a considerable loss to the owners and the community in general..."

The content of these articles refer to the progress of the Manawatu as tied to the rural settlement and clearance of the bushlands. These actions were, by these articles, seen as important to the general good of the community. Bush land clearance in itself from this perspective was not a wateful act. It was an act that can plausibly be viewed from the settlers contemporary understanding of his surrounds. In the first instance bush clearance was seen as a good act because it intimated progress, and progress was a desired state. Secondly the local perception through the 1870s and 1880s was of a massive forest. A common word used to describe the Manawatu timber resource was "inexhaustible". The 1875 Official Handbook of New Zealand referred to the Manawatu district as containing "an almost inexhaustible supply of the most valuable sawing timber". The size of the Manawatu forests and the amount of area initially available for millers seems to have helped encourage the use of only the best timber trees - totara and rimu in particular. When milling occurred, after the best and biggest trees were removed the rest was left for burning. With the thousands of acres available milling was to an extent selective.

An article appeared in the Manawatu Times on December 19, 1877, suggesting the importance of forestry to the contemporary region:

"... The question is often asked what supports Palmerston? Some reply Public Works expenditure, while others say they don't know. A few point towards the immense tract of valuable bush country surrounding us, and fancy that it alone is capable of supporting us for a very long time. We have taken some trouble to find out a few particulars respecting our trade in timber for the past year, and from one source alone we find that upwards of 10,000 pounds have been introduced from the sale of railway sleepers. The number of fencing posts sent have been about equal to that of sleepers. We have likewise sent large numbers of telegraph poles to various parts of the colony. We have produced timber to meet all the local requirements of the whole of this district, besides the immense quantity shipped from Foxton to Wellington, Dunedin, Christchurch and other distant centres. The amount accruing from the sale of building timber must represent a very large sum for any one year..."

The clear impression given in this article is of a trade which in itself was important to the area. As well there is the sponsoring of the image of the vast forest and that the timber industry could be sustained after the general settlement of the area. Again in 1885 in an advertisement for the sale of land, by the Emigrants' and Colonists' Aid Corporation, timber as a resource, and its plausibility as a means of support, was one of the techniques used to enhance the image. The advertisement appeared on January 3, in the Manawatu Evening Standard and read:

"... 35,000 acres of First Class Land for Sale in the Manawatu.

The Emigrants' and Colonists' Aid Corporation have the above quantity of land for sale in

sections varying in size from 100 to 500 acres in the Manchester Block, Manawatu. ... The land is the best of quality, and in many cases has very valuable timber upon it.

The Manchester Block is the centre of the Manawatu Timber industry, three quarters of the sawmills in that county being located in the Block.

The Land is opened up by roads, in many cases metalled and the railway from Foxton to Patea runs through the settlement. Taking into consideration the quality of the soil, the accessibility and proximity to the railway communication, the land on the Manchester Block is by far the cheapest now offering to the would be settler..."

The advertisement mentions the timber in terms which portray it as valuable. The image of the timber resource and its accessibility is used to convey a means to a livelihood until the other image, that of the farm, could be realised. Throughout, while the timber industry was realised as valuable, it is a subsidiary image to the farm. In a constraint caused by a policy of close rural settlement, and the active fostering of the farm image by Government, the forest resource seems to have lost value. The importance in this of the idealised view of the farm seems paramount. Those who bought land to settle upon did so with the perception of a farm established. To that end much of the contemporary articles which appear in the local papers reinforce that approach.

#### 4.3.1 Landscape Admiration

Petersen (1973, 92) writes of the beauty of the unspoiled surroundings that impressed coach travellers on the Napier road from Palmerston, but that this served

little "to lighten the burdens of the immigrants, whose preoccupied eyes passed unseeing over the delights which a lavish nature spread before them." In this respect Petersen notes the differing perception between the casual visitor and the pioneer. In this he is noting something significant, a paradox explained by Tuan (1974, 60):

"... Generally speaking only the visitor has a viewpoint. The native by contrast, has a complex attitude derived from his immersion in the totality of his environment ..."

The totality of the environment in the Manawatu bush landscape was a whole which not only included the physical constraints in which they found themselves but also cultural constraints. In this the idealised image was a most important image in the appraisals of the settler of the bush landscape. The image of the bush landscape was then one of a barrier, and 'immense' or 'inexhaustible', not necessarily because it was, but rather to the settler it appeared in these forms.

#### 4.3.2 The Desire to Burn

Even though in the early Manawatu the sawmilling industry provided a major source of income and employment, timber wastage was little questioned. More prevalent was contemporary comment on land clearance and bush fires. The attitude of the Manawatu Times in referring to bush fires as "a march of local progress" seems to be the approach taken by the contemporary papers. Clevely (1953, 24) noted that even when Bunnythorpe was settled in the late 1870s, most of the surrounding forest was never milled but burnt in clearing operations.

The state of the bush burns was a newsworthy item. The retreat of the forest landscape is by the simultaneous recording of the firing of the bush. Table 4.1 notes

reported bush burns which appeared in the Manawatu Evening Standard, 1885. Not only were bush burns newsworthy items in a general sense, but particular individual burns are also recorded as matters of local significance. February 21, 1885, the Manawatu Evening Standard reported:

"Messrs Stalland and Bryant burnt their Fitzherbert bush yesterday, the fire raging to a late hour last night. The former had a great difficulty in getting the fire off to a good start. Captain Walker intends to burn tomorrow if he has a good wind. Mr Raven we believe had not a very successful burn."

The maps in Fig. 2.1 and the inferred bush boundary from the noted distribution of tree types in Fig. 4.1 show the recession of the forest lands away from the site of Palmerston township towards the remoter areas, in particular the Pohangina Valley. Lands available for free selection are also shown to be at considerable distances from Palmerston North. By 1885 milling and burning had made considerable inroads into the bush landscape. That the bush-burn noteworthy item seems indicative of the prevalence of the farm ideal as a feature of the contemporary Manawatu. Even as late as 1889 the Manawatu Evening Standard recorded from a Bunnythorpe correspondent the following on March 2:

"... Bunnythorpe, for the last three or four days, looks more like Pompeii of old than anything else. The smoke is something fearful. The strong winds are carrying the ashes in showers all over the district.

The burns effected during the past week are chiefly satisfactory. Some are indeed very good. Mr Holland, our local sawmiller, has a very busy time of it just now; he has received several orders lately for houses to be built on the new burns along the Bunnythorpe-

Table 4.1 Bush Fire Reports  
Manawatu Evening Standard, 1885.

Date	Report
January 2	<p>"Many of the settlers around Ashhurst are almost in despair on account of the protracted bad weather. Some of them have had bush down two years and have never had a chance to burn. They want to get cattle on their land, so as to get a return for their outlay, but owing to the unprecedented prevalence of rain, they have been unable to burn. Several of them are getting very disheartened with the adverse seasons that have so retarded their operations and interfered with their progress."</p>
January 5	<p>"... If fine weather should set in for a week, there should be some magnificent burns in the Kiwitea..."</p>
January 8	<p>"... A Kiwitea correspondent states that if the bad weather continues much longer, the settlers who have bush to burn will be great losers. Some hundreds of acres have been felled this year and there is a large quantity left unburnt from last year. A few weeks of dry weather are much needed to render the bush fit for fire."</p>
February 2	<p>"... A large bush fire was raging in the direction of Bunnythorpe yesterday."</p>

.../Continued

Table 4.1 (Continued)

Date	Report
February 9	"Several bush fires were raging in the Fitzherbert direction this afternoon, and the weather should be very favourable to good burns."
February 13	"The heat was intense this afternoon, attributable to some extent no doubt to the many large bush fires in adjacent districts."
March 9	"The heavy rain of last night will probably put a stop to all burns for the rest of the season."

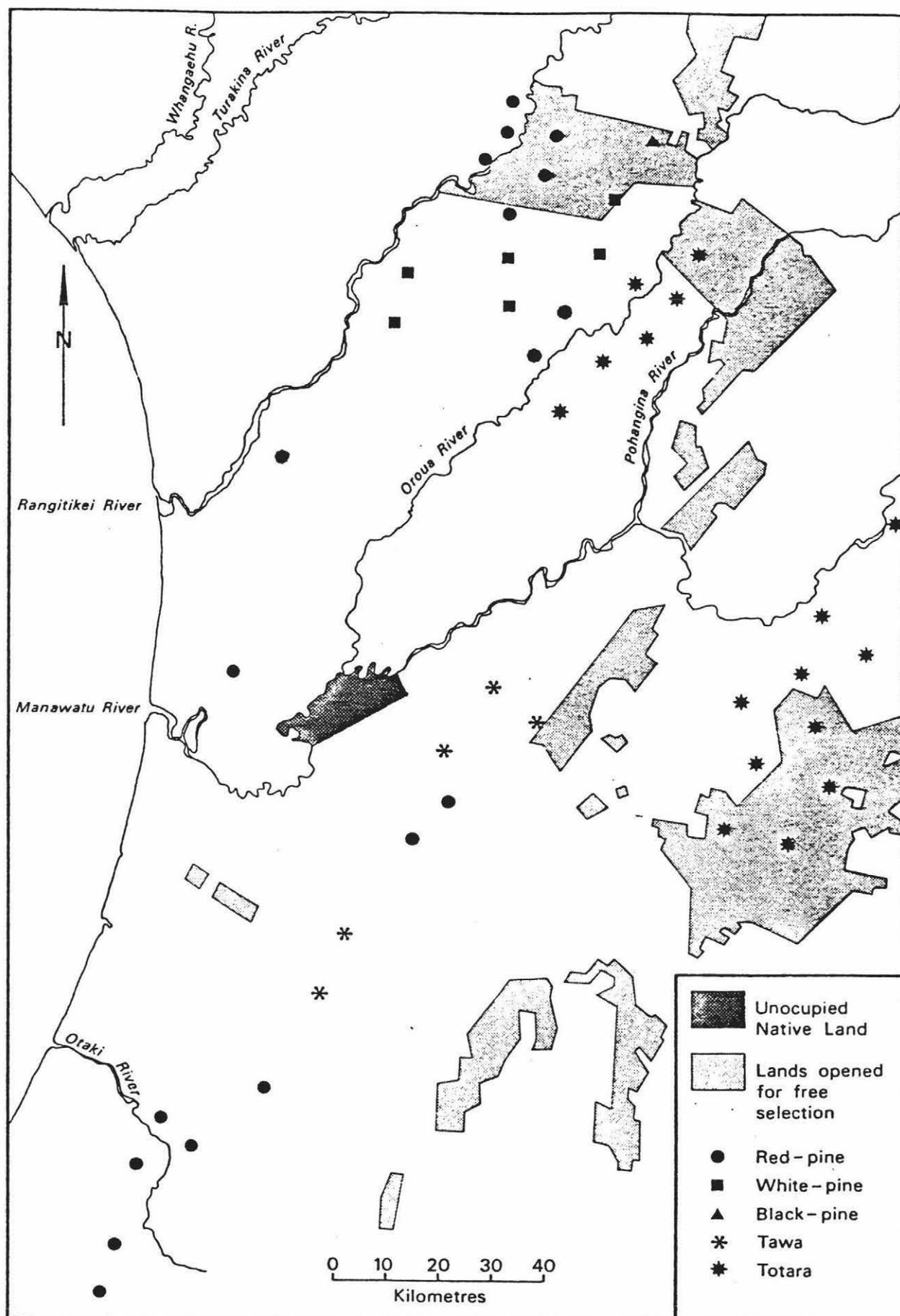


Figure 4.1 Manawatu Location of Lands opened for free selection, 1890; Unoccupied Native Land, 1892; Mercantile Timber Species, 1896 (AJHR; 1890, C5; 1892, C1; 1897, C8).

Ashhurst road. Mr Holland was also fortunate enough to secure a sleeper contract for the Ashhurst-Palmerston railway..."

What is interesting about the 1889 report is that while millable timber was becoming scarce, local view of the acceptability of forest removal does not seem to have changed. The sawmilling industry was in 1889 running out of areas it could tap into, but the report intimates bush-burns of some considerable size, big enough to produce "ashes in showers all over the district". The bush landscape as indicated by this article was still being tackled the same way it had been in the early 1870s. The major change through the 1880s was not it seems linked directly to perceptual values of the bush landscape, but with the rapidity of bushland clearance. The 1870s were characterised by relative slow rates of bush disappearance which were associated with other factors, such as small demographic size and isolation. With increasing population and lessening of the isolation barriers the rapidity with which bushland clearance could occur was greatly enhanced. Matheson (1971, 44) has noted that a locational link seems to have existed between the saw-mills and the railway lines between Halcombe and Palmerston, and on the line from Wellington to Longburn. Of the clearance operations Petersen (1952, 58) has found that:

"... the seventies and early eighties witnessed a great advance in the breaking in of the country areas. With the establishment of road and train communication new settlers moved in, blocks of land were opened up by Government and the tempo of the bush clearing increased."

(Petersen, 1973, 193):

"... The bushman ripped the heart out of the forest, and was followed by the settler, who had ready allies in axe and fire. Travellers by rail from Feilding reported that the bush

was on fire for miles along both sides of the line..."

The important idea raised by Petersen is of an assault on the bushlands; that there was a sustained effort to remove it by local agency.

On November 23, 1891, the Manawatu Times reported:

"... It seems a great pity to see so much beautiful grass going to waste on the wide roadsides of this district."

Coming at the end of the study period, when the timber trade was greatly scaled down and remote this seems to convey the continuance of the farm ideal. The reference to 'beautiful grass' seems indicative of the local perception which characterises this period. Contemporary comments of the bush landscape spoke of it as a resource, or a barrier. Halcombe referred to it as "rich, dark, melancholy forest". Terms of bushland beauty seem to have been the preserve of the visitor. The term "beautiful forest" does not appear from the bushland settlers of the 1870s and 1880s. In this there seems to be a consistency throughout the period of the perception of the farm ideal which does not seem to have significantly altered where the settler was concerned. The burning of the bush was not without its dangers, and to those eager to clear land possibly this helped foster the perspective of the "unseeing eye". February 16, 1885, the Manawatu Evening Standard reported:

"... Mr Andrewatha had a very narrow escape when firing his Fitzherbert bush the other day. He entered the bush and was lighting the fuel on a tawa stump when the wind suddenly rising sent the flames quickly round him. He had just time enough to cover his face by putting a soft cap over, and rushing into a creek adjoining."

This kind of accident in the bushlands cannot have been uncommon, and could plausibly explain perhaps the

perspective of the "unseeing eye".

There were those who did question the land management practices of the 1870s and 1880s. What seems difficult to ascertain is the extent of any support for such views. As early as 1874 Halcombe had noted the potential significance and importance of timber stands in the Manchester Block. In a report (W.P.C.J.P., Session 27, 1874, C 7) he noted:

"... large blocks covered with very valuable timber - matai, rimu, totara; large groves of totara occur through the block."

The reference to "valuable timber" is one to a resource and a perception of something usable in itself. That is, the bushlands in their basic state Halcombe saw some value in. The concept of bushlands as a resource is a different perception to one seeing their destruction by fire.

Elsewhere in the 1870s and 1880s there is some evidence that concern did exist as to the wastage of the timber resource. On June 15, 1885, the Manawatu Evening Standard reported:

"At the meeting of the Wellington Waste Lands Board on Thursday a discussion took place in reference to the great waste of valuable timber, and Mr Bunny remarked that a lot of young totara trees were being cut down, and the destruction should be put a stop to. Mr Betham, M.H.R., stated that a contract had just been let for creosoted sleepers and totara would not be quite so valuable as it used to be. There were large forests of white pine, and pine sleepers would be as valuable as totara sleepers when creosoted."

Petersen (1973, 93) also noted contemporary concern from one source which he quoted:

"... The totara bush through this district is quickly being worked out..."

That at least the totara resource was considered under some strain is further recorded in a Report on Native Forests and the Timber Trade by Kirk in 1886 (AJHR, 1886, C 3A):

"... Totara in the valley of Manawatu is rare, two or three sawmillers reported it practically cut out in the district, but this is not literally correct, as even in the immediate vicinity of the river, while in the upper part of the Oroua, was assured there is a large quantity still available. No actual knowledge of any large extent of totara except in localities where it would not be profitably converted at present rates..."

From these reports it seems a few perceived the bush as not inexhaustible, and from the report in the Manawatu Evening Standard concerning the meeting of the Waste Lands Board, that there was in fact a contemporary view that considered too much timber waste occurred. Overall though, based on the amount of land that was never milled and cleared simply by burning, it would seem this was not a majority perception, or at least a situation that the settlers considered in the reality of their position, that it was an unavoidable action. The settler worked within a particular framework. While it was easier to clear and develop land that had been milled, it seems it was a considerable reality that land had to be cleared as quickly as possible. This point Clevely touches upon. The constraints he noted in the settlement of the Bunnythorpe district under the auspices of the Emigrants' and Colonists' Aid Corporation included firstly that each settler after occupying a section was entitled to three years occupancy without payment, but that secondly they were required to do improvements to the extent of 30 shillings per acre in that time. In short they were required to clear their lands. Clevely (1953, 20)

states:

"... The first task was the clearing of land. The few district sawmills barely touched the millions of feet of magnificent totara, rimu and matai. The settlers could not afford to wait until the mills worked their leisurely way through the forest. The families had to eat and be clothed. The bush was doomed..."

Land which had had the big timber trees removed from it was easier to clear for pasture than land where they remained. That it could even be more valuable once the timber was removed is indicated in the Report on Native Forests and the Timber Trade (AJHR, 1886, C 3A):

"... In Manawatu ... converters frequently acquire the freehold and after clearing the timber, lay down land in grass, either retaining it for farming or disposing of it at prices which usually cover first costs and expenses. Not uncommon for unimproved land to be sold at a higher price after convertible timber has been cleared, than the original price; example a case in Manawatu - land bought at five pounds an acre realised five pounds ten shillings after the removal of totara and rimu... In many cases timber is acquired free of cost..."

That this could be the case, that is, land may have become more valuable after the timber was removed and that timber could be acquired free of cost would seem indicative of the strength of the farm ideal. It seems indicative of the perception of the forest as a barrier to the ideal. Management whereby timber was removed first, while slowing land development, would have prevented as much wastage of the timber resource as occurred. The land itself would have been easier for the settler to subsequently develop. That it was felt that this could not be done in the

majority of cases points to a position of considered constraint on the settler. The wastage of the timber in the efforts to develop the farm ideal is indicative of a perception of the resource as one which was not in need of more careful management to remain significant to the local community.

Settler impressions of the Manawatu lands were not locally uniform but there are consistencies which appear. A significant local feeling seems to have been that of the worth of the farm. The farm ideal equated to the subjugation of the native wilderness; the settlement of the bush landscape and progress. This notion of progress still belied many of the difficulties faced by individuals in the Manawatu area. That times could be difficult is indicated by contemporary papers which noted actual hardships being suffered by the general population. On May 7, 1885, the Manawatu Evening Standard reported:

"... Things appear to be in a very bad state in Marton. An open air meeting of the unemployed was to have been held last evening."

That things may have been difficult in Palmerston North is indicated by two reports in the Manawatu Evening Standard, May 19, 1885:

"It would seem as if there was never a time when so many bushfellers were seeking contracts. In one advertisement which appeared in the 'Standard' over one hundred persons have already been to inquire, besides letters on the same subject from Ashhurst, Bunnythorpe, Makino and other districts."

September 16, 1885:

"... We are sorry to learn that there are several cases of genuine distress in Palmerston. In one case of which we heard in Taonui Street we are informed that for days at a time the

family have absolutely been without food in the house..."

These three reports are of conditions within the local populous. Opened up farm blocks did not it seems necessarily provide an overall affluence which politicians such as Ballance suggested it would. The effects of refrigerated meat shipments and the factory dairy system at this stage were still some distance off. Two of these articles seem to suggest unemployment was a real problem in the Manawatu, while the third is suggestive of real deprivation. That the burdens of the constraints placed upon the farming settler could become too great is evidenced by a report in the Manawatu Evening Standard, June 1, 1885:

"... One or two bush settlers have left for other parts. The high price of land takes away the chance which the poor man has of getting along..."

In Palmerston North the timber industry could have sustained a large workforce and provided a considerable income for the district longer than it did. The farm ideal brought a radical change to the Manawatu landscape and was also responsible for the wastage of a large part of the timber resource contained within the landscape. The settler, it is considered, acted in a manner which he saw as correct and necessitated by his perception of his reality. In this manner the bush landscape was a barrier to his well being. While the perceptions of a visitor could be of beauty in the natural landscape, local perceptions of the Manawatu forests were tied to other values.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

Perceptions of the Manawatu bush landscape fall into several categories, broadly covered as those of official

perception, local perception and that of the visitor. The complexities of these are significant in that each of these groups judged the bush landscape in terms of different values. The views of Government and the interplay of Government with the local settler, the structures which were created, have been assessed as a significant factor in the development of a sponsored image in the Manawatu.

To an extent the sponsored image of the idealised farm was sustained by settlers and became the local perception, fulfilling official views and aspirations. It is only in the perceptions of the visitor that concepts of natural beauty become a relevant factor in dealing with the landscape. The Official/Popular relationship seems inherently one of compromise of the latter group to the former. The unoccupied bush lands of the Manawatu gave scope for the development of an idealised form.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The early exploration and survey of the Manawatu area, initially via the agency of the New Zealand Company and later by both Provincial and Central Government employees established the inland Manawatu and its forests as a desirable area for acquisition and settlement. The land transactions of the 1860s opened the way for European occupation of the area. From the first surveys it was considered that the forest lands could be settled and that rural prosperity could be achieved by land development. The subsequent settlement of the Manawatu from the 1859 surveys by Stewart until 1891 was associated with the removal of the bush landscape, and with it the wastage of much of the timber resource contained within the forests. The disappearance of this feature of the landscape has essentially been viewed in terms of an interplay between Official and Popular stances. This approach has categorised perceptions of the landscape essentially in those two groups. In this the views of a broad group, referred to as those of the visitor, have chiefly been used as a comparative tool. They show that other impressions of the forest landscape did exist, but they were relatively unimportant in the total picture. Overall a pragmatic view of settlement and land development was a dominant theme.

By making available lands to the small holder, the Government helped foster a populist stance favouring occupation and land development. Without the prior influence of any large run holders the Manawatu region could be opened to the small holder, through direct immigration and later the agency of Special Settlement Associations. In this way those without capital could aspire to land ownership, and subsequently settlers were responsive to a Government stance which favoured land settlement and development. Official views have been seen as pragmatic in that Government sought from the beginning of European settlement to develop and use the forest lands of the Manawatu area. It supported

settlement as a deliberate policy by actively recruiting Scandinavian immigrants and then placing them in bush Blocks made available for them. Even laws relating to deferred payment were altered to accommodate them. Government encouraged the rural settlement of the bushlands while the settler could use Government as a route to land. The settlers reacted in an obvious way to Official initiatives.

Government attitudes have been shown as a factor in pioneering activities. The arrival of both the Scandinavian and Manchester Block settlers provided the necessary impetus to settlement; they built the base upon which later arrivals could stand. The role of Government in these initiatives cannot be downplayed. Similarly Special Settlement Associations were able to grow because of Government involvement. Lands were made available to these settlers, indebtedness installed and for the Scandinavians and Manchester Block settlers, employment in Public Works was provided as a means of paying off those debts. Government helped ensure that settlers might stay in the area by providing employment on Public Works and in placing financial commitments on the settler. Agents like Halcombe were there also, to oversee progress in the settlement schemes. Without such involvement the process of removing the forests could not have been initiated in the large scale it was, as early as it did. Until the Public Works provided the necessary outlets for the region, land development was unavoidably slow. The rate of forest clearance increased as the communications network became more complete.

Meinig has contended that certain landscape depictions can be powerfully evocative because they are understood as being a particular kind of place, rather than something precise (Meinig, 1979, 164). The idea of the farm in the Manawatu has been similarly regarded. It was a form aspired to; it conveyed with it ideas of livelihood and progress, concepts considered to the overall good of the local area. From the time of the New Zealand Company and

the activities of E. Jerningham Wakefield, links were established between the forest lands and their potentiality as cultivated pasture. This image continued to appear subsequently throughout the study period. The fostering of the farm image was a tool in land development and related to Official image making and methods of information distortion. The efforts by Halcombe to attract immigrants for the Manchester Block Settlement in particular exemplifies both the distortion of the real situation which would confront settlers and the promotion of freehold ownership of farmland.

The farm ideal was an important image. Associated with this, beginning with the impressions of the New Zealand Company and continuing throughout the study period, was the tendency to intimate at the quality of the Manawatu lands by its luxuriant forest cover. Local admiring views of the bush lands stemmed from two main sources. Firstly they were unoccupied and secondly that they must be favoured lands for farming. The quality of the lands in the Manawatu was not questioned in the contemporary literature. The assumption throughout seems to have been that the lands would make fine farming areas. What has been shown is that as far as New Zealand bush was concerned an early link existed, created by promoters of the country, that said there was a connection between soil fertility and bush lands. While this assumption subsequently grew less tenable when land development activities were undertaken (Johnston, 1981, 23) it nevertheless appears in a diluted form in the Manawatu during this time. When promoting the Manchester Block, Halcombe had in 1873 referred to the bush lands as the best lands "for the man without capital" (Davies and Clevely, 1981, 10). During the 1880s the rates of forest conversion steadily increased until the virtual disappearance of the 'bush block' by the 1890s.

Subsequently following the 1860 land sales human agency in the form of the arriving settlers became the primary factor in landscape change. By 1891 the

settlement process had had a permanent effect on the landscape in that the bulk of the bush lands had been removed. This study of bush land perceptions within an Official/Popular framework has then related in part to what were pioneering actions and activities leading to the disappearance of the forests. In this were the realities of fulfilling Government licences, repaying loans and generally living. Life in the bush block was not easy, and for the settlers who could not sustain their financial commitment there was the prospect of losing all that had hitherto been worked for.

Settlers in the Manawatu region were placed within a constrained situation. The legislative as well as the physical and economic environment in which the settlers existed are seen as factors affecting local perceptions. The large, dense forests of the Manawatu were a problem to them. In the act of burning and clearing the bush lands the settler sought his own solutions to the problem of achieving a viable working unit. While this means of forest removal in the nineteenth century was the most practical way of achieving open land it in itself was an activity which had considerable risk. Accidents did happen. Settlers had accidents both in 'bush working' the forests ready to burn and with fires that went out of control. Then there was the problem of the weather. Faced with licence requirements to clear land, all that was needed to reduce months of hard work to nothing was a wet summer. The need to make land productive to produce an income meant any delay could be debilitating. Contemporary newspapers carried numerous articles concerning the state of the weather and its effects on bush burns. Then there was another social problem hinted at by newspapers in the 1880s that affected the rest of the country. For many of the later arrivals unemployment was a problem and for the bush wacker the prospect faced could be at best only seasonal employment. The settlers acted in a manner which was deliberate and they considered necessary. They aimed at converting the bush lands to pasture, but in doing so they faced many problems and

hardships.

For many of the settlers, in particular all the immigrant arrivals, the bush landscape provided a novel experience. Johnston (1981, 19) has noted that the New Zealand bush was assessed by immigrants as something different from previous experience. One of the images that becomes apparent after the perception of the forest as a barrier is that of the immensity of that forest. These images are somewhat related. Faced with the prospect of land clearance the forest landscape became assessed as an immense area. This image in the Manawatu and with it concepts of inexhaustibility of the timber supply survived right through the study period. Early forester's reports to Government supported this view that immense tracts of timber were available, and subsequently careful forest management practices were not followed. The potential resource value of the forests was thus little realised. In this perceptions of the Manawatu by settlers characterise those of a pioneering group. The response of the settlers to their environment and their attitudes as expressed in contemporary newspapers are consistent with those referred to by Tuan (1974, 66).

The stance adopted by Government in making lands available has been considered an important aspect in the Official/Popular dichotomy. The consistency throughout the study period of making lands available fulfilled in part a desire of those who sought or had been promised land but lacked the financial resource necessary to obtain it. A constraint within the Official/Popular framework has been to concentrate on the opening of public lands to this group. While this facilitated settlement of large acreages of the Manawatu not all settlers took up public lands. It is considered though that perceptions of Government to the settlement of the Manawatu were general. The role of Government in opening up the Manawatu through land acquisition and public works aided all settlers, whether they were seeking land in Special Settlements or independently. Following the Manchester Block acquisition

by the Emigrants' and Colonists' Aid Corporation, land acquisition was not restricted solely to immigrant settlers. Land was advertised for sale for any who were interested. Such flow on settlement occurred throughout the Manawatu following the impetus provided by Government.

In relation to the populist view of the Manawatu's forests, the conclusions arrived at have been that the local perceptions regarding bush block development coincide to an extent with those of Official perceptions. There was a local view that also favoured a 'farm ideal'. It was found there was very little questioning of contemporary land management practices. The views of visitors were briefly encountered, and were the only situations where perceptions of beauty in the natural state were actually encountered as a norm, and thus a factor significant to landscape appraisal. Elsewhere local perceptions are tied up with other values. The landscape was seen in pragmatic terms, the result of factors working directly upon the settler. The resultant response of 'unseeing eyes' to the natural scene admired by the visitor is thus explained.

What has not been attempted is a history of local land settlement or Government policy. Rather the intent has been to interpret Government/Settler relations, their perceptions of the bush landscape and subsequently understand the processes involved in subsequent landscape change. In this a chronological history of the conversion of forest to pasture would have been self-defeating. It would have failed to interpret the reasons for change. One of the major problems which has however restricted this study has been the lack of available information relative to the subject area. Newspaper coverage in the Manawatu from its start in 1876 until 1891 is not complete. Contemporary material dealing with perceptions of the bush landscape is at best scarce. The result of this has been that information that was available was used as suggestive of general themes rather

than categorical proof. Within this limitation, however, there were several consistent themes which have appeared in the material throughout the study period, in particular the farm ideal.

The landscape in the Manawatu area changed in relation to the ideas held by the settlers. That local perceptions of the bush landscape were not seen to change through time, even when the demise of the bush lands themselves was readily apparent, seems to be contrary to Tuan's (1974, 75) assertion that over time individual and group held attitudes do tend to change. Possible explanations for this could be that even while the bush lands themselves had disappeared the settlers still saw themselves in a pioneering world. Such tasks as clearing land of stumps had not been completed in 1891. Even as late as the 1960s stumps were removed from former bush blocks. These kinds of actions could perhaps plausibly explain why over time attitudes and perceptions of the bush landscape did not change. Another possibility is that the study period was too small in time scale to note changing perceptions. The tasks of clearing the land of its forests may have been too familiar to the settlers direct past to see a change in their attitudes which may have become apparent with an extension of the study period. A third possibility and one that is suggested by the desire for the farm ideal relates to preferred environment. With the removal of the forests by land development activities the process of producing a preferred environment was initiated. The founding of the farming industry and establishment of that lifestyle fulfilled the desire of a group who favoured such a pattern. The success of those efforts to produce the domesticated scene evoked pride of achievement. That pride is evident in the subsequent printing of newspaper supplements, the last in 1981, to commemorate the Feilding Centenary. The farm was, and remained, a desired form.

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