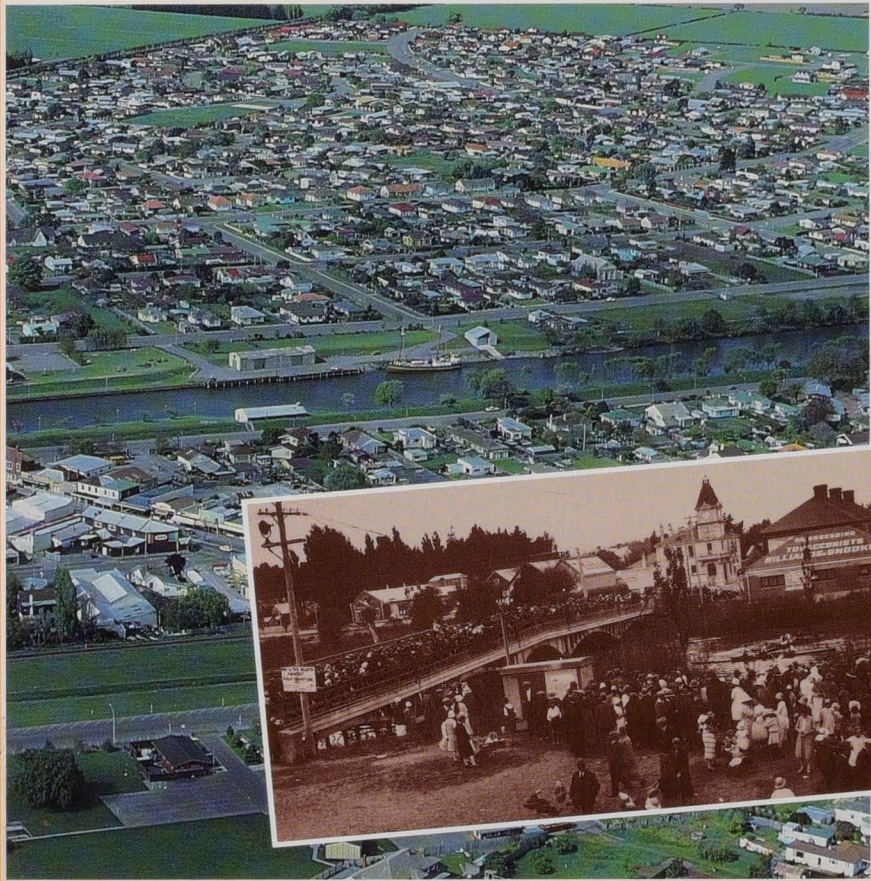


KAIAPOI



A Search for Identity



Pauline Wood

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The history of Kaiapoi is a study of one of the most interesting and varied towns in New Zealand. Dominated earlier by Maori settlement and a demanding rural hinterland the community later became an industrial town with a focus on both urban and rural development. Like no other town of its type in New Zealand, Kaiapoi became well known globally for what it produced while at the same time its people strived to establish a significant identity as a North Canterbury town. Throughout its history Kaiapoi has searched for its identity. This is the story of that search.

Front cover photographs
Aerial view Kaiapoi 1989
- Gavin Smith photographer
1922 River Carnival (inset)
- courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

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- Gavin Sm
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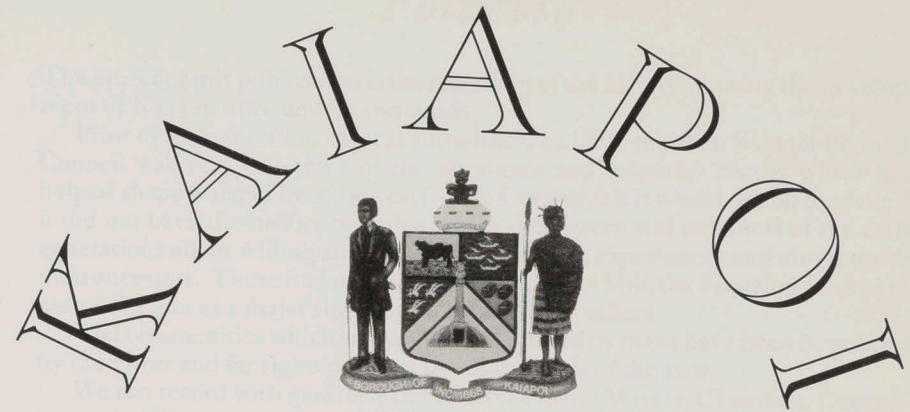
KAIAPOI

A Search for Identity

For Sale

Waimatiri District Council

This book is dedicated to the memory of my father,
Frederick Fawcett Farra, 1900-1987.



A Search for Identity

Pauline Wood

Waimakariri District Council

Publication Details

Published by: Waimakariri District Council.
© 1993 Waimakariri District Council,
High Street, Rangiora.

ISBN 0-473-02331-8

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Inquiries should be made to the publishers.
Typeset in 10 pt Caslon 540 Roman by Rangiora Printing Service (1984) Ltd.
Printed by the Rangiora Printing Service (1984) Ltd., 5 Blake Street,
Rangiora

Foreword

The object of this publication is the recording of the history showing the development of Kaiapoi town and its surrounds.

Prior to reorganisation of local authorities, in 1989, the then Kaiapoi Borough Council was very conscious of the important and colourful history which had helped shape Kaiapoi over the years. The Council felt it would not be forgiven if it did not have the history recorded whilst there were still members of the early generations about willing and able to pass on their experiences and also those of their ancestors. These include stories of the Kaiapoi Mill, the Freezing works, the use of Kaiapoi as a major shipping port, and many others.

Today's amenities which are so taken for granted by many have been developed by the effort and far sightedness of the enthusiasts of the past.

We can record with gratitude the efforts of many Mayors, Chairmen, Councilors and residents who gave much time and thought to the development of the area which started with limited resources, difficult now to imagine, in these more affluent times.

I extend to the citizens of the future my sincere wishes that the example set by those of the past will inspire them to act with the same confidence and skill that was shown by the earlier generations.

The author of this book, Pauline Wood, has spent many hours researching, interviewing and sifting through information.

On behalf of the Council, and those who will read this book to get from it both pleasure and information, I thank her for all her diligence, perseverance and ability.

H G McAllister B.E.M.J.P.
LAST MAYOR OF KAIAPOI

Acknowledgements

Over the time that it has taken me to research and write this book there have been many people who have helped me to find the information, to clarify my ideas and assist with the technical details.

The staff at the Canterbury Museum Library, Josie Lamb and Glenys Mitchell were particularly helpful at the beginning of my research as was Jo-Anne Smith, the archivist at the Museum. The staff at the National Archives branch in Christchurch also were most helpful. I am thankful that there is such a modern facility within easy reach. I thank the staff in the New Zealand Room at the Christchurch Public Library for their friendly co-operation during the period of my research for the book.

I am particularly grateful for the help that the volunteers at the Rangiora and Kaiapoi Museums gave me. Bill Leith at Rangiora was always available, often at short notice. In Kaiapoi, the volunteers, Lloyd Cleland, Mrs S. Nina Minchington, Ray Spriggs and the late Tom Ayers, were always most helpful. My special thanks, however are reserved for Bill and Jean Buckley from Kaiapoi. Bill has not only been a most particular and patient research assistant but he has also had the grace to listen while I tested my historical theories.

I am thankful to those families who allowed me to have information about their members who have made contributions to Kaiapoi's history. In particular, the Keetley family, the Wilson family, the Blackwell family, the Williams families, the Hills family, the Papprell family, the Wallace family and the McAllister family. Clem Lindsay is thanked for his information about the Kaiapoi Branch of the R.S.A. and The Pines-Kairaki Residents' Associations. I was also privileged to have the help of Paora Tau and Rik Pitama with the Maori history of the area.

My husband, Desmond and my sons, Jonathan, Matthew, Geoffrey, and Philip have listened to me and have supported me and I hope that I haven't tested their love too much! Matthew has been patient enough to help me overcome some of my computer illiteracy, while Jonathan, Geoffrey and Philip have not complained too often about the disruption to their lives. My especial thanks and love go to Desmond who encouraged me when I lost heart, read and corrected numerous drafts of the book, and made many cups of tea.

Gary Saunders has helped to keep me on track as well as listening to me and I thank him. My thanks also to my friend, Judith Hault, who has helped with the index and some of the proof reading.

The technical help from the staff at Rangiora Printing Service, Jim Clayden, Dodge Healey, Hamish Howie, Jeffrey Walesby and Kerry Roach, has been most appreciated.

Writing this book has been a most enjoyable and satisfying experience. Kaiapoi has a story worth telling and I hope I have done justice to it.

Pauline Wood.

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Chapter One:

MAORI HEGEMONY AND COLONIAL BEGINNINGS.

Kaiapo had no specific beginning. It has existed in one form or another for many centuries. The focus of this book is on the last one hundred and fifty years of Pakeha settlement. However, Maori history prior to that time cannot be ignored. To do otherwise would be to begin towards the end of the story. The Maori context and the South Island setting are an indispensable framework within which to locate the present town.

Orthodox research has always acknowledged that there have been four waves of occupation in the South Island; three of these were Maori and one Pakeha. The genetic links between the people of those occupation waves are in evidence in many of the present day community.

However, in the nineteen twenties, a kaumatua of the Kai Tahu tribe, Teone Taare Tikao, indicated in his talks with the historian Herries Beattie, that there were five tribes which successively inhabited the South Island. (1)

Tikao named the first of the tribes, Hawea. Hawea arrived in the canoe Kapakitua under the direction of Tai-ehu. Tikao described these people as very swarthy with thick mops of dark hair and with a language different to Maori. He speculated that they may have come from Africa.

The second tribe to claim the South Island as home, according to Tikao, was the Waitaha. Uruao, the Waitaha canoe, made landfall in the north of the island. Under the guidance of their leader Rakaihautu the Waitaha made their way south down the west coast of the island and north again on the east coast. It must have been an epic journey as on the way Rakaihautu dug out the southern lakes with his magic digging stick, Tuhiraki. Eventually the Waitaha reached the present day site of Akaroa. This site became a Waitaha stronghold. The area was a veritable food basket and the people were content to settle there. Rakaihautu planted his digging stick on the opposite side of the harbour to Akaroa. The planting turned Tuhiraki into a hill which is currently known as Mt Bossu.

(1) Told by Teone Taare Tikao to Herries Beattie, *Tikao Talks*, pp 57-58

In Tikao's recollection the third tribe to journey to the South Island was Te Rapuwai. This tribe had its origin in Hawaiki but in the words of Tikao, they were not much good. They could fight on the land but were apparently much better at fighting on the water. Consequently the name, Te Rapuwai, roughly translated, means beating on the water. The inference that can be taken from Tikao is that, although this tribe did not displace the Waitaha entirely, in a small localized area it was able to achieve paramouncy.

The fourth and fifth tribes referred to in Tikao's recollections were the Kati Mamoe and the Kai Tahu. Both of these tribes came from the east coast of the North Island and both were in search of land and food resources.

Waitaha, Kati Mamoe, and Kai Tahu can be accounted for in both the archeological and whakapapa records. The other tribes referred to by Tikao are an intriguing extension of our present knowledge of settlement in the South Island.

The South Island was attractive to the Kati Mamoe as an area where there was relatively little competition for the food resources. Whilst Waitaha could claim the whole of the South Island by virtue of exploration, they had confined their permanent settlement to the relatively small Banks Peninsula area. The Kati Mamoe heke into the island seems to have been a slow and gradual process during which Kati Mamoe intermarried with the Waitaha. There appears to have been no conquest by force. This is borne out by the whakapapa of the present day people who carry both the names of their Waitaha ancestors and their Kati Mamoe ancestors. There were probably times when the Kati Mamoe had to impose their will upon the Waitaha with more unpleasant methods than intermarriage. Even with direct hostilities the strong tradition of bringing about peace between warring parties by an arranged marriage meant that even under these conditions there was an inevitable genetic mix which bound people together.

The world that the Kati Mamoe came into provided seasonal changes in food and, through the knowledge gained from the Waitaha, provided also the means by which to gather and hunt for it. The day to day lives of the people of Kati Mamoe were a continual struggle to find enough food to sustain them through the winter months. The methods of preservation of birds and fish were essential tools to survival. This was coupled with the knowledge of the best time for the food harvest to ensure that food was able to be regenerated for the next season.

The last two waves in the orthodox view of South Island occupation took place during the past two to three centuries. The third wave (Tikao's fifth wave) came again from the east coast of the North Island and again, like the Kati Mamoe, the Kai Tahu were attracted south by the varied food sources. It has been said that some of the Kai Tahu were living in the Haitaitai area of the southern coast of the North Island when a gift of food was sent from the Kati Mamoe people of the northern South Island. It was this gift of food that proved to be the incentive that the Kai Tahu needed to take them across Ruakawa (Cook Strait) to hunt in the Wairau area for ducks. Naturally enough this brought them into conflict with the Kati Mamoe already in possession of the land and its resources. Two or three generations of fierce fighting then occurred between the two peoples for the land and the riches

it generated (2). As with the Waitaha and the Kati Mamoe, there was a tradition of intermarriage to ensure peace between the warring parties. Once again there was a genetic mingling that has been preserved in the names of the present day people.

The Kai Tahu had a tradition of cultivation, especially of the kumara. They found, however, that the colder temperatures and the less reliable rainfall in the South Island meant that the cultivation of the kumara was limited to the north eastern quarter of the island. Banks Peninsula proved to be the southern most region where the plant could be grown with any regularity. In order to survive, the Kai Tahu had to learn how to gather and hunt the food resources of the island. That knowledge was acquired from the Kati Mamoe.

One of the most influential chiefs at the time of Kai Tahu's drive south was Tuahuriri. This notable man had two wives, Kakukiao and Hinetawai. Tanetiki was Kakukiao's son and Hamua, Turakautahi, and Moki were the sons of Hinetawai.

Two of Tuahuriri's sons were involved in the first fighting in the Wairau. One of them, Moki, who proved to be a very successful general, went further south and began the conquest of Banks Peninsula. He then went on to conquer parts of Westland. According to Tikao, Moki transgressed some customs and paid for this mistake with his life. He was buried on Tapuaenuku, a mountain near Kaikoura, so that he could look north to his home area of the east coast of the North Island.

When Moki's father and his brothers learned of his death they decided to come south. On the journey across the strait Tuahuriri and Hamua were drowned. Turakautahi survived the crossing and then became involved in fighting at a pa called Pariwhakatau where he was wounded. He was then taken to a small village called Te Kohaka a Kaikaiawaru where it was thought that he would die. There the injured man made a pact with himself that if he recovered he would not fight again. After his recuperation, Turakautahi decided to remodel Te Kohaka a Kaikaiawaru into a great pa. He named the pa Kaiapoi. (3)

Turakautahi has been called a great strategist. Consequently, at a first glance, his choice of Kaiapoi as his paramount pa seemed rather odd. However this was not the case. The pa was located on a whale shaped promontory on the northern east coast of the island. To its north and east, was the lagoon of the Rakihuri (Ashley) River and to its west a swamp. Beyond the swamp was a great forest which stretched between the present day Woodend and Rangiora. Pakeha observers recorded sightings of totara (black pine), kaihikitea (white pine) and kowhai in this forest. (4) These timbers were ideal for building palisades and houses. The soil of this area was a sandy mixture that was ideal for the cultivation of the kumara. The swamp provided a readily accessible food source of fish and birds and, most importantly, made the site impregnable.

Turakautahi established an empire centred on that site that lasted for about two hundred years until it was sacked by Te Rauparaha in the early part of the nineteenth century.

(2) Pitama, Rik, and Paora Tau

(3) Told by Teone Taare Tikao to Herries Beattie, *Tikao Talks*, pp122-23.

(4) C.O. Torlesse to J. Thomas on the variety of timbers. 29.9.1849.

Turakautahi's empire was based on the need for the food resources of the island to be "swung" (Kaiapoi - to swing food) to the pa for distribution among the people. There were a number of small kaika surrounding Kaiapoi. These were established so that eels, whitebait and other fish species, various duck species, weka and pukeko could be gathered. One of the kaika was situated on the junction of the Korotuaheke (Cam) River and the North Branch of the Waimakariri River and was commonly known as Ruataniwha. Further up the Korotuaheke near the site of the present day woollen mill buildings was another kaika called Te Rakiwhakaputa.

These kaika appeared to be occupied throughout the year although, no doubt, there were times when the whanau in these villages were needed at Kaiapoi.

Separate whanau were given different food gathering, hunting or cultivating tasks that were carried out in the appropriate seasons. They brought the fruits of their labour to the pa to be distributed among the other whanau. Over the generations these whanau developed skills in a particular area of food gathering that has remained with them to the present day. For example, the fishing whanau of the southern part of the island (Murihiku) have had many generations of experience in both inshore and deep sea fishing grounds. They are able, with the confidence born of this experience, to harvest the catch in the most appropriate manner to ensure the survival of the different fish species.

Kaiapoi was not only the pantry of the Kai Tahu empire but it was also the tribe's university, spiritual centre and the seat of government. All of the important decisions concerning Kai Tahu were made at Kaiapoi and so long as the leaders were concerned with the greater good of the tribe the system worked well. However within the empire itself existed the seeds of its own destruction. Any society depending on face to face encounters and the mana of its leaders to enforce its will has the potential for the system to break down. In the case of Kai Tahu the breakdown began in the early years of the nineteenth century.

The leader at Kaiapoi during this time was Te Maiharanui. It has been strongly hinted that he was not equal to his leadership tasks. Although the people seemed to be in awe of him, he did not appear to have their total respect. The sense of awe is portrayed in the stories of the destruction of food stores if his shadow happened to fall on them. The lack of deference could be said to have initiated the Kai Huaka feud which by the time of its conclusion had so weakened the tribe, that it was an easy target for the Ngati Toa invaders from the north under Te Rauparaha.

The Kai Huaka feud began when Murihaka, the wife of Potahi, wore Te Maiharanui's cloak which he had left at their kaika, Waikakahi. This was a most terrible insult to Te Maiharanui. It had to be avenged. Murihaka must have known, when she put on the cloak, that she was committing a dreadful deed. Yet she could not have realised what the appalling consequences of her act were to be. To avenge the insult, the men of the village killed a woman servant. This murder signalled the beginning of a number of killings which very quickly involved all of the Banks Peninsula Kai Tahu.

Te Maiharanui was in Kaikoura during this episode. On his return he decided to attack the Taumutu people. He defeated them but during the action a number of Kaiapoi women in the Taumutu Pa were killed and eaten. Instead of stopping

the feud, Te Maiharanui's actions escalated the conflict to the extent that eventually all of the hapu on the island were involved. It is difficult to say exactly how long this feud lasted but some sources have indicated that it was sustained for as long as fifteen years and at a cost of a large number of lives.⁽⁵⁾ John Boulton recorded that the feud was still raging in the mid 1820's. Boulton, an English adventurer, spent from 1825 to 1828 in the Murihiku region of the island. He recorded in his journal people going to war at "Acalore" (Akaroa) and reporting on their return that they had killed 70 men.⁽⁶⁾ Boulton also reported the end of the Kai Huaka feud. In 1828, he wrote that a number of warriors were concerned that the chief of "Cabooti" (Kapiti), "Rowbulla" (Te Rauparaha) was becoming a worry.⁽⁷⁾

They had every right to be worried. Te Rauparaha's first expedition south gave him a victory at Omihi but a defeat at Kaiapoi. Te Rauparaha had hoped, on the false proclamation of friendship, to get his warriors into Kaiapoi. Kai Tahu learnt of this treachery from one of their spies and laid a trap for the Ngati Toa. As the last of the Ngati Toa warriors stooped to come through the gateway into the pa, he was hit on the head and killed. In the next few moments four other Ngati Toa were killed. Te Rauparaha withdrew and returned to Kapiti to plan his revenge.

After two years Te Rauparaha's plan was ready to be put into action. He had persuaded Captain Stewart to take his ship the "Elizabeth" to Akaroa to pretend to trade with the Kai Tahu. Once the Kai Tahu were on board, the Ngati Toa, who were hidden below, came up and captured them. The capture included Te Maiharanui, his wife, Te Whe and their daughter, Te Roimata. During the voyage north Te Maiharanui killed Te Roimata, to spare her the indignities of capture. On their arrival at Kapiti the Ngati Toa warriors handed over Te Maiharanui to the widows of those killed at Kaiapoi for a tortured and slow death.

The way was now clear for Te Rauparaha to return south and complete the rout of Kai Tahu. He laid siege to the great pa. To make the task of breaking into the pa easier, Te Rauparaha instructed his men to pile bundles of brushwood up against the palisades with the intention of burning them down. As quickly as the Ngati Toa put the brushwood up the Kai Tahu took it down. After several months of this activity Kai Tahu grew impatient and during an easterly wind set fire to the brush themselves in order to chase the Ngati Toa away. However they forgot the fickleness of their own environment. The wind changed to the north-west, blowing the fire back onto the pa, allowing the Ngati Toa warriors an easy passage to the heart of the Kai Tahu empire. With an overwhelming advantage in musket numbers the Ngati Toa were able to kill or capture most of those in the pa. Those who escaped went to the peninsula pursued by Te Rauparaha. The great pa was abandoned. The bodies of those who were killed were left unburied.

On the peninsula, the sacking of the newly erected pa at Onawe indicated to the Ngati Toa that they had at last eliminated the Kai Tahu nuisance. However, the southern Kai Tahu under Taiaroa, the Otakou chief, decided that the honour of Kai Tahu was more important than any lingering animosities

(5) Pitama, Rik, and Paora Tau.

(6) ed. Starke June, *The Journal of John Boulton, Journal of a Rambler*, p. 28

(7) *ibid.* p. li, & p. 65, footnote.

left over from the Kai Huaka feud. The Otakou warriors made their way north and with the advantage of muskets were able to defeat Te Rauparaha at Cloudy Bay where he had been engaged in a duck hunting expedition. The captured Kai Tahu were permitted to return home. They brought with them a Ngati Toa child whose presence was to ensure peace between the two tribes.

The Kai Huaka feud and the Te Rauparaha raids decimated Kai Tahu and at that most vulnerable time in their history the beginnings of the fourth wave of occupation of the South Island began.

Since the first sighting of James Cook's expedition by Kai Tahu on the Kaikoura coast in February 1770 and again in Doubtful Sound in 1773, the people of the South Island had been aware of a fair skinned race which sailed in strange craft. Tikao recounts that the South Islanders called Cook and his crew, korakorako. This word can be translated as albino. Tikao also told of the amazement of the local people when they saw smoke coming from Cook's head; he was smoking a pipe. This indicated to them that he was a demon. If, after water had been thrown at him, Cook's head was still smoking that would have proved that he was a demon. Luckily, for the probably startled Cook, the water put his pipe out and the people accepted that he was human.⁽⁸⁾

The last decade of the eighteenth century saw increased contact between the two races. Generally this took place on the southern coast of the island and was of a transitory nature. The Pakeha were attracted to the area by the abundance of fur seals on the coast. The sealers were left on the shore for limited periods by their ships to catch as many seals as they were able. This contact was a troubled one. The Kai Tahu perceived that the sealers were stealing their property and the penalty for that was death. The sealers, on the other hand, regarded the seals as wild and therefore not belonging to anyone.

Occasionally some of the sealers were abandoned by their ships. They had to learn to adapt to Kai Tahu society in order to survive. From these rather unpromising beginnings the fourth genetic mix began.

In the northern region the Pakeha were attracted by flax. This commodity was traded by Pakeha from bases in the North Island and from Sydney in New South Wales. At the same time as the flax traders were showing some interest in the potential of the South Island the whalers were beginning to establish shore stations in the areas where the whales came close to land during their annual migrations to and from their breeding and feeding grounds. The need for these shore stations to be sustained throughout the year encouraged Kai Tahu, who had a tradition of cultivation, to turn to the new Pakeha crops. The sale of such crops as potatoes and wheat ensured that Kai Tahu established a mercantile relationship with the whalers and flax traders. The price for this new way of life for Kai Tahu was further decimation through deaths caused by Pakeha diseases.

(8) Told by Teone Taare Tikao to Herries Beattie, *Tikao Talks*, pp154-55

The Kai Tahu had no natural immunity against such incursions into their environment.

Joseph Price, an English sailor, has been credited with recording the first meeting between the Kaiapoi Kai Tahu and the Pakeha. Price arrived in the area on the baque "*Vittoria*" commanded by Captain Southam.

The "*Vittoria*", which was owned by Sydney rope maker Jacob Myer, departed from that port on 5 May 1829 loaded with ten cases of muskets, ten cases of gunpowder, tobacco, gin, and brandy to trade for flax from Ngati Toa on Kapiti Island. The record of the "*Vittoria's*" voyage from Kapiti to Purau Bay in Port Cooper, as Lyttelton Harbour was then known, is vague. It is known that the vessel called into Port Underwood, then a whaling station, and there, Price boarded her.

Price had been whaling in both the Kapiti and Port Underwood areas for some time but on the arrival of the "*Vittoria*" he decided to take up flax trading. Perhaps life at a shore whaling station did not suit his personality and he had been missing the challenge of real sailing. In his reminiscences, which were recorded in 1892, Price gave two accounts of his travel to Kaiapoi. The most frustrating aspect of the chronicle is that he does not give any definite dates for his journey.

Most commentators have assumed that Price saw and stayed in the great pa at Kaiapoi but he recorded little of the physical appearance of area. It would seem logical, if Price had seen the two and a half hectare site with its impressive buildings, gates and palisades, that even after sixty years, he would have remembered some of the particulars of the pa and have noted them in his reminiscences.

In his first version Price states that the trading master of the ship went overland from Port Cooper to Kaiapoi while the crew took the baque, under the pilotage of a Maori, to Kaiapoi. Apparently they lost their way and had difficulty finding the entrance to the Waimakariri River. Eventually they found Kaiapoi and stayed there for two nights. Price remembered that they were treated most hospitably and were given fish and potatoes as well as a bed companion for each of them. Unfortunately for Price his companion was an eighty year old and not therefore the most desirable inamorata. The crew traded muskets, powder, blankets, tobacco and a little rum for pigs and flax. The pigs and flax were sent overland to Rapaki and then onto Purau. This raises the question of what happened to the "*Vittoria*" after she had found the Waimakariri River. It would have been less of a task if the flax, at the very least, had been loaded on her while she was in the river.

In the second version Price recorded that he made the overland journey to Kaiapoi along the Rapaki track and that Captain Southam took the baque up the coast. As the Captain was unable to find the Waimakariri River mouth he returned to Purau to wait for the pigs and the flax which had been traded for guns.

It is possible that the crew of the "*Vittoria*" stayed at one of the small kaika on the banks of the Waimakariri rather than at Kaiapoi. There does not seem to be any particular Kai Tahu memory of the encounter and that again is a small clue indicating that perhaps Price did not stay at the great pa. It also appears odd that

the "Vittoria" in both versions of the journey appeared to lose her way. It is particularly strange in the first version, in that she was under the pilotage of a Maori. It is hardly likely that a Kai Tahu man would not have known where the Waimakariri River mouth was situated. The pilot, however, could have been exercising caution, given the recent experience of the "Elizabeth" under Captain Stewart.

The "Vittoria" was in Port Underwood in the early days of August 1831. As it was only a journey of three or four days in the most foul of weather to Port Cooper then the ship must have been in the Waimakariri area in mid August. This means that the crew must have been in the area either in the period prior to the sacking of Kaiapoi or in its immediate aftermath. In either case it seems strange that, even with the time lapse between seeing the area and the recording of his experiences, Price did not notice the upheaval that must have been going on in the region. (9)

The encounter does indicate that there was a willingness among those Kai Tahu that the crew of the "Vittoria" dealt with, to trade with and be hospitable to strangers. The commodities that the Kai Tahu traded displayed a knowledge of the current values of the goods that they sought, if version one of Price's journey can be relied upon.

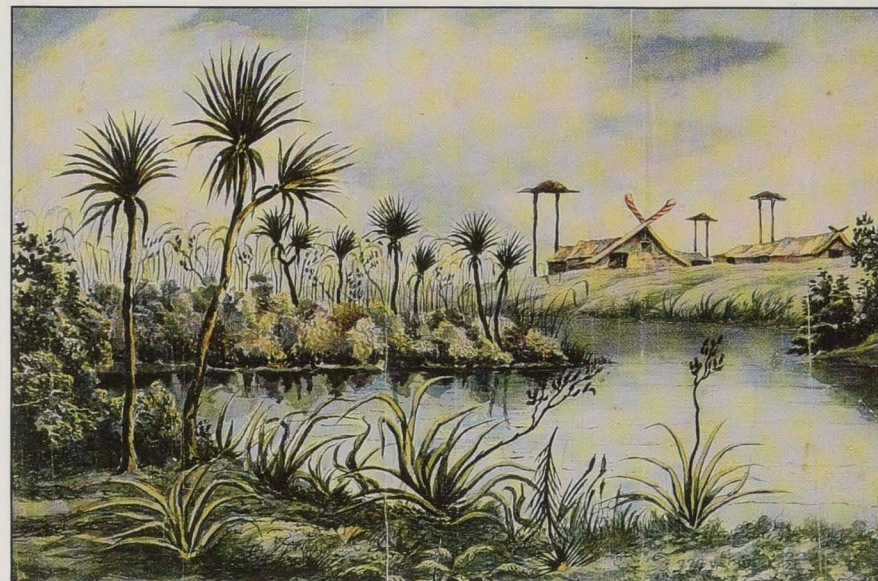
This particular encounter was not an isolated one amongst the Kai Tahu. In their relatively long contact with the Pakeha, many Kai Tahu had come to understand and speak English. Many of the leaders were also literate in English. When the Kai Tahu leadership signed the Treaty of Waitangi the majority were able to sign in their own hand. As they were bilingual, they were acutely aware that the Treaty guaranteed them possession of their land and treasures and that they would, as of right, enjoy the protection of the Crown as British citizens.

Throughout the 1840's Kai Tahu prospered as farmers and traders. They were agricultural and pastoral farmers and their trading exploits led them as far away as Sydney in their own vessels. The Treaty appeared to have given them sovereignty in their own land.

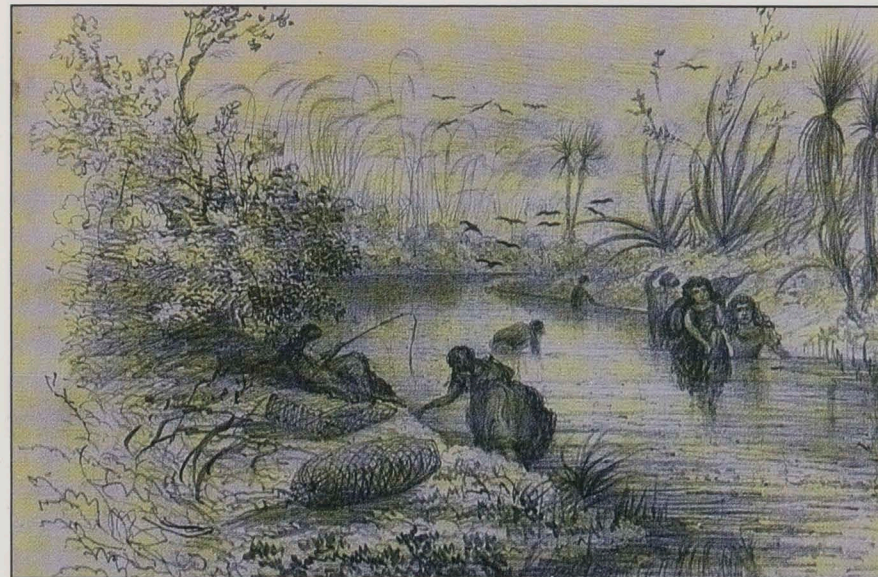
In the years immediately following the signing of the Treaty, Governor Fitzroy set up the Aboriginal Protectorate to give effect to the provisions of the Treaty particularly with respect to the purchase of land from the various tribes. In 1846 George Grey was appointed Governor. He decided to abolish the Protectorate and replace it with Commissioners who were to purchase land as quickly as possible for there to be sufficient land available for the arriving Pakeha. It is in this period that the great differences in the cultural appreciation of the land led to an inevitable clash.

The Maori, and in particular Kai Tahu, regarded the land as a sacred trust. It was the land that provided the people with sustenance and without the land and its naturally occurring resources Kai Tahu would literally starve. Although many of the Kai Tahu had begun to use Pakeha methods of cultivation, there were vast uncultivated, but not unclaimed areas, in the South Island. The

(9) Price, Joseph *Reminiscences 1838-1841*, ed T. Quealy, 1892



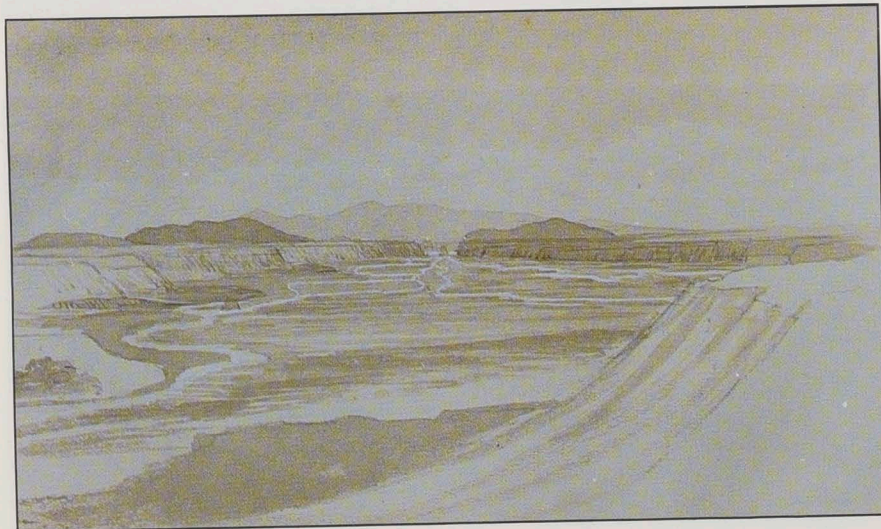
"Scene on the Horotueka or Cam, Kaiapoi Pah Canterbury" - water colour by Charles Haubroe, 1855. - courtesy Canterbury Museum



"Eeling in the Cam Creek, Kaiapoi" - pencil by Charles Haubroe, 1855. - courtesy Canterbury Museum



"Te Aika's Whare, Kaiapoi" - pencil by Charles Haubroe, 1855. - courtesy Canterbury Museum



"Scene in the Waimakariri" - water colour by James E. Fitzgerald (1818- 1896), 26 November 1851. - courtesy Canterbury Museum.

The artist's note - "Scene on the banks of the Waimakariri looking down on the bed of the river towards the east. The Gorge is seen about six miles distant and above it the high land of Banks Peninsula about forty miles distant. The bed of the river, about four hundred feet beneath the spectator is near a mile wide and contains several streams. On the right the water of the Kowai enters the bed of the great river. Nov, 26th 1851"

Pakeha regarded these uncultivated and largely unsettled areas as waste land and saw them as a legitimate targets for purchase. In 1846 the British government instructed Grey to declare as Crown land, all land not actually occupied. The missionaries, especially Bishop Selwyn, seemed to understand the Maori attitude towards the land. They protested vigorously, citing the Treaty of Waitangi as the basis for land transactions between the tribes and the Crown. Consequently, Grey was persuaded that in order to acquire the land, he had to pursue a rapid policy of purchase rather than to annex it to the Crown for sale to the Pakeha.

Grey began his South Island negotiations in 1848 when he paid a visit to Akaroa. He discussed the purchase of the whole area between Nelson and Otago with some of the Kai Tahu chiefs who were then at Akaroa. The chiefs agreed, after a long and sometimes heated debate, to sell the area for two thousand pounds provided that there were sufficient reserves set aside for Kai Tahu's needs both present and future. The chiefs also stipulated that the government was to provide schools, hospitals and general care for Kai Tahu. On the surface this verbal agreement seemed to be fair to both parties. However it was revealed later that the chiefs had been under duress when they made the agreement. Kai Tahu had been told by Grey that he intended to purchase the land from Ngati Toa if they refused to sell. Ngati Toa, according to Grey had a right to the land through Te Rauparaha's conquest. Kai Tahu were in the invidious position of having to sell the land in order to receive monetary and other recompense. If they had refused to sell, Kai Tahu would have not only been landless, they would also have been completely penniless.

The day to day administration of the southern part of New Zealand was in the hands of a Lieutenant-Governor based in Wellington. After Grey had made his verbal agreement with Kai Tahu the details of converting that into a written agreement were supposedly left to the Lieutenant-Governor, E.J. Eyre. In turn, Eyre appointed Henry Tace Kemp as the Commissioner. Eyre gave Kemp a set of instructions. The most important of these, from a Kai Tahu view point, was the instruction to visit all the kaika to obtain the agreement of every land owner before the purchase could be completed. Kemp was supplied with a properly drawn up Deed of Sale from the Law Office and an accurately drawn map. He was to mark precisely the surveyed reserves on the map after he had consulted with the Kai Tahu in each area. He did not carry out these instructions.

On his arrival at Akaroa, Kemp found that the Kai Tuahuriri of the Kaiapoi district were refusing to sell. Rather than confront them Kemp decided to remain in Akaroa and negotiate with the people there. After three days he maintained that he had completed the deal. The reason for Kemp's failure to carry out the Eyre instruction lies in his direction from Grey to purchase the land as quickly as possible. Thus Kemp avoided any protraction of the negotiations by staying in Akaroa and talking only to those who were willing to sell the land.

Apart from this, however, Kemp made a number of fundamental mistakes. Firstly the Deed of Sale was made out to the New Zealand Company and not to the Crown. Secondly, he did not accurately define the boundaries of the land he had

purchased. This gave rise to extreme confusion between the sellers and the purchasers. Kemp was sure that he had negotiated the purchase of the island from the east coast to the west coast whereas the Kai Tahu maintained that they had only sold the land from the east coast to the first mountain range.

The first manifestation of this confusion arose when the New Zealand Company surveyors began their work. Kai Tahu expected that their kaika and their mahika kai would be reserved to them during this survey. When it became apparent this was not the case, a Kai Tahu delegation visited Wellington to sort the matter out with Lieutenant-Governor Eyre. The interpreter at the meeting was Walter Mantell who, like Kemp, was one of Grey's men. When Eyre appeared to agree with the Kai Tahu request that the land between the Waimakariri and the Kowai Rivers remain in their hands, Mantell's reaction was one of such outrage that Eyre abandoned the meeting. Mantell had been instructed by Grey to stick to the ten acre per head reserve and this he did despite the obvious and sustained protest from the Kai Tuahuriri of Kaiapoi.

In August 1848 when Mantell and fellow surveyor, Alfred Wills, were working at Tuahiwi on the survey of the reserve, their hut was set on fire. Although this did not deter them from their task it was an indication of the extent of the hostility with which the Kai Tuahuriri viewed the activities of Mantell and Wills.

Under difficult and confusing circumstances, therefore, the land around Kai Tahu's power base at Kaiapoi passed out of Kai Tahu stewardship into the control of the New Zealand Company. After its purchase from that company by the Canterbury Association this land became part of the Canterbury Block.

That purchase signalled the absolute end to Kai Tahu hegemony in the South Island. The fourth wave of occupation was about to begin in earnest and it would change not only the power structure but also the very landscape upon which the preceding peoples had depended upon for their existence.

Chapter Two:

PAKEHA EXPLORATION, SURVEYING AND FIRST SETTLEMENT.

The fourth wave of occupation was almost imperceptible at first. The Pakeha were regarded initially by Kai Tahu as curiosities. When it became apparent that the Pakeha had both a different knowledge and an alternative technology that would advance the Takata Whenua in its food gathering, commerce, and warfare, they were welcomed. The Kai Tahu were particularly keen to learn the new ways. It was perceived by Kai Tahu that they could live in harmony with the fair skinned strangers who bought strange but useful ideas with them.

For their part the early Pakeha explorers were more interested in the landscape than the inhabitants. They were seeking a pleasant and green land which would provide all their needs for a new settlement. The magnificent sweep and wonderful nature of the plains won immediate and unanimous approval from the first explorers. The surveyors sent by the New Zealand Company to investigate the suitability of the area for the Nelson settlement, Captain E. Daniell and Mr G. Duppa, documented in their August 1841 report that the plains were of unsurpassing beauty.⁽¹⁾ However, at this point in the development of the area, beauty was not enough. For its own reasons, the New Zealand Company hierarchy decided on the northern South Island for the Nelson settlement.

Nevertheless the New Zealand Company did not dismiss the Port Cooper region altogether. It sent another surveyor to the area in 1844 to consider the district as the site for the proposed New Edinburgh settlement. The surveyor, Frederick Tuckett, undertook a more detailed study of the region than Daniell and Duppa had done. He explored thoroughly the Banks Peninsula area and went north as far as the Waimakariri River. The immensity of the plains impressed Tuckett although he had some reservations about the fertility of the soils. His observations noted the deterioration in grass growth the further west he travelled. This information led Tuckett to recommend that the minimum land subdivision area

(1) ed Hight, James & C.R. Staubel, *A History of Canterbury, Vol 1 to 1854*, p.87

should be a square mile. Notwithstanding Tuckett's enthusiasm, once again the New Zealand Company rejected the Port Cooper locality.

However, while the New Zealand Company was not persuaded by its surveyors to proceed with either the Nelson or the New Edinburgh ventures in Port Cooper, a few private individuals were willing to take a risk and settle in the area. Some of these individuals bore names that were to become synonymous with the early development of Canterbury.

The first Pakeha settlers on the plains arrived in April 1840. There were seven adults and one child in the party and they came under the auspices of a Sydney firm, Abercrombie and Company. The leader of the group was James Heriot. Their task was to establish a farm and this they set about doing in the vicinity of the present day Hagley Park. Heriot decided not to stay and so the venture was left in the hands of Malcolm McKinnon. He managed to plant and harvest corn. However three events coincided with each other to put an end to the endeavour. Firstly the corn was eaten by rats; secondly a ship coming from Sydney with supplies and men was lost and thirdly McKinnon felt that the Maori owners of the land were becoming hostile to the enterprise. Thus in March 1841 he abandoned the effort and he and his family went to Akaroa. (2)

Eighteen months later William Deans made an exploratory journey from Wellington to Foveaux Strait in search of suitable farmland. He was captivated by the appearance of the plains. After his return to Wellington he decided that the plains near the base of the hills that framed Port Cooper would be ideal for his farming venture.

Deans began his pioneering enterprise in February 1843 when he arrived at the area he called Riccarton. He was accompanied by the Gebbie and Manson families. Deans was joined in July by his brother John, who had gone to New South Wales to procure the necessary stock and seeds for their farm. John Deans brought with him fifty four cattle, forty three sheep and two mares as well as wheat, oat, lucerne and potato seed. By 1845 the Deans party had built three houses, bridged the Avon in two places, built sheds and stock yards and established an apple and plum orchard along with a vegetable garden. For the first three years they squatted on the land but in 1846 the Deans brothers negotiated an annual lease with the local Otautahi Kai Tahu.

In the same year that the Deans party arrived, three other farming pioneers settled in the Port Cooper area. Ebenezer Hays and his family in conjunction with Francis Sinclair began their farming ventures at Pigeon Bay in April. James, Joseph and Edward Greenwood arrived in December. The Greenwood brothers farmed firstly at Purau Bay and from 1847 ran a station at Motunau. The lease of their Purau Bay property was sold to W.B.Rhodes.

In spite of these advances, the area was generally regarded as too remote by most other Pakeha settlers in New Zealand. It was not until 1848 that there was any serious interest in the region.

(2) Reed, A.H. *The Story of Canterbury*, pp55-56.

1848 was to be a momentous in the development of the area. In that year the Association for the Founding of Canterbury was formed. In its first published papers on the colonizing of the land it named as Canterbury, the Association proclaimed that it was going to transplant a slice of English society to the new country. It felt that many of the recent colonies had had unnecessary struggles to survive because the colonists were from one social class. The papers expressed the view of the Association that the time to set up a new colony was opportune because of the turmoil in Europe. Life in the new colony was described as idyllic. Each new child born there would be a blessing rather than the burden a child was in the old country. There would be no din of war, no tumult of revolution, no clamour of pauperism and no struggle of classes to wear out the body and soul as in crowded

and feverish Europe. In the new country the colonist would not be losing a country but would be gaining a new one of his own. (3)

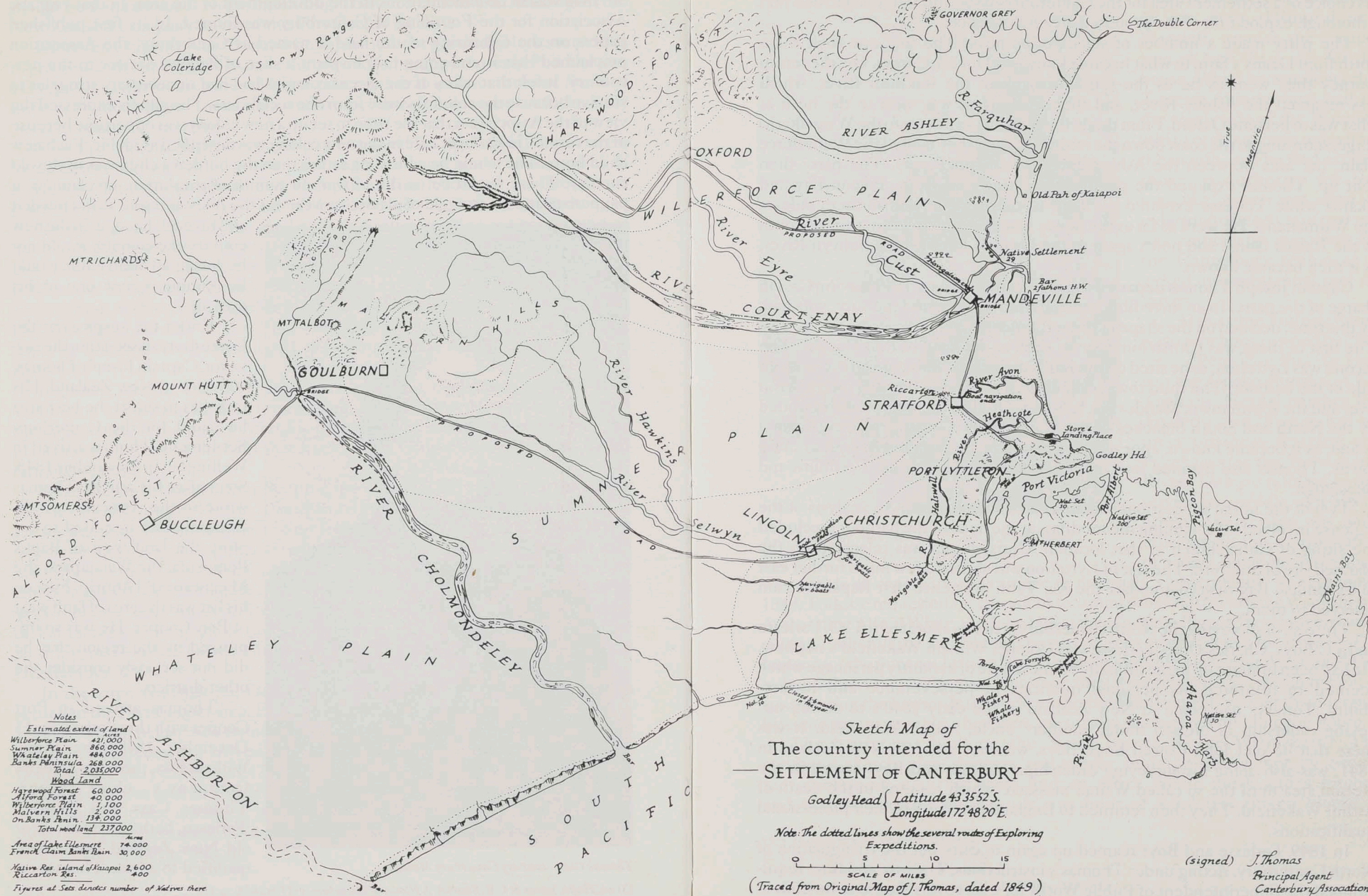
Under the auspices of the Canterbury Association the surveyor, Captain Joseph Thomas, was sent to New Zealand. His task was to select the best area he could for the Canterbury Settlement. Thomas arrived in Wellington in November 1848. Soon after his arrival, Thomas wrote to the Association indicating that he intended to explore the land west of Banks Peninsula, the Waiarapara, the Manawatu and Ahuriri. First on his list was the area of land west of Port Cooper. He was so impressed by the region that he did not seriously consider the other districts.

Thomas arrived in Port Cooper with three others on 15 December 1848. The three, William Fox, the New Zealand Company's chief agent, Thomas Cass and Charles Torlesse, both surveyors, were old New Zealand hands well qualified to advise Thomas on



Thomas Cass - courtesy Canterbury Museum

(3) ed. Hight, James & C.R. Staubel, *A History of Canterbury, Vol 1 to 1854*, p.150



Notes

Estimated extent of land

Willerforce Plain	421,000
Summer Plains	260,000
Whateley Plains	464,000
Banks Peninsula	268,000
Total	2,035,000

Wood Land

Harewood Forest	60,000
Aiford Forest	40,000
Willerforce Plain	1,100
Maitern Hills	2,000
On Banks Penin.	134,000
Total wood land	237,000

Area of Lake Ellesmere 74,000
French Claim Banks Basin 30,000
Native Res. island of Kaiapoi 2,600
Riccarton Res. 400

Figures at Sets denotes number of Natives there

Sketch Map of
 The country intended for the
 SETTLEMENT OF CANTERBURY

Godley Head { Latitude 43° 35' 52" S.
 Longitude 172° 48' 20" E.

Note: The dotted lines show the several routes of Exploring Expeditions.

SCALE OF MILES
 0 5 10 15

(Traced from Original Map of J. Thomas, dated 1849)

(signed) J. Thomas
 Principal Agent
 Canterbury Association.

his choice of a settlement area for the Canterbury Association. It was decided that a thorough exploration of the proposed area was needed.

The party made a number of separate journeys. The first one took them north from Deans's farm to what became known as Double Corner. On the return journey they went as far as the southern bank of the Rakihuri River, which was renamed the Ashley River, and then made their way west to the bush at what was to become Oxford. From there, the party made its way to the Waimakariri gorge, returning to the coast down the middle of what they named the Wilberforce Plain, the area between the Ashley and Waimakariri Rivers. The party then split up. Thomas explored the peninsula, visiting Port Levy, Pigeon Bay and Akaroa while Torlesse explored the land to the west on the southern side of the Waimakariri. He went as far as the newly named Malvern Hills, turning south to the Rakaia Gorge and north again to the Deans's farm via the Selwyn River, as it then became known.

Captain Joseph Thomas departed the district in February 1849 leaving Cass in charge of the party. In an incredibly concentrated work period the surveyors had, by this time, decided on the shape of the settlement. There were to be four towns. The first of these was Christchurch to be sited at the head of Port Cooper. The second was Lyttelton, to be sited on the Kai Tahu village of Rapaki on the western side of the harbour. The third town, called Stratford, was to be sited on the Avon river and the fourth town, Mandeville, was to be sited on the large island bounded by the North and South branches of the Waimakariri (Courtney) River. Kaiapoi Island, as it became known, appeared to be suitable for farming. As well as those towns, Thomas also planned four other towns, Lincoln, Oxford, Goulburn and Buccleugh.

Two of the initial suggestions for sites had to be changed. An analysis of the expense involved in reclaiming the mudflats at the head of the harbour precluded the siting of Christchurch at that location. Christchurch was relocated on the planned site of Stratford. The site of Lyttelton was shifted a few miles further east to Cavendish Bay to accommodate the Kai Tahu insistence that Rapaki remain reserved to them.

The task of surveying the North Canterbury area was allocated to C.O. Torlesse and J.C. Boys. Charles Obin Torlesse was Colonel William Wakefield's nephew. He had been brought up in the inflexible atmosphere of a country parsonage which seemed to reinforce his personal qualities of perseverance and intractability. Torlesse had come to New Zealand in the early 1840's to do his surveying cadetship in Nelson under another uncle, Arthur Wakefield. It was there that he met John Cowell Boys. Boys, who had come to New Zealand in 1841, was also doing his surveying cadetship. Torlesse and Boys stayed in the Nelson area until the so called Wairau massacre which resulted in the death of Arthur Wakefield. They then returned to England to complete their professional qualifications.

In 1849 Torlesse and Boys teamed up again to carry out the triangulation of North Canterbury. Acting under Thomas's instructions, Torlesse and Boys requisitioned the Superintendent of Public Works for a surveyors' house to be built at



J. C. Boys July 1869, Martin & Lawson, Christchurch photographers - courtesy Canterbury Museum

Mandeville. (4) Torlesse and two of his men, Dimond and Wagstaff, went to the Kaiapoi area to look for a site for the house. While he was doing this Torlesse found a peat bed on the south side of the Waimakariri river about seven miles from the mouth. (5) The find excited those in authority for the presence of peat was often an indication of reserves of coal and was particularly important for the Canterbury region as it lacked any substantial fuel reserves.

At this time Torlesse's base was a new house owned by "Peter". "Peter" or Pita Te Hori was the Upoko Runaka of Kai Tuahiriri. Nearby another Kai Tuahiriri man, Tainui, had set up a business ferrying the Pakeha across the Waimakariri River. Torlesse referred to this service as a paddle, as it was by canoe. The service was quite efficient for the transportation of people across the river but it

was unable to cope with the carriage of materials. Consequently, in September 1849, Torlesse requested specifications for a punt to be built to cross the Waimakariri. At that time Alfred White and John Hays (the son of the Pigeon Bay pioneers) were cutting timber in the area but had no way of conveying it across the river. (6) The request for the punt could have been Torlesse's way of persuading White and Hays to build the surveyors' house. However, they were reluctant to take on the job of constructing the house. It is not clear whether White and Hays built the punt but, by some means or other, they were eventually coaxed into building the house.

The house was built on the North Branch of the Waimakariri. The surviving sketch plan shows a rectangular building, thirty feet by twenty feet containing a sitting room and an office facing north and a kitchen and bedroom facing south. (7) It was built of kahikatea set on blocks of

(4) J. Thomas to C.O. Torlesse, 28.9.1849.

(5) C.O. Torlesse to J. Thomas, 13.9.1849.

(6) C.O. Torlesse to J. Thomas, 29.9.1849.

(7) J. Thomas to the Superintendent of Public Works, 20.9.1849.

kowhai. (8) The house, which had a floor and a ceiling, was the first substantial Pakeha building in North Canterbury.

The harassment that Mantell and Wills were subjected to in 1848 was also encountered by Torlesse during his surveying work in the region. For Torlesse, however, there was an important difference, at least in his view. He stressed that those who were protesting against his work were not the Kaiapoi Maori. In a letter to Thomas, Torlesse recorded that he had been told



Pita Te Hori - courtesy Canterbury Museum

by Takiori, a North Island Maori, and Turaka, from a village near Lake Forsyth, that none of the land north of the Ashley River had been sold and that parts of the Mandeville Plain were also disputed. Takiori and Turaka claimed that they had not received any money from the sale of the land. According to Torlesse, these two were responsible for cutting down the trigonometrical station on the bank of the Courtney (Waimakariri) River. This action was taken to avenge the moving of a Maori pole in the Papanui Bush so that a trigonometrical station could be built on that spot. (9) In his reply Thomas assured Torlesse that this was "mere talk." However he must have been more concerned than he admitted because he wrote to J.Watson, the Resident Magistrate at Akaroa, urging him to send a Government officer so that the offenders could be brought to justice as soon as possible. Thomas expressed the

opinion that the troublemakers were probably being instigated by ill-disposed persons, Europeans or Natives, and in his experience these incidents, however trifling they appeared at first, nearly always escalated. (10) At this point the harassment stopped and Torlesse, unhindered, carried on with the survey.

(8) C.O.Torlesse to J.Thomas, 29.9.1849.

(9) C.O.Torlesse to J.Thomas, (letter 1075 Canterbury Association 1849)

(10) J.Thomas to J.Watson, 29.10.1849.

Boys had gone to Riccarton (Deans's Farm) in early 1850 to work on the master map for Canterbury, leaving Torlesse to complete the field work in North Canterbury. The money set aside by the Canterbury Association for the survey ran out in March 1850 necessitating Thomas to call a halt to the work. Torlesse, demonstrating his intractable nature, was determined to carry on. He proceeded with his survey work in the Oxford district so that the map for North Canterbury could be completed.

A month after Thomas had called a halt to the preparation work for the settlement, the Canterbury Association's chief agent, John Robert Godley arrived at the fledgling port of Lyttelton. Godley was impressed by the progress made and by the number of people settled in the area. At the time of his arrival he recorded that there were twenty five houses in Lyttelton. This number more than doubled in the next six months to sixty houses. The rapid growth was as a result of the influx of tradesmen and labourers engaged by the Association to prepare the settlement for the first colonists.

In the same period northern Canterbury was beginning to be settled by the new immigrants as well. Captain W.M.Mitchell and Mr E.Dashwood, the first Pakeha to use the overland route from Nelson, arrived in the Mount Grey area in May 1850. Mitchell was so impressed by the pastoral potential of the Mount Grey Downs that he placed some sheep and cattle there in the charge of a stockman. This pioneering venture joined that of the Greenwood brothers at Motunau and paved the way for pastoralism in North Canterbury. By November 1850 two other pioneer pastoralists, R.Waitt and C.Hunter-Brown, had settled in the vicinity of Mitchell's squat.

In the meantime Godley and his family had gone to Wellington to wait for the Canterbury Association to complete its terms of purchase of the Canterbury Block from the New Zealand Company. News of the completion of the negotiations reached Godley in November 1850. The family immediately set sail for Lyttelton.

Soon after their return to Lyttelton the Godley family made a tour of North Canterbury. Godley's wife, Charlotte, in one of her many letters to her family in England, described her journey to the banks of the Waimakariri where the family camped for the night. She wrote that they saw nothing but unvaried plain, with surveyors' poles for landmarks. The plain was covered with different kinds of grass which reminded Charlotte of hay. She found it very tiring to walk through.

At their camp site the family made beds of flax and toi-toi in its tents. It was with amazement that Charlotte observed that the flax and the grass around their tents was so tall that it reminded her of being in a shrubbery. During the evening a number of Kai Tahu crossed the river and spent the night in comfortable conviviality with the Godley party around their fire. (11)

From their camp the Godleys would have been able to observe the southern side of Kaiapoi Island. The island had been formed when the Waimakariri River had split into two main channels which came to be known as the North and

(11) Godley, Charlotte, *Letters From Early New Zealand 1850-1853* pp 142-144

South Branches, respectively, of the Waimakariri. In common with the rest of the plains the island had a mixture of vegetation. On the higher ground towards the middle of the island were tall grasses and on the lower more swampy area especially



Charlotte Godley - courtesy Canterbury Museum

on the northern and southern sides were raupo (flax) plants. The island itself was pear shaped with the narrow end lying to the north-east. It was in this vicinity that the North Branch was joined by the Korotuaheke River. The enlarged North Branch then flowed in a southerly direction to meet the South Branch and roll out to sea.

The soil at the north eastern end of the island was mainly sand and the Godleys would have observed less luxurious vegetation growth there. The island may have had some trees on it but because of the frequent flooding these were likely to have been single specimens growing on the more elevated parts of the island. On its northern side, Kaiapoi Island was framed by an extensive bush. Rising above the island and the bush was the dominant presence of Maukatere, known by the Pakeha as Mount Grey.

The Godleys returned to Lyttelton on 13 December. Three days later, in the morning of 16 December the "Charlotte Jane" arrived, bringing the pioneering colonists of the Canterbury Association. This was the first of the ships and was followed by the second ship, the "Randolph", which arrived in the afternoon. The next morning bought the third ship, the "Sir George Seymour". The "Cressy", the fourth ship, came into the harbour on 27 December. Suddenly there was an influx of people in the settlement, all of whom wanted to get on with the task of building a new life. It had been planned that the colonists would have to wait for three months before selecting their blocks of land. They were in too much of a hurry for this to be a practical consideration. Consequently, at a meeting held on 30 December Godley was persuaded to permit the new arrivals to select their town sections in Lyttelton. However, he was not prepared to allow the colonists to select their rural blocks. The meeting was also notable in that approval for the siting of

the main town, Christchurch, on the planned site of the town Stratford was granted. After this meeting the construction of the most important building in Christchurch, the Land Office, was started.

In the first six months most of the colonists were content to take up their town sections in either Lyttelton or Christchurch and their rural sections in the immediate environs of those towns. However an important event in the development of Kaiapoi occurred in that one of the colonists went straight to the Kaiapoi area.

Thomas Haynes Harrison was the son of a clergyman who arrived in Canterbury on the "Randolph". He selected for himself Rural Section 134 which represented land between the Korotuaheke River and the bush of the Maori reserved land to the north. Harrison's first hut was the second Pakeha building in the area. It was built near two sacred places for the Kai Tahu. The first place was the burial area, Te-Kai-a-Te-Atua, just to the north and the second, to the north west, was Waituere. His name is preserved in the place known as Harrison's corner.

Harrison tried growing crops in his first year. Unfortunately the season was cold and wet and the crops failed. In the following season Harrison turned to grazing cattle and for the next twenty years he made his living from cattle and the sale of timber.

Harrison was known among the other Pakeha settlers as "Maori Harrison" as he appeared to have a more in common with his Kai Tahu neighbours in his solitary, quiet life. He did not adopt the busy life that characterised the farming operation of the Deans family and for that reason he may have been regarded as "Maori" in his lifestyle by the Pakeha in the neighbourhood.

By the winter of 1851 other settlers were beginning to move into North Canterbury. Torlesse had resigned from his surveying job and had begun a farming venture in an area he named Fernside on the north western side of the Rangiora bush. At approximately the same time some developments took place which would lead to the establishment of a ferry to cross the Waimakariri River. Lionel William Fitch wrote to the officer in charge of the Land Office, W.G. Brittan, to request a license to establish a ferry. In his application Fitch said that he would open an inn as well as building large stock yards. His application was based on the fact, proclaimed by himself, but self-evident, that there had been a rapid increase in the population of the area. (12)

It is not known what became of Fitch but it is possible that Alexander Baxter took up his plans. Baxter had built a hut on the North Branch of the Waimakariri River near the survey house in the winter of 1851. On 30 August Baxter signed an agreement with Godley to lease half an acre of the river bank on either side of the North Branch for a period of three years. An annual rent of one shilling was fixed. Baxter was bound by the agreement to provide approaches to the ferry and to build a punt to carry stock as well as providing a dingy to take foot passengers across the river, within two months. The tolls to be paid ranged

(12) L.W. Fitch to W.G. Brittan, 6.6.1851.

from one shilling and sixpence for a pack or saddle horse to six pence for a man on foot. (13)

Baxter's ferry house, which was really just a wattle and daub hut with a thatched roof, became a defacto inn as it was an easy stopping off place on the journey south to Christchurch as well as to the stations in North Canterbury. Henry Sewell was later to complain, in his journal, of the exorbitant price that he and his party were charged at the ferry for bread, cheese and butter served with palatable but milky river water adulterated with a little rum. Nevertheless, in his view the sustenance was welcome, in the Kaiapoi wilderness of February 1853. (14)

By September 1851 two other settlers had joined Baxter in the Kaiapoi region. The first was William Philip Welch, (known as Philip) the third son of Thomas Welch, vicar of Paltishall, England. Welch had studied law but had decided at the end of his time that he did not want to spend his life "turning black into white." His father had applied for a fifty acre section in the new colony, which Welch, on his arrival, selected on the bank of the Korotuaheke River near Harrison's section. The land was heavy and wet with some bush on it. Welch had arrived in the "Bangalore" on 31 August 1851 with two school friends, Ross and Fred Hildebrand, the sons of his former teacher.

About three weeks later the friends had arrived at the North Branch of the Waimakariri. Welch recorded that first day in their new home in his diary. The entry bears the date, 22 September, and is indicative of the exertions experienced by Welch and his companions. The only way the cutter, carrying their supplies could be manoeuvred up the Korotuaheke River to the section was to pull it along with a rope. This was slow and back-breaking work. Welch and the Hildebrand brothers unloaded their things, set up a tent, made a fire and cooked something to eat. By this time it was nine o'clock, and they fell into their beds, utterly exhausted by their day's work.

In the first weeks Welch employed Torlesse to survey the boundaries of his section. The task was completed in October by which time Welch was able to put his first cattle on the land. The cattle were supplied by Torlesse. The next few months were filled with hard work, in clearing the ground, purchasing more cattle and planting potatoes.

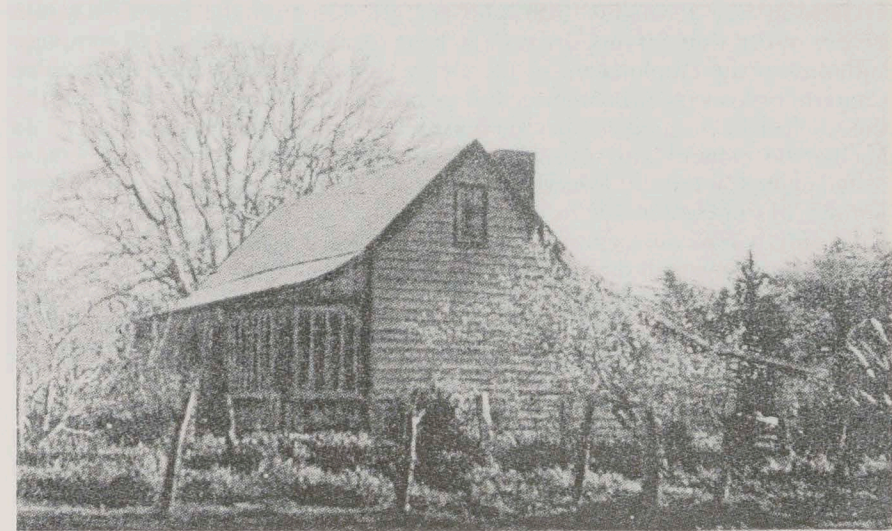
There was also some heartbreak. During this time Ross Hildebrand contracted a badly infected finger which meant a visit to Lyttelton for treatment. If that was not bad enough the weather did not make things easy for these pioneer farmers. Welch recorded in his diary that throughout the time they were living in a tent, it was cold, wet and stormy.

The construction of the house was started with the laying of piles on 8 December and finished in February 1852. Just after the house was started Welch had health problems. He developed boils which he had to endure as there was no medical help available. This affliction could have been caused by his restricted diet. The Pakeha did not learn to live off the land as the Kai Tahu

(13) A. Baxter to J.R. Godley, Agreement to run the ferry at Kaiapoi, 30.8.1851

(14) ed. McIntyre, W. David, *The Journal of Henry Sewell, Vol 1 1853-57* p. 129.

had done. However from time to time Welch did eat what must have been to him to be strange food. He reported that he shot a large gull which measured four feet six inches from tip to tip. He also shot what he described as a large water



William Philip Welch's house. The centre portion was built of pit sawn timber in 1851-52 - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

hen. It was probably a pukeko. Welch widened his food sources in the first year by planting wheat and onions as well as further crops of potatoes. He harvested his first crop of potatoes in April 1852. In that month he also acquired a bullock from Mt Grey to help with the cultivation. He hired his first employee in Te Aika to build him a canoe. (15)

The bush on Welch's land supplied some income. Timber milled from it was sold to Baxter as well as to the settlers in Christchurch. The timber was taken to Christchurch on small coastal schooners that came up the Waimakariri River.

Welch made it clear in his diary that pioneer life was hard and the work to survive unremitting. The Hildebrands found the experience difficult. Ross left for the more civilized Port Philip in December 1852 and Fred returned to England in January 1853. After the Hildebrands left, Welch, like Harrison, led a solitary life breaking in more of his land and growing crops. He stayed at Kaiapoi until March 1859 when he returned to England.

The second Pakeha settler to come to Kaiapoi in 1851 was a missionary. Henry Fletcher arrived in Canterbury on the "Castle Eden" in February 1851 as one of

(15) Welch, W. Philip, *Diary 1851-1855*

the party with the Bishop designate, Thomas Jackson. It would seem that Fletcher had been employed by Jackson as a schoolmaster and catechist to the Kai Tahu. His mission, however, suffered gravely in the general upheaval that Jackson caused in the colony.

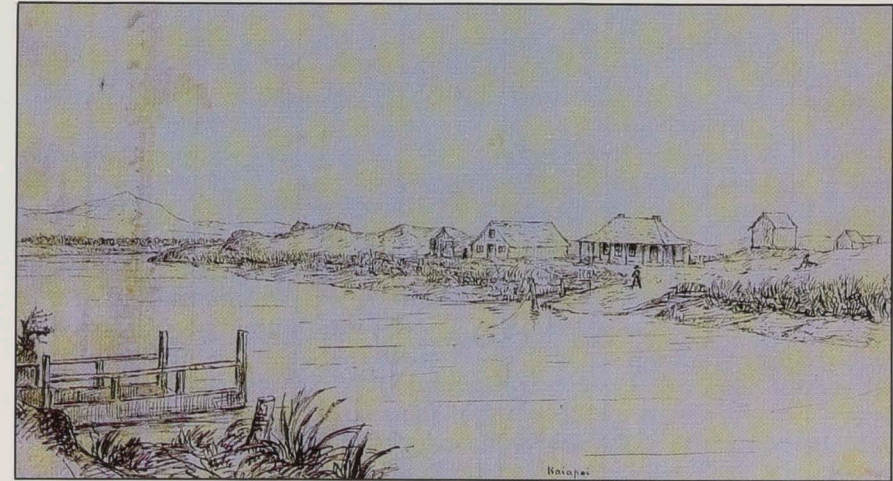
Jackson was a haughty man who got off side with the colonists within a very short time of his arrival. Jackson insisted that he had complete authority in the employment of the clergy as well as the schoolmasters. The Canterbury Association committee had given him this discretion although at the time it had been granted, the committee had not known that Jackson could not handle money. This weakness became apparent to Godley and he protested to the Canterbury Association against the appointment of Jackson. Jackson himself was uncomfortable in the colony and departed for England in March, after only a few weeks residence. He left Fletcher and his family behind to cope somehow with their penniless situation. The new parishes of Lyttelton, Sumner and Christchurch decided to support Fletcher's work. Each parish dedicated its Thanksgiving Day collections to the mission. These totalled twenty four pounds two shillings and nine pence. Bishop Selwyn raised a further forty four pounds five shillings for the mission by preaching at both Akaroa and Pigeon Bay. Fletcher was given a grant of fifteen pounds to start the mission. (16) At some time in the first quarter of 1851 he and his wife, Hannah, and daughter, Mary-Jane, made their way to Kaiapoi. Fletcher had a building erected on Maori reserve land, probably in the village of Ruataniwha, that served as both a church and a school. In Henry Sewell's journal the building was described as

“small and surrounded by miserable hovels more fit for pigs than human beings, but hardly worse than Irish cabins.” (17)

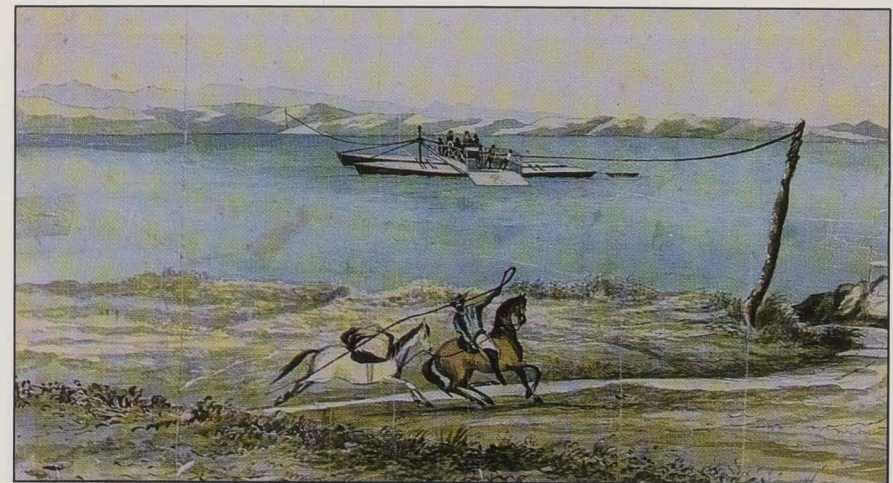
Fletcher received a stipend of sixty pounds per year. It was paid in quarterly amounts of fifteen pounds. For his part, Fletcher submitted quarterly reports to the Canterbury Association on the activities of the school. In his first report for the quarter ending 31 December 1851 Fletcher recorded that there were fourteen pupils in the school, including three girls. The age range of those pupils was between seven and twenty five years. All of the pupils, according to the report, made some improvement. One of them, Tainui, a twelve year old boy, was described as “very quick”. (18)

By the time of the report for the March 1853 period, the pupil numbers had risen to thirty two and the age range had widened from six to forty seven years. In this report Fletcher explained that the scholars were taught reading and writing in the Maori language and in the working out of any arithmetical question they used the English names for the figures. He added that six of the pupils were being taught to read English but that they learnt slowly and with difficulty. Out of the thirty two pupils listed ten were reported as

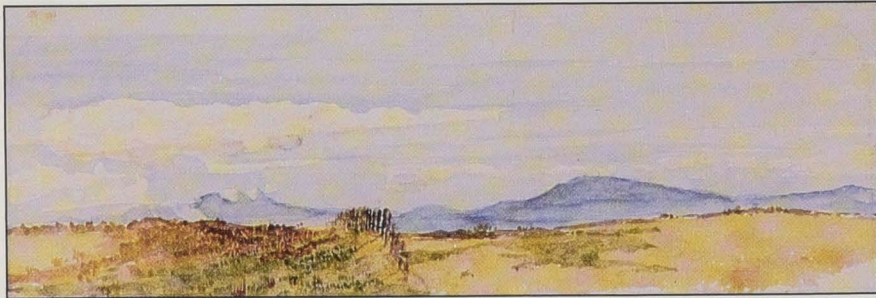
(16) Church of the Most Holy Trinity, Lyttelton, *Parish Papers 1851*
(17) ed. McIntyre, W. David, *The Journal of Henry Sewell, vol 1, 1853-57* pp. 129-38.
(18) Canterbury Association Accounts for Year ending 31 December 1851.



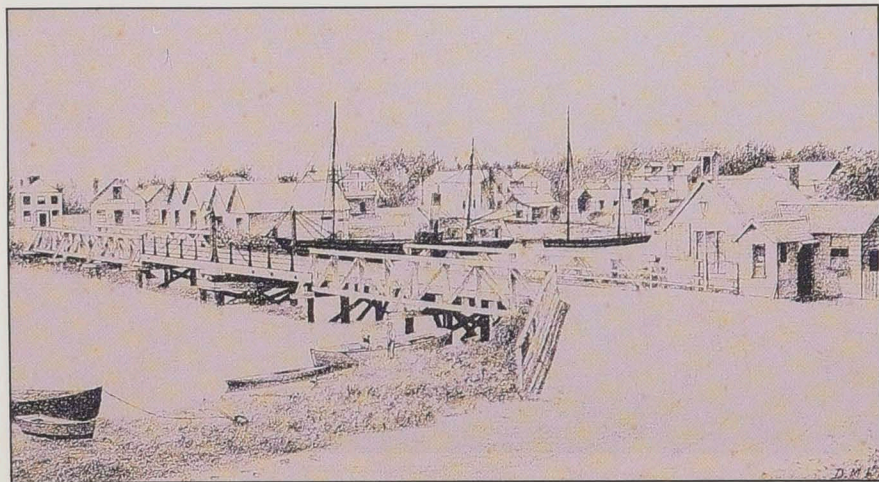
"Kaiapoi" - ink by Alfred C. Barker (1818-1873), 8 September 1854. - courtesy Canterbury Museum



"Felton's Ferry, Waimakariri River". - watercolour by Charles Haubroe, 1855. - courtesy Canterbury Museum



"View from sandhills, Kaiapoi". - watercolour by unknown artist, c.1863. Brittner Collection, - courtesy Canterbury Museum



"Kaiapoi Bridge, 1876". - lithograph by unknown artist. - courtesy Canterbury Museum

Pakeha Exploration, Surveying and First Settlement

knowing nothing at the time of entrance to the school. The number of girls had risen to twelve by this time and out of those, five were listed as knowing nothing. (19)

The last of the reports was dated 30 September 1853 when the numbers had slumped to twelve. The school must have closed shortly after this report as nothing more about it is documented in the official records. (20)

A Presbyterian minister, Reverend Hogg, undertook a tour of North Canterbury in March 1852. Hogg reported that Mr Fletcher had had success in raising the mental condition of the Maori at Kaiapoi. The Kai Tuahuriri people remembered Fletcher well. When the next Pakeha missionary, the Reverend James Stack, came to minister to them, Pita Te Hori said in his speech of welcome that the first minister they had had been a teacher, Mr Fletcher. Pita Te Hori did not think that it was the fault of Kai Tuahuriri that Fletcher had gone. In memorable description he said that they had got the feathers of the bird in their hands but that the bird had flown away. (21)

The first years of Pakeha exploration, surveying and settlement saw the North Canterbury region become known to the harbingers of the fourth wave of occupation in the South Island. A small number of highly individualistic and self contained men struggled to make a home for themselves on the northern bank of the North Branch between the Korotuaheke River and what was known as the Maori Bush.

The next phase of settlement in the area was to have a different emphasis.

(19) Canterbury Association Accounts for Quarter ending 31 March 1853

(20) Canterbury Association Accounts for Quarter ending 30 September 1853

(21) *MacDonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies*, Henry Fletcher

Chapter Three:

FROM GLADSTONE TO THE TOWNSHIP OF KAIAPOI.

Systematic colonization was a Victorian response to the seeming chaos in Europe and the haphazard way the lands of the new world had been colonized. Simultaneously, it was both a conservative and an idealistic reaction. The conservatives were responding to the perceived need to retain old social orders. The move towards democratic forms of government in Europe raised the spectre of a godless society. The solution for the conservatives was to found a new and better society in the frontier lands to preserve all the best attributes of English rural life. The idealism was expressed in the belief that such an exercise would work in a completely foreign environment.

The scheme had to have a practical base from which to operate. To Victorian eyes there could be no better practical base than the value of land. Social order could be preserved if the value of land was high enough to allow only a small land owning elite. Notwithstanding this view, land ownership was not to be exclusive. There had to be a balance between the value of land and the wages of the labouring class to enable the more thrifty, eventually, to own land.

This solution had been generated by the fertile mind of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Wakefield had been influenced by the writings of Jeremy Bentham and he had also some direct experience in the colonies. He had travelled to Canada in 1838 with Lord Durham to help resolve the difficulties arising from the rebellion in Lower Canada. Most of Wakefield's theories, however, were formulated in response to what he perceived as the failure of colonization in Australia.

To Wakefield the value of land in Australia was too low. It enabled almost everyone who wished to own land, to do so. The result was a scattered and non-cohesive settlement. The Wakefield solution would ensure a tightly knit social order that would allow all members to attain their personal ambitions. He resolved to apply his theories to the settlement of New Zealand.

Wakefield was able to persuade a number of influential members of the Whig government to form the New Zealand Company to colonize the country following the guidelines of systematic colonization. Three settlements,

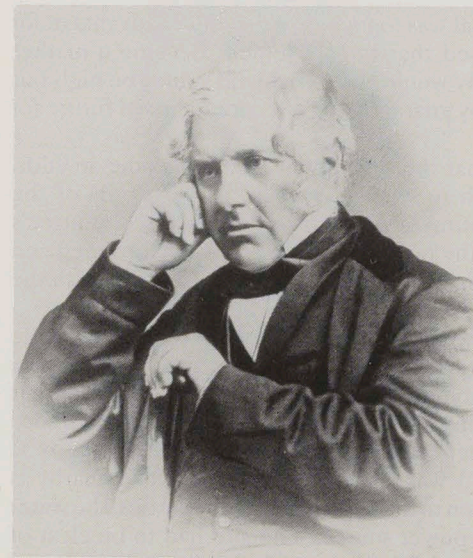
Wellington, New Plymouth, and Nelson were founded in the early 1840's by the New Zealand Company. Soon after the founding of Nelson, the Whigs lost power to the Tories and the activities of the New Zealand Company all but ceased until the Whigs regained power in 1846. In the meantime Wakefield had met John Robert Godley whose conservative philosophy had led him to despair for the future of Europe. The outcome of this meeting was the founding of the Canterbury Association.

The Canterbury Association was to espouse the Wakefield theory on the value of land. It was also to follow the lead of the Nelson settlers in fixing the value of land. The sale price had to be high enough to enable the Association to set aside funds for the support of the clergy and the founding of an education system.

Land in Canterbury was to have a varying range of prices. The cost of a half acre section in Christchurch was set at twenty four pounds and the price of a quarter acre section in Lyttelton was established at twelve pounds. Three pounds per acre was the fixed price for a rural allotment where the purchaser was required to take up a fifty acre block. In addition each purchaser of a rural allotment was entitled to a pasturage lease of one hundred acres at twenty shillings per acre. An inducement was offered to the settlers in the first four ships. They were permitted to acquire pasturage at a special rent of sixteen shillings and eight pence per one hundred acres, for every acre that they purchased.

Land sales on the whole were slow. The Association struggled continually to attain its sale targets. Towards the end of 1851 it became clear that the Canterbury Association was barely viable. The news that the Imperial government intended to pass an Act to enable the colonists to assume control of their own government was greeted with relief by the Association. The Act would enable the Canterbury Association to shed its responsibilities for the settlement and hand over control to an elected Provincial Government.

Godley decided to leave Canterbury in December 1852. He knew that Henry Sewell, the Association's paid vice-chairman since 1850, was arriving in the colony in



Henry Sewell aged about 70 - courtesy Canterbury Museum

February 1853. Sewell, trained as a lawyer, was to oversee the winding up of the Association's affairs and the orderly handing over of power to the new Provincial Government.

At the same time as these events were occurring a parallel movement to settle Canterbury was gathering momentum. This movement was led by Sir Thomas Tancred. Described as a social reformer, Tancred founded a committee in 1851 to promote a new settlement in Canterbury. His thoughts on the Canterbury settlement were recorded in a letter written to Lord Lyttelton in April 1852. His letter was published in the *Lyttelton Times* on 4 September 1852. Sir Thomas wrote that he was prepared to come to the colony now that the initial hardships had been overcome. However he was concerned that the Association's plans for the colony in ecclesiastic and educational matters had not made much progress. He asked for an assurance that the settlers would have the political privilege of local government.

The Tancred committee's proposal for the new settlement, to be named Gladstone, had two distinct attributes. The first attribute centred on the overall social makeup of the settlement. It was proposed that the Gladstone settlers become acquainted with each other before they left England. Sir Thomas thought that this degree of knowledge would produce a social cohesiveness not often found in other colonies. In view of the fact that it was only physically possible to gather a small range of people together, the scheme would, of its nature, produce a narrower, more exclusive social base in Gladstone than was the case in the other settlement townships.

The second attribute of the proposal was to include a pecuniary advantage for the Gladstone settlers. It was proposed that the settlement become a market centre. This was to ensure that not only would the initial land values be high but that they would be maintained, thereby guaranteeing a secure financial future for the inhabitants.

The Tancred committee hoped that the settlement would become an additional outpost of the Anglican church in what had been, in the words of the committee, "a heathen land." This sentiment was consistent with the committee's view that the settlement would offer the opportunity for fellow countrymen and fellow churchmen the means of fulfilling the bible's injunction "to replenish the earth and subdue it." (1)

In June 1852 Sir Thomas Tancred wrote to Sewell, on behalf of the Gladstone Purchasers' Committee, asking him to inform Godley about the scheme. The Committee had specific instructions about the siting and size of the town. It was to be between 8,000 and 10,000 acres in size and it was to be a sufficient distance from Christchurch to allow it to be independent of that town. The land was to be naturally fertile for arable purposes and was to have a substantial wood nearby as well as a good supply of water. In addition to its life-sustaining properties, the water had to be capable of being used as a power source. The site had to be clear of swamps and timber so that the colonists did not have the additional burden of drainage and felling before the town could be established. In the neighbourhood of the town there was to be land suitable for pastoral farming. (2)

(1) Sir Thomas Tancred to Lord Lyttelton, 24.4.1852.

(2) Sir Thomas Tancred to Sewell, 1.6.1852.

Sir Thomas's letter was forwarded to Godley accompanied by a letter from Sewell explaining the views of the members of the Canterbury Association of the matter. Sewell informed Godley that, the plan as formulated by Sir Thomas Tancred, had been received with a great deal of favour by intending purchasers. The Association had been advised by the Deans family and William Fox that the area in the vicinity of the Harewood Forest (Oxford) would meet the requirements of the Gladstone scheme. Sewell stressed in his letter to Godley that Sir Thomas had been told that the plan must be conditional and subject to the discretion of the company. Godley was free to do what lay in his power to carry the plan into effect. Sewell thought that there was a distinct possibility of land sales that he hoped would finance the construction of a church and some preliminary improvements, such as a road. Sewell also advised that if the plan was to be put into effect then the selection of the site should be done quickly and in secret to prevent the purchase of land by outside interests. (3)

This letter, although genuinely sincere in tone, raises a question about the integrity of the officers of the Canterbury Association. Sewell and Godley both knew that the Association was on its last legs and that it could not sustain a new settlement. The prospect of more land sales in the dying months of the Association quite likely swayed them from the honourable course of informing the Gladstone proponents that the plan was not viable. As Godley did nothing to advance the plan it was left in limbo until the arrival of the intending Gladstone settlers.



Sir Thomas Tancred - courtesy Canterbury Museum

The Gladstone settlers came to Canterbury on the same ship as Sewell. The "*Minerva*" sailed for Lyttelton in October 1852, arriving in February 1853. Among the settlers were two of the leading proponents of the scheme, the Reverend John Raven and Captain Francis Fuller. Raven, an Anglican clergyman, was born in 1821 and educated at Shrewsbury and Caius College, Cambridge. He was on the Gladstone Purchasers' Committee and although he was out of town at the time of the writing of the June letter, he had taken a full and active part in the promotion of the scheme. Fuller was an ex-officer of the 59th Regiment and he, too, was involved with the drawing up of the scheme. The other "Gladstone families" on board the "*Minerva*" were sure

(3) Sewell to Godley, 15.6.1852. *Canterbury Association correspondence and dispatches, 1850-54*, Church House Archives.

that they had the right to purchase land in an area set aside by the Canterbury Association for the new settlement.

Once the ship had docked the settlers became aware that a site had not been set aside for them. On 4 February 1853 Raven and Fuller met Sewell at the Land Office in Christchurch to sort out the problem of the site. Sewell reported in his Journal that they were to determine something about Gladstone. He thought that the idea fell into the mythical category, and that it was a mere invention to catch purchasers, which was quite a different opinion to the one he held when he wrote to Godley in June. The idea, according to Sewell, had been pooh-pooed and nothing had been done to make it a reality.

After asking the advice of many people, Sewell, Raven and Fuller were informed that the best site for the township would be towards the mouth of the Waimakariri River. The land in that vicinity was church reserve land. It had been set aside in March 1852 when Godley had accepted Boys's tender to survey several blocks of land in the neighbourhood of Kaiapoi for an ecclesiastical and education reserve.⁽⁴⁾ Sewell was surprised by this revelation. In his view nothing could have easier than to set aside some of it for the township of Gladstone. It was decided to inspect the site on 7 February. The news of this decision spread like wildfire and many people volunteered to join the expedition.⁽⁵⁾

The party which gathered at the Land Office on the morning of the day for the inspection was an assembly of quite disparate characters. Edward Gibbon Wakefield was accompanied by his friend Frederick Henslow. Raven, Fuller and William Smith, another Gladstone settler, were there. Octavius Mathias, an Anglican clergyman, Cass, the chief surveyor, Henry Cridland, an agent for the church reserve land and Sewell completed the company.

The first three miles of their journey was on a formed road which took them to the Papanui Bush. This was a small settlement of a few houses clustered around the church. For the next two or three miles there was only the merest hint of a road. After the six mile peg all signs of the road ceased and the party found itself in open country. Sewell described this area as an open common covered with flax, tu-tu, toi-toi and coarse grass. There were some swampy patches but the general impression was one of firm ground bounded with sandhills which were covered with coarse grass. Sewell described the South Branch of the Waimakariri as broad and handsome but not navigable. He felt that there was an improvement in the appearance of land on the Island. The Mount Grey range became more distinct as did the Native Reserve. Sewell was surprised that such an immense area of woodland had been set aside for the Natives. As the party was unable to raise the Maori ferryman, the group travelled two miles further upstream to Baxter's ferry. It was at this juncture Cass pointed out the line of the proposed road and the recommended site of the new town on the banks of the North Branch of the Waimakariri. Sewell noted with satisfaction that the North Branch was navigable. There were also large amounts of driftwood lying about which would serve as firewood. The site

(4) Godley to Boys 17.3.1852. Church House Archives.

(5) ed McIntyre, W. David, *The Journal of Henry Sewell, Vol 1 1853-54*, pp. 125-26.

impressed him as being extraordinarily suitable for a new settlement. Sewell wrote that the site had many advantages over Christchurch.⁽⁶⁾ The inspection over, the party returned to Christchurch.

Raven and Fuller met Sewell and Captain Charles Simeon, the acting Chief-Agent for the Canterbury Association, on the following day. Simeon was late in arriving and missed Fuller's outburst at the beginning of the meeting. Fuller was emphatic that the Church Reserve land at Kaiapoi should be thrown open immediately for purchase by the Gladstone settlers. Sewell was taken by surprise by this demand and deflected it by explaining that Simeon would not give up the reserve land without an equivalent amount of land being set aside. As soon as Simeon arrived, he and Sewell conferred privately. They decided that the best solution was to offer the Gladstone settlers fifty acres of the Church Reserve land for their township. They hoped that the result of this suggestion would be to enhance the value of the remaining Reserve land. After some discussion Raven and Fuller seemed to accept this offer. Sewell warned them that he would have to check that his powers of attorney from the Canterbury Association gave him the authority to make the offer.

At this point the meeting broke up. Sewell and Simeon made their way to



Reverend John Raven c 1865-70, R. Dighton, Cheltenham, England, photographer - courtesy Canterbury Museum

(6) *ibid*, pp. 127-29.

Lyttelton on foot. They were joined by Raven and Fuller. At Ferrymead the men decided to break their journey to have some bread and cheese at the Public House. Just as they began their refreshments Raven exploded with questions. He had obviously been pondering over the discussion at the meeting while they had been walking along the road. The most pressing point for Raven was a matter of honour. From his questions it seemed that he was most concerned that the Gladstone settlers were not to be disadvantaged by the fifty acre offer. Raven wanted to know whether the settlers would be entitled to the surplus land after they had taken up their town allotments and whether the promised portion of the Church Fund would

come to them. Sewell was sure that these requests could be accommodated. However Simeon suggested that Raven and Fuller write down all their requests so that there would be no misunderstandings. He further proposed that Sewell and himself discuss the requests in the evening and give Raven their reply the following morning. Raven, his passion aroused, accused both Sewell and Simeon of putting obstacles in the way of a settlement. Fuller joined in what had become a shouting match. Raven said that if the matter was not settled immediately he would have nothing more to do with the scheme and would go ahead with his own selection. He asked if he could instruct the surveyors. Simeon explained that purchasers were allowed to make a selection according to the priority of application on their Land Orders being delivered to the Land Office. The angry outburst continued with Raven saying that he would go to Lyttelton to fetch his Land Order and then return to the Land Office. Sewell and Simeon, astonished by this intemperate attack, refused to take any further part in the discussion. Raven, accompanied by Fuller, raced off to fetch the Land Orders from Lyttelton in order to return to the Land Office and ensure their priority when the surveyors marked out the sections.

Sewell and Simeon were left to make their more leisurely way to Lyttelton. On the way they decided to put an end to the Gladstone scheme. In the beginning it was considered feasible only if two thousand acres were sold. Somewhere between thirteen and fourteen hundred acres had already been sold and Simeon had been prepared to let the scheme go ahead. However, after the angry response from Raven and Fuller, both he and Sewell decided that it was not worth the trouble. They decided that once the purchasers' extra money had been returned to them the whole scheme should come to an end.

Sewell and Simeon were perceptive enough to realise that the township scheme still had merit. They agreed that the opportunity of founding a new township on the Church Reserves was too good to be lost. Sewell mused that, although it would be a loss to the Gladstone purchasers, it would probably be a gain to the Church.⁽⁷⁾

It is extraordinary that the Gladstone scheme collapsed so quickly. This is particularly so in view of the fact that it had been a long term plan. It can only be surmised that the Canterbury Association officials were so impressed by the site of the proposed town that they were determined to keep it in their own hands so that they might derive an advantage for the Association in the closing stages of its existence. The Gladstone purchasers were also impressed by the location and they were equally determined to settle there, no matter what obstacles the Canterbury Association might put in their way.

The matter did not end on 8 February. Raven was still angry several days latter. It is recorded in Sewell's Journal that Raven complained to Wakefield about the abandonment of the scheme. Wakefield told Raven that it was his own fault and that Sewell and Simeon had not been discourteous. This seems a trivial reason for the renunciation of the scheme. The Association, however, forged ahead. Simeon instructed Cridland to lay out a town as quickly as possible so that construction

(7) *ibid.*, pp. 131-32

could be proceeded with. Two hundred acres of church land were marked off and mapped for a town. This first map, the field work of which was probably done by Cridland, and two labourers, Philip Tisch and John Steward, can no longer be found. A receipt for ten pounds was issued to Cridland on 31 May 1853 for the map of survey laying out the town at Kaiapoi. A pay list for 26 March 1853 shows that Tisch and Steward received four pounds one shilling and two pence for their work in Cridland's survey party at Gladstone. The Thomas Cass map for the township which was appended to the township proclamation of 1857 is probably a copy of the first one.

Sewell was also busy talking to people concerned with the abandonment of the scheme. He advised Elizabeth Revell, another Gladstone settler, to keep her Land Order for selection in the new township. He also consulted with Torlesse and Isaac Cookson, a Lyttelton merchant, about their views on the suitability of location for the new township. Both these men agreed that the site was satisfactory for a settlement because of its proximity to a navigable river and a large forest.⁽⁸⁾

Although the district had always been referred to by its Kai Tahu name, it is about this time that the settlement became known as Kaiapoi rather than Gladstone. Sewell liked the sound of the Kai Tahu language and it was probably through his use of the word "Kaiapoi" that it supplanted Gladstone as the name of the township. On the other hand the Association may have been trying to distance itself from the Gladstone debacle by insisting on using the name Kaiapoi. Alfred Turner Brundell who came to Kaiapoi as a sawyer in 1855, recalled in his reminiscences written in 1895, that it was the settlers, rather than the government, that insisted on the town being known by the Kai Tahu name for the area.⁽⁹⁾

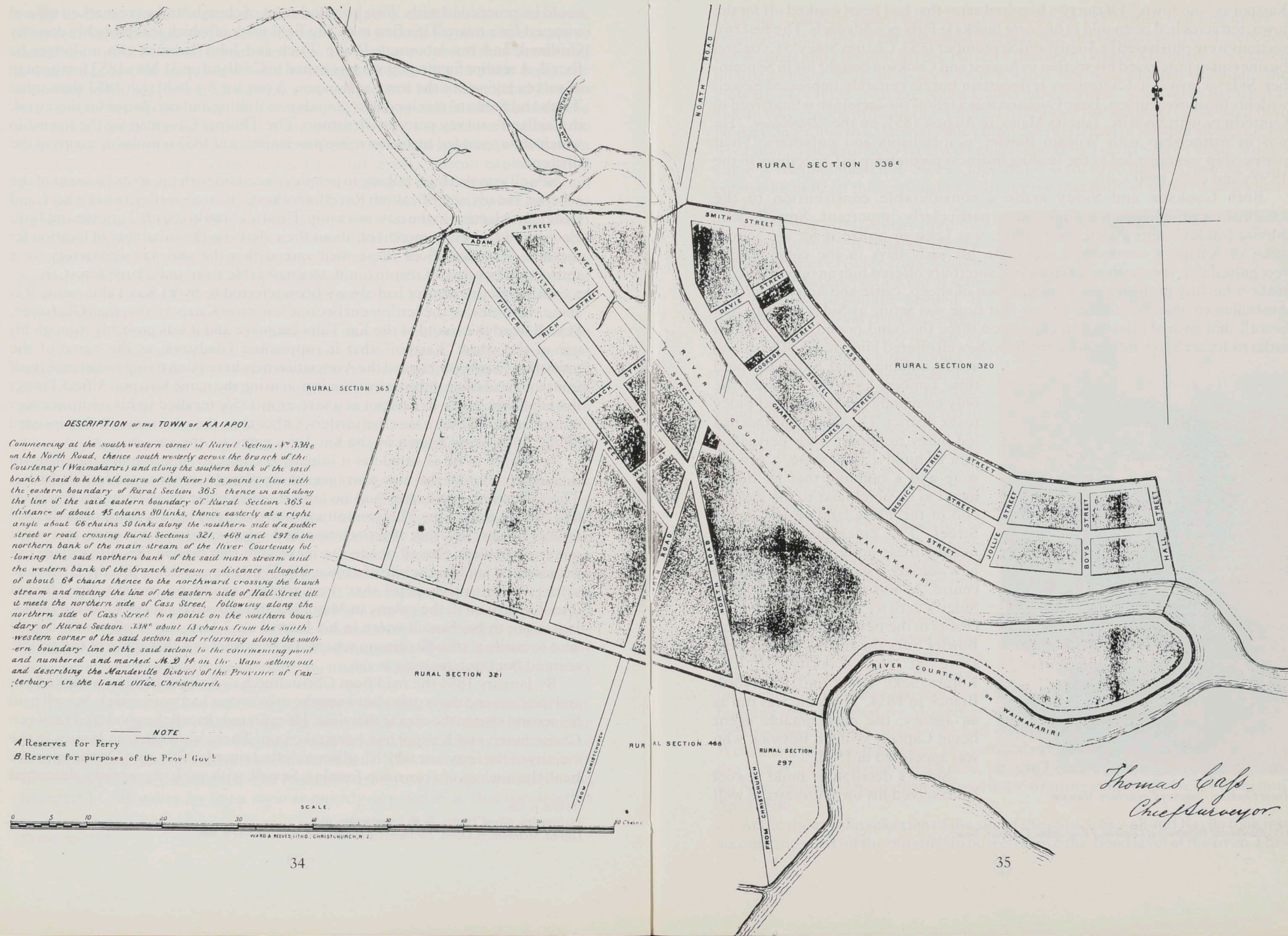
It was not to be as simple as it initially seemed, to superimpose the plans for the construction of the new town over those already in existence for Gladstone. The Gladstone committee had no land it could point to as being its choice of site for the township. The committee, however, did have a band of dedicated followers who felt that their scheme had been sacrificed for ends that were not entirely clear. Sewell needed to make sure that he had the authority to use the reserved land for the site of a township. While he was doing this the Gladstone settlers were ever hopeful that their scheme would be revived. Sir Thomas Tancred arrived in the colony in May 1853 and provided a focus for these hopes. It was not to be. Sewell wrote in his Journal on 7 May that at all events legally and formally it (the Gladstone scheme) was extinct but that some of the people seemed hot upon reviving it.⁽¹⁰⁾

By January 1854 the road from Christchurch to Kaiapoi had been marked out and the carts and drays going between the two centres had worn a track. Sewell paid his second visit to the area at that time. He reported that all the good land between Christchurch and Kaiapoi had been taken up. There were thirteen houses in the vicinity of the ferry site which had been shifted since his first visit. On the opposite bank the nucleus of a town was forming. Sewell, with an air of propriety, described

(8) *ibid.* p. 136.

(9) Brundell, Alfred Turner, *To My Grandchildren*, p15.

(10) ed. McIntyre, W. David, *The Journal of Henry Sewell, Vol 1 1853-54* p. 280.



DESCRIPTION of the TOWN of KAIAPOI.

Commencing at the south western corner of Rural Section 338 on the North Road, thence south westerly across the branch of the Courtenay (Wainakariri) and along the southern bank of the said branch (said to be the old course of the River) to a point in line with the eastern boundary of Rural Section 365, thence in and along the line of the said eastern boundary of Rural Section 365 a distance of about 45 chains 80 links, thence easterly at a right angle about 66 chains 50 links along the southern side of a public street or road crossing Rural Sections 321, 468 and 297 to the northern bank of the main stream of the River Courtenay following the said northern bank of the said main stream and the western bank of the branch stream a distance altogether of about 64 chains thence to the northward crossing the branch stream and meeting the line of the eastern side of Hall Street till it meets the northern side of Cass Street, following along the northern side of Cass Street, following along the southern boundary of Rural Section 338 about 13 chains from the south western corner of the said section and returning along the southern boundary line of the said section to the commencing point and numbered and marked M. 2. 14 on the Maps setting out and describing the Mandeville District of the Province of Canterbury in the Land Office, Christchurch.

NOTE

- A Reserves for Ferry
- B Reserve for purposes of the Prov^l Gov^t



Thomas Cass,
Chief Surveyor.

Kaiapoi as "our town." Of the two hundred acres that had been marked off for the town, ten acres had been sold in one acre blocks at forty pounds each. The first two sections were purchased in August and September 1853. Charles Sidey, a Lyttelton businessman purchased his section in August and Cookson bought his in September. Sidey's arrival in Canterbury is uncertain but he certainly impressed Sewell with his business acumen. Isaac Cookson was a fellow businessman who arrived in Canterbury with his wife, Janetta Maria, in August 1851, on the "*Dominion*". He was in partnership with William Bowler as merchants and importers. Their partnership was regarded as the leading business partnership in Canterbury in the 1850's and early 1860's. (11)

Both Cookson and Sidey made a considerable contribution to the establishment of Kaiapoi. Sidey was particularly important. Sewell, who admired Sidey's shrewd business sense, was keen to utilize it for the foundation of Kaiapoi's commercial sector. In his early days in the colony Sidey recognised that the shortage of stock in Canterbury offered him an opportunity to make a healthy profit from the importation of sheep, cattle and horses from the Australian colonies. Cridland, who at that time was acting as Sidey's agent, told Sewell that each shipload of stock cleared three thousand pounds for Sidey. In order to attract Sidey to North Canterbury, Sewell offered him a block of bushland

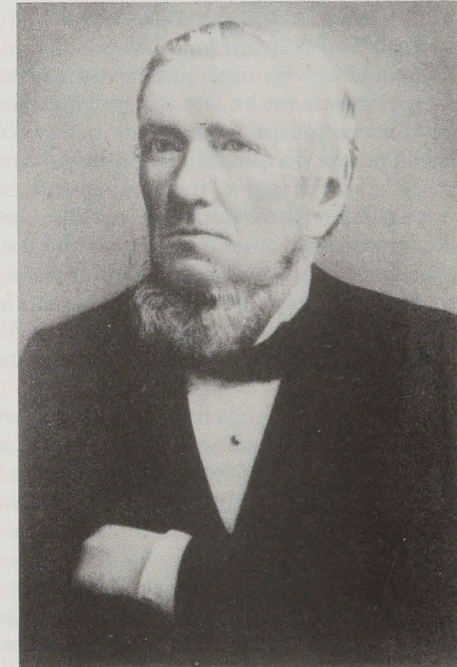


Isaac Cookson - courtesy Canterbury Museum

(11) *MacDonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies*, Cookson, Isaac.

as being a soundly based commercial decision. In 1851 Sidey had negotiated a favourable purchase of two thousand acres outside the Canterbury Block between the Waipara and Hurunui Rivers. He left a manager, George Mason, to run sixteen hundred sheep on it. In Sidey's view Kaiapoi was well situated to handle the growing wool trade from the North Canterbury stations. The North Branch was able to take vessels of about thirty tons. To facilitate the shipping of the wool from North Canterbury to Lyttelton, Sidey built the first wharf in Kaiapoi along side his wool store. The wharf also received general goods for sale in Sidey's store. Sidey's name is commemorated in Sidey Quay and it is thought that his naming of the cottage he built on the Korotuaheke River gave that body of water its new name, the Cam.

Sewell was extraordinary optimistic about the future of Kaiapoi. He saw in the activities of Sidey and Cookson and Bowler the energetic kind of start that the new community needed. It was during his second visit that Sewell, along with Raven selected the site of the Anglican church on the corner of Sewell and Cookson Streets. By this time Raven, was living on the one hundred acres that he had selected in the vicinity of the present day Woodend. He called the property "Ravenswood" and it served as his base as he conducted his ministry to the settlers, in what was designated, the Kaiapoi parish. The boundaries of the parish were those of North Canterbury. It was important to Raven that a church was established in the only substantial settlement in the area. Sewell gave one hundred pounds out of the land sales fund towards the building of the church. This gift gave to a band of dedicated men the impe-



Henry Jones - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

tus needed to raise enough money to have the church built within a year. The building was designed by Mountfort and Luck, architects in Christchurch and constructed by Henry Jones who had erected all of Sidey's buildings. Jones, a Welshman, who was born about 1825 arrived in Canterbury as a cabin passenger on the "*Cressy*". He had married his wife, Jane, in London just before they embarked for New Zealand. Jane died in Kaiapoi in 1856 during childbirth. Henry lived until April 1890.

At the time of the selection of the site of the church Sewell and Raven took into account the need for the building to be well above the flood level of the river. They

also discussed the possibility of reserving further land for a parsonage, schools, a cemetery and a small glebe. Sewell was sure that Kaiapoi would be become a considerable place. The sandhills which fell within the town boundaries did not seem to Sewell to pose much of a problem. In his opinion, in contrast to site of Christchurch, the attraction of dry sound land and the navigable river would outweigh the disadvantage of the sandhills. (12)

Certainly the growing number of settlers attracted to the area must have agreed with Sewell. Sidey's enterprises were responsible for attracting many settlers to the district. One of the conditions of Sidey's bush lease required five acres of it had to be cleared a year. Thus he needed a number of sawyers to carry out this proviso. He also required men to run the wool store, the general store and the hotel. The general store was run by George Black.

In 1854 *The Canterbury Almanack* listed Robert Hamlett as the licensee of the Kaiapoi Hotel. Hamlett had arrived in Canterbury in 1851 on the "Castle Eden". On the passenger list he was described as an agricultural labourer but it is doubtful whether he pursued that career in New Zealand. He was one of the early settlers in the new town of Kaiapoi and was able to procure a license for his house which he called the Kaiapoi Hotel. He continued to hold the license until 1857 when it was transferred to George Day who was renting the building that Sidey had designated as an hotel. The license and the name were not only transferred to a new publican but also to a new building. Sidey finally had a functioning hotel.

Sidey's Kaiapoi Hotel, the Waimakariri Ferry Hotel run by Alexander Baxter and his partner George Jackson and the Kaiakanui in Peraki Street run by White became the focal points for the large number of sawyers attracted to the area by the certainty of work.

Simeon in his capacity of acting Chief-Agent of the Canterbury Association had drawn up regulations for the sale of the bush lands at Kaiapoi in March 1853. The Association preferred to have cash for the sale of the land but it was willing to accept approved bills of payment at six monthly intervals for two years. Leases of the land for periods of not more than fourteen years were also acceptable. The terms were adopted by the Canterbury Provincial Government when it assumed the responsibility of administering the affairs of the settlement. The fact that the Papanui Bush was beginning to be cut out and the generous terms of occupation encouraged a sizable number of men to come to Kaiapoi. Probably the most compelling reason for the influx of sawyers to the area was that it was possible, in relative terms, for bushmen to make an ample living for themselves in a short time.

Typically, the timber industry of this era consisted of a two man operation. The common method was for the men to set up an informal partnership to work a section, using the pit method of sawing. The work was exceedingly hard and carried out under primitive conditions. Some of the men may have constructed rough huts but customarily they were content with canvas tents as shelter. Their food was basic and while they were working they had no social interaction with other people. Brundell described his first impressions of the Maori Bush in his

(12) ed McIntyre, W. David. *The Journal of Henry Sewell, Vol 1 1853-54*, p. 428

reminiscences. He walked from St Albans carrying about forty or fifty pounds of equipment and food to join up with his mate, William Denn, who had been securing a section for them to cut. When he arrived in the late afternoon he was greeted with delight by his mate and the neighbouring sawyers, the Wilson brothers, as they had had no food all day. After they had refreshed themselves with food and drink the Wilsons invited Brundell to share their "warry" (whare) for the night. It was during the night that Brundell was introduced to one of the curses of the sawyer's life, the mosquito. The swamp land was a perfect breeding ground for them so that bushmen knew from experience that they had to have mosquito nets for their beds and that they had to light a fire in the doorway to deter the insects from coming inside. (13)

On their days off the sawyers cut loose. The only form of recreation was found in the hotels and the drunken behaviour of the sawyers gave Kaiapoi the flavour of a frontier town. This was quite the opposite tone to that of the idealised intentions of Sir Thomas Tancred and the other Gladstone pioneers, but it was entirely consistent with the usual pattern of settlement. Those Gladstone settlers in and around Kaiapoi, Raven, Fuller, the Revell family, William Sneyd and William Smith viewed with alarm the apparent breakdown in the social order. They requested the Provincial Government authorities to station a policeman at Kaiapoi.

The authorities acceded to the request but they were unsure of the extent of the policeman's duties in Kaiapoi. The Secretary for Police, Charles Bowen, wrote to the Provincial Secretary in April 1854 to point out that the Kaiapoi policeman, in his opinion, ought to be sworn in under the provisions of the Constabulary Force ordinances so that he could keep the peace and investigate crimes. However the Provincial Secretary thought that it would be sufficient to have a man to keep the peace rather than carry out all the duties of a policeman. In his view, the population was not large enough to justify a full-time policeman. (14) This disagreement did not stand in the way of the appointment of a policeman. William Horton Revell was appointed to his post in May and his duty was to keep the peace throughout the whole of North Canterbury.

Revell's appointment had a wider context than just the consent of the Provincial authorities to a request from the settlers for a policeman.

Just after Revell's appointment the Provincial authorities became concerned over what appeared to be the indiscriminate felling of timber. Cridland wrote in September 1854 that it would be a great advantage for the public works of the Province to reserve the timber on the North Road and on the banks of the Cam. He observed that the sawyers were already cutting down and damaging the trees. The damage sustained by the timber felled in this careless manner made it impossible for its use in the building of bridges and culverts. On this basis Cridland sought the revocation of the bush licenses in the area. (15) This was done without any strong protests from the sawyers. It could be argued that the establishment of government authority a few months earlier with the presence

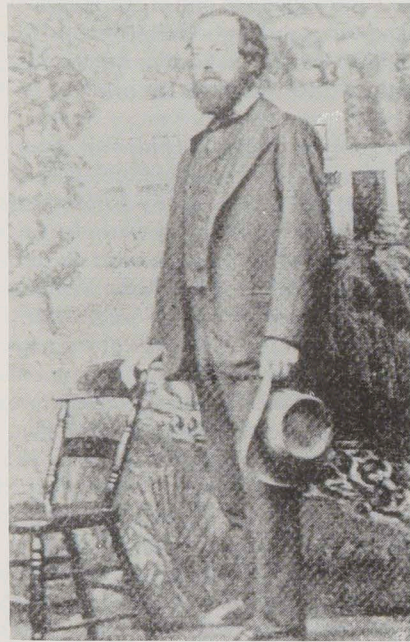
(13) Brundell, Alfred Turner. *To My Grandchildren*, p16

(14) Bowen to the Provincial Secretary, 11.4.1854.

(15) Cridland to the Provincial Secretary, 29.9.1854.

of Constable Revell made the task easier for the Provincial Government. The appointment of Revell however, meant that from then on Kaiapoi citizens always had a difficult job in persuading the government they needed more law enforcement officers in the district.

Having attained their goal of a policeman, the settlers began the task of acquiring a post office. At a public meeting held in Kaiapoi in September a number



George C. Black - courtesy Canterbury Museum

of resolutions were passed which formed the basis of a petition to the government. The first resolution revealed how important it was for the settlers to be able to keep in touch with the rest of the world community. It stressed that a post office was needed for the social comfort and the commercial advancement of the community. The second and third resolutions indicated that the community was willing to support itself in order to have the request granted. It was decided that a twice weekly service would be adequate and that the settlers were willing to pay one penny on all letters dispatched as well as received in Kaiapoi. Finally the meeting recommended that Mr George Black be appointed as postmaster.⁽¹⁶⁾ The petition was sent to the Provincial Secretary over the name of Samuel Beswick.

This was the first instance of the public life of the Beswick brothers. Two of the brothers, Samuel and John accompanied by their wives and in John's case two children, arrived in Canterbury on the "Hampshire" in May 1853 with Sir Thomas Tancred. They went straight to Kaiapoi to work as sawyers. Samuel, however, did not work in the bush for long. The settlers were keen to have a resident doctor so that they would not be dependent on either Doctor Baker in Christchurch or Doctor Hodgkinson in Waipara. The Kaiapoi settlers put a subscription together so that Samuel could resume the practice of his medical profession. Notice that he had presented his Diploma from the Royal College of Surgeons, London to the Resident Magistrate was gazetted in January 1854 and he became the settlement's first doctor. ⁽¹⁷⁾

John, likewise, did not stay in the bush for long. He had a chequered career which saw him settling in Timaru as a merchant and a customs agent. He also had a share in a MacKenize Country run called Glenmore. John was drowned in the

(16) Beswick to the Provincial Secretary, 29.9.1854.

(17) *MacDonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies*, Beswick, Dr Samuel



Joseph Beswick - courtesy Canterbury Museum

wreck of the "City of Dunedin" on 20 July 1865.⁽¹⁸⁾ He also served as chairman of the Kaiapoi Mechanics Institute, as a committee member of the Mandeville and Rangiora Road Board and on the first School Committee of the Kaiapoi Borough School.⁽¹⁹⁾

William was possibly the oldest of the brothers. Elizabeth, his wife and two children came from England with him. Of all the brothers, William had the most successful commercial career. He was advertising timber for sale in March 1854 and not long after he set himself up as a land agent. From that job he progressed to being the agent for Cookson and Bowler and eventually setting up his own mercantile business in partnership with Josiah Birch. ⁽²⁰⁾

(18) *ibid*, Beswick, John.

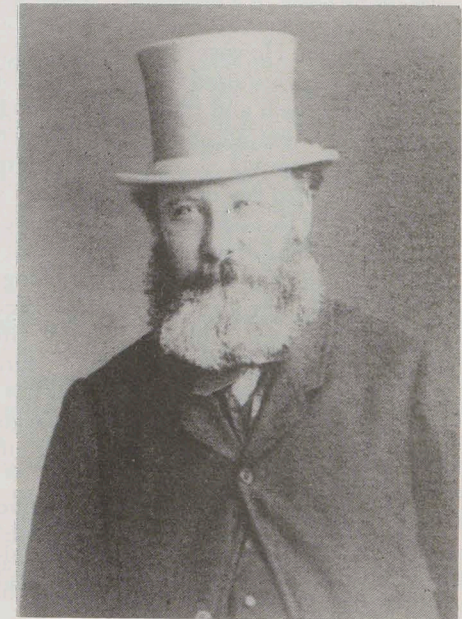
(19) *ibid*, Beswick, Joseph.

(20) *ibid*, Beswick, William.

wreck of the "City of Dunedin" on 20 July 1865.⁽¹⁸⁾

The other two brothers William and Joseph arrived in October 1853 on the "John Taylor". They went to Kaiapoi to join Samuel and John and it is thought that they too, spent a little time on their arrival, as sawyers.

Joseph shared the interests of John. He part owned Glenmore Station with him and after John's death he took over the customs agency in Timaru. Despite these interests the Kaiapoi district was his main base. Joseph had a long and not particularly distinguished career in local and national politics. He represented the Mandeville seat in the Provincial Government of 1862 and in 1866 he won the Kaiapoi seat in the General As-



Captain W.C. Beswick (1821-1902) - courtesy Canterbury Museum

The petition over Samuel Beswick's name was successful. George Black, Sidey's storekeeper, did become the first postmaster. He ran the post office in his store. This must have occurred shortly after the petition had been received. The next official report on the post office was in the 1857 report of the Provincial Superintendent, J.E. Fitzgerald. It was stated that a twice weekly postal service had been established between Lyttelton and Kaiapoi. It was also noted that Black received a salary of twenty pounds for his duties as postmaster.

Kaiapoi society in 1854-55 was in a transitional phase between the lawless excesses of a frontier culture, epitomized by the sawyers, and the more conservative trappings of the pioneer community. The community had obtained a doctor, a policeman and a postal service. It was now time to petition the government for a gaol.

In a letter to the Provincial Secretary, Bowen pointed out that Revell could do nothing towards the suppression of drunkenness and violence without a gaol to keep offenders in until they could be brought before the magistrate. He went on to write that as the population increased, so did the number of public houses. The more orderly residents felt threatened by the lack of a lock-up.

There is evidence of a plan for a gaol drawn up by Cridland. Fitzgerald received a letter from Henry Jones on 30 January 1855 explaining that since he had entered into the contract with Cridland on 6 January he had heard nothing further. He wrote that he was now in a position to obtain the timber and bricks as well as an acre of land. Jones indicated that the Provincial Council had already voted seventy pounds for the project. He wished to notify the government that he was no longer able to mill the timber required from his own bush at Ohoka. He would, instead, mill it in the Church Bush and transport it through the sand hills to the gaol site. Jones assured the Superintendent that this alteration to the contract would not alter the price of the project. A note on the letter from Fitzgerald indicated that the government had decided not to proceed with the plan to build the lock-up.⁽²¹⁾

In making this decision the government exacerbated the problems associated with the building of the gaol, not the least of which was finding a suitable location. All of the available land in Kaiapoi belonged to the Anglican Church and to obtain land for public purposes was a complicated matter. It was suggested by Fitzgerald that the Provincial Solicitor, Henry Gresson, consult with Sewell about the conveyance of about half an acre of church property at Kaiapoi to the Provincial Government. Gresson however, did not agree with this scenario and suggested instead that the land be taken from the government reserve which lay outside the two hundred acres that Sewell had originally set aside from church land for the settlement.⁽²²⁾

This internal debate resulted in inevitable delay in the decision making process. The delay was interpreted by the Kaiapoi residents as indifference to their plight. To stress the importance of a gaol to the community, a petition to the Superintendent was organised, praying that he would consider the urgent need for

(21) Jones to Fitzgerald, 30.1.1855.

(22) Fitzgerald to the Provincial Secretary, 6.2.1855.

Kaiapoi to have a lock-up and a regularly appointed policeman. The petition was signed by Torlesse, James Wylde, William Beswick, William White, Edward Revell and others. It was received by Fitzgerald on 13 February 1855. A note written on the back of the petition indicated that the Provincial Engineer, Edward Dobson, had already been instructed to obtain land and was to draw up plans for a lock-up.⁽²³⁾

Dobson's first plan was costed out at fifty pounds. The government regarded the plan as too expensive and in need of modification. Dobson was asked to make the gaol more secure and capable of accommodating more prisoners without causing them any needless discomfort as well as reducing the cost of building it. Needless to say Dobson's second plan was a completely new one and this time it was acceptable. The plan was tendered out in April to a builder called Young.⁽²⁴⁾

The next stage was to have William Revell appointed a Sub-Inspector of Police and Clerk to the Bench at Kaiapoi. He was willing to accept the position at a salary of one hundred pounds provided the government paid his expenses. This condition was accepted and in April Revell's appointment was confirmed by Simeon, who was by this time the Police Commissioner.

The last link in the justice chain was put in place in July 1855 when Hamlett, the licensee of the Kaiapoi Hotel, gave his permission for a magistrate's court to be held in one of the rooms of the hotel at a rental of five shillings per sitting for a year.

Now that the presence of law and order was established in the community it was time for the residents to secure a good roading system. Thomas and Cass had planned a road over the Island to connect with the road to Oxford. The ideal route for that road was on a line through the southern third of the Island bisecting the planned town of Mandeville. However the actual settlement pattern of North Canterbury changed those plans. The eventual layout of Kaiapoi straddled the northern tip of the Island and the northern bank of the North Branch. This meant that the main roading system was developed along the northern coastal region rather than to the north west as it would have been if the Thomas-Cass plan had been adhered to.

Sewell reported in 1854 that the road between Christchurch and Kaiapoi existed more in name than in fact. The siting of the ferries across the Waimakariri determined the route. Alexander Baxter's ferry had been operating on the North Branch since 1851. His enterprise was constricted by the unpredictable nature of the river. The frequent floods changed the profile of the river so that, at times, it was impossible to work the punt. At the same time as Baxter was operating his ferry the Kai Tahu ferrymen were continuing to run their service over the South Branch and during the times when Baxter was unable to conduct his service they also ferried people over the North Branch. In theory this sounds like an ideal solution to problem of getting people across the Waimakariri River however in practical terms it was far from ideal. The Kai Tahu ferrymen were often away from the region

(23) C.O. Torlesse and others to Fitzgerald, 13.2.1855.

(24) Dobson to the Provincial Secretary, 15.2.1855. & 21.3.1855

as they needed to hunt and gather food in their other mahika kai areas. Baxter also, was at times, absent from his duties. As the numbers of Pakeha settling in North Canterbury grew, the demand for a more reliable ferry service likewise grew. In 1853 in order to have both branches of the river under the control of one ferryman Simeon proposed that Baxter run a service over both branches. In order to comply with this request it was necessary for Baxter to find a partner. George Jackson, one of the Kaiapoi settlers, took up the offer of partnership and began the task of ferrying across the South Branch. His ferry was sited near the junction of the North and South Branches. From there travellers had to negotiate the sandhills to the town where Baxter's ferry connected the Island with the settlement on the northern bank.

In 1855 Dobson proposed a new roading system. Part of the plan involved moving the site of Jackson's ferry further to the west to an area described as being the highest point at which it is practicable to place a ferry on account of the shoals which occurred further up the river. The banks at this spot were high and Dobson judged this as an advantage over the original position as it would be easier to keep the ferry rope out of the water thus eliminating the strain and risk associated with the transportation of drays over the river.

In Dobson's plan the road from the new ferry site was to follow the South Branch north to Kaiapoi to connect with Peraki Street.⁽²⁵⁾ Although this route involved some expenditure in either bridging or putting in culverts over the streams and swamp areas it had the advantage of opening up the fertile regions of the Island to farming. Dobson calculated the actual cost of the scheme to be about ninety pounds.⁽²⁶⁾

The settlers, as with the construction of the gaol, were impatient for the work to be completed. Again they sent a petition to the government requesting the speedy expenditure of the money voted in the second session of the Provincial Council to keep the road from Christchurch to Kaiapoi open.⁽²⁷⁾ The road on the Island section of the route was particularly hard to form and maintain because of the high water table. The formation of the road was completed in 1856. It gave the settlers a quicker and less arduous link with Christchurch.

It was only more efficient if the ferrymen were performing their duties for the convenience of the travellers and this was not always the case. There had been a number of complaints about the running of the ferries over the years. The complaints became more pronounced after the construction of the road and the proposed relocation of Jackson's ferry. In May 1856 W. Lavington wrote to the Provincial Secretary complaining about the attendance of the ferryman, Jackson.⁽²⁸⁾ In a terse reply Jackson wrote that a year had gone by since the proposal had been made to move the ferry. In that time he had continued to live in a house that needed repair and to provide a service across the river whenever it was required. From the date

(25) Dobson to the Provincial Secretary, 13.6.1855.

(26) Dobson to the Provincial Secretary, 13.7.1855.

(27) G. Dunmage and others to the Superintendent, 26.12.1855.

(28) W. Lavington to the Provincial Secretary, 29.5.1856.

of his letter, Jackson stated that he intended to double the fares after eight at night.⁽²⁹⁾

Another year went by during which the condition of the punt itself deteriorated to such an extent that travellers refused to use it. This situation led the Smith brothers, Stephen Payne and Stephen Thomas, who farmed on "Sheerwater Farm" near the junction of the North and South Branches to make the decision to run a punt across the river. They offered to reduce the fares by half and to pay a rental of twenty pounds a year.⁽³⁰⁾ The government was delighted to accept this offer even although the Smith's ferry did not connect with the road. However the fact that travellers were prepared to use the Smith's service indicated the desperate state of Jackson's ferry.

In the meantime, probably to generate some income for himself, Jackson decided to apply for a general license to run The Ferryman's Arms. He already held a bush license which made him responsible for the maintenance of the ferry. At the Licensing Committee meeting on 12 May 1857 the magistrates decided to hold Jackson to the terms of his bush license and not allow him to have a general license until he had either brought the ferry up to the required standard or had disposed of it. Jackson protested that this was unfair and at another hearing it was found that the magistrates did not have the power to attach such conditions. A general license was granted to Jackson but the problem of the ferry remained.

In July 1857 Dobson submitted a report on the ferry. The punt which had been in use for five years was completely worn out. Dobson recommended that a new punt be built. He was sure that there would be no difficulties in attracting a tenant to run the ferry service. The example of the Smith brothers' service may have been in his mind.

However Dobson also had in mind the general unreliability of the ferry service. The report presented an alternative to the ferry service. Dobson thought that the Provincial Government should consider bridging the rivers in North Canterbury as a safer alternative to the ferries.⁽³¹⁾ The government rejected this suggestion because of the cost involved.

In August 1857 Charles Dudding applied for and was granted the lease of Jackson's ferry. There were two conditions attached to the lease. Firstly the fares were to be regulated to prevent the leaseholder making a unilateral decision to raise the fares as Jackson had done. Secondly the ferry was to operate at regular hours so that travellers would not have to endure unusual delays waiting for the ferryman.⁽³²⁾ Charles Dudding could not have picked a worse time to take on the lease. At the same time as the ferry lease was being signed the Provincial Government was negotiating with William White with respect to his desire to bridge the North Branch of the Waimakariri. These negotiations did not affect the short term commercial outlook for Dudding but the opening of a second ferry service on the South Branch near Dobson's 1855 proposed site for the ferry was a death blow for

(29) G. Jackson to the Superintendent, 7.6.1856.

(30) S.P. & S.T. Smith to the Provincial Secretary, 29.12.1856.

(31) E. Dobson to the Provincial Secretary, 8.7.1857.

(32) C. Dudding to the Provincial Secretary, 6.8.1857.

Dudding's business. He wrote a letter of complaint to the Provincial Secretary in December 1857. Dudding explained that he had sunk all his capital into the purchase and repair of the ferry and that he was now faced with competition from Joseph Felton.⁽³³⁾ The letter was laid before the Executive Council but before further action could be taken the river flooded and took with it Dudding's punt and stockyards leaving Felton with a virtual monopoly over the South Branch.

The location of Felton's ferry made it the most popular of the services. At times there were so many people with their goods trying to get across the river on Felton's ferry that many of them detoured to the Smith brothers' ferry. No doubt there were others still who availed themselves of the services of the Kai Tahu canoes.

On the last day of December 1856 William White received a letter from Dobson confirming that the Provincial Government had accepted his proposal to build a bridge over the North Branch and that a bill would be brought before the Council during the next session to enable the scheme to go ahead. White had arrived in Canterbury in 1852 and had made his first home in Papanui, working as a foreman for Joseph Brittain. After a very short time the damp atmosphere in that location caused a deterioration in White's health and he decided to move to the drier Kaiapoi. By all accounts he was a restless man with a talent for engineering. The North Branch must have presented an irresistible challenge to White. He designed a swing bridge that spanned the river in approximately the same position as the bridge over the present day Kaiapoi River. The swing was to allow ships to pass beyond the bridge to the wharves on the Cam. White's Bridge Ordinance was passed by the Provincial Government in 1857 and allowed White to operate the bridge for seven years. For the first three years he was permitted to collect tolls at half the toll rate collected by Baxter on the ferry. For the remaining four years the bridge toll was set at two thirds of this reduced rate. The government for its part undertook not to harm the bridge traffic by establishing ferries or bridges in the neighbourhood without compensating White. Under these terms the letting of the lease of Jackson's ferry to Dudding and the establishment of Felton's ferry were viable because both were on the South Branch. Although it can be said that the building of the bridge was commercially unfair to Dudding the same cannot be said about Felton's ferry. On the contrary, as the road from the ferry lead directly to the bridge, it probably encouraged travellers to use Felton's ferry.

White purchased timber from the Church Bush to construct the bridge which was built under direction of the foreman, William Hammett, a ship's carpenter. The bridge was opened for traffic in May 1858. The first vehicle across the bridge was Jonah Wheeler's mail cart. Hammett was one of the passengers.⁽³⁴⁾ The bridge gave the settlement an air of permanence as did the roading system.

Now that there was a permanent road between Christchurch and Kaiapoi many more settlers were attracted to the area. The town was beginning to lose the characteristics of a raw frontier town. The new wave of people were more than likely to be family groups and it was the increase in the numbers of children in the

(33) C. Dudding to the Provincial Secretary, 3.12.1857.

(34) *MacDonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies*, Hammett, William

district that turned the settlers' thoughts towards the provision of a permanent school.

In July 1855 William Beswick wrote to the Superintendent explaining that it had long been the belief of the settlers that if they could find a competent and respectable woman to be the schoolmistress then the government would be expected to lend its assistance. Beswick reported that he had found the ideal candidates in Mr and Mrs A.J.White. Beswick had spoken to them several months prior to this time about establishing a school but had found that the Whites were unable to contribute the required thirty shillings for the foundation of a school. In Beswick's estimation Mr and Mrs White were respectable and trustworthy. Although the Whites came from good families they were poor. Mr White was from Cork and Mrs White from Gloucestershire. Beswick added that the only drawback that Mr White had, was his poverty, but he shared that with a good many others in this refuge for the destitute. The growing number of children in the district made it imperative that a school be established in the district before the summer. Beswick suggested it be housed in the residence of his friend, Hall who was moving up-country to his station. Although Beswick was convinced that the Provincial Secretary had assured him that there were funds available for this type of project and that John Hall had also told him that part of the Education funds would be appropriated to Kaiapoi, the scheme did not come to fruition.⁽³⁵⁾ No doubt the Whites moved on to a place where their talents could be utilised.

During 1856 and 1857 the number of settler families grew and so did the demand for education. In response to this demand Raven began a school in the Anglican church. This arrangement was far from ideal. In the majority of cases the new families had settled on the Island. The church was on the north side of the river. The ferry service was not reliable and many parents were afraid to allow their children to travel on it. The building itself was not suitable, especially in the winter. It was very cold and there was no way of heating it. This, factor added to the reluctance parents felt in sending their children to school. In May 1857 Raven requested the use of the government office in Kaiapoi for his school.⁽³⁶⁾ The office was situated on the southern side of the river and it was able to be heated. Raven was refused on the grounds that if the building was used by the school it would interfere with the government service.⁽³⁷⁾ The school struggled on in the church with very few regular attendees. By February 1858 the Anglican church was sufficiently concerned about education in the Kaiapoi district that the Bishop requested funds from the government for the establishment of a school. ⁽³⁸⁾ In the same month the Reverend John Aldred applied for a grant of land in Kaiapoi on which to build a Wesleyan church and school.⁽³⁹⁾ These requests were followed in May by a petition from the Presbyterian minister, the

(35) Beswick to the Superintendent, 11.7.1855.

(36) Raven to the Superintendent, 30.5.1857.

(37) Note on Raven letter 30.5.1857.

(38) The Bishop of Christchurch to the Provincial Secretary, 15.2.1858

(39) The Reverend J.Aldred to the Provincial Secretary, 16.2.1858.

Reverend Charles Fraser, for funds and land to build a church and school at Kaiapoi.⁽⁴⁰⁾

The government responded to the request from the Anglicans. A grant from this source and locally raised funds enabled a school room and a schoolmaster's house to be built in Hilton Street. The first attendance return for the school was presented by the Bishop in October 1858 and it showed that there were eighteen children enrolled. The average attendance for the school was fifteen. In the next return, covering the period between April 1858 and March 1859, the Bishop noted that although the school house was not finished it was habitable and that the roll had risen to twenty three children. The government's Inspector of Schools, J.P. Restall, paid his first visit to Kaiapoi in December 1858. He must have been satisfied with what he saw as he made no adverse comments in his report about the school.

The Wesleyans received a grant of one hundred pounds to build a school in Kaiapoi during 1859. The school was situated in building attached to the Wesleyan church in Fuller Street. The Presbyterians opened their first school for boys in Kaiapoi in 1860. They, too, received a grant from the government for the establishment of the school.

The lists of school books sent from England indicate that the children were taught arithmetic, European history and geography, English literature and bible studies. It could be assumed that from the books on the lists that the children who attended school received a good basic education. This was not the case. It is clear from Restall's reports that the standard of teaching did not match the standard of the books. In many cases schools were run by clergymen who did not have parishes. They were untrained in teaching methods and to Inspector Restall, who was a trained teacher, their methods were appalling. Although there is no specific mention of the Kaiapoi schools in his complaints about the schooling system it is safe to assume that the teaching standards there, in Restall's view, were only mediocre.

Arguably the most important request that the first settlers made to the Provincial Government in the process of turning their community from a frontier society into a pioneer society was a petition presented in November 1856 asking that Kaiapoi be proclaimed a township. This request was driven by extraordinarily practical considerations. For some time the petitioners had been inconvenienced by straying cattle and horses breaking down fences and damaging fields and gardens. The settlers' major source of food came from their gardens and to have them trampled by straying animals was a catastrophe.

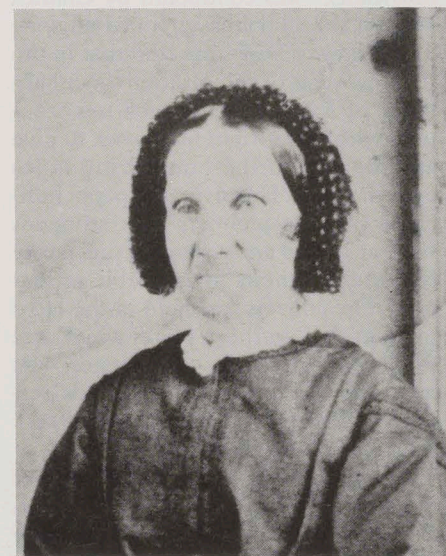
The Kaiapoi settlement, although it had been planned as a town, had never been legally recognised as a town. The body responsible for the administration of the settlement was the Provincial Council and it was too remote to be concerned with the day to day problems of the settlers. The settlers needed a legal means of sanctioning those who allowed their animals to wander and cause such substantial

(40) The Reverend C. Fraser to the Superintendent, 12.5.1858.

damage to the sustainability of life in the settlement. Once Kaiapoi was declared a township then the local governing body would have the power to pass by-laws to ensure that animals were not permitted to wander at will among the houses and gardens of the settlement. Among the signatures on the petition were those of William and Samuel Beswick, Philip Welch, Henry Jones and John Henry Parnham.⁽⁴¹⁾

The government was sympathetic to the plight of the Kaiapoi settlers. Kaiapoi was declared a town under its own ordinance during Provincial Council session VIII, number seven, 1857. The ordinance stipulated that Rural Sections 320, 321, 364, 297 and 468 were deemed to be the town of Kaiapoi. Under later Municipal Council ordinances the town was to be administered by a Municipal Council. The *Lyttelton Times* reported on the event by calling attention to the rapid manner in which Kaiapoi had risen and the important place it now held as the commercial centre of the northern district.

"In less than four years, it (Kaiapoi) has been changed from a wilderness to a thriving town; containing its church, school, courthouse, land office, merchant's offices, stores, etc and numbering a larger constituency than Lyttelton and within 53 (voters) of Christchurch." ⁽⁴²⁾



Sarah Baker - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Kaiapoi. Just over a year later they were still writing in the same optimistic vein, reporting that things had really moved on and that it was much more prosperous in

(41) Beswick and others to the Superintendent, 22.2.1856

(42) *Lyttelton Times*, 21.10.1857. p.5.

Kaiapoi than it had been in England. The letter also commented on the changes in the environment.

“Things are beginning to look very much like England as there is ever improvement now as regards cultivation.”

In this same correspondence the Bakers wrote about the building of White’s bridge and that Kaiapoi was about to be proclaimed a town. They were very pleased to report that a Wesleyan chapel was being built and almost as an after thought that there had been a sharp earthquake.⁽⁴³⁾ A note in a margin that the new baby, Aaron, was now five months old, seems to put into perspective the events that affected the lives of the pioneer settlers. It was more important to them that the settlement become “civilised” than it was to record the birth of a new member of the family. Certainly the gruelling work and the isolation related by Philip Welch in his diary had been replaced by a more domesticated account of life in the Baker’s letters.



James Baker - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

a small number of Gladstone settlers had formed the core of the new community Sewell’s entrepreneurial plans carried out by Sidey and Cookson attracted many lively, hard working frontiersmen. The men, in the main, were engaged in sawyering. The community formed around them was a raw, largely undisciplined

(43) *The Baker Diary*, 86/51, Kaiapoi Museum

(44) *Lyttelton Times*, 31.10.1857. p.5.

frontier settlement. The hamlet, centred on the hotels, nevertheless attracted a second group of settlers who were mostly farming families. In only five years from 1853 to 1858 a thriving community had evolved. Its character had changed from meeting place for sawyers to a colonial village of merchants and service people catering for the needs of the surrounding farming pioneers.

Cridland’s survey and subsequent plan for Kaiapoi began the process of change for the environment. From the building of the houses and the breaking in of land for cultivation, to the securing of law and order and the establishment of a basic communications system, the settlers at Kaiapoi had changed the environment.

Chapter Four:

THE WOOL AND FLOUR YEARS 1858-1868

Charles Sidey's plans to make Kaiapoi the commercial centre of the northern district were formulated on the belief that the region would produce a large wool clip and that it would be shipped out through the port at Kaiapoi.

In the early 1850's a number of small craft came up the river with supplies for the up-country stations and settlers. The craft sailed out with loads of timber. George Day, a resident of Heathcote, owned the "*Flirt*", the most well known vessel to ply the river in the early years of the 1850's. Day established a regular service between Kaiapoi and Heathcote in 1852 although he had been making the journey on request for at least the previous year. A payment to Day for three pounds was made by the church authorities in February 1851 for the transportation of Henry Fletcher's baggage.⁽¹⁾

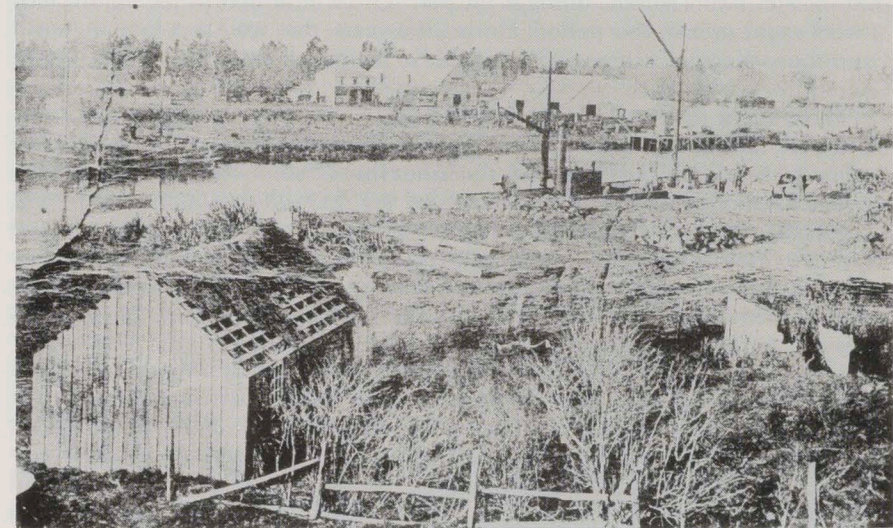
The "*Flirt*" and the other vessels provided a quick and safe journey for the settlers coming to the northern district. As the traffic increased on the river frequent calls were made for the river and the bar, in particular, to be surveyed. In response to such requests Torlesse carried out a survey in 1857. The survey was to focus on the difficulties caused by the character of the predominant Canterbury river.

The Torlesse report noted that the Waimakariri was a substantial river that carried a large volume of water. Rain in the mountains along with snow melt caused the river to flood at fairly regular intervals. The mouth of the river was about eleven feet deep during high tide and the bar, which was close to the beach, was generally smooth. Nor-easterly gales brought problems creating heavy swells from the south east. This would cause a change to the entrance to the river. Flood waters from the river itself also caused changes to the entrance. At the time of the survey the river channel was clear of any shoals or snags leading Torlesse to surmise that any vessel which could negotiate the bar would have no difficulty sailing up to Kaiapoi. It was essential, in the collective view of the Kaiapoi merchants, that river navigation

⁽¹⁾ *Maori Mission Fund 1851*, Church of the Most Holy Trinity, Lyttelton, Parish Papers, 1851.

The Wool and Flour Years 1858-1868

should be as safe as possible in order to attract vessels to the harbour. William Beswick was particularly keen to have the river passage made safe. He and a number of other merchants proposed that a beacon be constructed at the river mouth so that all vessels would have no difficulties in navigating the bar. The



Kaiapoi Township, building in foreground possibly the surveyors' house - courtesy Canterbury Museum

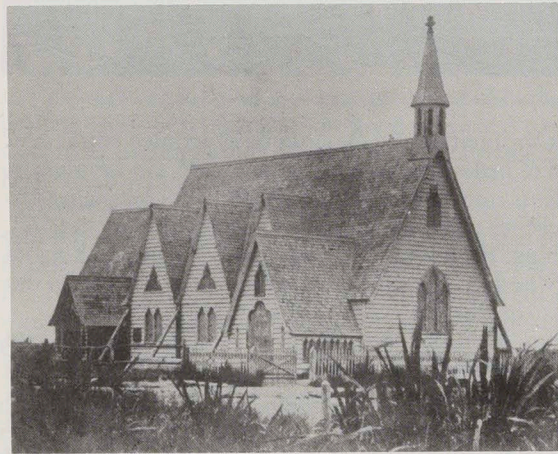
Provincial Engineers were not so sure that the expense of erecting a permanent beacon would achieve the aim of making the river entrance safe. Consequently, Woollcombe, one of the engineers, recommended that an inspector be engaged to check that the markers and beacons were in the right place after each fresh flood. This suggestion was not taken up. Each time a ship made the journey to Kaiapoi the master made the decision whether or not to proceed across the bar and up the river. It was his responsibility to ensure the safety of the vessel and cargo.

Once in the port, in the early days, the cargoes were loaded directly on and off the banks of the river. Without doubt this was a hazardous operation although there were no reports of injury. The subsequent construction of wharves by Sidey and Cookson and Bowler made cargo handling less arduous and more profitable. This was evident from a report in the *Lyttelton Times* during this period. In commenting on the 1857-58 wool season, the newspaper stated that the season had begun early on 14 October with a load from Marchant and Pohill's station at Double Corner and it was predicted that upwards of one thousand bales would be shipped through the port that season. That amount of wool could be handled because of the installation of a powerful hydraulic press on Cookson and Bowler's wharf.

The wool season was important to the settlers of Kaiapoi. Wool provided seasonal jobs in the wool stores and ensured an injection of cash into the local

economy. Its importance was indicated in the yearly reports on the tonnage of wool despatched from Kaiapoi by J.Lowthian Wilson, who had become, in 1863, the resident reporter in the town for the newly founded newspaper, *The Press*. From that year until the harbour closed to regular shipping Wilson included a report on the tonnage of wool handled through the port. This is indicative of the significance of wool to the area in this period. During the years that wool was king in North Canterbury Kaiapoi progressed favourably in comparison with other North Canterbury settlements.

There was a fear in the middle 1850's that the harbour at Saltwater Creek, Northport, would take some of the trade from Kaiapoi. This fear was heightened during the brief period of time that the Canterbury Steam Navigation Company was in existence. This company was founded in 1855 with the intention of having a regular service between the North Canterbury ports of Kaiapoi, Northport and Motunau. Two of the founding directors were Sidey and William Beswick. The company directors appeared to favour Saltwater Creek over Kaiapoi although many of them were resident in Kaiapoi. The company purchased the steamer "Alma" and she made her first visit to Kaiapoi in December 1855. Unfortunately before the service became established the "Alma" grounded on the Sumner bar and was unsalvageable. The Canterbury Steam Navigation Company was unable to sustain this loss and it was wound down taking with it



Wesleyan Church Kaiapoi 1860's - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

the fears of the Kaiapoi residents that their port would fall out of favour with the shipping companies. Apart from this episode the established settlement and the consequent superior infrastructure insured that the port at Kaiapoi was paramount in North Canterbury. It has been commonly believed that the character of the settlements in Canterbury was predominately English and Anglican in nature. This was not so in Kaiapoi even though the first settlers were English and Anglican. Many of those who could be viewed as the pioneer entrepreneurs of Kaiapoi and therefore most influential in the character it assumed, were either Presbyterian or Wesleyan. Either by design or by accident these persons were involved in the wool trade. Sidey was a Presbyterian and it was through his efforts that the Presbyterian church in Kaiapoi was established. The Wesleyans however, were more determined than their Presbyterian brethren. Their first services were held in the Baker's house in 1855 and continued in that venue until the church was

built and opened in 1868. The Wesleyan philosophy appealed to a broader mass of people and in particular to those pioneers who took up the small farms on the Island. There was no doubt that in order to survive, these first settlers had to lead independent, sober and hard working lives. These characteristics were affirmed in the work ethic embraced by the Wesleyans. Along with these rather dour characteristics there was also a genuine concern for the well-being of their fellow citizens. This concern led a number of those pioneers to discharge that characteristic by serving on a number public bodies.

The physical environment created by the Waimakariri River required those Wesleyan characteristics for the survival of the community. Despite Torlesse's rather favourable survey the Waimakariri was to cause the inhabitants a great deal of grief, especially to those farming on the Island. The river, although it had its benign periods, dominated the lives of Kaiapoi residents for many years.

During the first years of Pakeha settlement in the area the swamps and attendant tributaries of the Waimakariri furnished exactly the right conditions for the growing of the tall hardy flax, raupo. It was this material that provided the



St Paul's Presbyterian Church and manse built 1874 - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

thatching for many of the first Pakeha buildings in the area. The plant also drew the first manufacturers to the region. C.R.Blakiston and his partner C. Young built the first flax mill in the area in 1855 and, although it was not a success, it paved the way for the second wave of manufacturers, the flour millers.

Over the centuries the frequent flooding of the Waimakariri had resulted in a fertile soil being built up on the Island. It was apparent, even at the beginning of European settlement, that the soil was capable of producing heavy crops. The area became the grain bowl of the northern district and the seasonal round of planting and harvesting became the norm for many lives. The ease of growing those first crops gave the many small farmers in the district a false sense of security. The

warning signs for difficulties to come were already apparent when Philip Welch was struggling to establish his farm.

From the perspective of the settlers it was the unpredictability of the weather and consequently of the river that played a major part in the history of Kaiapoi in the decade from 1858 to 1868. The Waimakariri River was not like any river that the settlers had ever known. At first it seemed to behave in the expected ways of rivers in Europe. Near its mouth it was deep, relatively slow flowing and seemingly perfect for a river port. It was hard for the settlers to comprehend that this sedate river could, in a matter of hours, be transformed into a raging flood that broke up great trees as if they were match-wood and changed course apparently at will. What was more puzzling to the colonial mind was the fact that there was no need for it to be raining in their location for the river to be in high flood.

In fact the river was likely to flood without warning at two crucial times in the farming year. The first of these periods was in the spring when the annual snow melt and the prevalence of nor-west winds dumped enormous quantities of water in the headwaters of the river. The resulting freshes could, in a matter of hours, wipe out an entire crop. The second period was during the January-February harvest time when once again the nor-west wind brought rain to the mountain catchment area causing floods in the lower reaches of the river. The *Lyttelton Times* carried a report in its issue of 20 January 1858 on extensive floods which coincided with high tides. This was the flood which swept Charles Dudding's ferry out to sea and destroyed his stockyards. The report makes no mention of the damage the fresh must have done to the nearly mature crops but it is safe to assume that if it carried away plant then it must have also destroyed crops.⁽²⁾ The damage that the floods did to the land increased when the settlers began draining the swamps. No natural sponge remained to absorb the extra water from the swollen river.

The other natural phenomenon that the settlers found hard to cope with was the nor-west wind. Damage to crops was inevitable when this wind blew. The Kai Tahu term for the wind is Te hau kaitakata, man eating wind, and that is exactly what it appeared to be. Not only did it sap the vitality of the human inhabitants but it also drained the land and the crops of their growth-giving moisture. At times the nor-west wind gave the area the appearance of a dust bowl with the consequent increase in the discomfort of the settlers. In her reminiscences, published in *The Press* in 1900, Sarah Baker recalled that the nor-west wind rocked their house so violently at times that the family felt it safer to sleep outside.⁽³⁾ Apart from these discomforts the wind exacerbated other damaging circumstances and left the area vulnerable to fire.

Fire was a particularly feared and a fairly common occurrence. The first great fire after the Pakeha arrived was in November 1859. The *Lyttelton Times* reported that the strong nor-west wind of the proceeding week was the cause of the fearful destruction of property at Kaiapoi. The whole of the Native Bush as well as a good

(2) *Lyttelton Times*, 20.1.1858.

(3) *The Press*, 24.12.1900.

proportion of the Church Bush was burnt by the fire which had started in the north eastern corner of the Native Bush near the present day location of Woodend. By the next day the fire had burnt to the south-west corner of the reserve, just north of the Island. The wind had, by this time, become stronger and the fire had leapt the Cam River and destroyed Ruataniwha, the pa nearest to Kaiapoi. On the third day the wind had changed direction to blow from the south and the Church Bush on the eastern side of the Cam, north to Woodend, was also destroyed. Twelve houses and many yards of sawn timber and firewood were razed. It was estimated that approximately twenty thousand pounds worth of timber was destroyed.⁽⁴⁾

This fire was disastrous for several reasons. Its immediate effects were to wipe out completely the economic basis of the Kaiapoi region for the Kai Tahu and to hasten the end of the timber industry. The land reserved to the Kai Tahu at Kaiapoi was not extensive enough to allow them to support themselves by farming. Prior to the 1859 fire the land was covered with a valuable timber resource. The Kai Tahu had, by a combination of leasing the land to the Pakeha, and by milling the timber, managed to sustain themselves. With the destruction of so many fellable trees not only did the Kai Tahu lose their last viable economic activity but also the Pakeha timber-based industries were similarly laid waste.

The long term effects of the 1859 fire were more subtle in their influence on the environment. The loss of so many trees at one time meant that the natural absorption rate of rain was diminished. The district was thereafter prone to more severe surface flooding than before the fire had occurred. The bush had also moderated the effect of the nor-west wind and with that moderating influence gone ways and means had to be found to cope with the wind's destructive potential on farming. It was not long before the settlers were devoting their energies to the establishment of shelter belts for their animals as well as for their crops. The landscape as the Bakers had noted in their letter became more English with the planting of exotic trees. This was facilitated by the establishment of the Kaiapoi Nursery run by L.R. Sheeres. An advertisement in the *Lyttelton Times* of 1857 noted that the nursery had in stock, fruit and forest trees; shrubs, apples, pears, cherries, plums, apricots and peaches; thorns and briars and English and Cape brooms for hedges.⁽⁵⁾ Sheeres' nursery had a ready market for these plants especially after the great 1859 fire. The flax, toi-toi and tall grasses of Charlotte Godley's description had gone forever.

Floods, wind and fire were not the only problems facing the farmers of the Kaiapoi district in those first years. Part of the farmers' lot in the pioneer days was an acceptance of loss of a proportion of their crops due to insect, bird and fungus attack. The loss due to rust was serious. A fungal disease which, if left unchecked, rust is capable of destroying a whole crop. The only method of control the pioneer farmer had at his disposal was to fire the stubble at the end of the harvest so that the fungus was destroyed. Unfortunately if the fungus was on the grain, it was unable to be destroyed by this method and so the grain carried the cause of its own

(4) *Lyttelton Times*, 19.10.1859.

(5) *Lyttelton Times*, 7.6.1857.

destruction into the following season. It was vital for farmers to keep storage areas clean in order to prevent the spread of rust. Many people taking up farming were inexperienced in hygienic farming methods leading to rust becoming a prevalent pest.

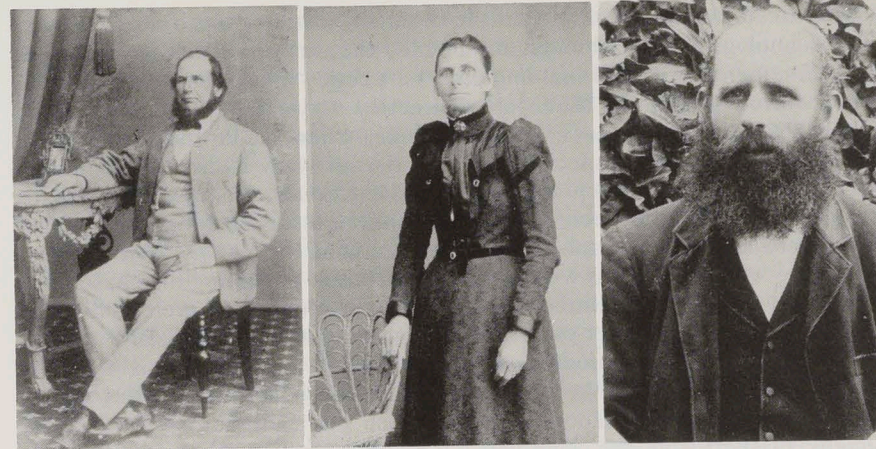
The liberation of the house sparrow in the 1860's by acclimatisation societies to control crop damaging insects unleashed an even bigger problem for the farmers. The comparatively mild winters and the abundant food supply ensured a rapid increase in the numbers of sparrows. As sparrows are both territorial and gregarious they are able to inflict enormous damage on grain crops. Barely fifteen years after their liberation the government passed, in 1882, The Small Birds Nuisance Act which allowed the destruction of both the birds and their eggs. Sparrow numbers were already out of control, the 1882 Act and subsequent measures were never able to contain the damage that grain farmers sustained from bird attack.

The other difficulty was an acute shortage of labour especially in the late 1850s and early 60s. Many men left the area to find fortune, if not fame, on the various goldfields in Australia and New Zealand. The fledgling agricultural industry had a number of schemes to attract labour, especially from Australia and also from England, to boost the numbers available for work on farms. These schemes were not successful and farmers were forced to compete with each other to secure the labour they needed. This in turn initiated an upward spiral of wages. There was such a shortage of labourers that even the attraction of high wages and other incentives such as a supply of free beer could not secure labour for many farms. The farmers were unable to harvest their crops and therefore faced ruin. If the crops were harvested, then farmers often found that there was a glut of grain on the local market and consequently the prices were very low. Abandonment of farms by farmers for all of these reasons was not uncommon.

Those farmers who managed to surmount the problems of rust, bird attack, labour shortage and the low market prices for their crops had a further difficulty to overcome. There was a lack of good agricultural machinery and the animals necessary to pull it. Those ploughs that were available were wooden and had a single furrow. Sarah Baker described the planting and harvesting by her family of what was to be the first grain crop on the Island. James Baker rented the run on the Island until the end of 1858 when he gave it up. In his first season there, he planted thirteen acres of oat seed for which he paid twenty shillings a bushel. The ploughing and harrowing was done with wooden implements pulled by bullocks. The crop was harvested by hand using a reap-hook and threshed, again by hand, using a fail.⁽⁶⁾ Obviously such methods were both inefficient and onerous.

At a time of such apparent need, one of Kaiapoi's most important early tradesmen arrived. Joseph Keetley arrived in Canterbury on the "*Mystery*" in March 1859. He came with his wife, Alice and their five children, Harry, Elizabeth, Harriet, Sarah and Thomas as well as the children's nurse Ruth Smith. Keetley had been trained in foundry work and in blacksmithing in England and it is reasonable to assume that Kaiapoi was attractive to him because of its reputation as a farming

(6) *The Press*, 24.12.1900.



Joseph Keetley - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Sarah Keetley, I.N. Eagle, Kaiapoi, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Tom Keetley, Tolputt and Clarke Rangiora, photographers, - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

area. The first advertisement for his business was published in the *Lyttelton Times* on 24 August 1859. It informed the public that Joseph Keetley had set up as a smith and repairer of all sorts of agricultural implements, plough harrows, scarifiers, corn and turnip drills. In the advertisement Keetley recorded that he would pay particular attention to shoeing and blacksmithing. His address was given as Piraki (sic) Street, Island, Kaiapoi. It becomes obvious that his ironmongering skills were needed. According to the reminiscences of Harriet (Mrs T. Hassall), Keetley had helped make the first iron plough which was exhibited at the London Exhibition in 1851.

Keetley was indeed the right man at the right time for the development of Kaiapoi. His interest in agricultural implements increased over the years. This was particularly so with the growth of ploughing as a sport and the interest in exhibiting the very latest implements at the various Agricultural and Pastoral Shows. The Britannia Foundry, as Keetley's business came to be known, turned out high quality agricultural implements. At that time there were two styles of ploughs. One was known as the swing plough. It was so named because the plough relied on a number of chains attached to the front end to swing the plough around when a change of direction was required. The other style had a wheel at the front end which allowed for a change in direction. Although Keetley manufactured both styles he preferred the wheeled plough as it had more stability and a greater accuracy. As the wheeled plough already had stability it was probably not a great step to add another ploughshare and moldboard to the unit to make a double furrowed plough. Keetley had developed this most famous of his implements by 1867. It is not difficult to appreciate the difference that the two-furrow plough made to the task of ploughing. Two furrows halved the time

needed to complete the work and it made the art of ploughing much more accurate. This technological breakthrough also opened the way for further development and refinements of agricultural implements. Keetley himself had put together a three-furrow plough by 1869. Joseph Keetley very rarely put his name on his ploughs and this habit has created a difficulty when tracing the development of his ploughs. His rivals, especially James Anderson who was also a blacksmith in Kaiapoi, copied his developments but unlike Keetley, Anderson named his ploughs. The rivalry between Keetley and Anderson was documented in angry letters between them in letters to the editor column in the *Lyttelton Times* in 1861.

Keetley enjoyed success with his ploughs both in ploughing matches and at agricultural shows for a number of years. Expert ploughmen were convinced that the Keetley ploughs out-performed ploughs imported from England and this preference for the local product saw the price of imported ploughs fall by about a third. William Plaskett, Sarah Keetley's husband, was Keetley's chief ploughman. The 1867 Kaiapoi ploughing match was a triumph for the Keetley ploughs. Plaskett won the championship and out of the eighteen placed men, ten were using Keetley ploughs. Harry Keetley won the boys' match.

The Britannia Foundry, positioned on the corner of Peraki and Fuller Streets, gave Kaiapoi a land mark that is still known as Keetley's Corner. At its height the foundry employed about twenty-eight men and had six forges. There were times in the early sixties however, when it was the Keetley daughters that kept the foundry working. The Otago goldrushes caused the shortage of labour at this time. Keetley, as had the farmers before him, had the worry of not only a shortage of labour but also the necessity for the payment of high wages in order to both attract and keep his labourers. It was not, therefore, an uncommon sight to see Harriet and Sarah with their sleeves rolled up helping in the foundry. From his arrival in 1859 to his death in 1875 Joseph Keetley worked tirelessly in his business. Although it can be said that his foundry was the first Kaiapoi business to have an influence on the wider Canterbury economy and to some degree on the New Zealand economy, Keetley's business was essentially a local one.

Another settler important to the development of Kaiapoi became established in Canterbury in the mid 1850's. On his arrival Richard Woodford purchased R.S.374, one of Torlesse's selections, for three hundred pounds. The section was crucial to Woodford's plans as it contained a good mill site on the junction of the Ohoka Stream and the North Branch of the Waimakariri. Like Blakiston and Young before him Woodford was drawn to the area because of its reputed potential. Whereas it had been the native flax that had drawn the former, the exotic grain crops were what attracted Woodford. Since James Baker's first oat harvest many new settlers had followed his lead by diversifying into wheat and barley as well as planting oats. Woodford's decision to build a mill was, nevertheless, surprising in view of the fact that in 1857 there was the beginning of a glut on the local grain market. However his judgement of the situation was to have even more far reaching effects on the development of Kaiapoi than Keetley and his foundry. Woodford's first mill and another one built in the early sixties by Donald Coutts were water driven but by 1867 steam technology had been adopted by the innovative Richard

Woodford. He built a large steam driven mill on the river bank in Charles Street. It was a three story building elevated on piles to keep it above the flood level of the river. These mills, like the foundry, gave the Kaiapoi area a wider economic base. Kaiapoi-milled flour was found throughout the settlement but more than this, continuing in the tradition of the timber mills, it gave the area an specific identification as a milling area.

Woodford's enterprise of 1857 encouraged other businesses to locate in Kaiapoi. In November 1858 the Kaiapoi brewery operated by H. Jaggard opened for business. It drew on local supplies of barley for its product. The XXX ale was advertised for sale at three shillings per gallon and the XX ale sold for two shillings and six pence per gallon. As well as these specifically local businesses there were all the usual enterprises that go to make up a viable local economy. There were builders, the most well known of whom were Henry Jones and William Hammett, butchers, general stores, a brick kiln, milliners and dressmakers, all of whom were needed for a healthy local economy.

A letter to the *Lyttelton Times* dated 4 August 1858, announced with some pride the fact that the sailing of the "Uira" from Kaiapoi to Wellington was a new era in progress. It was confidently predicted that it would only be a matter of time until Kaiapoi was declared a port of entry. William Beswick reported that Cookson and Bowler were willing to build a bond store. This request along with the desire to have White's bridge declared toll free signalled a change in the attitude of the



James Wylde, Member for Kaiapoi, Canterbury Provincial Council 1866, from official montage photo by D. L. Mundy - courtesy Canterbury Museum

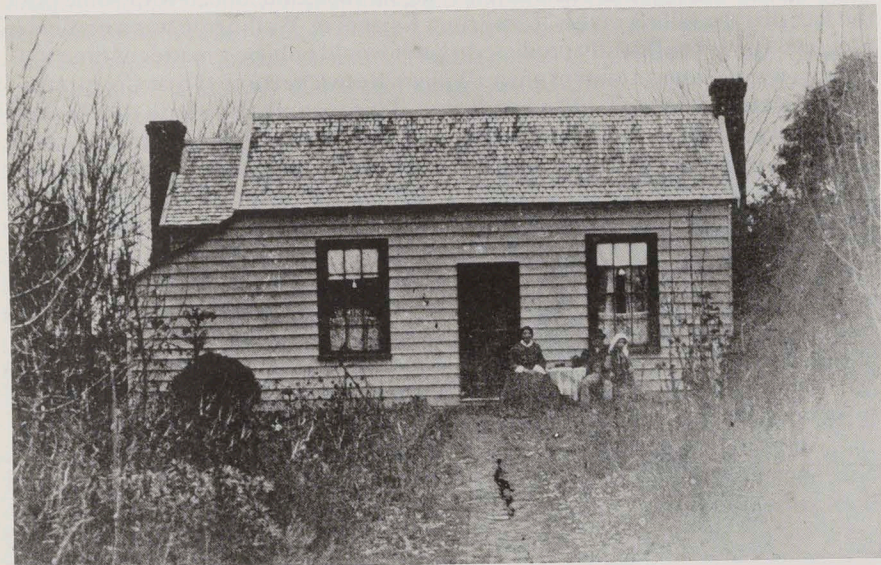
settlers. No longer were the settlers concerned with the struggle to establish themselves. They were concentrating on building a strong and viable community that was to sustain their descendents as well as providing a better life than they had experienced on their arrival.

Prosperity also encouraged the establishment of clubs and societies that catered for the leisure time of the settlers. The edifice known as the Assembly Rooms, built on Charles Street in 1859, was one of the largest buildings in the settlement. Its establishment meant that such diverse activities as balls and banquets, public meetings and concerts could be held in relatively comfortable and spacious quarters. In July 1859 two public meetings were held in the Assembly Rooms to establish a Musical Society. At the meeting held on 25 July a committee was appointed to manage the affairs of the society which was to be known as the Kaiapoi Philharmonic Society. James Wylde was

elected chairman. Wylde who had arrived in Kaiapoi in the mid 1850's, had worked as an engineer on railway projects in Scotland and water schemes in Denmark. In Kaiapoi he worked firstly as a sawyer in the Ohoka Bush and then after the purchase of land he became the town's first land and stock agent. He held regular stock auctions in the stock yards attached to the local hotels and from the money he made he was able to finance the building of a "memnonium" in Charles St, where no doubt he hoped the Philharmonic Society would perform.

The Philharmonic Society's first treasurer was Fuller with George Hewlings as secretary. Mr Jennings was to be appointed conductor as soon as fifty members had been enrolled.⁽⁷⁾

In that same month another public meeting had convened to discuss the choice of a horse racecourse and a time for a meeting. The *Lyttelton Times* reported on 18 December 1859 that a race meeting had taken place on Wednesday, 7 December 1859. The day was fine, the company numerous, and notwithstanding a few accidents, the sport satisfactory. The swampy ground was the cause of the



Kaiapoi; Mr & Mrs Norman and child outside their home, Kaiapoi Island, 1863, showing a typical farm house of the period - courtesy Canterbury Museum

accidents. The report added some colour by stressing that the ground was positively dangerous to man and beast.

The most important society to be formed in the decade of 1858 to 1868 was the Mandeville Farmers' Club. The club was established in response to a motion by

(7) *Lyttelton Times*, 10.8.1857.

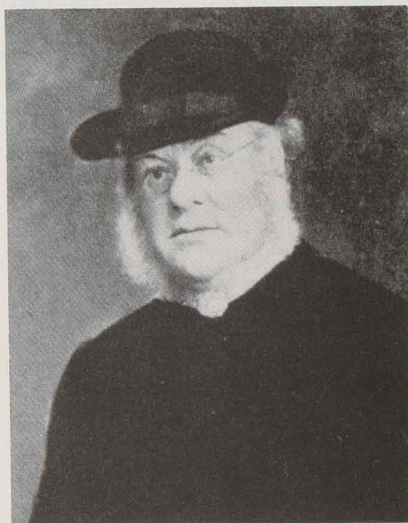
Coutts at a meeting of Kaiapoi farmers in November 1860. The club had a threefold purpose. Firstly it had what could be termed a technical role. The members, under the chairmanship of Dr Charles Dudley, discussed the latest methods of farming and shared innovative ideas. The problems of farming as well as possible solutions could be discussed at these meetings. Secondly it had a political purpose. The farmers, by combining their voices in the club, could have their grievances, their worries and their solutions to the problems heard at the local and provincial political levels. Through the club the farmers pressed for better roads and drainage systems in the area. Many of the office bearers in the club also served on the local councils and road boards as well as winning seats in the provincial legislature. Thirdly, and probably most importantly for the majority of members and their families, it had a social role. The club organised agricultural shows and ploughing matches. The ploughing matches in particular gave the district a social focus and provided a showcase for local ingenuity.

In the same way as the farmers organised themselves into a formal society to promote their communal concerns the townsfolk were beginning to recognize that Kaiapoi needed its own local governing body. Under a Provincial Government Ordinance local communities were able to form road boards to take responsibility for the roading in each local area. A road board was empowered to levy the residents in its district a rate for the forming of new roads as well as the maintenance of existing roads. The residents of Kaiapoi saw the formation of a road board in their area as a way of gaining jurisdiction over matters they felt were being shelved by the Provincial authorities. Since the late 1850's the citizens had been pressing the authorities to have White's bridge declared toll free. They were sure that the money gathered through the tolls was not being spent in the area. One of the advantages seen by the Kaiapoi residents in a road board would be that they could decide for themselves how the toll money was spent.

The proclamation allowing the formation of a road board under the Road Districts Ordinance Act 1863 for the town of Kaiapoi was published in the *Lyttelton Times* on 16 January 1864. A public meeting to form the road board was held in the Kaiapoi Hotel on 25 January 1864. The chair was taken by Mr Charles Dudley, the son of Dr Dudley, who explained that the meeting had been called for the electors to propose and vote for the road board. Messrs C. Dudley, W.C. Beswick, J.S. White, G.C. Black, G.F. Hewlings and G.F. Day were proposed and seconded by a show of hands. In almost a parody of the democratic process a discussion then arose as to the correctness of the decision. It was decided to start again and this time to elect the road board by secret ballot. In the opinions of those men who had already been nominated the result of the ballot was surprising. The Reverend William Willock was elected chairman of a five member board. The other four members were W.C. Beswick, Dr Charles Dudley, George Hewlings and George Day. After the vote had been taken James Wylde who was a member of the Provincial Government urged the Board to communicate immediately with the government to put matters into working trim. ⁽⁸⁾

(8) *Lyttelton Times*, 28.1.1864.

The newly elected Kaiapoi Road Board took this advice to heart and at a special meeting held on 28 January the Board resolved to ask the Provincial Council for the five hundred pound grant that had been voted to the Kaiapoi District by the



The Rev. William Willock - first Chairman of the Kaiapoi Road Board - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Council in September 1863. More importantly, the Board decided to ask the Provincial Council for the possession of the swing bridge subject to the proviso that the Council pay for the upgrading of the bridge. At the second meeting the Board appointed Fuller as its treasurer/clerk for a salary of twenty-four pounds a year. One of the tasks the Board was charged with and which was overseen by Fuller, was the drawing up a roll of ratepayers and the collection of the road rates. This was the first time a roll of ratepayers had been drawn up for Kaiapoi.

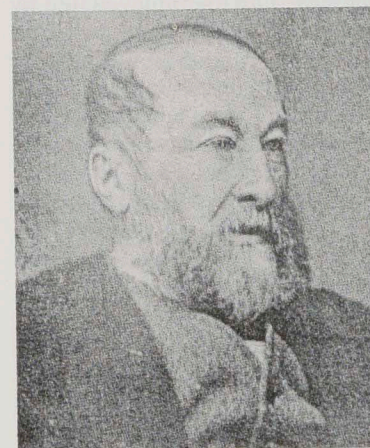
The Provincial Council was willing to hand over the bridge to the Kaiapoi Road Board. The Board appointed, on a temporary basis, a man called Alridge to collect the tolls. After a couple weeks the Board appointed a permanent toll-collector, Richard Allen, at a wage of two pounds a week. The Board also decided to buy a house for the toll collector to live in.

The Kaiapoi Road Board set up a local bureaucracy that made it easier for the local people to take responsibility for the governing of their own community. The Board was concerned in the early months of its existence with the state of the roads and footpaths in its district. However, under the direction of its chairman, the board began to assume a more socially conscious role. In September 1864 the Board held a special meeting to authorise the chairman to approach the government in conjunction with the local Member of Parliament, William "Cabbage" Wilson, to request money to relieve the distress of some families in the district. It was reported that many people were close to starvation. This approach to the government was successful. The Board received one hundred and twenty-five pounds and this allowed it to employ extra men under the supervision of the ganger, Mr Davis.

Despite the wider role that the Kaiapoi Road Board was assuming the residents were not satisfied with limited powers that it had. In September 1864 a public meeting was held at the Kaiapoi Hotel to debate the possibility of having Kaiapoi proclaimed a municipality. The ubiquitous Dr Dudley was in the chair. The meeting was addressed by William Wilson who explained the necessary steps that the community would be required to take to have their town declared a municipality under the Municipal Council Ordinance. Wilson presented the meeting with a petition to the Superintendent which, he explained, would have to be signed

by one hundred people in order to have the government declare Kaiapoi a municipality. After that had been done the residents would have to choose nine persons to become councillors. Those nine would then select a chairman who would then set up a sub-committee to frame an Ordinance suitable for the needs of the town of Kaiapoi. Wilson told the meeting that numerous advantages would accrue to the town if it became a municipality. He cited the example of Christchurch which since becoming a municipality had been able, under the good management of its councillors, to form and macadamise its roads with a consequent rise in property values. Wilson was convinced that the same would happen in Kaiapoi which had the added advantage of a rich agricultural hinterland and one of the best navigable rivers in New Zealand running through its centre. Wilson's advice had about it an air of authenticity. He had been elected a Provincial Council Member for Kaiapoi in 1864, ahead of both William Beswick and Fuller, as well as being the first elected Mayor of Christchurch.

Wilson's resolution to circulate the petition was adopted by the meeting. During the course of the discussion concern was expressed that the change might mean a rise in the rates. Wilson thought that the shilling currently charged by the Kaiapoi Road Board would be sufficient for the Municipal Council. It was also acknowledged that the Road Board was not able to address such problems as the provision of a fire engine and the installation of a sanitary service. As the numbers of people increased in the district these concerns would assume more urgency. The meeting was convinced that the sooner that Kaiapoi was declared a municipality the better off the citizenry would be. (9)



Dr C. Dudley - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

The petition attained the requisite number of signatures and the Superintendent declared Kaiapoi a municipality. The first meeting of the Municipal Council was held in the Kaiapoi Hotel on 1 December 1864. Dr Dudley was elected chairman of a seven man council. The seven were G.C. Black, W.C. Beswick, G.F. Day, A.A. Dobbs, G.F. Hewlings, E.A. Lock, A Weston, and J.T. Winterbourne.

With the advent of the Municipal Council the Road Board was no longer needed. The last recorded meeting of the Kaiapoi Road Board was held on 4 January 1865. It was resolved that the tolls from the swing bridge were to be assigned to the Municipal Council and that the Board would meet again on 10 January. At a previous meeting the Board had decided to wind up its affairs at the 4 January meeting. It is unclear why it decided to meet again. The last minutes of the Kaiapoi Road Board have

(9) *The Press*, 5.9.1864.

remained unconfirmed. For just over a year the Kaiapoi Road Board attempted to fulfil the role of a local council and it provided valuable experience and public recognition for the men who served on it. Although its existence was of a short duration, without it the community would have been slower in recognising their need for a more comprehensive form of local government.

There was a smooth transition of governance from the Road Board to the Municipal Council. This was probably so because four of the eight members of the Council had also served on the Road Board.

Despite the air of confidence about the establishment of the Municipal Council the council was born under the shadow of large scale unemployment. The Road Board had attempted to solve some of the problems in September 1864 but at best this was only a stop-gap measure. As well as the request from the Road Board, the Provincial Council had also received a petition from a meeting of unemployed men requesting the immediate start of special work cutting drains on the main roads through the swamps. It was thought that if this was done the landholders could fence off their land and bring it under cultivation thus employing more men. The meeting also requested that immigration be stopped in the meantime.

The Provincial Superintendent, William Rolleston, instituted a commission of enquiry into the situation. The commissioners found that there were cases of genuine need among the labourers in Kaiapoi and that work was needed to allay the present discontent. The Road Board, with its one hundred and twenty-five pound grant, had decided that it would pay a maximum of five shillings a day to the labourers employed on its work schemes. The unemployed, led by John Elliot, decided at a public meeting held in White's music hall that a fair wage in the town area would be seven shillings per day and eight shillings per day in the district. The Reverend Willock, chairman of the Road Board reported that although he did not want lower the wages, he was constrained by the demands of the Provincial Government. This answer was unacceptable to the men and so they went on strike. However Rolleston threatened to call in contractors to metal Fuller Street and so the labourers did not have any choice but to accept the lower wage rate.

A further public meeting was held on 6 November 1864. The unemployed heard a speech from Richard Woodford who told them that it was the flow of immigration over the previous two years which was the cause of their plight. His solution was, for those affected, to vote for men who were inclined to their cause. Woodford was sure that the Provincial Government only voted money to its friends. The forthcoming Kaiapoi municipal election was an opportunity, in Woodford's view, for the unemployed to vote for sympathetic candidates. The response of the Road Board to this meeting was minuted at a special meeting held on 18 November. It was decided to instruct each ganger to employ only twelve men all of whom were to be married men with families resident in Kaiapoi. The gangers were also directed to read to the men a resolution from the Road Board telling them that the discontent among the labourers in Kaiapoi was attributable to the dangerous counsel and insidious advice from John

Elliot. Elliot denied this vehemently, indicating that he was in Christchurch during the strike and that he had told the workers to return to work, which they did.

After the Municipal elections the discontent among the labourers seemed to dissipate. Three of the men elected to the council could have had stronger links with the unemployed than the others who were elected. They were E.A.Lock, A.Weston and J.Winterbourne. Although he owned land around the site of the present day freezing works Lock did not appear to have any other assets. Alfred Weston had been in the district since he had been employed by Torlesse during the survey of the area. He had tried several jobs and lost most of what he had owned during the great 1859 fire. Winterbourne was a turner and was also likely to have suffered during the labour troubles of 1864. The other members of the Council were well established men and were probably less inclined to be sympathetic towards the unemployed labourers.

The new Municipal Council needed to employ a clerk. When applications closed on 28 December there were twelve candidates and it was necessary to hold two ballots. On the second ballot Charles Edward Dudley, Dr Dudley's son, was voted to the position. His salary was to be at a rate of seventy-five pounds for the first three months and thereafter at a rate of one hundred pounds a year.

In January 1865 the Council decided to sink an artesian well on the ferry reserve in Charles Street and to place a bell at the bridge which was to be rung at stated hours. The bell was purchased, at his own expense, by William Wilson and presented to the Council. The Municipal Council thus started the tradition that is still evident in Kaiapoi today when the hour is chimed. By April the new ratepayers roll had been completed and the rates were set at the old Road Board rate of one shilling in the pound. The Council stipulated that the rates were to be paid in two instalments in June and September.

The most exciting social event in Kaiapoi during the time of the Municipal Council was the visit of Governor Grey in 1867. The Municipal Council applied for and was granted fifty pounds from the Provincial Council to entertain the Governor. The Council planned to present Grey with an illuminated address and to entertain him at a reception. The Oram Brothers provided the food at ten shillings a head for Pakeha and five shillings a head for Maori.

If Kaiapoi's leaders saw the visit of the Governor as confirming their status as a community, the Maori population of the district saw his visit as an opportunity to have a number of grievances addressed. They wished to have their burial ground on the North Road extended. This, it was felt, would be an easy matter to rectify as crown land bounded the cemetery. The Kai Tuahuriri also wished to gain the right to sell off a portion of their land to create a right of way for those living along their boundary. At the time those living in the vicinity had to pass over Kai Tuahuriri land in order to reach the road. In addition, a request was made for a road to be formed by the government from a point on the North Road just past Waituere to Tuahiwi and on to the sections on the Rangiora road. The petitioners assured the Governor that the road would be open to Pakeha as well as Maori. The most important request was from a number of individuals who wanted to have parcels

of land granted to them as they no longer wished to work the land in a communal fashion.

These requests for what appeared to be special treatment for Kai Tuahuriri added to the number of small irritations felt between the two races in the Kaiapoi district. In the first few years of Pakeha settlement there was fairly regular contact between the two peoples. However with the growth of numbers of Pakeha in subsequent years this contact began to lessen. By the middle sixties two farming problems served to strain the relationship.

Firstly, there was the thistle problem. After the bush was destroyed by the 1859 fire the land became a fertile area for many varieties of weeds. Thistles were the most vigorous of these and very quickly reached epidemic proportions. The only method of eradication was by grubbing the individual plants out. The provincial authorities set up an inspectorate of thistles. Each district had its own inspector and during the thistle season over the spring and summer the inspectors would travel from property to property to ensure that each land holder had done his best in grubbing out all of the thistles on his land. Those landholders who failed to heed the warnings of the inspectors could be prosecuted for breaching the thistle regulations. The Maori reserve at Kaiapoi posed a problem for the inspectors. Although the land was held under individual title it was most often worked by a family group. These groups did not necessarily include the owner. It was therefore often quite difficult for the thistle inspector to serve a notice on the landowner. The Pakeha neighbours of the Maori reserve land had the feeling that the Maori landowners were able to get away with non-compliance of the thistle regulations.

The second farming problem gave rise to similar suspicions. In 1861 there was an outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia in cattle in Otago. This was a contagious and in those days, if left, a fatal disease. The Canterbury Provincial Government moved quickly to prevent the spread of the ailment into its region. It forbade the importation of cattle from Otago. Unfortunately even this stringent measure did not prevent the disease occurring in Canterbury. Cattle from Nelson brought the illness to Canterbury. The Government's next approach was to try to confine it to the areas of its first outbreak. Farmers were not allowed to move cattle that might have been in contact with infected cattle. All infected cattle were to be slaughtered. A number of farms became quarantine areas including some of the Maori Reserve. This meant that cattle that had, or were suspected of having had, contact with infected cattle were moved to these quarantine farms. The Maori farmers objected strongly to their land being used as a quarantine station because it meant that their cattle were in imminent danger of catching the malady. Like the thistle outbreak the pleuro-pneumonia outbreak raised suspicions between the races. This time it was the Maori whose suspicions were aroused as to the intentions of the Pakeha. A letter written to the Provincial Secretary in June 1868 by Wi Naihira, Henare Perita, Patia Turakautahi, Honai Tau and six others outlined the fears of the Maori farmers about the disease. They explained that in their view the whitemen had brought the disease to their land. On the discovery of the disease the Pakeha had not removed the cattle to their own land. If the ailment had

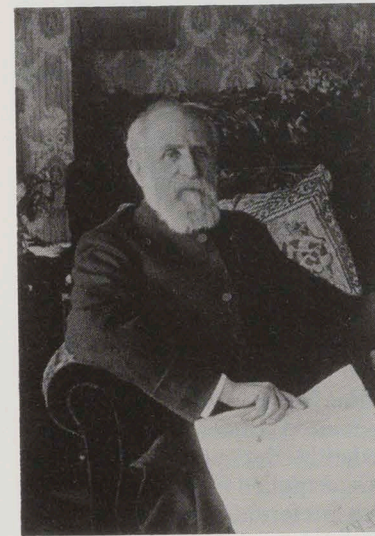
originated among their cattle, the Maori, the petitioners, wrote, would have discovered some diffusion of herbs that would have cured the cattle.

"The Pakeha has brought this disease here and ought to provide us with a remedy for it or pay for our cattle when killed (by order of the Inspector). We have never heard before of animals being killed because disease has attacked them and that is why we ask to be paid for them."⁽¹⁰⁾

The request was refused.

These differences between the races were, as a general rule, minor ones but they did nevertheless confirm wariness of the other's culture. In practical terms this meant that there was only limited contact between the two communities. When contact did take place it was usually on a personal level and at public celebrations when the Maori community would be asked to perform and/or put down a hangi.

At this time one Pakeha was seen by his fellows as speaking for the Maori. He was the Reverend James Stack. He had been appointed to the Maori people as their missionary by Bishop Harper in 1859. Over the years Stack became the intermediary through whom the Kaiapoi Maori, in particular, put their grievances. Stack also acted on behalf of Maori living elsewhere in the province. This arrangement was not always beneficial to the Maori as Stack would sometimes put



The Reverend Canon J.W. Stack, 1919 - courtesy Canterbury Museum

his own interpretation on events which would then result in a lesser response from the authorities than the Maori petitioners expected. This probably added to their slowly growing sense of frustration.

However Stack did actively pursue the case for the education of Maori children. He pushed to establish a model boarding school at Tuahiwi to which children from all the Maori settlements in the South Island would be sent. The curriculum as well as covering reading, writing and arithmetic was designed to teach the boys farming methods and the girls how to housekeep and look after children. Through cajoling both the church authorities and the central government for funds for the school Stack managed to open it in 1865. Lamentably for Stack the school was not an overwhelming success. Maori parents were cautious about an establishment which took over the discipline of their children and expected them to pay for it. The school ran

for only five years until 1870 when it was destroyed by fire.

(10) Naihira, Wi and others to the Provincial Secretary, 26.6.1868. (translation James Stack)

The Pakeha had no such qualms. They were keen to have their children educated. Many schools opened in Kaiapoi in the decade 1858- 68. In 1858 the Misses Andrews had opened a school for ladies at Kaiapoi to which they hoped that pupils from all over Canterbury and neighbouring provinces would be sent.

Jane Andrews had been the governess to the children of the Superintendent of Wellington and Captain Simeon in Lyttelton. In January 1857 she had opened a school for girls in Lyttelton with her sister Fanny. Fanny, Mrs Louisa Andrews and possibly a third sister Georgiana had arrived in Lyttelton in December 1856. It is possible that Jane and Fanny Andrews saw Kaiapoi as a more central location in the growing colony, than Lyttelton and that is why they moved there. Their school,



Jane Andrews - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum



Fanny Andrews - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Langstone, was situated on Raven quay. It offered a good English education and board as well as extras of music and drawing.

The Anglican Church opened its school in Hilton Street in 1859. Its most well known master was John Matthews. He was appointed master in 1862 and remained in the job until the school was superseded by the opening of the new Kaiapoi Borough School in 1874. John Matthews had applied for the headmastership of this school but the School Committee preferred Edward Rayner a university graduate who had recently arrived from England. Many of the residents felt let down by this decision. Matthews however took over the mastership of the Kaiapoi Island North School which was later renamed Clarkville School. For many years after the closing of the Anglican school the ex-pupils held reunions which testified to the strong spirit of loyalty that John Matthews engendered in his pupils.

The Presbyterians opened their Kaiapoi school in 1860 under the mastership of Mr Gunn. It lasted only six years but it was not as short lived as the first Roman Catholic school which opened in 1867 and closed in 1868. The Wesleyans opened a school with their church in 1860. Over the first three years of its operation the opening roll doubled from twenty to forty-one. The first master was Thomas Veysey. All the church schools with the exception of the Presbyterian school catered for both boys and girls.



John Matthews - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Adult education was not neglected. In March 1864 a public meeting was held at the Pier Hotel to consider a scheme to build a Mechanics Institute with a reading room and a library. The notion had been proposed six months earlier but the plan had been delayed because of uncertainties over the site. In July Beswick wrote to the Provincial Secretary for a grant of money to pay for a section which the Mechanics Institute had nominally purchased from John MacFarlane. The Provincial Secretary thought that the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds was too expensive. MacFarlane was persuaded to accept the lower price of one hundred pounds and so building was able to be commenced. It was opened in 1866 and Matthews was appointed librarian. The books were obtained secondhand from Hookham's Library in London. The local

papers were kept in the reading room and from time to time there were complaints from the Institute about the state that the reading room was left in by those using it. The Mechanics Institute also arranged public lectures and concerts.

Kaiapoi was not isolated from the rest of New Zealand in this decade. 1860 saw the beginning of the Land Wars in Taranaki and the settlers in Kaiapoi viewed this development with some concern. In a family letter dated 25 May 1860 the Bakers told of a disturbance in the North.

"The Governor has begun war with them (the Taranaki Maori) and up to the last account there were about one hundred natives killed but only two sailors from our man-of-war were killed in one battle, but the Governor has got force enough to put them down and we are awaiting very anxiously for news from there. The natives are very peaceable in this Island and very few in number so there is no fear of them here." (11)

Despite the Bakers' confident assertion about the disposition of the South Island some Kaiapoi residents were sufficiently alarmed by the situation in the

(11) *The Baker Diary*, 86/51, Kaiapoi Museum.

North Island to embrace, with some enthusiasm, the establishment of the Volunteers in the district. The Volunteer Force was the forerunner to the national army. Each district had the option of forming its own corps of volunteers to be responsible for security in that area. The Kaiapoi district volunteers were formed in May 1860 as Number Nine Company of the Canterbury Rifle Volunteers. On 29 May Captain Scott from Headquarters in Christchurch attended a meeting at the Northern Hotel at which sixty men enrolled in the Company. By August the membership



Kaiapoi Rifle Volunteers, 1893 - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

had grown to eighty. The Volunteers were under the command of Captain John Fuller and Lieutenant A.F.N. Blakiston. In July 1861 Blakiston wrote to the Provincial Secretary asking for permission to use Reserve No 47 as a rifle range. (12) During the following year the Company had two changes of rifle range and so in April 1862 Blakiston again wrote to the Provincial Government asking for money to build a stronger, better and permanent butt for their rifle practice. (13) The range was shifted to section 320 in Beach Road in 1863. (14) The Provincial Government granted the Company three hundred pounds to prepare the ground and to build a butt (15) In spite of the number of relocations of the Company's venue in its first years of existence the Kaiapoi Company was a united body of men. Firstly there was very strong leadership from Fuller and Blakiston. Secondly the company earned a well deserved reputation for marksmanship. Each year there were a number of shooting competitions between the various companies in Canterbury and the Kaiapoi members were always in the top half of the competition. Over the years the membership of the Company waxed and waned with the perceived

(12) Blakiston to the Provincial Secretary, 5.7.186

(13) Blakiston to Provincial Secretary, 24.4.1862

(14) Fuller petition to the Provincial Secretary, February 1863.

(15) Fuller to Captain Armstrong, 30.6.1863.

danger to the community. The Volunteer movement gave many men in the Kaiapoi district valuable social and community service.

The social event of each year for the Volunteers was the ball. Balls were usually held to raise money for community projects and to commemorate Queen Victoria's birthday. The first ball held in 1860 was to raise money for the relief of the people in Taranaki. It was held in White's Kaikanui Hotel and the dancing went on until five o'clock in the morning. The Volunteers' uniforms provided a sober background to the aerial draperies of their partners and the supper prepared by Mrs White was most acceptable. On this occasion the music was supplied by The Christchurch Band. Thereafter the Kaiapoi Company had its own band which played not only for its own events but for other community occasions.

Some of the town's sporting clubs had their origins in the decade 1858 to 1868. The sport that captured the imagination of the population more than any other at

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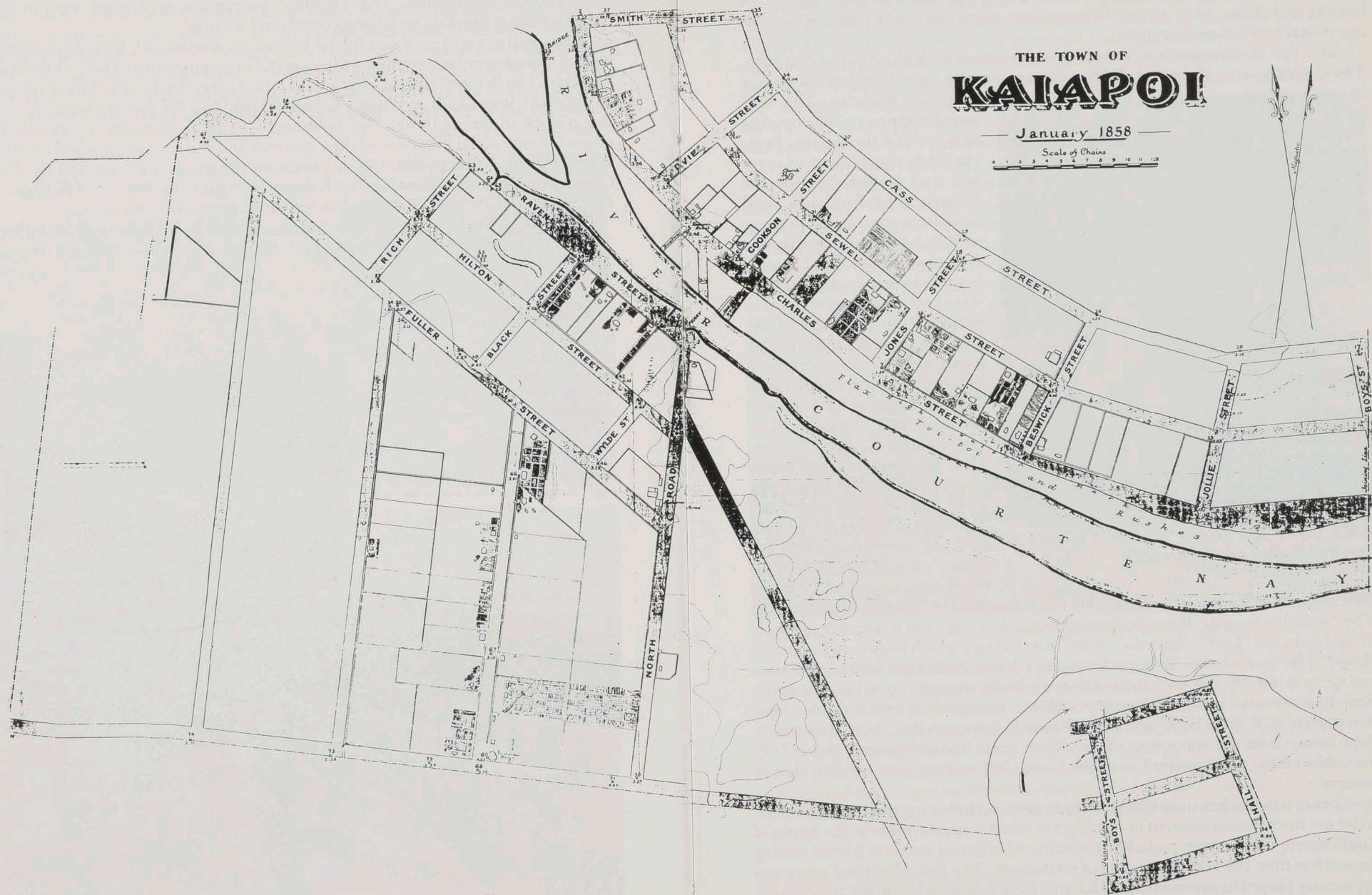
Boats getting ready to race at a regatta - looking east from swing bridge to traffic bridge, c.1890's - I. N. Eagle, Kaiapoi, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum.



Below:

Crowds watching a regatta c.1890's - I. N. Eagle, Kaiapoi - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum





this time was boating. The river, especially around the town area, was perfect for boating and there were many vantage points along the banks where spectators could watch the races in comfort.

The first boating races were held in conjunction with the rural sports days. These sports days started in 1858 and were usually held to celebrate Queen



Kaiapoi Bowlers - Back Constable Simpson, Richard Wylie
Front R.M. Wright (talented sportsman), G.H. Blackwell -
courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

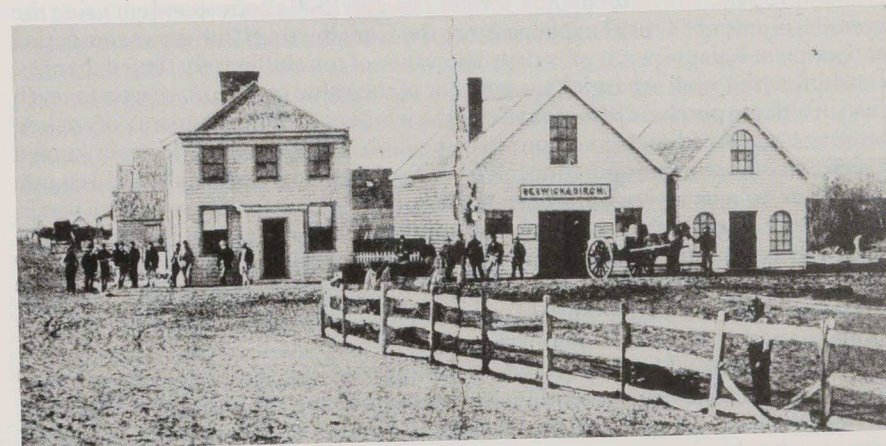
Victoria's birthday. The boat races became so well supported that by 1866 the Kaiapoi Boating Club was formed to regulate and promote the sport in Kaiapoi. The first races held were between sailing boats as well as row boats but after the formation of the club rowing became more popular. Not only was there intense competition between the members of the club but there was also, during regattas, tremendous competition between the Kaiapoi club and the various Christchurch and Lyttelton clubs. At its inception the Kaiapoi Boating Club bought two light whale boats in which to train its crews. The boats, named the "Cam" and the "Isis", were to lead indirectly to the formation of the Cure Boating Club. Shortly after the purchase of the boats the

crew of a privately owned boat, the "Ariel", challenged the Boating Club to a race. The "Ariel" won easily. It was in turn challenged by the crew of another privately owned boat, the "Cure". Again the "Ariel" won the race which was over a three mile course. The crew of the "Cure" did not give up and challenged for a second time and again it lost. By this time the whole town had got caught up in boating fever. Each boat attracted its loyal supporters and they formed their own separate clubs. There were now three boating clubs in Kaiapoi. Although the "Ariel" was clearly the superior boat, the supporters of the "Cure" were better organised and in 1873 the other clubs amalgamated with the Cure Club to form one boating club in Kaiapoi.

Cricket was another sport that attracted a devoted following among the settlers. It did not have the excitement of boating but it had a special place in the hearts of Englishmen. There were probably a number of informal matches played among the settlers from the very beginning of settlement. The first advertised game was apparently played between a team of Kaiapoi Gentlemen and team of Christchurch

Gentlemen in 1853. From this date until 1859 games were held in North Canterbury on an informal basis and they were usually played at Rangiora. In 1859 the Rangiora Cricket Club was formed and it and a team from Kaiapoi played matches against teams from clubs based in Christchurch. According to D.N. Hawkins in *Beyond the Waimakariri* Kaiapoi had a cricket club in 1861 but that it combined with the Rangiora Cricket Club in 1862.⁽¹⁶⁾ The next mention of a cricket club in Kaiapoi was a report in *The Press* of 2 October 1867 when it was stated that a club was soon to be formed. The meeting to form the club was held on 5 October but it being a Saturday, there were not many people in attendance.

One of people who did turn up must have been Robert Wright, who had arrived in Christchurch in 1852. He was a builder who settled in Kaiapoi in the first wave of settlement. Wright was obviously a talented sportsman. As a shooter with the Volunteers he was a consistent marksman who was often the top scorer in shooting matches. His score was the top one in the first big shooting match held in Canterbury in 1861. He won the silver medal in 1866 with double the score of his



Kaiapoi Bank of New Zealand Corner 1863 - E.M. Lovell-Smith Collection - courtesy Canterbury Museum

nearest rival. He was also a keen rower and was part of the winning "Ariel" crew.

The first cricket match that the newly formed club played was against the Albion Club in Christchurch on 14 January 1868. It was not an auspicious occasion for the Kaiapoi men. They lost both innings. The first at thirty to sixty and the second at twenty-one to forty. ⁽¹⁷⁾ It was not a good beginning for Wright. However he did manage to redeem himself in a later match between single men and married men when he scored ninety eight for the married side. In those days when the out field could represent a ploughed paddock a score of that magnitude was rare.

(16) Hawkins, D.N. *Beyond the Waimakariri*, p.408

(17) *Lyttelton Times*, 14.1.1868.

Cricket did not attract the same fervent following as did boating. A number of reasons for this can be advanced. Cricket by its nature requires the players and spectators to be free from other tasks for at least a day. In the early days of Pakeha settlement in Kaiapoi there were tasks that needed to be done in order to survive, for example the twice daily milking of the house cow. Boating on the other hand needed only to occupy the afternoon and even then a particular crew may only be required to race once. Spectators, too, were more likely to be attracted to an event that did not require a long time commitment.

The time factor may also be tied in with the social make up of the Kaiapoi population. There were a large number of small farmers and businessmen who relied on their families to work on the farm or in the business. They could not afford the time required for cricket away from their livelihood. Cricket may have been seen by these people as belonging to the ruling class whereas boating belonged to the people.

Another reason for the popularity of boating may be found in the fact that the crews were paid. In a letter to the *Lyttelton Times* in 1870 a correspondent using the nom-de-plume of "Truth" explained that the Cure Boating Club crews competing at regattas at Kaiapoi received a daily allowance of ten shillings for their expenses. In addition the club set aside four per cent of the value of any prizes won for each man in order to purchase testimonials for the winners. (18) The popularity of cricket, however, waned to such an extent that the club ceased to exist. It is not known exactly when it stopped operating but it is safe to assume that it only lasted a couple of seasons from its inception. The next mention of a cricket club in Kaiapoi was in 1882 when a meeting was held at Mr Burnip's hotel. The Kaiapoi United Cricket Club was formed with Mr Isaac Wilson as president, Mr R. Moore as vice-president and Mr P. Bate as the secretary/treasurer. Mr J. Hirst was elected Captain. The subscription was set at five shillings per year. Mr Hirst and Mr Bate were deputed to purchase the necessary equipment. (19)

Cricket may well have confirmed the Englishness of the settlers whereas the raw energy and the community involvement of boating confirmed their new life.

By 1865, according to *The Press* report of 23 March, Kaiapoi had undergone many noticeable improvements. Chief among these were the new Mechanics Institute building, the enlargement of the Mandeville Hotel and the building of a toll house. The toll house bell, as well as marking the hour, was used as a fire alarm. The nearly completed general store of Hebden and Kerr was situated on the North Road and it was noted by *The Press* that the store would do a slashing business if the present route to the West Coast gold fields was continued. Next to the general store was James Anderson's new blacksmith shop and next to that a wheelwright's shop was planned. These buildings were on the monotonous sandhills and according to the paper would give the area a more lively appearance. According to the report the biggest drawback to the town was the narrow dimension of the Court House. The reporter

(18) *Lyttelton Times*, 12.10.1870.

(19) *Lyttelton Times*, 2.2.1882.

mused as to whether or not the government would provide the cash to build a new Court House which had been so long promised but showed no sign of becoming a reality.

An urgent and longstanding problem soon took up the energies of the Municipal Council. As noted earlier, the Island was prone to sudden and severe flooding. Up until 1864 the Provincial Government did not seem to be inclined to spend much money on the prevention of flooding on the Island. However in 1864 the Provincial Government appointed W. T. Doyne to study the Waimakariri River and to make recommendations for its control. Doyne was a civil engineer who had worked in Tasmania before he arrived in Canterbury. The prevention works that were in place already were not effectual. They had been constructed on a piece meal basis in response to a particular instance of flooding. In most cases the embankments were neither high enough nor long enough to be an adequate defence and in a few cases they had been constructed in the wrong places. Straying cattle and tethered goats also created a problem on the embankments by trampling on them and thus weakening them.

Doyne inspected the area and reported that any method of holding the river on the north side of the Island was only a temporary thing. The present embankments did nothing more than save the crops and did not retard the river in the inroads it made into the Island. The natural tendency of the river was to establish a new course across the Island from west to east and it would do this regardless of the breastworks constructed. In Doyne's mind the real question was whether the government was duty bound to indemnify the property holders on the Island against damage to their properties by natural causes. He thought that if it was, then it might be more economical to allow the river to take its course and to pay compensation for the damage done. The settlers thought that if this approach was adopted then the Island would cease to exist and the district north to Woodend would be subject to flooding.

There were two solutions. One was to construct very high and very long breastworks along the southern banks of the North Branch. This was not considered a practical solution. The other solution was to construct a road with deep ditches on either side from the Kaikanui Creek to the Central Island Road which was the highest point on the Island. The flood waters could then flow down the ditches to the Kaikanui Creek.

During 1864-5 there were numerous freshes which left the settlers with ruined crops, stock losses and houses and farm buildings full of silt. The settlers, backed up by the Municipal Council, regularly petitioned the Provincial Government for relief. There were two dangerous localities. One was the area known as Sneyd's Corner and the other was at Mason's Corner.

Dryden Sneyd was one of the Gladstone settlers. He had selected Rural Sections 366 and 366a both of fifty acres and situated on the northwest corner of the Island where the North Branch began its turn south towards its confluence with the South Branch. In 1858 Sneyd decided to subdivide one of the fifty acre blocks into one acre sections. The sale of these began in October 1858 and by the end of 1860 more than half had been sold for prices varying between

twenty and thirty-five pounds. The subdivision was named Keel by Sneyd and although that name was to be used by some people over a number of years it was more popularly called Sneydstown. With so many people settled there the area created constant problems for the Provincial authorities and the various local bodies involved with the management of the subdivision and its immediate neighbourhood. At first it came under the control of the Rangiora and Mandeville Road Board. That Board had to liaise closely with the Kaiapoi local authorities because the encroachment of the river in that area severely affected the land to the south in the jurisdiction of the Kaiapoi Municipal Council. Earthworks constructed around the bend of the river at Sneyd's Corner merely directed the water towards Kaiapoi itself, resulting in the encroachment of the North Branch onto Adam and Raven Streets. Eventually Adam Street which ran along the southern bank of the North Branch, north from Raven Street, disappeared altogether.

The overflow of water at this point caused problems at the cemetery as well. In May of 1865 a meeting of the St Bartholomew parishioners and members of the public were informed that the Reverend Willock had interviewed John Hall, the Secretary for Public Works, a few days earlier and that he had promised that the cemetery would be protected. An engineer, Mr Moore, had been sent to inspect the state of the river adjacent to the cemetery. He found that in order to protect it at least one hundred pounds would have to be spent as well as removing the first two rows of bodies. Moore recommended that a new cemetery should be selected. The meeting was to consider that proposal. Although Moore had inspected three sites he favoured the triangular site of five acres between Mr Powrie's section and Mr Belcher's brickworks. In his opinion this was the highest and least likely parcel of land on the Island that could be subject to flooding. It was also fenced with post and rails and laid in grass. Josiah Birch expressed two objections to the site. Firstly, a small stream bisected the site which had in times past had taken the overflow of water from the river and could, in Birch's opinion, do so again. Secondly the property was very near the road. However if it was agreed that willows be planted along the banks of the stream and a row of trees alongside the road then Birch would withdraw his objections. The meeting agreed to this and to the suggestion from Joseph Beswick that some plots for denominations other than Anglicans should be set aside.

It was absolutely essential to move the cemetery as it was below the level of the river and would have always been subject to flooding. It was the second time that the river had caused the cemetery to be moved. The first time it was only shifted in from the river bank but as the river had moved to within two yards of the first row of graves, a complete relocation of the site was necessary. John Hall thought that it was imperative to shift the burial ground from Sneyd's corner in order to secure public decency. The meeting approved the disinterment and reburial of the bodies in the new cemetery. There was no money to assist in this operation and so it fell to the relatives and friends of the deceased to pay the expenses of the reinterment.

There were two serious floods in December 1865 that caused widespread damage on the Island and in particular to Sneydstown. The inhabitants held a public meeting and as a result petitioned the Provincial Government for support. The Public Works Department asked one of their engineers, Alfred Beetham, to undertake a report on the damage to the whole Island.

There were nineteen claims for damage from Island farmers for relief. In his report, issued on 9 February 1866, Beetham wrote that most of the farmers were well-to-do and would rather see the money that the government had set aside for land grants for them spent on works designed to stop floods in the future. Henry Englebrecht had already abandoned his land. John Murphy who held forty acres leasehold and Ephraim Jeffs who held ninety acres of leasehold land had had their entire properties flooded. They were both anxious to leave their properties. The other sixteen claimants considered the excellent quality of the land a sufficient reason for staying and raising another crop.

Beetham's report on Sneydstown however paints a very different picture. Here he found that the inhabitants were nearly all labourers with large families. The majority of the families were using their allotments for gardens and for making hay. In the opinion of the Sneydstown residents the prospects for the coming winter were gloomy and they were all convinced that there would be further floods.

A number of the Sneydstown claimants rented their properties. One claimant George Edmonds, and his wife and four children, had to leave their partially destroyed house. The Edmonds' wheat and potato plantings and their garden was completely destroyed. George Edmonds claimed three pounds in compensation. Patrick McCarty, who with his wife and two children rented half an acre of land which they had the right to purchase, lost a crop of potatoes. The water was two feet high in the McCarty house and they lost some of their fencing as well as half a cord of firewood. The McCarty claim was twelve pounds. Another resident, William Dodson, claimed fifty pounds. He had a wife and six children and owned the two acres they lived on. The Dodson house was damaged and one acre of grass seed was destroyed. Half an acre of potatoes and carrots was also lost as was half an acre of garden. In addition the Dodson's posts and rails, their firewood and their fowls were all carried away by the flood waters.

In relative terms, these compensation claims represented the large outlay that the inhabitants of Sneydstown had spent on establishing themselves in the subdivision. The heartbreak that must have accompanied this disaster would have contributed to the gloomy atmosphere that Beetham noted in his report. Before Beetham's report was completed the Provincial Government had set aside two thousand acres of good agricultural land for the relief of the sufferers of the floods but in the majority of cases, like the farmers, the residents wanted to stay in Sneydstown. They preferred to have protection works installed rather than shift from their homes.

The plan to construct a drain across the Island was seen as the best way of relieving the pressure on the banks at Sneyd's corner. The fresh in December 1865 resulted in cuttings having to be made from Peraki and Charles Streets in order to drain the water back to the river. Men working on this job were well

paid at one shilling and sixpence an hour as they had to work in water. The Municipal Council was required to apply to the Provincial Government for a grant to carry out repairs after the flood, as all its rating income for the year had been allocated to other contracts. In May 1866 the residents of Sneydstown again petitioned the Provincial Government for favourable consideration for relief from the devastation caused by the floods. The Municipal Council did not have the resources to initiate any programmes to cope with either the prevention of flooding or the clean-up after a flood had occurred. All it could do was to press the case for special consideration for its residents to the Provincial Government.

The other dangerous location for flood damage was at Mason's corner. This did not affect so many people but the damage resulted in profound changes to the landscape. Mason's corner was situated on the south western end of the Island at the point where the North Branch split away from the South Branch. It was named after Richard Mason who had settled there in the early 1850's. The North Branch appeared to be cutting a new bed towards the Kaikanui Creek and in so doing was carrying away Mason's land. One of the Provincial engineers, George Aiken, reported on the situation in August 1864. He found that the North Branch was cutting a new channel which took the water back to the South Branch. At the time of the report there were two embankments at Mason's bend. The inner one was completely washed away and the outer one was in danger of collapse. If it did collapse, in Aiken's opinion, much valuable land would be lost. Many people observed that Mason himself did very little to help the situation. He allowed his cattle to graze on the embankment thus weakening it. He was also reluctant to contribute to any saving measures.

Throughout 1864 there were a number of inspections of the area and all of the reports written after these inspections were pessimistic as to the future of Mason's farm and that of his neighbour, Englebrecht. In December of that year at a public meeting chaired by Joseph Beswick, the owners and occupiers of land on the Island discussed the possibility of constructing a drain across the Island. The meeting also considered the possibility of having the Rangiora and Mandeville Road Board levy a rate to keep the banks of the river in repair.

For all the surveys, public meetings and discussions, the building of embankments and the construction of facines, the river itself ultimately gave the answer. That answer demonstrated that the Pakeha settlers had not yet understood the dynamics of one of Canterbury's most powerful rivers.

The biggest and most devastating flood in North Canterbury occurred in February 1868. On 4 February the Mandeville plain area became an immense lake with the combination of the catchment waters of the Ashley and Waimakariri Rivers. The residents of Kaiapoi were completely unprepared for this monstrous flood. Many parts of the town were under five to six feet of water. There was enormous loss of property and stock. Communication between the two sections of Kaiapoi was cut as part of the bridge was swept away by the water. When the water subsided the wreckage of the town was revealed.

The streets had turned into shingle beds. Many of the buildings were uninhabitable. Trees and crops had been washed away and the corpses of many animals were lying about.

One of the heroes of the flood was Sergeant Hurse. The Municipal Council wrote to him after the crisis was over to thank him and the men under his command for the tireless work they did to save life and property. The toll collector, William Burnip was another person who earned the thanks of the community. He used the Kaiapoi Boating Club's skiffs to ferry people across the river until a punt could be found.

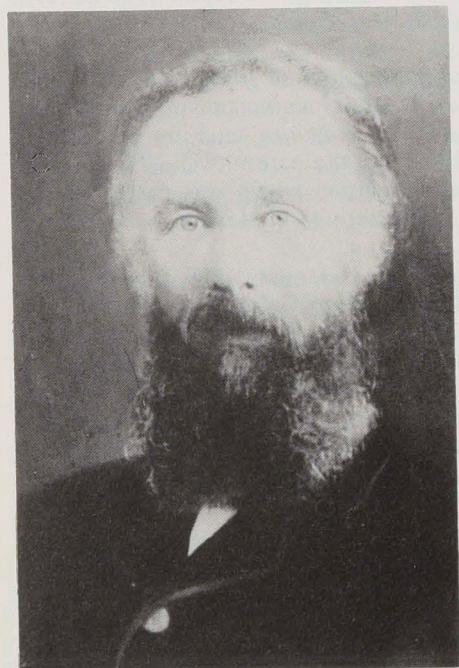
The 1868 flood which meant almost the complete rebuilding of the town also coincided with the change over in local administration from the Municipal Council to a Borough Council. In the previous year the central government had passed the Municipal Corporations Act. The Act allowed local communities to petition the central government to be constituted a borough. The Kaiapoi ratepayers were of the opinion that borough status would be advantageous to the welfare of the town. Under the Act boroughs were permitted to raise their own loans. In the case of Kaiapoi that would allow the townfolk to make their own decisions about flood control measures and any other works that were needed to improve the living conditions in the town.

In early December 1867 a committee was formed from members of the Municipal Council to draw up a petition to go to the Governor praying that the town be declared a borough under the terms of the Corporations Act. Fifty signatures of inhabitant householders were required to make the petition valid. These must have been gathered quite quickly as a resolution which was passed by the Municipal Council at its 23 December 1867 meeting stated that as soon as it was ready the petition would be sent to the Governor.

Just under a month later at its meeting of 21 January 1868, the Municipal Council acknowledged the receipt of a letter from the Colonial Secretary informing the Council that the petition had been received. Under the terms of the Corporations Act the Municipal Council had to wait at least two months from the publication of the petition before the Borough could be declared in order to allow any person to circulate a counter petition. The Municipal Council received a letter from the Colonial Secretary at the end of March informing it that the petition would be considered on 4 May 1868.

From this time on there was a great deal of instability on the Municipal Council. This may have occurred as various members of the Council manoeuvred themselves into positions where they might have a better chance of being elected on to the first Borough Council. At the 14 April 1868 meeting the clerk had only just begun reading the minutes of the previous meeting when Messrs Kerr and Hebden left. This meant that the meeting had no quorum and so had to be adjourned. At the next meeting all the members of the Council, except J.C. Porter, were present. A letter of resignation was read from Porter and Matthew Hall was voted into the chair. It was resolved that Hall retain the chairmanship until the new Corporation Act came into effect. At the next meeting on 13 May it was the turn of Dr Dudley to resign. The 26 May meeting could not proceed as

there was no quorum probably due to the fact that both George Hewlings and Alfred Dobbs had resigned. A special meeting was held on 29 May to arrange a time for an election to fill the vacancies caused by the resignations. That meeting was, by coincidence, held the day after Governor George Bowen had declared Kaiapoi to be a Borough. The declaration was gazetted on 2 June. The Municipal Council tried to hold a meeting on 10 June but there was no quorum. The next day a so-called Town Council met to elect a Mayor. This must have been a device to get around the fact that the Municipal Council had ceased to exist and could not, therefore, elect the new Borough Council. Matthew Hall, Richard Woodford, Edward Kerr, Charles Oram, and John Hebden seemed to have constituted themselves as the Town Council but there was dissent even among this small group. The meeting opened with Woodford protesting against the presence of Hebden. Hebden, was according to Woodford, not qualified to be at the meeting. Nevertheless Kerr and Hebden proposed and seconded Hall to the mayoral position. They said that Hall's position on the Municipal Council as the highest polling candidate at the last



Matthew Hall - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

election qualified him as the best mayoral candidate. Woodford and Oram countered this by proposing Dr Dudley who was not present at the meeting. Hall then spoke against the past policies of Dr Dudley. The vote was taken and resulted in Hall being elected by three votes to two. Hebden then resigned lending credence to the fact that Woodford's objection was valid.

Hall, a cooper by occupation, had arrived in Canterbury in 1860 with his wife. He belonged to the Wesleyan church and was a member of the first Board of Trustees for the Kaiapoi church. He was an accomplished lay preacher and was appointed to the circuit in 1868.

Although it was established in controversial circumstances, Hall's mayoralty did not seem to unduly upset the residents. Not many people attended the election meeting and these people must have been satisfied with Hall's election. There was a further election held on 1 July at which William Thomas Newnham was elected councillor in place of Hebden. Yet another election was held on 8 July to replace Woodford. Newnham's business partner, William Buddle was elected.

The first full meeting of the Borough Council took place on that same date. Charles Dudley, the Municipal Clerk, was retained in his job until September and the Borough Council adopted the seal of the Municipal Council. The Council also resolved to have the Bank of New Zealand as its official bank.

No sooner had the infant council sorted out its personnel problems than it was confronted in July 1868 with a writ issued against it by Joseph Beswick. Beswick claimed that the reconstruction of the swing bridge after the February flood had damaged his business. The flood had washed away ninety feet of the northern end of the bridge and the force of the water had pushed the piles out of alignment. When the contractor, John Bowmaker, closed the gap the bridge had a distinct curve. It was feared that if the bridge was opened it would not be able to be closed again. In making the bridge a fixed structure Bowmaker had effectively cut off the upstream wharves from their source of business, as ships could no longer be navigated past the bridge. The Council appointed Dr Foster as its solicitor but nothing more was done until September after the first annual Borough elections. Beswick sent a letter to the new Council asking if it would give permission to Captain McClelland of the "*Gazelle*" to force the bridge open by ramming it with the "*Gazelle's*" stern. When the Council did not answer, the "*Gazelle*" berthed at Birch's wharf and began unloading there. Beswick now felt he had a strong enough case to take to court.

The case was heard in March 1869. The Council's evidence centred around the fact that the Mayor had said that Beswick could open the bridge at his own risk and that Beswick had declined to do so. The jury found in favour of Beswick and awarded him one hundred and seventy-five pounds in damages.

The Council decided to appeal the court's decision which elicited a fresh protest from the Reverend Willock and fifty-six others. They felt that the Council should settle with Beswick and get on with the job of providing a new bridge. After some time, during which the Council seemed to be determined to pursue the matter, it finally paid the damages to Beswick.

Throughout the ten years from 1858 to 1868 the town was sustained by its rich hinterland. The up-country stations provided wool which was shipped out from Kaiapoi on the multitude of boats that plied the river as was the wheat from the farms on the Island. The town itself changed from being administered by the Provincial authorities to the limited self government of the Road Board and subsequently the Municipal Council to the autonomous Borough Council. There were many birth pangs but throughout, the early character of Kaiapoi remained. It was a town acutely aware of its own identity in the hard working Wesleyan tradition.

Chapter Five:

YEARS OF CONSOLIDATION.

The early years of the Borough Council constituted a period when Kaiapoi began to consolidate on its pioneer beginnings. Richard Woodford's decision to build a flour mill encouraged at least two others to undertake similar constructions in the region. Donald Coutts built a mill on the Island and Isaac Wilson built his at Ohoka.

Coutts had bought land bordering on the South Branch through which the Kaikanui Creek flowed. This stream provided the power for his mill which was capable of both threshing and grinding. The land was situated to the south-east of the land owned by Mason and Englebrecht. Both of these properties had suffered serious encroachment by the North Branch. One of the solutions proposed to resolve this problem in the middle sixties was to cut a drain across the Island to draw the water into the Kaikanui Creek just above the mill site. Coutts objected to the plan which withheld water, and hence power, from his mill. His assertion made the Provincial Government reluctant to act because it did not have the money to construct the drain and to pay compensation to him. By 1867, however, it was obvious that the drain would have to be cut, as the shingling up of the North Branch was diverting water naturally in that direction. As foreseen, the construction of the drain caused a larger volume of water to come down the Kaikanui Creek. This diversion of water eventually cut off Coutts' land from the rest of the Island and formed what came to be known as Coutts Island. That deviation of water, both natural and man directed, meant the end of the economic life of the mill. In its day it was ideally situated to accept the harvest from the surrounding farms on the southern part of the Island. Its location complemented the positions of Woodford's and Wilson's mills.

Of the three mills, Wilson's is the one which is most commonly remembered. Isaac Wilson arrived in Lyttelton on the "*Northfleet*" in January 1854 with his parents, Thomas and Jane, his sisters, Mary and Jane and his brothers, James and Edward. The family joined the oldest son, Thomas, who had arrived on the "*Samarang*" in 1852. Isaac Wilson, the youngest of seven children, was born 7 August 1848 at High Wray Farm, Grasmere. The family settled on a farm at St

Albans Town. As was common in that period, their home was a crudely constructed slab hut. Wilson and his brothers, Thomas and Edward, began their working life cutting timber in the Papanui Bush. When most of the timber in that locality had been felled, the Wilson brothers moved to the Maori Bush at Kaiapoi. It was reported that they cut many thousands of feet of logs into scantling and timber. They punted their timber down the Cam and the North Branch of the Waimakariri to the South Branch from where it was taken by road to Christchurch. The great 1859 fire destroyed their livelihood and they had to look for other means of support. Isaac Wilson turned his attention to running a passenger service from Christchurch to Kaiapoi in partnership with Charles Fairweather.

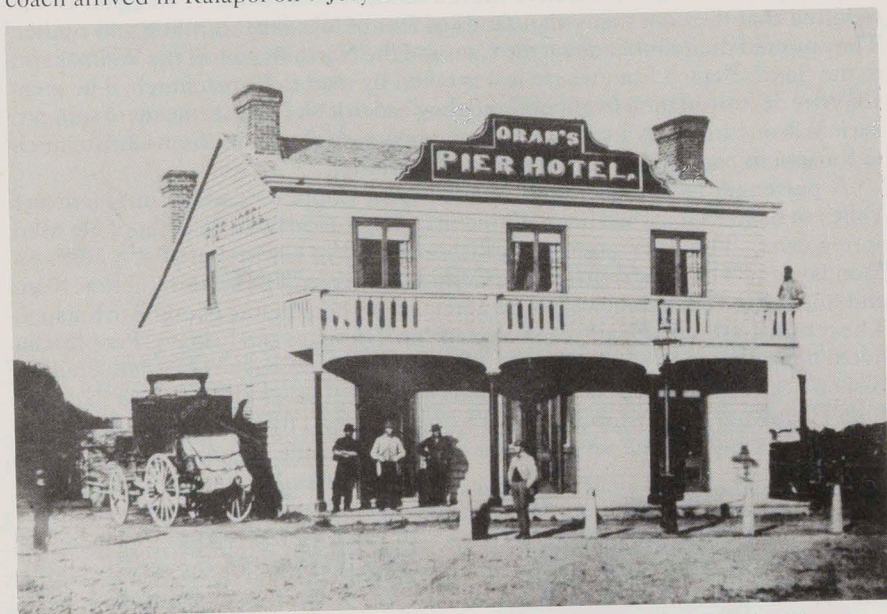
A passenger and small freight service from Coppell's cottage in Heathcote Valley to Baxter's ferry had been started in October 1856 by C.W. Bishop. He used spring carts. The run started from Bishop's store in Christchurch at 8.30am on Mondays and Thursdays and went to Coppell's cottage. The cart left there at 10am and stopped in Christchurch again for about half an hour before going on to Kaiapoi. The return journey to Heathcote was made on Tuesdays and Fridays. People who lived along the route were able to order groceries and have them delivered by Bishop's cart. The fares, exclusive of tolls were set at seven shillings and sixpence from Heathcote and five shillings from Christchurch. Bishop's service was short lived and its end left the way open for others to institute a similar business.

Fairweather started a carting business in partnership with William Belcher in 1859. After Belcher had been drowned in the wreck of the "*Crest*", his son, Richard, had come into the business to look after the horses. In 1862 Fairweather expanded the business by taking on the passenger service with Wilson. The first vehicle used was an Australian car with an outrigger. This two-wheeled conveyance was pulled by one horse between shafts. It was not a big enough vehicle to be economical and shortly after it began, the partnership bought a three horse coach. The service ran three return trips to Kaiapoi from Christchurch and one return trip to Leithfield daily. The partnership earned a reputation for the distinctive way it signalled the departure of the coach. Wilson exercised his musical talents by blowing a bugle. After two years of hard work the partnership was dissolved in 1864. The district was



Isaac Wilson, E. Wheeler & Son, Christchurch, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

not left without a passenger service. Charles Oram of the Pier Hotel had persuaded the proprietors of the Cobb and Company coaches, Leander and Charles Cole, to run a service from Christchurch to his hotel. The first six horse Cobb and Company coach arrived in Kaiapoi on 9 July 1864.



Cobb and Company's Leithfield coach at Oram's Pier Hotel, Kaiapoi 1864 - courtesy Canterbury Museum

The following year Wilson purchased a steam threshing machine and began a mobile threshing business around Kaiapoi. Towards the end of 1866, with the capital accumulated from his business ventures, Wilson purchased land on the Island and had began farming. In 1872 Wilson began yet another business by opening a flour and flax mill at Ohoka. It was situated not far from the site of Woodford's first mill and like Woodford's second mill, was a large three-storied building. It was not unheard of in those days to have dual purpose mills. The mill machinery would be used for stripping flax during the day and for grinding flour at night. Wilson was a considerable purchaser of wheat, some of which he sent to the English market. This experience in the running of a mill was to be of great benefit when he became involved in the setting up of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill. Wilson involved himself extensively in his community. He used his musical talents in what he probably regarded as a more constructive way, by playing the organ at the Methodist church in Kaiapoi for the first twenty years of its existence. He also supported both the Kaiapoi and Woodend Methodist churches financially. His church association naturally involved Wilson in the temperance movement. In turn, his belief in temperance principles led him to seek public office. Wilson was the first chairman of the Eyreton Licensing Committee which was responsible for

the first hotel closure in the district. He was also on the Kaiapoi Licensing Committee when four hotels were closed.

At the same time Wilson began serving on the Rangiora and Mandeville Road Board. The Rangiora and Mandeville Road Board was formed in 1864 and had as one of its primary concerns, during the sixties, the protection of the Island from flooding. In 1870 a division of the Rangiora and Mandeville Road Board led to the formation of the Eyreton Road Board of which Wilson became a member. The Eyreton Board was concerned at first with the extension of the railway into the area. Once this undertaking had been accomplished the Road Board turned its attention to providing drainage for the Eyreton district. Wilson had a vital interest in the three projects that the two Boards espoused. The protection of the Island from flooding was critical to his milling business as most of his suppliers farmed there. The railway extension was also crucial to his milling business. A siding was built from the branch line to his mill and it is through it that his name is commemorated. Wilson's Siding is still a landmark in the Eyre district. Drainage of the area instigated by the Eyreton Road Board extended the potential of the land for growing grain crops which again helped expand Wilson's milling interests.

Together Woodford's, Wilson's and Coutts' mills gave the Kaiapoi area a distinctive identity. The town was in the centre of an expanding grain growing and milling locality.



Mill at Wilson's Siding Kaiapoi. Verrall, Rangiora, photographer, Historic Places Trust Collection - courtesy Canterbury Museum

At the same time as the millers were working to expand their personal economic bases the new Borough Council was struggling with the foundation of a modern town. The first meetings of the Borough Council were concerned with the establishment of its own authority. Its attention was initially fully captured

by Beswick's action for damages. When that matter had been dealt with the Council was able to turn its attention to the concerns of the wider community especially that of fire prevention.

Up until this time the town had to rely on its own neighbourliness to cope with the ever-present hazard of fire. The bell installed on the toll keeper's house was the alarm to alert the townsfolk to a fire. In the early days of settlement fires, although devastating to the individuals whose properties burnt down, were not a threat to the town as a whole. There was plenty of space between the buildings making it relatively easy to confine the fire to a single building.

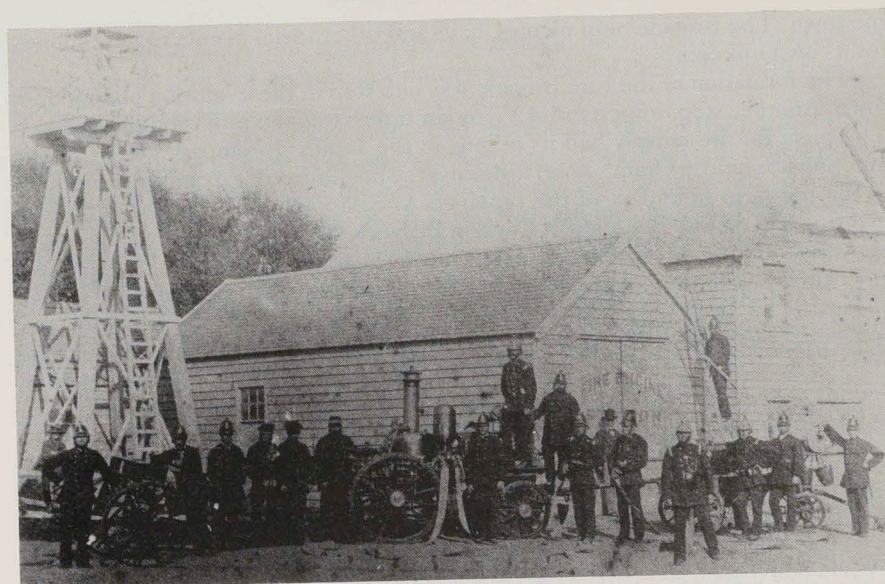
Kaiapoi had always been conscious of fire. One of the very early requirements of the Provincial Government was that all houses with thatched roofs in Kaiapoi were to have such roofs replaced by a less flammable material. However it was not until the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act in 1867 that local authorities were bound to prevent fire in their districts. In that year the Municipal Council decided to purchase twenty five leather buckets, two light ladders and a rope in readiness for a fire emergency. There was no thought, at that stage, to have a group of men trained to fight fires.

After the establishment of the Borough Council, the councillors became more aware of their obligations under the Municipal Corporations Act to promote the prevention of fire. The first step towards fulfilling those obligations was taken by the Council in January 1869. It established a sub-committee to draw up the regulations for the prevention of fire in the Borough. The committee was headed by the Mayor, J.C.Porter, with the other members being Councillors Kerr and Birch. The establishment of the Fire Prevention Committee was followed in February by the Kaiapoi Borough Council writing to a number of insurance companies to ask them to subscribe to the purchase of a fire engine. The letters did not produce any support from the companies, probably because the Borough Council did not outline any plans for the formation of a brigade or even its intention to appoint a Fire Inspector.

The Borough Council initiated another approach to the insurance companies for help to purchase a fire engine and other necessary equipment at the beginning of 1870. This time it assured the companies that it intended to appoint a Fire Inspector as soon as possible.

The Fire Prevention Committee's next task was to secure a site for the fire station. It proposed that the station be built on the land reserved by the Council for a ferry on the north side of the river. This was the location of most of the commercial and private development of Kaiapoi at that time and so it was the ideal site for the fire station.

Having secured a site for the station the Council then set about recruiting suitable men to form the Brigade. By early March 1870 a number of men had already volunteered to serve in the Brigade. At this point the Mayor called a meeting of those already enrolled in the Brigade and those who were willing to serve but had not signed up. The men were requested to sign a declaration that they would remain in the Brigade for the following twelve months. Secondly, and more importantly, for the success of the Brigade, the men were asked



Fire Brigade, buildings and equipment 1874 - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

to recommend a Fire Inspector. The man that received their endorsement was Robert Marshall Wright, a local carpenter and sporting hero. By the middle of March, Wright was able to submit a list of men who would to serve in the Volunteer Brigade and he requested that the first meeting of the Brigade be held in the Council Chambers on 18 March.

The next step was the calling of tenders for the erection of the fire station. When tenders closed at the end of March there were three tenderers: Fred Pearce, at thirty pounds three shillings and Smith and Wright, and R.Woodford, both with tenders of twenty eight pounds and ten shillings. Smith and Wright won the tender on a ballot. This was particularly apposite as the firm was jointly owned by R.W.Smith and Robert Wright.

In early April the Town Clerk sent notice of Wright's appointment as Chief Fire Inspector to the Provincial Government. This was confirmed a couple of days later by the Mayor. Thus, in every possible way, Robert Marshall Wright was the founding father of the Kaiapoi Fire Brigade. His sporting achievements, no doubt, gave him the necessary mana to guide the Brigade through its early phase. A manual fire engine was purchased from the Christchurch City Council and arrived in Kaiapoi in April 1870. By June, Wright was submitting designs for the Brigade's uniform, the tenders for which were called in July. In March 1871 the Brigade received permission to purchase helmets at a cost not exceeding fifteen pounds out of the next appropriation of rates. Thus within a year the Brigade was formed and kitted out, drilled and ready to fight fires. The Brigade, like the Volunteers before it, formed a distinct social grouping in

the town. The Brigade held picnics, balls and other social events to raise money for its own upkeep.

The formation of the Fire Brigade was one step in the evolution of a modern town. Another step, important in Victorian times, was the provision of a railway. The push for the railway had its origins in the 1860's. In January 1864 a public meeting was held at Oram's hotel to discuss the possibility of extending the railway to the northern boundary of the province. W.S. Moorehouse was present at the meeting and on the invitation of Captain Beswick was asked to assume the chair. He was evidently uncomfortable in the role as he explained that he did not have any firm views on the matter of extending the railway north, although he was an enthusiast for the railway system. He added that he could not pledge himself to any particular course for the extension of the railway. When Captain Beswick spoke, he told the meeting that imports to Canterbury were already running at one million pounds a year and that as railways saved at least ten per cent of the cost of conveyance, it was worthwhile to consider the proposal. Beswick went further and said that he thought that men of capital would be willing to invest in such a scheme if the government could guarantee a return of at least six per cent on their investment. They would also be willing, according to Beswick, to contribute their time and labour to a railway project. Dr Dudley then took the floor and spoke to the second resolution of the meeting which called upon the government to find out how much traffic currently used the North Road. Dudley had received some useful information from Alexander Weir who had kept records at the Kaiapoi bridge for two particular months, one of which was in mid-summer and the other, in mid-winter. From this survey Dudley estimated that there were ninety thousand foot passengers a year, approximately one thousand bullocks and a greater number of sheep. The dray and carriage traffic was also substantial and although an actual number was not given in the report, the participants at the meeting were surprised at the great quantity.

Robert Rickman, who represented the Mandeville electorate in the Provincial Council from 1862-64, said that although he approved of the object of the meeting he could not pledge himself to any particular course in the Council. He added that he thought that Dr Dudley's estimates for the export of grain were not as high as they could be. As an exporter himself, he was sure that he could make a larger profit if there was a railway to transport the produce to the market. He felt that this would mean a lesser freight cost to his business than he was then levied.

Later on in that same year the Canterbury Railway and Bridge Commission released its findings on the best routes for the northern railway. There was no argument on the route from Christchurch to Kaiapoi but the five man commission was split on the route it should take once it left Kaiapoi. R.J.S. Harman, J. Wylde, and E. Wright favoured a route running northwest from the present site of the station in Kaiapoi towards Rangiora and then, at the halfway point between the two towns, proceeding north, crossing the Ashley River at Waikuku. This route would cross the South Branch near the site of Jackson's ferry and the North Branch near Jeff's Ford. It would be built around the western edge of the Rangiora swamp. E. Dobson and E. Richardson, supported by the chief surveyor, T. Cass, favoured

the coastal route north from Kaiapoi. In this scenario the station in Kaiapoi was to be sited on Boys Street, and the line north was to parallel the Main North Road to Woodend and Waikuku.

The Provincial Government authorised the construction of the northern line when it passed the Canterbury Great Northern Act in 1864. It favoured the western route and it was thought that the northern line and the southern line to Timaru would be constructed simultaneously. It was with astonishment that the northern settlers learnt that when work began on the southern line it did not begin concurrently on the northern line.

One of the problems with the Provincial Government's public works programme was the continual need to raise money to be able to proceed. It was therefore, surprising, that for the Great Northern Line the government chose to lay the more expensive broad gauge even although the narrow gauge had been chosen for the railway line to the south. As with many enterprises the words describing what was proposed were very easily uttered; the work that had to be done to put these words into reality was very difficult indeed. Throughout North Canterbury the perceived need for a railway network in the area was known to everyone except perhaps the merchants in Kaiapoi. These men saw that with a railway, the demand for the port would fall away. Indeed it was pointed out at that first meeting in 1864 that the grain farmers' profits would rise when the freight costs were lowered with the introduction of the railway. This would explain why, among all the North Canterbury communities, the Kaiapoi people did not hold numerous meetings lamenting the fact that the railway had not been started during the seven years between the passing of the legislation and the actual start of construction.

Apart from the perennial lack of money there seemed to be a philosophical argument as to the best way to use the railway system to benefit firstly the province and secondly the whole colony. *The Press* editorial of 16 March 1868 used the example of the United States to explain why the railway system was needed and how it should be implemented to make the best use of the available land and people resources. The paper noted that the United States had no problems attracting a large flow of migrants to its shores. To disperse them throughout the country, the government used the railway system to open up what was termed waste lands. The first sign of settlement in much of the land was the railway and later, towns and villages developed along the side of the track. *The Press* argued that if more immigrants were to be attracted to New Zealand then railways should be built into the waste lands to encourage settlement in the more remote areas of the country.

Not surprisingly many correspondents, especially from the northern district, saw in this thesis the perfect excuse for the Provincial Government to do nothing. North Canterbury was not as vast as the states and territories of the United States and so there was no real need for a railway system to disperse the hoped for immigrants. A letter appearing in *The Press* in March 1869 submitted by E.J. Wakefield, summed up most of the arguments. Wakefield wrote that although there was a substantial economy in the north a railway line was not going to improve it unless mines were discovered and these in turn attracted a bigger population. He

stated that the ports at Saltwater Creek and Kaiapoi had sufficient capacity to handle the exports from and the imports to the north. (1)

By the following September, while not conceding that the main part of the thesis may not have been applicable to Canterbury, *The Press* was still advocating a thorough examination of the reasons for constructing a railway given the limited resources of the government. It suggested that the north might be better served if the terminus for that region was at Kaiapoi and all goods be shipped from there to their ultimate destinations. It also asked the very practical question of how the railway was going to be financed and built. The paper asked whether the project was to be undertaken by contract as planned or whether perhaps a capitalist could be induced to invest in such a venture. In any case *The Press* concluded

“— the ability of the province to carry on any large undertaking of this kind without starving itself by devoting all its available funds to a work not immediately reproductive — must receive much fuller consideration than has yet been given to them (the questions) before any satisfactory conclusion can be arrived at.” (2)

In those seven years the various local authorities that had an interest in Kaiapoi only rarely concerned themselves with the railway. In June 1870 the Borough Council formed a committee to ascertain the route of the proposed northern railway through Kaiapoi. There is no record of a report from this committee. The reason for this can probably be laid at the door of provincial vacillation. Part of the explanation for the long delay in commencing the line was indecision on the exact route the railway was to take. In addition to the routes that the Railway and Bridge Commission had come up with, there was a plan to take the line to the west so that it only had to cross the Waimakariri once thus cutting down the expense of construction. One correspondent wrote that if the line was to pass to the west of Kaiapoi then the produce and passenger traffic from Kaiapoi, Woodend and Saltwater Creek would continue to use the port at Kaiapoi or the Main North Road. The correspondent calculated that the loss would not be made up by the cheapness of the land in the west, as land in Kaiapoi itself was extremely cheap. He went on to add that the grain stores at Kaiapoi would be rendered useless if such a scheme went ahead. He then asked that if the worst came and the railway was constructed on the western route, would the government then build a new road to the north when the Waimakariri claimed the Main North Road as a channel, as it appeared to be doing at Coutts' mill-race. (3) Such questions indicated the wide-spread concern of local residents about the rail-link.

In September 1870 the Railways Act authorized the building of the line from Addington to Rangiora. The Act adopted the five foot three inch gauge. Unfortunately this was not the end of the controversy over the direction of the line. In October the Provincial Council member for Oxford, Mr Melville Walker, brought

(1) *The Press*, 11.3.1869. p.2.

(2) *The Press*, 29.9.1869, p.2.

(3) *The Press*, 26.10. 1869. p.3.

a motion before the Council asking that the construction of the northern line begin at Kaiapoi and go on to Rangiora. His main reason for this unusual request was that he believed that the freight on a ton of goods from Kaiapoi to Lyttelton would be ten shillings less if despatched by sea. He also believed that not even a half of the produce of the northern area would go by rail even if it was carried for nothing. This would make the line from Kaiapoi to Christchurch a liability rather than an asset. Although many of the northern Members were sympathetic to this view they could not, as Beswick suggested, vote against a measure already passed by the Council. The motion was lost. (4)

The railway, after all these birth pangs, began to push steadily towards Kaiapoi from that date onwards. By February 1871 enough of the line had been completed to let the contracts for the next portion of the line between Kaiapoi and Rangiora. The engineer who oversaw the construction of the northern portion of the railway was Edward George Wright. Wright had arrived in New Zealand in 1857 and had undertaken a number of engineering tasks in the North Island including the construction of the Pencarrow lighthouse. His first engineering assignment in Canterbury was the building of the bridge which, over time, replaced White's bridge in the communications network. It was built in 1863 downstream of White's bridge, connecting High and Cookson Streets which together make up the Williams Street of the present day.

The longest and most costly part of the railway line between Addington and Kaiapoi was the bridge over the Waimakariri River. It needed both thorough planning and careful engineering to take into account the terrible force of the river in high flood. The bridge was designed by the Provincial Chief Engineer, George Thornton, and built by William Stocks of Dunedin. The work started in June 1871 from the northern bank. The iron girders of the superstructure rested on eighty piles of Australian iron-bark each of which was fifteen inches in diameter. The piles were further strengthened by having an iron shoe of twenty eight pounds. The bridge was six hundred and twenty seven feet long and cost one thousand, seven hundred and ninety-nine pounds.

The celebrations to mark the opening of the twelve mile line between Christchurch and Kaiapoi took place on a cold, dull Monday, 29 April 1872. The train carrying the official party left Christchurch station at twelve thirty. The party consisted of the Superintendent, William Rolleston, the Minister for the Middle Island, William Reeves, a member of the Colonial Government, Edward Stafford, members of the Executive Council, the Provincial Council, the Mayors of Christchurch and Kaiapoi, the Town Clerk and Councillors of Christchurch, his Honour the Judge and Resident Magistrate, Mr Gresson, the Public Auditor and the engineers. After a short pause at Papanui, during which an address was read to Rolleston, the train arrived at Kaiapoi just after one o'clock. At the station the Mayor of Kaiapoi, Edward Kerr, made a brief speech of welcome. Then the one hundred guests went to the Mechanics Institute Building for a celebratory dejeuner. There were numerous toasts in honour of all of the guests and others

(4) *The Press*, 12.10. 1869. pp.2-3.

connected with the building and financing of the line. The tone throughout the proceedings was one of self satisfied congratulation and this contrasted with the low-key approach which the Kaiapoi Borough Council took to the opening.

The Council was annoyed that the Provincial Government had taken over the arrangements for the celebrations. The Council had declared a half holiday but few of the shopkeepers took the trouble to close their doors. There were also very few decorations in the streets and those people who did manage to go to the station to greet the train could not be bothered to cheer on its arrival. The cold reception was commented on in the report of the occasion by *The Press*, as was, the rather undignified scramble of Mayor Kerr to alight from the train and to get to his place on the platform, in time, to greet the Superintendent and other important guests. A letter written to *The Press* summed up the general feeling of discontent in Kaiapoi over the arrangements.

“—the Town Council had, I believe, prepared a programme for filling in a half holiday, having gone as far as to issue invitations to visitors from Christchurch. But the Provincial Government, meantime, had decided that they would give a dejeuner to which they invited the Town Council and a selected unimportant few of the townspeople to be present. The Council, whether through fear of causing any unpleasantness or not, I cannot say, allowed their programme to lapse expecting that the Provincial Government intended to carry out the proceedings on a grander scale. Instead of doing so, however, we find them taking a holiday, selecting a few people, making the journey over the line, faring sumptuously at the Institute, making bombastic highfalutin’ speeches, and shaking the dust of their feet, returning by the way they came, in a haughty domineering manner.”

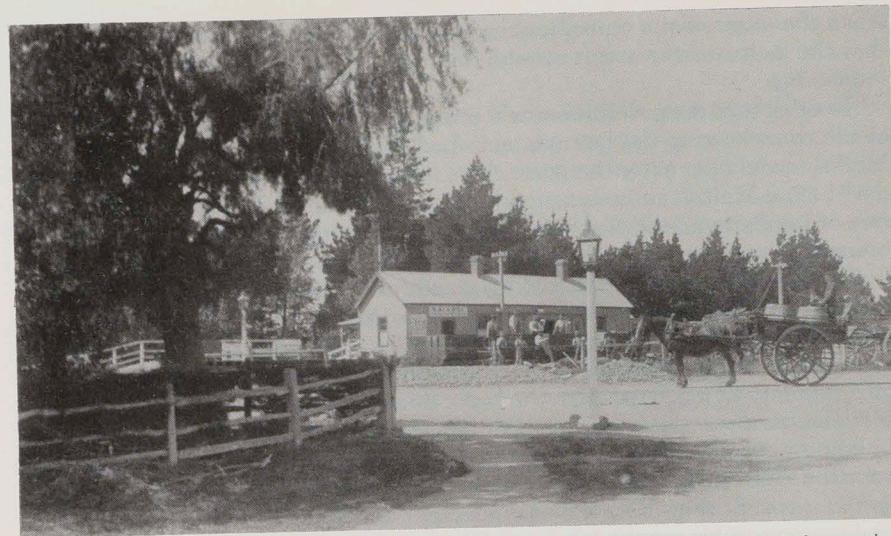
The writer went on to suggest that the ladies should have been thought of and perhaps a marquee could have been erected on the vacant railway ground so that the townsfolk could have

“— feasted and met together, and felt better for each others’ company”

He concluded by stating that Kaiapoi felt snubbed. (5) On the day there was probably every justification for this feeling but it must be remembered that throughout the struggle by the northern community to have the railway built, the Kaiapoi residents took very little interest or part in the discussions and arguments.

The station building was constructed by Smith and Wright. Robert Wright thus had a hand in building another of the town’s public buildings. The station had not been completed for the official opening. The state of the station could have added to the sense of disappointment that the citizens had over the celebrations.

(5) *The Press*, 2.5.1872. p.3.



The first railway station, photographed from the Fuller Street corner, 1900, I.N. Eagle, Kaiapoi photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

The station was fifty feet long and fifteen feet wide with a seven foot verandah on its eastern side. The booking office and the gentlemen’s waiting room was on the right of the building. The ladies’ waiting room and the luggage and goods department were on the left hand side. The platform was one hundred feet long and ten feet wide. It was, according to the reports, the equal of any station on the line. (6)

If the opening of the line from Christchurch to Kaiapoi caused the citizens of Kaiapoi to feel snubbed then there was one citizen who did not allow the authorities to get away with trampling on his rights. When the line was being constructed to Rangiora the embankment followed the line of Peraki Street and in so doing blocked the access to Joseph Keetley’s shoeing shed. Keetley’s section was bounded by Fuller and Peraki Streets. He had arranged the various buildings on his section so that the different aspects of his business could be separated from each other. His residence was also on the site. The Fuller Street entrance was for those wanting to have their agricultural implements repaired and for those wishing to buy new implements. There was a yard on this side of the section on which Keetley displayed his goods or parked those awaiting repair. On the Peraki Street side was the blacksmithing part of his business. The shoeing shed with an attached forge was placed to allow horses and their owners free passage into it. After the embankment for the railway had been constructed there was very little room to get the horses into the shed. It was particularly difficult for the owners of young, inexperienced and nervous horses to get them

(6) *The Press*, 30. 4.1872. p.2

down the slope of the embankment and into the shed. There was also a claim that the noise of the trains would frighten the horses and so make shoeing impossible.

Keetley sued the government as a consequence for his loss. However at the time of the court hearing the line was not open so the Resident Magistrate, George Mellish, would not allow the noise claim to be made. The case, which ran for six days before Mellish and two assessors, James Callender and Joseph Clark, therefore centred around the claim for damages suffered through a decline in business brought about by the construction of the embankment so close to the shoeing shed. T.I. Joynt appeared for Keetley in his claim for five hundred pounds against the central government which was represented by Maude, the secretary to the Resident Minister for the Middle Island. Much of the argument in court revolved around how much trade Keetley had actually lost and the offers that the central government had made to Keetley to make things right for him. The offer to fill the section up with sand to a level compatible with the embankment and to move the buildings was rejected by Keetley's counsel as being next to useless. He said that once the sand had compacted the problem would reappear. The claim was based on the loss of Keetley's regular customers as well as the casual trade he expected to do as part of his regular business. In the end the court awarded Keetley four hundred and fifty two pounds in compensation as well as his court costs. The action proved to Keetley that it was well worth the trouble to take proceedings. It also demonstrated that the court system could work for those who knew their way round it.

During the years of Provincial Government vacillation over the building of the northern railway the merchants of Kaiapoi were endeavouring to have that body improve the port facilities. There had always been a concern over the navigation of the Waimakariri and especially of the bar. In June 1865 the Port Officer from Lyttelton, Captain Fred Gibson, reported to the Secretary of Public Works for the Provincial Government, John Hall, on the state of the port at Kaiapoi compared with the ports at Saltwater Creek and Sumner. He found that although a substantial amount of cargo came in and out of the Kaiapoi port very little had been done to ensure that it was a safe port. He speculated that with the completion of the bridge over the Ashley River the port at Kaiapoi would have an increase in the amount of wool shipped out and that improvements at the bar and the proper staking of the channel would add to the trade. Gibson added that nothing, as yet, had been done for navigation of the Waimakariri which he considered to be the equal of the port at Sumner and better than the one at Saltwater Creek. The estimate for the work proposed in Gibson's report was three hundred pounds. Surprisingly, the Provincial Government's response was to place the recommendation on the estimates. Such promptness was unexpected. As a result Gibson was given the authority to appoint a fisherman, John Peterson, at Kaiapoi, to mark out the navigable channel on the Waimakariri. Peterson's duties included keeping the leading beacons at the bar in line with the channel up to Birch's wharf, keeping the channel clear of snags and shifting or replacing the stakes when necessary. He also had to keep a boat and two men ready to rescue any craft that might find itself in

difficulties. The recompense for this work was to be one hundred pounds out of which Peterson had to pay for the materials needed to keep the channel stakes in good repair.

1866-67 was a bad season for ships on the Waimakariri. A number were stranded and lost all or part of their cargoes. In September eleven men connected with the port sent a petition to Gibson. Six of them were either captains or owners of ships using the port, and the other five were businessmen in Kaiapoi. They wanted Gibson to have a signal staff erected at the entrance to the river to give the captains of vessels using the river an indication of the state of the bar particularly after a fresh had come down the river. Gibson, on instructions from the Secretary of Public Works, referred the request to Josiah Birch for his opinion. Birch felt that although the signal staff would be a benefit to the ships using the river it was not absolutely necessary. In his opinion, as most of the ships trading at Kaiapoi came directly from the Port of Entry, Lyttelton, where they could either get the requisite information on the bar or pick up a seaman who was familiar with the condition of the bar at that particular time, there was no need for the extra expense involved in erecting a signal staff. Birch further considered that the work done by Peterson was sufficient to keep the area safe for shipping. As Kaiapoi was not a Port of Entry the government saw no reason for spending any more money on its improvement. This was an additional reason for the merchants at Kaiapoi to be less than enthusiastic over the opening of the railway as they had always considered the port the best way to get goods in and out of North Canterbury.

During that same period in the sixties, the Provincial Government had to spend a large amount of money in improving the roads, culverts and bridges on the North Road particularly the ones over the creeks and drains on the Island. With the constant flooding of the Island most of the original bridges and culverts were either in a poor state of repair or so rotten that they needed to be replaced. Despite the Government's perennial lack of money the work was essential and was duly scheduled. However the work did not proceed smoothly. The contract was let to J.W. Stewart who did not carry out the terms of the contract especially in regard to the piling of the bridges. The Provincial Engineer, Thornton, prepared a report on Stewart's work in which he was quite scathing:

“— it will be obvious that the opportunities for such practices as the contractor for this instance has been guilty of are both numerous and difficult of detection as in the case of the piling. — The piles procured by the contractor for the work were of the proper length, were pointed and as far as I saw were shod and ready for driving. This would lead a person to suppose he honestly intended to drive them, but some departure must have been made from this on my back being turned. Although I distrusted the contractor from the first, as you are aware from my reports, his previous character did not lead me to the

conclusion that he was scamping the work to such a shameful degree as the result has proved.” (7)

Stewart was replaced by the builder, John Bowmaker, from Kaiapoi. Under Bowmaker's direction the work on the Main North Road bridges and culverts proceeded smoothly. The government had to spend more money than it had budgeted for to fix the mess that Stewart had made of his contract but the travelling public did receive a good road and the journey from Christchurch became a relatively quick and safe affair.

Despite the improvements in the town's amenities, transport systems and local government Kaiapoi still had the appearance of the raw settler society. The constant floods had prevented the growth of any substantial exotic trees and a combination of the sawyers and the fires had destroyed the large native trees. Kaiapoi in the early 1870's, for all its progress, still appeared to have been built in no more than a haphazard manner. The perennial problems of dust and mud still plagued the inhabitants.

In June 1873 the Borough Council formed a committee to oversee the planting of ornamental trees in various parts of the town. The Town Clerk was instructed to write to the Provincial Government to ask for trees. This committee was the forerunner to the sundry societies concerned with the improvement of the physical appearance of the town. These societies were important indicators of the commitment the settlers had to their town. Most of the tree planting done by these committees would never be seen in their maturity by the members who had planted them. This dedication to the future well-being of Kaiapoi showed that the citizens had an allegiance to the town which was now being transferred across the generations. At a planting session in the Domain in April 1877 many shrubs were planted and plans were put forward for the making of a lawn on the north side of the park to prevent the drift of sand into the Domain. There were also plans for the forming of paths and the planting of flowering trees.



*School children planting trees in Kaiapoi Domain
Arbor Day 1908 - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum*

These plans indicate that at the same time as the citizens were considering the aesthetic side of their town's appearance they were also considering how best to protect themselves from the natural elements. The sand drift in parts of the town posed an acute problem especially in the north-west wind season and any measure of control was welcomed by the citizens. Trees also provided protection on the embankments from the ravages of the floods. The 1870's saw a large number of willow trees being

(7) Thornton to Hall, 24.12.1867.

established along the river banks. The establishment of trees was never easy in North Canterbury and to add to the problems of frequent flooding and the drying effect of the nor-west wind the young trees in Kaiapoi had to be protected from wandering stock, especially horses. The Borough Council regularly, throughout the seventies, drew the attention of its citizens to the prohibition against wandering stock. At times the police were asked to act against those owners who had not heeded the warnings.

The transfer of care for the future of Kaiapoi across the generations was not confined to the planting of trees. Several notable commercial and industrial developments crystallised in the 1870's that would mark Kaiapoi as a town where the work ethic was paramount.

From the middle 1860's there was a boom in the flax industry and several new flax mills opened up, one of which was on the Cam River at Sidey Quay. In the short time from its opening in 1866 until 1873 the mill had, in effect, four owners. The first owners were Morris and Company. That firm sold out in 1867 to Jenkins who ran the mill until 1869 when he gave it over to Ninnis who was endeavouring to find a new, economical way of producing a strong fibre. He failed in this and the mill was once again back in Jenkins' hands.

For about the next eighteen months there was a flax boom with many new mills starting up. The millers were not always well versed in their craft and the product they made was not always of a high standard. The honorary secretary of the Canterbury Flax Association wrote to *The Press* to point out that although Mr Hawkins of the Styx mill had won a bronze medal at the International Exhibition in Sydney for fine clean machine-dressed flax that made perfectly beautiful rope, the general state of the fibre produced in Canterbury was nowhere near this standard. It is not known what the standard of the fibre produced by Jenkins was like. However it is known that in 1873 when the boom was beginning to level off he sold the mill to the Canterbury Spinning and Weaving Company. The intention of the company was to manufacture bales, packs, sacks and scrim. It was calculated that the conversion of the mill into a manufacturing plant would use up about half of the new company's capital. In order to get a quick return and to claim the Provincial Government's reward for being the first company to manufacture woollen goods the company turned to the production of blankets and flannels.

The first Annual General Meeting of the Spinning and Weaving Company was held in April 1876 under the chairmanship of Mr W.H. Lane. The chairman's report painted an ambiguous picture of the state of the company. On the one hand Lane reported that the machinery was fully utilized, that the four thousand pounds worth of goods produced had been sold and in fact the company had been unable to fill orders from outside the province because it did not have enough plant to cope with such orders. The future looked bright for the company as it was on the verge of claiming the Provincial Government's prize of two thousand pounds for being the first to produce five thousand pounds worth of goods.

On the other hand after questioning from a shareholder, Mr DeBourbel, Lane admitted that the company was carrying a two thousand pound loss and that it had dismissed all the specialized workers it had attracted from England. Some of the

loss had been incurred in experiments needed in the operation to find the best way of producing woollen goods. Again, under questioning from DeBourbel, it was revealed that the products were sold below cost. The reason given for this strategy was that the company was a new one and had to win the support of the merchants in the province. This it could do by undercutting the prices of its rivals, even if this meant selling at a loss in the initial stages of market development. The directors, however, were sure enough about the viability of the company to order more machinery from England. This move outraged the shareholders at the meeting. They were concerned that the directors had made a decision to spend more money on extra machinery without shareholder consultation. The reply from Lane, that if the directors had waited for a shareholders' meeting then the factory would have had insufficient machinery for the coming season, did little to mollify the concern of the shareholders.

The report of this meeting in *The Press* was followed by a letter from a correspondent signing himself "Blanket." He obviously had inside information as he was able to reveal that the total number of specialized workers from England was two. The company fitter, Mr Hoyle, was on a twelve month contract to fit up the machinery and when that had expired he had left for South Africa. The other hand was the manager, Mr Mills, and he had been discharged. "Blanket" then reported that some of the experiments alluded to in the chairman's reply included the feeding of wool full of thistles, gorse, fernsticks, and other rubbish through the machines causing frequent stoppages to repair broken threads. The wrong class of wool was often used for the type of yarn the mill was trying to produce and generally was not properly mixed and evenly blended. It would seem, that from "Blanket's" point of view, the Canterbury Spinning and Weaving Company did not know how to run a woollen manufacturing plant.

By September, however, the directors were beginning to plan to shift the mill to Heathcote. A special meeting was called under the chairmanship of George Hart to put two resolutions to the shareholders. The first resolution was to authorise the directors to raise a loan to pay for the machinery which they had ordered from England, some of which had already arrived. The second resolution was to authorise the directors to look for a suitable site for the mill near the railway line between Lyttelton and Christchurch. The directors had examined a site near the Hillsborough station which they thought would be suitable given its proximity to the station and to the Heathcote River. The directors had not reckoned on the depth of local feeling among the Kaiapoi shareholders. Isaac Wilson summed up the feeling of the shareholders when he pointed out that there would be a large outlay incurred for the purchase of the land and he thought that if the company needed to expand then new buildings could be erected just as inexpensively in Kaiapoi as in Christchurch. It would be preferable, in Wilson's opinion, to leave the mill on its present site than to incur a loss of between five and eight thousand pounds.

Mr H. Thompson thought that the Kaiapoi shareholders were making the issue too personal and that they would do well to remember that the Company was called the Canterbury Spinning and Weaving Company and not Kaiapoi. In countering

this argument Mr Beharrell pointed out that the flannel produced by the mill was known as Kaiapoi flannel. As most of the directors lived in Christchurch the most pertinent reason for the proposed shift may have been their own convenience. It would have been easier for them to supervise the running of a mill situated in Christchurch.

The Kaiapoi shareholders held a meeting on 3 October at the Pier Hotel with Oram in the chair. Those in attendance held between them one hundred shares. The meeting passed two resolutions. Firstly that the company be wound up and secondly that a committee be formed to canvass all the shareholders to obtain the requisite majority for such an action. Messrs Beharrell, Parnham, Isaac Wilson, Johnston, R. Moore, Wearing and J.L. Wilson formed the committee.

A week later the northern shareholders held a further meeting, again at the Pier Hotel, with G.H. Wearing in the chair. The meeting asked for a report on the committee's work to date. It was told that the committee would report when it had finished its task. J.L. Wilson then proposed that if the directors persisted in their aim to move the mill to Christchurch then the committee should consider the feasibility of starting another company and putting in an offer for the present plant. Three days later a deputation of shareholders met with the directors to discuss the issues. The directors were still determined to shift the mill site and the Kaiapoi shareholders were equally determined to pursue their option of winding up the company. At a special meeting to confirm the directors' right to borrow more money to pay for the machinery and the removal of the plant to Christchurch the Kaiapoi contingent were there in force but they were unable to stop the resolutions being confirmed. However the wrangle between the factions proved to be fatal for the Canterbury Spinning and Weaving Company. It had lost the confidence of the local merchants who placed their orders for the coming season with English companies. The directors had no option but to allow the mill to stop work and eventually in 1877 the plant was put up for auction. It was bought by the Hon. J. T. Peacock for



Kaiapoi Woollen Mill's staff c 1886 - 90 James Leithead, manager, seated in centre - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

seven thousand pounds. He sold it in 1878 to the newly formed Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company. The Kaiapoi shareholders of the Canterbury Spinning and Weaving Company had, through this purchase, achieved their aim of keeping the mill in Kaiapoi.

The chairman of directors of the new company was Isaac Wilson who had played a leading role in the committee which had toppled the directorate of the old company. His fellow directors were J. Ballantyne, George Blackwell, G. Coup, R. Coup, J. W. Ellen, R. Moore, E. Mulcock, Edwin Parnham, Thomas Pashby, J. T. Peacock, William Sansom and James Wood. This time the company was entirely in local hands.

Wilson used his considerable skills to guide the company through its early days. The company set out to produce a quality product that was closely identified with the name of Kaiapoi. This seemingly modern technique with its emphasis on quality gave the fledgling company a local advantage which resulted in the company recording a profit in its first six months of trading. By 1880 the company was able to increase both its share base and its capital from fifteen thousand pounds to one hundred thousand pounds. The premises were extended and a clothing branch was established in Christchurch.

More than that, however, the mill brought about a change to Kaiapoi itself. The majority of the first employees at the mill were immigrants from Lancashire who had arrived in Kaiapoi in the sixties with the requisite spinning and weaving skills. These people gave the town an atmosphere unlike any other settlement in Canterbury. The enthusiasm for rowing, the affection for brass band music and the Non-Conformist beliefs already present in the town were strengthened by the North of England origins of these new inhabitants.

George Blackwell, one of the first directors of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company, along with Isaac Wilson played a determining part in the direction that Kaiapoi took in the sixties and seventies. He was to bring considerable expertise to the commercial life of the community.

Blackwell was born in Leamington, Warwickshire in 1848. At the age of fifteen he signed on with the Royal Navy and joined "*H.M.S. Styx*" which was engaged in the war against slave traders on the West African coast. After six years Blackwell bought his way out of the navy and for a year and a half worked at various jobs in England including working on the railway then being constructed between London and Oxford. In 1863 he left England as an immigrant on the "*Huntress*" which arrived in Lyttelton in April 1863. He was able to get a job immediately on his arrival with his cousin Henry Kite who was a builder. Kite's main work was in Lyttelton but he did have some contracts in Kaiapoi. Blackwell's first task in the town was to help build Micheal Lynskey's house in Black Street. In 1865 Blackwell left Kite and began doing carting work between Lyttelton and Christchurch. This lasted only a few months and in August he decided to go back to his maritime life by joining the merchant trade between Lyttelton and Hokitika. The first ship he sailed on was the "*Thetis*" and the second one was the "*Spray*". This work only lasted a few months because by February 1866 Blackwell was back on shore working for W. Reed who was a commission agent and ships' chandler in Lyttelton.



G.H. Blackwell - courtesy Waimakariri District Council

After a year with Reed, Blackwell left to begin work with Newnham and Buddle in Kaiapoi.

Newnham and Buddle were general storekeepers, grain and produce merchants. Their store was in Charles Street south of where the Hansen Building is today. The store and its associated wharf had been built by Beswick and Birch. Charles Street was the centre of Kaiapoi's commercial life in that pre-railway era with ships going in and out of the port on a daily basis. Newnham and Buddle had three areas of business. They had a general store, they bought and sold farm produce and they also ran a shipping enterprise. It was a marvellous firm for the young Blackwell to learn the skills of a general merchant as well as extending the skills he had already acquired in his previous jobs. He was able to save enough money to buy a house and to send for his fiancée, Annie Shearsby.

The house which Blackwell purchased in April 1868 for fifty four pounds was situated in Raven Street. In a little under two months after he had bought the house George Blackwell and Annie Shearsby were married. The marriage took place on 3 June 1868, a week after Annie arrived in Canterbury.

During the period that Blackwell worked in the store the firm had a change of partnership. From Newnham and Buddle it became Callender and Newnham and in this period it became less viable. Newnham had become involved in the new Borough Council and in December 1869 had been elected mayor. His sudden death in July 1870 must have left the business in a weakened state.

It was not, therefore, surprising that in 1871 Blackwell made a decisive move both for himself and for Kaiapoi. He went into business on his own account. His store which opened in August on the Main North Road was called the Railway Store. In using that name he may have been cashing in on the hoped for popularity of the railway which was nearing completion at that time. He may have also been remembering his work on the London-Oxford line. The store carried all sorts of general goods including a cart and harness section and was apparently profitable enough after two years for Blackwell to buy out Alfred Weston, another of Kaiapoi's early storekeepers. Weston's business was situated in bigger premises on the corner of Hilton and Black Streets. The construction of the railway had shifted the commercial centre of Kaiapoi from Charles Street and the Main North Road to the southern side of the settlement. Blackwell's purchase of Weston's store took him

near to the heart of the new business area. Weston's business also gave Blackwell a wider diversity of goods. As well as groceries, drapery and clothing it had a bakery, a produce store and a stable. Blackwell's business was being built on the experience he had gained during his years with Newnham's business. It was in this year, 1873, that Blackwell began his country rounds to Clarkville, Eyreton, Ohoka and Woodend. Through hard work and a great deal of acute business acumen George Blackwell built up a business that is part of the continuous history of Kaiapoi.

Blackwell, in common with Isaac Wilson, was an active member of the Methodist church. It is easy to make the connection between the philosophy demonstrated by that church of hard work and sober living and the business success of George Blackwell. To do so on its own would ignore the personal qualities of the man himself. His whole life was one of service both to his family and to the wider community.

Together Blackwell and Wilson in both their business and political lives gave Kaiapoi a new sense of direction. Their determination gave the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company a competitive edge that was not matched by any other woollen manufacturing company in New Zealand for many years. They believed in the viability of the factory from the very beginning. It has been said that the first piece of tweed made by the new company was sold by Blackwell's store.

The secret of their success with the mill was always to keep the factory up with the latest developments in current technology. An early example of this philosophy was the employment of James Leithead in 1881 as mill manager. Leithead had gained his experience of woollen manufacturing in the south of Scotland at George Roberts and Company of Selkirk and then at J.J. Wilson of Kendal. With this experience Leithead was able to insist on the highest of standards and quality; gone were the days of the Canterbury Spinning and Weaving Company's practice of feeding dirty wool into the machines. It was under Leithead's managership that the name "Kaiapoi" became synonymous with quality.

Isaac Wilson's devotion to the success of the mill cannot be overlooked. It was certainly appreciated by his directors. At the first annual general meeting of the company they voted that two hundred pounds be appropriated from the profit account and be given to Wilson as an honorarium in appreciation for the many hours of work he had given the company in its first year. In a gesture typical of Wilson in accepting the gift he said that he would use it to set up an interest bearing fund from which money could be drawn by employees of the company when they were sick or injured and not in receipt of a wage. However at the fifth annual general meeting the directors were able to give Wilson a memento in recognition of his energy in promoting the company. The woollen mill had been awarded a trophy made of New Zealand silver worth sixty pounds as an Industrial Prize. The directors felt that it would be a small token of the appreciation they had for the years which Wilson had devoted to the company without any monetary reward.

In July 1883 Isaac Wilson became ill and in his absence Blackwell was voted into the chair. Blackwell continued to hold the chairmanship in this manner until the

1884 Annual General Meeting in April, when it was obvious that Wilson's illness was preventing his return to the chair. Blackwell was elected the second chairman and managing director of the company. His salary of one hundred and fifty pounds was back-dated to October 1883 in recognition of the work he had been doing in the absence of Wilson. The Hon J.T. Peacock was voted onto the board of directors to fill the vacancy caused by Wilson's departure.

In the same years as Wilson and his fellow directors were establishing a viable industry for Kaiapoi the Borough Council was attempting to consolidate the position of the port. The Provincial Government had never been enthusiastic about the establishment of the port and although it had assisted in the clearing and marking of the channel in the sixties the Provincial Government did not want to assume responsibility for further improvements. In 1875, just at the death knell of the provincial government system, the Borough Council requested what was termed as the river reserves plus a further five thousand acres be set aside as an endowment for the Waimakariri Harbour Trust. The Superintendent, Rolleston, replied that the Provincial Government had no authority to do such a thing and that the Borough would have to get permission from the central government ministers. This reply resulted in some confusion. The Member of the House of Representatives for Kaiapoi, C.C. Bowen, pointed out that all the Provincial Government had been requested to do was to give approval for the scheme. The central government would carry the request into effect. Rolleston still seemed unsure of his role and while the confusion was being sorted out, the Borough Council came up with a solution of its own. In a letter to Bowen, the Mayor, E.G. Kerr, specified that the Council wanted the Waimakariri Harbour Bill, currently being considered by the House, to contain a clause enabling the Waimakariri Harbour Board to borrow on the security of its property and to be able to levy the necessary dues. This was important to the Council as it did not want the Harbour Board to have the right to levy rates on rateable property in the town.

In order to set the Harbour Board up with a property base the Borough Council passed a resolution at its 27 June 1876 meeting to the effect that it would give up its claim to the river frontage reserves and the ferry reserve for the benefit of the Harbour Trust. This was subject to the proviso that the government would guarantee the leases already entered into by the Council. The river frontages consisted of the land on the north bank between Charles Street and the river and the land between Raven Street and the river on the south bank. In the midst of these bewildering circumstances the Colonial Legislature passed the Waimakariri Harbour Act.

Unfortunately the Act did not give the Harbour Board the power to borrow sufficient funds to carry out improvements. The Board was, therefore, hamstrung before it even began its operations. However there was support for the Harbour Board from the ratepayers. In July 1877 over one hundred ratepayers signed a petition asking the Council to assist the Harbour Board to make the river navigable. Those ratepayers represented more than half of the assessed value of the Borough and so the Council considered that it had an interest in acceding to their request. Accordingly the Borough set aside three hundred pounds to help the

Board pay for the clearing out of the North Branch from Luck's Point to the Swing Bridge.

There was also a move by the Borough Council to connect the railway to the port by constructing a siding from the station to Raven Street. It was anticipated that the increased business for the harbour that would result from the construction of the siding would help the Harbour Board to become a self-operable entity. But once again the Borough Council struck difficulties in convincing the government of the wisdom of this plan. The Department of Public Works did not see the need for the siding and it is apparent from the minutes of the Borough Council that it was aided in this decision by the Railways Department. A viable port would be a threat to the North Canterbury operations of the Railways Department. In a way, the argument over the best way of transporting goods from North Canterbury was settled by the refusal of the Public Works Department to build the siding. Without it and without any proper method of funding, the Waimakariri Harbour Board was not able to function in a competitive fashion with the railway.

In September 1879 the Borough Council received a letter from the Harbour Board enquiring as to whether the Council would be willing to take over the functions of the Board. The Council resolved that it would be willing to do so with respect to both the functions and the property of the Board on condition of a formal legal transfer to the Council. The Harbour Board was not able to accept this condition and so kept its separate identity.

The Public Works Department and the Railways Department played another major role in the administrative life of Kaiapoi in the seventies. The curse of regular flooding had still not been resolved. The focus of attention had shifted, however, from the north-west of the settlement to the south-east. In 1870 the government had funded the erection of a groyne on the eastern side of the South Branch of the Waimakariri near the railway bridge in an effort to protect both the Island and Christchurch from the ravages of a flood. By June 1877 it was apparent that the groyne was assisting in the destruction of the embankment protecting the Island rather than protecting it. The Borough Council wrote to the Minister of Public Works to ask him to take steps to remedy the problem as soon as possible, as the safety of the town was being threatened. There was no response to this request. The Council wrote again in October 1877 to ask for the removal of the groyne as its presence was contributing to considerable destruction in the adjacent area on the Island. Again there was no response. In August 1878 the Council wrote to the Secretary of Public Works requesting that some action be taken over the "evil" that was occurring at the southern end of the Railway Bridge. The Council suggested that the bridge be extended so that it was not impeding the flow of water. The Council also informed the Secretary that James Clark had given permission to the Council to erect an embankment on his land to prevent the river from eroding the eastern end of the town. By 1 October 1878 the Council was demanding that a commissioner be appointed to enquire into the problems caused by the river. As part of the solution the Council had decided that an embankment should be built along Jollie Street to

Cass Street and from there to the large floodgate in Commercial Road. A fortnight later it was decided that a delegation led by the Mayor should go to Wellington to put the town's case directly to the Minister.

After this visit there were a flurry of inspections and recommendations from the local Government Engineers. It was decided to cut a waterway through Stewarts Gully and to lengthen the railway bridge by three bays. In addition the Borough Council was advised to allow five hundred pounds to carry out protective work in the eastern portion of the town.

However it was not until November 1879 that the Council saw the full report of the Engineers. This was two and a half years after the first approach to the Minister of Public Works. The report, written by the Resident Engineer, Dobson, and the Commissioner of Railways in Christchurch, Henry Lowe, noted the damage complained of by the Council was in the eastern portion of the town near the woolworks owned by Mr Ellen. The river had made a large encroachment of ten chains in the soft sandy soil and had carried away two embankments and was now at the base of the third embankment. The Council had built a fourth embankment beyond the woolworks and the report considered that the building was in imminent danger of being swept away.

"— It appears all but certain that one or two floods will take away all the land on which the works stand— nothing but the most expensive work will prevent this." (8)

The report recommended that the only feasible option was to direct as much water as was possible into the old South Branch outlet channel. This was to be done by cutting a channel through Stewarts Gully and by adding three forty-foot spans to the south end of the bridge. By doing that it was thought that the water would be diverted away from the weaker parts of the Kaiapoi bank. The farmers on the north bank had registered complaints about the raising of the bank across Irishmans Flat which had resulted in the floods between Chaney's and Stewarts Gully being higher. The report recommended that the breaches made by the floods remain in the bank until the cutting had been constructed in Stewarts Gully so that a flood in the immediate future would have an outlet to the river.

The Borough Council had found that dealing with the government in Wellington had been just as frustrating as dealing with the Provincial Government in Christchurch. It was not until a delegation had been to Wellington that flood protection was taken seriously by the Departments of Public Works and Railways. The journey north was to be made many more times in succeeding years as the various councils sought assistance from the national government.

In the meantime the Council called a conference with the other local bodies to discuss whether the area needed to set up a Board of Conservators to oversee the section of the Waimakariri River that affected them. The Waimakariri Harbour Board was represented by its chairman, George Blackwell, the Borough of Rangiora was represented by the Mayor, H. Blackett, who also represented the Rangiora and

(8) Report presented at a Special Meeting of the Kaiapoi Borough Council, 4.11.1879.

Mandeville Road Board. The Eyreton Board was represented by its chairman, Isaac Wilson. It was decided that a Board would be of no additional use to them but that the Board of Conservators for the South Waimakariri should be written to and asked not to construct any obstruction in the Waimakariri bed that could cause damage to the north bank. It was also resolved that the government should be written to and asked to proceed without delay on the channel through Stewarts Gully. Accordingly even after the report and the recommendations there was no immediate action taken by the government to relieve the problem of flood control for Kaiapoi.

One of the continuing problems that plagued the administration surfaced during this conference. This was the lack of will on the part of the local authorities to co-operate with each other to attain a common goal. The absence of co-operation was especially apparent over the problem of flood control of the Waimakariri River.

A dearth of collaboration between adjacent local bodies was also apparent in the difficulties over Beach Road. The Heney and Saunders families were pioneer dairy farmers in the Beach Road area and it was through their efforts that the road across the low lying swampy land had been constructed. The area was criss-crossed by creeks, the most significant of which was named Salt-water Creek, not to be confused with the river port of the same name further north. In order to prevent continual flooding the road was constructed above the level of the land. This created a ponding effect on the northern side of the road. To relieve the build-up of water a number of drains were put in running towards the Waimakariri at right angles to the road. The administration of the area was shared by the Borough Council and the Rangiora and Mandeville Road Board.



Beach Road Poplars - Kaiapoi Diamond Jubilee Booklet 1868-1928

There were continual problems with the maintenance of the drains and of the road. The root cause of most of these problems was the lack of co-operation between the authorities when they were setting their budgets and maintenance programmes. The road itself became a land mark in the district because of its avenue of poplar trees. These were planted by the Council and the Road Board at the behest of Isaac Sanders. He thought that the trees would prevent the road from slipping down to the level of the surrounding land. Even the maintenance of the trees caused problems between the Council and

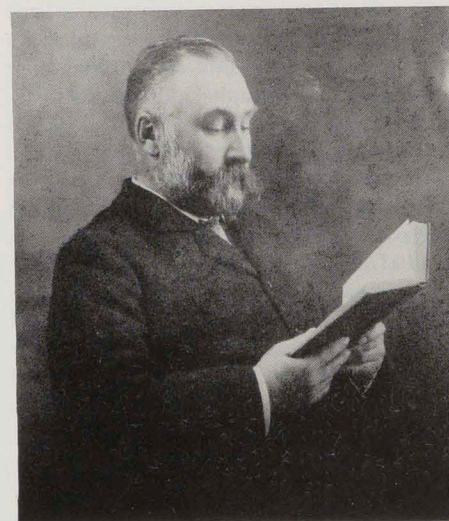
the Road Board that at times reached Gilbert and Sullivan proportions with each authority writing numerous letters to each other on the subject of the welfare of the trees.

Within the Borough itself at this time, however, the various groups concerned with living conditions in the town were able to co-operate to improve the environment. Most of these groups were formed on the initiative of the Council.

The first such group was the Board of Health. It was formed in 1876 by the Council constituting itself, on appropriate occasions, as a Board of Health. The local medical practitioners were always present at the Board of Health meetings where they presented reports on contagious diseases among their patients. The precaution taken in all cases was to isolate the family until either the disease had run its course and the patient had recovered or the patient had died.

There was concern among the townsfolk about the state of hygiene in Kaiapoi. This worry manifested itself in petitions to the Council asking it to clear away, in the terminology of these requests, public nuisances. Such nuisances could range from pools of stagnant water left behind after a flood, to piles of refuse, to the unhygienic disposal of sewage.

In the first years of settlement each household made its own arrangements for the supply of water and the disposal of rubbish. As the town grew, it became apparent that there needed to be co-ordination in the supply of water and sewage disposal to prevent the passage of water-bourne diseases. In the 1870's it fell to the Board of Health to accept responsibility for this task. In fact, the Board became a public watchdog on the state of hygiene and thus of health in general throughout the borough.



Dr W. Ovenden - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Dr William Ovenden, an Irishman who attained his medical degree from Trinity College Dublin, was the first chairman of the Board of Health. He had arrived in New Zealand in 1874 and had immediately set up practice in Kaiapoi. His election to the Borough Council in March 1876 coincided with the establishment of the Board of Health. His monthly reports contained the usual lists of families suffering from the numerous communicable diseases of the period such as scarlet fever, scarletina, and diphtheria. Ovenden extended his duties by instigating preventative measures. In December 1879 after a report of a case of diphtheria in the Armitage family the Board of Health decided to write to the Borough Council asking it to instruct the teachers at the Kaiapoi Borough School to inspect the children once a week for

throat disease. If any child was found to be infected then he or she was to be kept out of school until he or she had recovered. In February 1880 the Board of Health directed that the school water closets be inspected by the Inspector of Public Nuisances.

In the meantime Dr Ovenden was appointed the Medical Officer to the Board of Health at a salary of thirty pounds a year. With this appointment Ovenden's role in public health became more active. He decided to conduct weekly inspections of the schoolchildren and he coupled this with inspection of the school buildings and grounds to ensure that they were in an hygienic state. As a result of his school inspections Ovenden recommended that ventilators be installed in the closets and the urinals. He also objected to the burial of night soil in the school grounds. The Borough Council gave the School Committee permission to bury the night soil on the Main North Road Reserve.

In April 1880 there were two child deaths in Kaiapoi from diphtheria that resulted in further changes for the Borough. The first death in early April was in Charles Dudley's family. Dr Ovenden recommended that a drain be put down from Dudley's house to the river so that the stagnant water could be drained away. The Council agreed to do this on condition that Dudley paid half the cost. The drain was put in and still exists. The second diphtheria death occurred at the end of the same month in the Bennett family. This time the doctor recommended that the Beach Road drains be cleared out. This led to another round of correspondence with the Rangiora and Mandeville Road Board. Ovenden's recommendations also extended to observations on the state of the side channels in Peraki Street and to an order to the butcher in Peraki Street not to hang his sheep skins on the fence as they were objectionable. But more importantly the Borough Council began to consider a borough-wide scheme for the disposal of sewage.

In April 1880 the Council called a public meeting to study the most up to date method of sewage disposal in existence at that time, the pan system. This system involved the employment of a man to collect the night soil. The soil was then disposed of by burying it in a place deemed to be safe by the Board of Health. In considering this centrally controlled method of sewage disposal the Borough was adopting a communal responsibility for its citizens that would take the settlement a step further away from the town's pioneer roots. The pan system was introduced into the borough in July 1883.

Another example of communal education was also initiated by the Board of Health. It was decided to have two hundred and fifty pamphlets printed with instructions on the proper care of infectious patients and distribute them to all householders.

The second example of a group within the town co-operating to improve the living conditions of the citizens displayed a rather more ambivalent attitude than that shown by the Board of Health. In an age where it was a duty to look after one's neighbours there was, seemingly, a lack of feeling towards those who were less well off in the community. In general it was thought that those without the means to support themselves had brought this state upon themselves. However communities did set up Charitable Aid Boards to assess the needs of those in distress and to

give them sums of money to relieve their anguish. Kaiapoi was no exception. In the seventies and eighties, especially, there was a fair proportion of women and children in Kaiapoi who needed help from the Charitable Aid Board. As with the Health Board the cases were reported to the Borough Council which had the power to refuse the recommendations of the Board. In fact it rarely did so and in some cases it asked the Board to reconsider its findings to increase the allowance for a family. In December 1879 the Charitable Aid Board recommended that a man called Kerr be given a ten shillings a week allowance. The Council decided to increase this to twelve shillings and sixpence a week. In other cases however the Council took a sterner attitude. In the case of a Mrs Sellars, in July 1879, the Council resolved to write to her two sons to request them to contribute five shillings a week each for her upkeep, with the reservation in the case of one of them to allow him some time to pay the money. In one unusual case, in August 1880, the Borough resolved to petition the Minister of Justice through the Resident Magistrate to seek a pardon for Mr T. Pearson. Mr Pearson's wife was dying and it was thought that if he was not released from gaol then he would not see her alive again. The Council also empowered one of the councillors to procure the necessary medical comforts for Mrs Pearson. The Council, in this case, certainly went far beyond its duty in caring for its citizens. It can be speculated that in a small close-knit society the business of all the inhabitants was well known to everyone and that it was imperative that the Council be seen to do the best that it could for its citizens. A further speculation can be made; the strong influence of non-conformist thinking of those on the Kaiapoi Borough Council made the councillors more amenable to wider acts of charity than was normal for those times.

The years of consolidation lasted from the first days of the Borough Council to the early 1880's. It was a time when the administration of the town was new and there were all the attendant problems that are associated with being new. There was broad growth in new industrial and commercial enterprises. In the beginning these were considered necessary for the survival of Kaiapoi but in the end had national significance. This was particularly so in the case of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill. The town's sporting and cultural clubs flourished. The growing pride in the town felt by its citizens was reflected by the planting of trees and shrubs and the laying out of the Domain. The town authorities also began to assume a care for the welfare of all of the inhabitants of Kaiapoi that moved the town positively along from the pioneer days when each individual and family was responsible for its own welfare.

Chapter Six:

THE LATE VICTORIAN AGE.

In the thirty three years from the founding of Kaiapoi as a borough to the end of Queen Victoria's reign there was a shift in the perception of the town by its citizens. They no longer regarded themselves as on the edge of civilisation concerned with the difficulties of survival. They were becoming part of the mainstream of New Zealand life.

The 1870's had been a boom time for the national economy because of the enthusiasm of the government for Vogel's public works schemes. The schemes replaced the gold rushes of the 1860's in acting as a stimulus for the national economy. Unfortunately apart from the construction of the northern railway and the various branch lines, the local Kaiapoi economy derived little benefit from the Vogel schemes. In fact the immigration scheme that went hand in hand with the public works scheme proved to be a problem for Kaiapoi as it tended to increase the numbers of unemployed people in the town. The town was developing its own economic infrastructure which protected it, to a large degree, from the depression of the 1880's that followed the 1870's boom. The centre of the infrastructure was the Woollen Mill. Due to good management and an emphasis on quality the mill was able to continue to grow steadily at a time when other businesses in the country were faltering.

The success of the mill could account for the ambiguity of outlook that was displayed by Kaiapoi in its official life at the beginning of this period. The Council was pleased to celebrate what could be termed the more cheerful events in the nation's life, as for example the Queen's Birthday, and it ignored the more painful aspects of life, for example the dramatic rise in the numbers of men who were unemployed. In Kaiapoi this rise was caused by the numbers of people attracted to the area by the hope of employment at the Woollen Mill or on the surrounding farms. However their aspirations were largely unsatisfied because although the mill made steady progress it did not expand and farmers were making more use of machinery and their own family members to work their farms.

Towards the end of August 1880 a problem surfaced in connection with the fire brigade that typified the inward concerns of the town. Some members of the fire brigade were not inclined to carry out their duties and the Council asked that they either resign or resume their duties. Two members of the brigade, R.W.Smith and G.F.Pearce, did resign but the rest decided to remain as members. In a letter to the Council the remaining members enclosed a letter from twenty-one residents offering to form a new fire brigade if G.H.Blackwell was appointed superintendent. This was done and the fire brigade began a new era under the firm management hand of Blackwell. The Council passed a resolution at its September meeting thanking R.W.Smith and the former members of the fire brigade for their services and lamenting the fact that such a trifling matter should have resulted in disturbing the harmony between the brigade and the Council.

It appears though, that local matters, some more trifling than others, were to plague the council for most of the 1880's. The first of these was a dispute over the nonpayment of rent by the lessees of the Ashburton estate. When the Provincial Government decided to make the bridge toll free it compensated the borough by giving to it an estate of two thousand acres at Dromore, near Ashburton. The tolls had been used by the Council to maintain the bridge and the Main North Road which were of vital national importance in the communication network. The rent from the estate was to do the same job as the tolls and so any non-payment of the rent was viewed most seriously by the Council. The lease in the 1880's was held by the Sanders brothers who had struck trouble with their farming operation in the general downturn of the economy of that time. The Council on the advice of its solicitor, Mr Joynt, offered the Sanders the option of surrendering the lease and paying the rent to date. The Sanders were happy to do this and so the affair was settled amicably by the Mayor at a special meeting with the Sanders. The lease was offered for sale again at four shillings an acre.

The second event was not so easily settled. The townsfolk had not given up the idea of a railway siding being constructed to the harbour. In August 1881 the Council came up with an ambitious plan which if it had been presented to the government five years earlier may have succeeded, at least in part. The plan was to construct a railway siding from the station along the Main North Road, over the bridge and down the side of the river. The siding to the south of the bridge was to connect the railway with the wharf on Charles Street and the siding to the north was to go directly to the Woollen Mill.

The government was to be asked to give a grant of money towards building a new bridge strong enough to carry loaded trucks and a small engine as well as laying the rails. Isaac Wilson, who had just become the Member for Kaiapoi, was asked to take the matter up with the government. The Council decided on a fall back position if the government decided against the plan. It resolved that it would raise the money to build a new bridge, provided the government built the sidings. From that meeting until September 1882 the matter of the bridge and the sidings was unresolved. The government was reluctant to start any new construction work and the Council found it was unable to proceed on its own. Finally the Roads and Bridges Construction Act 1882 came to the rescue of the new bridge. It did not

however encompass the construction of the sidings. The Council still hoped that the government might be to be persuaded to build them. Under the provisions of the Act, the Council needed to find only one third of the cost of the bridge and the government would contribute the remaining two thirds.

An architect in partnership with Jacobsen in Christchurch, Otto Peez, designed the new bridge and the council put in motion the steps needed to raise the money for the bridge. A public meeting was held in December 1883 to gain ratepayer approval for the raising of a three thousand pound loan. The Council had to put in place, under the provisions of the Act, a special rate to pay off the loan. This was set at seven pence in the pound on all rateable property in the borough.

The contract to build the bridge was let to Scott Brothers after some opposition from a few of the members of the Council. In the event this caution was well founded. The Scott Brothers fell behind in their construction programme. Furthermore there was a suggestion that they were not carrying out the specifications of the design. Peez was asked to monitor the work more closely. After some delays which were sanctioned by the Council the bridge was finished towards the end of 1885. Kaiapoi had its new bridge but it still did not have the railway sidings.

The Council tried again in May 1885, this time with the help of the surrounding local authorities, to persuade the government of the necessity for the town and the outlying districts to have railway sidings to the port. Again, although the case was pressed hard by the local member, the government decided against funding the project. The last that was heard of the railway siding project was in January 1887 when the Waimakariri Harbour Board was given permission to build, at its own expense, a siding from the station along Bowler Street to the river. The siding plan was ambitious and if it had been adopted would have given the port a certain advantage over the railway in the short term although it is doubtful whether this advantage would have been sustainable. The port would have attracted trade from the Woollen Mill for part of the plan was to link the mill directly with the port. It is not known whether the farming community of North Canterbury would have used the port in large enough numbers to sustain the expense of building the sidings. Their support would have been needed to supplement that of mill.

During this period the Council was not immune to having disputes with its own officers. A serious disagreement took place in 1882 between the Town Clerk, C.E. Dudley, and the Council. This was the year of Caleb Smith's mayoralty and at the second meeting of the year questions about the Town Clerk's activities were raised by Councillors Fraser, Woodford, Moore and Stanton. Fraser proposed that the clerk should not be paid a commission for collecting the rent from the reserves. The motion was lost but a motion that all the vouchers for the clerk's salary for the past two years be presented at the next meeting was passed. The faction in the council questioning the clerk's activities was not satisfied with that decision and moved a further motion that the clerk be dismissed with three months notice. Again, the motion was lost. The anti-clerk faction then went on to suggest that a committee be constituted to draw up a schedule of duties for the clerk and to recommend a suitable salary. This too was defeated. The third Council meeting of the year was even more divisive with motions being put and lost and then being put

again with the same result. It was decided to leave all matters concerning the clerk until the middle of February meeting. All that eventuated from that meeting was a question from Councillor Fraser enquiring as to whether the Council had received a letter from the Building Society. The clerk replied that he had thought that the letter was addressed to him as an individual and not as an officer of the Council. For the rest of the year the worries over the bridge and the sidings dominated the Council's meetings. It was not until the beginning of 1883 under the mayoralty of Edwin Parnham that the matter of the clerk's activities were again called into question.

This time the Council's auditors, James Matthews and G.H. Hewlings, were asked if they had inspected the rate amount or the rate books for the last two years. Their reply was considered unsatisfactory. However a motion to dismiss them under the provisions of the Municipal Act 1876 was lost. At a special meeting called on 13 January the clerk tendered his resignation. Before this was accepted, Councillor Fraser as chairman of the Finance Committee, reported that the work of the Committee was extraordinarily difficult. The Committee had found that three sets of rate books were missing as was the 1877 balance sheet. This meant that it could not complete its work and the work that it had done was "completely useless" as the Council's books and papers were in a generally disgraceful state. The chairman asked for the immediate suspension of Dudley which was agreed to. Fraser added that the fault seemed to lie with the auditors. Their work had not been attended to and it had been found that the rates were deficient by five hundred and fifty pounds over a five year period. The motion passed at the previous meeting to retain the auditors was rescinded and it was decided to take steps under the section 97 of the Municipal Act 1876 to have the auditors dismissed. A public meeting was called but before it took place the auditors tendered separate resignations. In their letters of resignation each appeared to be shifting the blame for the state of the Council's books to the other. The meeting however took place with the Mayor, Mr Parnham, in the chair. The chairman of the Finance Committee read to the meeting the financial report that the Committee had been working on since December. The report showed that there were six hundred and fifty pounds and ten pence in outstanding rates going back seven years. Only three hundred and three pounds thirteen shillings and six pence were recoverable as the remaining rates were more than two years out of date. Many members of the public were critical of the actions of the Finance Committee and of the Council as well as the auditors. The most vocal of them was Mr T. Gallagher who expressed the view that the meeting was being stage managed by the Council and that it was the Council that ought to be on trial. The main resolution from the public meeting was a request to the Council to employ an accountant to investigate the books of the corporation from the date of the last government audit and to report as soon as possible. By the middle of February an accountant, F. Adams, had been appointed to investigate the matter.

Adams' investigation did not end the affair. At the April 1883 meeting the balance sheet for the previous twelve months was read. It showed discrepancies, deficiencies and unauthorized expenditure of one hundred and two pounds

fourteen shillings and nine pence. There was also a credit balance of one hundred and five pounds fourteen shillings and three pence at the bank. These findings resulted in another heated meeting as there was a wrangle over the report presented by Adams. The Finance Committee had only just received the report and had determined to decline to lay it on the table until it had time to study it. The Mayor was astonished at this turn of events and ordered that the Finance Committee surrender the report. Councillor Fraser, as the chairman of the Finance Committee, indicated that he would not be dictated to. The Mayor replied by threatening to call the police. Councillor Fraser was not moved and so the Mayor left the chair. In the interval between the Mayor leaving and returning, the report was handed to the Town Clerk. On his return the Mayor read the report and the balance sheet for the previous thirteen years. It was considered most unsatisfactory and it was decided to refer it back to Mr Adams. The Mayor also indicated that he would take steps to have Councillor Fraser prosecuted.

There were a number of responses to this meeting. Firstly the Finance Committee resigned. This was lamented in letters to the editor of the *Lyttelton Times*. A correspondent signing himself "Burgess", in a pithy letter, gave some indication of local feeling. He wrote that the Mayor and the Council were groping about in the dark as well as throwing the Borough's money into the Waimakariri. He advocated that the Mayor and the Councillors be discharged as they were so incompetent. Mr Fred Adams also felt obliged to write to the *Lyttelton Times* to explain that under the terms of his agreement, he had only to carry out the work to the satisfaction of the Finance Committee and not to the satisfaction of the whole Council. (1) On the following day the *Lyttelton Times* editorial made an interesting comment on the affair. It could be considered that these events were disgraceful but the *Lyttelton Times* was of the opinion that such scenes were necessary from time to time in order to keep those who were publicly elected on the job. The paper speculated that

"a little warmth, even when it produces a blaze, is preferable to the cool neglect of public interests which has heretofore characterised certain municipal bodies in New Zealand, and this very Kaiapoi Borough Council amongst the number. For many years this Council was as respectably dull as, say our own City Council, and it has been during the latter part of those years that the unfortunate financial deficiencies, which have brought Kaiapoi and its municipal name into Colonial bad odour, happened and were not discovered." (2)

In writing this editorial the *Lyttelton Times* was reminding its readers that there was more to the running of a municipality than respectable mediocrity. There needed also to be vigilance on the part of the councillors and that the public ought to find this comforting rather than disgraceful as it meant that the councillors were doing their jobs.

(1) *Lyttelton Times*, 24.4.1883.

(2) *Lyttelton Times*, 28.4.1883.

It is not certain what the editorial response to the appearance of Councillor Fraser in court on charges having used abusive and disorderly language towards the Mayor was but it was clear that the Magistrate, J.C.Porter, felt that it was a matter that should not have come before the Court. He stated that there had been a breach of order but as it had been bought on by a little precipitancy on the part of the Mayor he was going to dismiss it with a reprimand and that he would not allow costs. (3)

In July 1883 Charles Edward Dudley appeared in court charged with two counts of embezzlement from each of the Waimakariri Harbour Board and the Kaiapoi Borough Council. During the trial it was alleged that Dudley had failed to account for certain sums of money in connection with rents due to the Harbour Board and rates due to the Borough Council. After a long and involved trial Dudley was acquitted of the charges on the grounds that there was no evidence of embezzlement. However there was ample evidence of both bad business and accounting methods being used by him.

The affair came to an anticlimatic end with very little resolution of the manner by which the Borough should conduct its business and financial affairs. The council acquired a new Finance Committee chairman, J.Lowthian Wilson, and a new Town Clerk, Thomas Sutherland. At the end of his term in December 1883, Mayor Parnham said that he hoped that the unpleasant experiences of the Council in the past year might never be repeated. He wished instead for a state of peace, good will and prosperity for the borough and the Council in the ensuing year. (4)

The shift in the perception of themselves by the Kaiapoi citizens was illustrated by the saga over the reserve between Cass and Sewell Streets. The saga began with the initial survey of the town and continued with a gift of land to the Borough in the 1880's by J.S.White. It was exacerbated by the plans to commemorate the jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign and finally settled in the minds of some citizens by the commemoration of Queen Victoria's long reign at the time of her death.

When Kaiapoi was first surveyed, the reserve of land between Cass and Sewell Streets was to be for a church site, a glebe and a market square. St Bartholomew's church was built there and opened for services in March 1856. As this land was composed of very unstable sandhills it was apparent, not long after the opening of the church, that the nor-west wind was shifting the sand from around the foundations and that the building was in danger of collapse. The vestrymen wrote to the Bishop in January 1859 that the church was

"hourly in danger of very serious injury." (5)

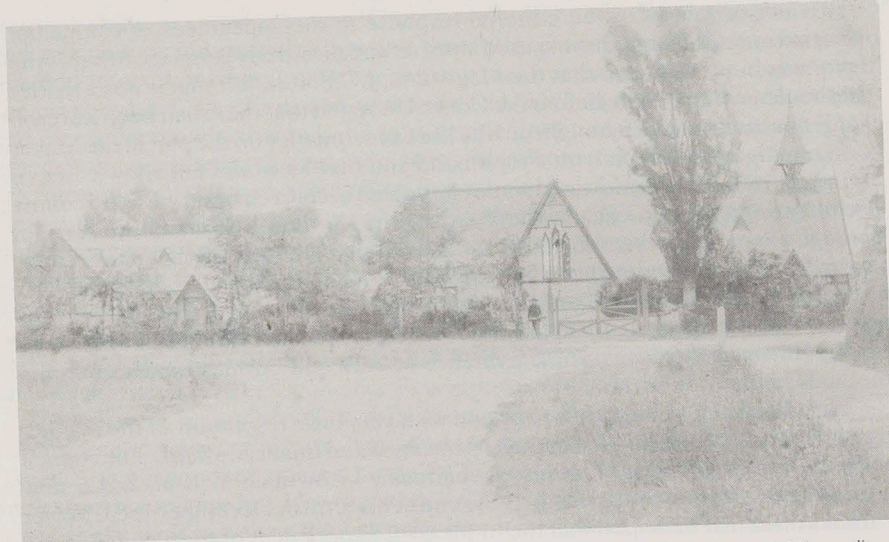
The decision to shift the building to another more stable site in lower Cass Street was taken shortly after this with the building being moved in its entirety some time in April-May 1860. The old site was abandoned.

Over the subsequent years between the shifting of the church and 1881 various ideas were floated as to what to do with the land. Unfortunately the nature of the area precluded anything much being done with it. The land set aside for the market

(3) *Lyttelton Times*, 8.5.1883

(4) *Kaiapoi Borough Council minutes, A.G.M.*, 19.12.1883.

(5) *Anglican Diocesan correspondence*, 3.1.1859.



St Bartholomew's Church and Sunday School in Cass Street. The Reverend de Vere White (1883-88) standing at gate looking down Meadow Street - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

was never used although a weekly market was conducted on Thursdays by Joseph Beswick at Benjamin Monk's Sneyd's Arms Hotel in the 1870's. In fact the reserve had become an eyesore.

J.S. White owned a section of land on the northern side of the reserve and it was this section that he gifted to the borough in October 1880. White had a mysterious background. He once said in a speech that he had arrived in Canterbury in 1856 and he certainly opened his Beehive store in Kaiapoi in 1858. His given name was Josiah Senior White but he commonly went by the name of Joseph Senior White. He had apparently been mixed up in some trouble in Australia that was described as the "Ballarat scandal" and given the dates it could well have been the Eureka stockade. Most people in Kaiapoi knew him as "Bully" White. Over the years he owned a number of businesses in Kaiapoi and at Saltwater Creek. He eventually owned a farm which he called the Ohoka Homestead.

The section, bordering the reserve, was an area of three quarters of an acre and he gave it to the borough for recreational purposes. This section added more space to the reserve. It was difficult for the Borough Council to know what to do with the enlarged reserve and in June 1881 it called for a report. Nothing came as a consequence of this report and the reserve, in common with other open spaces in Kaiapoi at this time, became an unofficial rubbish dump. In August 1882 White was asked by the Council to name the reserve and he settled on the name Darnley Square which was adopted by the Council at its meeting of 15 August. In the following June the Council was given another gift by White. This time it was a gift of trees and shrubs to be planted to beautify Darnley Square. From that point on

until the celebration of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Darnley Square became a forgotten piece of land in the borough although at times the Council did call for reports on its improvement. The Square was from time to time rented out to people who grazed livestock on it. It may be assumed that White's gift of trees and shrubs succumbed to the elements and to the stock. More land was added to the Square in May 1891 when G.J. Webster, the Oram Trustees and G.H. Wearing contributed about one and half acres. This land like the land given by White was of no use for building or stock grazing. It simply added to the problems of the Square. Again the Square was left as a waste area until the after Queen Victoria's Record Reign Jubilee in 1897.

The social base of Kaiapoi broadened in the 1880s. Two Christian denominations opened churches in Kaiapoi during this time. The Roman Catholics had been using Hutchison's store in Peraki Street for their masses from the middle of the 1860's. By June 1881 there were sufficient numbers of Roman Catholics in Kaiapoi for the parish to accept the task of building a church. It was decided that the church was to be built on the site of Hutchison's store. Designs were submitted to the Building Committee from which it chose a design submitted by Theodore Jacobsen. The church, which was dedicated to St Patrick, was a substantial timber building set on a concrete foundation two feet in height. The nave was forty four feet long and twenty four feet wide. The church was lighted by single lighted Gothic windows with margin lights of coloured glass in the sides of the building. There was a belfry surmounted by a spire on the western end. There was enough room for two hundred worshippers. The Kaiapoi Jubilee Booklet states that the first parish priest was Reverend Father Binfeld and that the church was consecrated by Bishop Redwood. The church was contained within the Parish of Rangiora as it was not considered to be big enough to stand as a parish on its own. Many of the Roman Catholics in the Kaiapoi area were labourers, a substantial number of whom had settled in the Ohoka district.

The second denomination to establish itself in Kaiapoi in the 1880's was The Salvation Army. The Army's soldiers opened fire in Kaiapoi on 13 January 1884 under the leadership of Captain H. Ford. The weather on that first day was wet and cold and it was with regret that Captain Ford reported that attendance at the meeting was poor. Nevertheless the soldiers marched through the streets to show the people of Kaiapoi that the Army was on the move. The situation and the weather improved throughout the week and by the following Thursday, when the Army Special paid a visit, a good number of people attended the open air meeting. At the end of this meeting those who wished to be saved went to a Holiness meeting held in Sister Blackburn's cottage. The first fifteen dozen copies of the War Cry to be sold in North Canterbury were distributed by Captain Ford and a band of Soldiers in Kaiapoi, Woodend, and Rangiora on 19 January. Interest in the Salvation Army continued to grow throughout January and February. Captain Ford's reports in the War Cry documented a goodly number of converts and a growing interest from the public including the Kai Tahu. Meetings were held outdoors, in a tent and in houses. It was important for the Army to make its presence felt. It was not always a presence that was appreciated.

“Salvation in a tent: Hallelujah! We thank God because we have a tent to praise Him in. Although we were threatened to be capsized if we did not hold our noise, we are as noisy as ever and, Praise God! every night we hold our little meetings,——” (6)

Captain Ford was at that stage renovating a grain store in Raven Street that was formerly the premises of Eckersley and Company for use as a Barracks. The *Lyttelton Times* reported the opening of the Barracks as if this service was the first one held by the Salvation Army in Kaiapoi. (7) It would seem as if the establishment was a little wary of this new and active denomination.

The message that the Army brought was one of belief in saving power of God especially from the evils of drink and gambling. It was a welcome message to many women and children who were leading lives that were damaged through either or both of those pastimes. That the message was so attractive to women may explain, in part, the active role that women took in the Army organization and in the various services that the Army held. Captain Ford was replaced in about June 1884 by Captain Lizzie Herdman. She was a plain talker and a hard worker for the Army. Lizzie Herdman, along with her friend Elizabeth Westlake, was among the first converts to the Army when it began its New Zealand campaign in Dunedin in April 1883. After an initial twenty days training Lizzie Herdman was commissioned as a Captain and Elizabeth Westlake as a Lieutenant. They were the first women in New Zealand to become officers and to command a corps when they were given charge of Dunedin South. Lizzie founded the Waimate Corp before being transferred to Kaiapoi. Her existence as the head of the Army in Kaiapoi must have caused comment among the establishment of the town.

By time of Captain Dixon's time in the early 1890's the Salvation Army was well established in Kaiapoi. A story about Captain Dixon's wife, Beatrice, illustrates the late Victorian attitude towards women and, despite the Army's attitude towards the sharing of duties between men and women, the enormous social hurdle women had to overcome in order to take a full part in the life of the church. Beatrice had asked if she could conduct a "Lasses Surprise". This meeting was entirely arranged and run by the women members of the Corps. Rather nervously her husband granted permission and the women set about planning their evening. They had to be very careful when they were meeting that all the windows and doors of the room were covered up so that none of the men were able to get a hint of what they planned. There was a part of the proceedings that was so secret that Beatrice kept it to herself. As part of the preparation Beatrice collected a number of jars and bottles from her neighbours saying that she was going to make jam. Instead, with the help of her maid, she cut the bottoms off the jars and covered them with coloured paper. On the night of the "Lasses Surprise" the women assembled at the appointed place and Beatrice joined them with her load of jars into which she instructed the others to place a lighted candle. The women then set out in a candlelit parade singing

(6) *The New Zealand War Cry*, 15.3.1884. p1.

(7) *Lyttelton Times*, 24.3.1884.



Captain Rose Kells, Lieutenants Mary Monroe and Mary Hamilton of Kaiapoi, c.1890, G.E.A. Burrell, photographer Christchurch - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Salvation songs. The Salvation Lads and the general public were astonished to see the demure lasses making such a show. They were even more surprised when the women conducted the service entirely on their own. Beatrice had warned the women that if they faltered in their presentation then the men would take over. They did not and the evening was judged a total success even by the sceptical Captain Dixon. (8) This may have been the first entirely organised and conducted women's event in Kaiapoi. The Salvation Army and its credo gave the women the courage to, in the terminology of the day, make a spectacle of themselves and yet show that they were as capable as the men of conducting a service. The Army and the Women's Christian Temperance Union gave women the experience of running their own affairs which

was a departure from their everyday lives. That this should take place in a town with what, seemed to be a conservative outlook, should not be surprising. Kaiapoi townfolk had been innovative in their approach to business. Maybe some of this forward thinking rubbed off in their attitudes towards the role of women.

1885 saw the establishment of two organizations that have had a continuing presence in Kaiapoi ever since. The first of these organizations was the Kaiapoi Brass Band. Its real beginnings were with the establishment of the drum and fife band of the Kaiapoi Volunteers. Although it was seen as important for the Volunteers to have a band it was not formally constituted as part of the organization. As a result its membership fluctuated depending on who had the time and talent to belong to it. This situation changed in 1885 when a military brass band was enrolled with the H. Company Kaiapoi Volunteers. The band was well turned out in a locally made woollen uniform of black trousers and red tunics with a pork-pie styled cap, trimmed with white bands and white braid on the crown. It was a popular acquisition for all public events in Kaiapoi but as well as those performances the band was required to fulfil its military functions by being in attendance at the annual camps for the Volunteers and at official parades. Even with its new status it was a struggle for the band to retain its membership in the first ten years.

(8) Ah Kow, Major Adelaide, *From Maoriland to Wattleland*, pp107-111.

In 1895 when Cecil Hoskin became band master the band had only six regular members. Hoskin's enthusiasm for band music, however, attracted more players. By the end of 1895 he had twenty one members and by the end of the century, thirty six regular players. The band had become an established part of Kaiapoi life. (9)

The second organization that dates 1885 as its beginning is the Kaiapoi Working



*Kaiapoi Brass Band 1895 -
Back row, Tom Winterbourne, Bob Scott, Eddie Scott, George Geering, Arthur Wright, George Millar,
William Knight, Wally Bate,
Centre, Harry Stone, Alf Broadley, Tom Hoskin, Cecil Hoskin, (Band Master) Dan Murphy, Johnny Burns,
Wally Dunn, Jim Hoskin
Front, Harry Lyle, Clive Wright, Jim Broadley, Bob Wright, Albert Moore - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum*

Men's Club and Mutual Arts Society. The concept of a club where working men had an apolitical environment which provided recreational and educational opportunities was started in Britain in 1862 by the Reverend Henry Solly. It was not long before the idea had spread to New Zealand with the establishment of a club in Dunedin. This club was followed quickly by the establishment of clubs in Wellington, Napier and Wairarapa. These early clubs had their establishment rules based on the ones drawn up for the Dunedin club. It is thought that the Kaiapoi club based its rules on the rules of the Napier club. A group of men had begun meeting some time before 1885 in a room in Adams' Boarding House in Raven Street. A charter was given to this group in 1885 and the first committee was formed. L.J.Cox was elected as the first President. In 1886 a house situated in Raven Street was purchased from the estate of J.C.Porter and that became the club house. Thus even

(9) Lucas, Vicky, *Kaiapoi Brass Band Centennial Booklet*, pp 3-5.



Kaiapoi Working Men's Club, I.N. Eagle, Kaiapoi, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

from the informal beginning of the club it has been sited in Raven Street. (10) In the early 1900's the club had gained a reputation for the supply of cheap beer. Morgan Williams on his journey to New Zealand asked one of the returning New Zealand Boer War veterans about Kaiapoi and was told it was the place that you could get "tuppenny beers". (11) This did not impress the teetotal Williams. The club however did go out of its way to fit in with its neighbour, the coffee shop of the Women's Christian Temperance Movement. It agreed to repair the fence between the properties and to plant shrubs on the coffee shop side of the fence. That the club has continued to grow over the period of its existence is proof of the need for a recreational and educational club in a small town like Kaiapoi.

In 1897 the British Empire commemorated the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. The town had marked the Queen's fiftieth jubilee in 1887 with a parade, a sports meeting and a church service. The Diamond Jubilee celebrations however were more significant and more elaborate. A Jubilee committee was formed to organise the occasion. The Jubilee festivities involved the citizens in a world wide movement. In a newspaper published to mark the occasion the editorial was fiercely patriotic.

"We trust it (the celebration) will be as complete and beautiful a triumph from a loyal and affectionate people. It will certainly lose none of its lustre in the hands of the Kaiapoi public. They are one and all taking an enthusiastic part in the grand celebration which is going through the known world. In this tumult of rejoicing and thanksgiving for material prosperity, every heart is in absolute tune. The dominant sensation of the current twenty-four hours will be the swelling choruses of praise and gratitude, and no

(10) *Centennial Working Mens Club Kaiapoi 1885-1985*, pp. 8-9.

(11) Williams, Peter, *The Savill Saga*, p. 143.

more fitting shrine could have been found for the mighty heart beating throughout the universe.— In conclusion we can only devoutly hope that on this day every consideration and hospitality will be extended to the noble natives of this land; that the event will be suitably and indelibly impressed on the memories of our children and that those in indifferent circumstances will not be overlooked in the midst of the joyous acclamation.” (12)

The procession to mark the occasion, which was watched by five carriage loads of people from Christchurch, reflected those sentiments. All of the clubs and organisations in Kaiapoi were represented. Fifty Maori from Tuahiwi took part. Some of them were in a large waggon from which they chanted and performed haka. The rest of the party followed on foot dressed in their traditional clothing. According to the newspaper reports they made a “very attractive part of the procession.” About seven hundred children from all the local schools took part in the procession. The Maori children with their teacher, Mrs H.J.Reeves, the children from Kaiapoi Borough School led by their headmaster R.J.Alexander, and children from Clarkville, Coutts Island and Eyreton schools marched along holding flags and banners bearing the words, “Truth: Honesty: Education and Fortune: Purity: Courage: and Try Again.” Their presence was described as “interesting and pretty.” Half of the thirty five cyclists in the parade were “ladies” and all the cycles were decorated. Altogether it was estimated that two thousand people took part in the procession which wound its way around the borough. Starting in Hilton Street, the procession travelled by way of High Street, (Williams Street), Ohoka Road, Peraki Street, Raven Street, across the bridge, Charles Street, Jones Street, Cass Street, Cookson Street, (Williams Street), to Beach Road and Victoria Park. At the Park there was a short inter-denominational service and patriotic speech followed by the firing of a feu de joie by the Volunteers. After the formal part of the proceedings were over there was a sports meeting with races for adults and children. The Tug of War between a Maori team and a Pakeha team was won, after forty minutes, by the Maori team. This victory was greeted by a duet from two women from Parihaka and a haka from the men. Food was provided by roasting a cattle beast on a spit and putting down a hangi with another cattle beast in it. The spit roasting took five hours and the hangi took three and a half hours. There was also a refreshment tent run by the Hinemoa Ladies Hockey club. Ninety-eight pounds was taken at the gate and this was considered to be a great achievement. In the evening there was a fire works display, a number of illuminations set up round the town and a cantata performed under the direction of Miss Sims, John Sims’ daughter, in the Oddfellows Hall. The words and music for this performance were written by one of Kaiapoi’s most distinguished musicians, Reuben Blakeley.

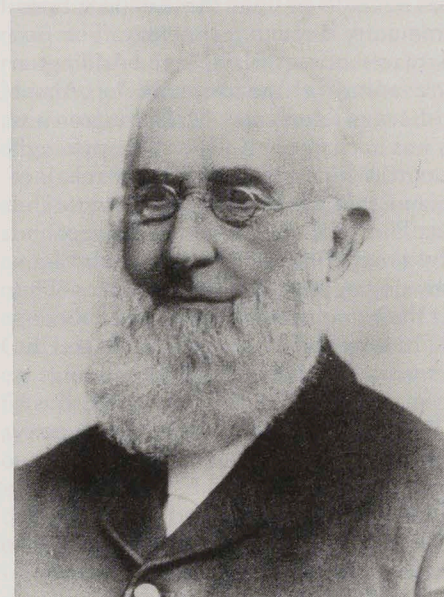
Blakeley deserves recognition for the large amount of musical work he did in Kaiapoi. He had left England in 1880 with his wife, two sons and a daughter at the

(12) *Diamond Jubilee Advertiser*, 21.6.1897.

relatively late age of forty six. The family had sailed directly to Port Chalmers and had stayed in Timaru for five months before settling in Kaiapoi where Blakely obtained the position of organist for the Wesleyan church. In his home town of Bately in Yorkshire he had been the organist of the Methodist Zion Chapel. Both in England and in his new homeland Blakeley composed and wrote the words for many anthems and hymns. In addition to his organist duties he taught

music, conducted bands and composed music for the Glee Club. His talents were passed on to his son B.Wilson Blakeley who became the first conductor of the Brass Band after its formation in 1885.

The day of the celebrations was capped off for many in the town by attending a ball held in a most elaborately decorated Drill Hall. The music was provided by Messrs Hoskins, Bennett and Burgoyne. There were souvenir programmes printed and presented to the ladies. The report of the ball in the paper emphasises the elaborate costumes worn by the women. The day was obviously an important one in the social life of the town. It was a day which affirmed the place of Kaiapoi in New Zealand society and in the British world at large. For many of the participants in the celebrations the Jubilee was a chance to feel they



Reuben Blakeley - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

were still part of the mother country. It was a day when the day to day struggles could be forgotten but most of all it was a chance to affirm a British heritage. The Maori component of the celebrations was not an integral part of the procedures. It was more of an exotic dimension added to the festivities. The overall feeling was one of belonging to an international family with Queen Victoria as the head. There was a reverential dimension to the day’s activities as well as a great deal of joyous celebration.

After the Record Reign celebrations there was a move to record the day permanently in the landscape. The Jubilee Committee wanted to use the money raised on the day to improve the Domain. However it was decided that that area was not suitable for the development of a recreational space. Attention was then turned to Darnley Square. It was hoped that the space would become an area where the people of Kaiapoi could meet for recreation, cultural and sporting events. However these grand plans came to nothing. It was decided instead to create a small lake in the Domain. The money was used for this and for the drilling of a well, named the Kaiapoi Jubilee Well, to supply the lake. The well was finished in

October 1897 and from a depth of about three hundred feet it supplied fifteen gallons per minute.

It was not until the death of Queen Victoria that Darnley Square attained a focal point. The Memorial Committee decided to commemorate her reign by erecting a statue. This statue was to give the town a cultural icon that tied it to the outside world. Kaiapoi had its square, at long last, in the manner of the large cities of Europe. Unfortunately Darnley Square has never lived up to these expectations.

Kaiapoi was woven into the wider community through technology. The first telephone conversation in the region took place between Kaiapoi and Addington on 27 March 1878. *The Press* termed it as "an evening with the telephone."⁽¹³⁾ About twenty people gathered at each location with seven telephones. Mr Harrington was in charge at Addington and Mr Meddings was in charge at Kaiapoi. The proceedings opened with a cornet solo from T. Tankard in Addington, followed by a clarinet solo from Petrie also in Addington. The Kaiapoi contingent asked for an encore and then responded with a chorus of their own. The Addington folk sang "Sweet and Low" as a quartette which was matched by a rendering of "Silver Threads" from Kaiapoi. In all, three hours were occupied by singing and instrumental pieces. This part of the evening ended by the singing of the National Anthem and the cheering of both Mr Harrington and Mr Meddings. The next part of the experiment was the holding of a conversation between Mr Seagar in Addington and Mr Meddings in Kaiapoi. *The Press* described the conversation as being held with as much ease as if the participants were in the same room. The evening was finished by each party singing alternate verses of "Auld Lang Syne." The participants in this marathon experiment with the telephone were understandably excited by the invention which was barely two years old at that stage.

Modern technology was brought to Kaiapoi in a more permanent way in 1883 by Isaac Wilson. Wilson was by that time the chairman of both the Grain and Produce Company and the Woollen Manufacturing Company. To ease his communications problems with his businesses he decided that he would install a telephone system. He had a telephonic communication between his own house, the Woollen Factory, the Ohoka Flour Mills and the office of the Produce and Milling Company in Charles Street. The office was connected to the Christchurch Exchange. The innovation was taken up in 1885 by Dr Ovenden who engaged the Hebden Telephone Company to connect his rooms with the chemist shop owned by Mr C.M. Brooke. The Hebden company attached the wires to the buildings between the two premises. This method was not approved of in official circles and in March 1886 only four months after the wires had been put up the contractor, Meddings, and his staff were busy pulling the wires down so that they could be re-erected by government officials on telegraph posts.

Under the chairmanship of Isaac Wilson the Woollen Mill was to be the site of the second technological innovation to come to Kaiapoi. In February 1883 the directors of the mill received two tenders for the installation of electric light. These were from Miles and Company and the Power Company of Dunedin. It was

(13) *The Press*, 27.3.1878. p2.

decided to leave the whole matter in the hands of Wilson. On behalf of the directors he accepted the tender from Miles and Company. This company agreed to supply the mill with a No 4 Gulcher dynamo and one hundred and forty incandised lamps for a total cost of three hundred and seven pounds. Installation of the equipment began in May 1883 and was completed by the end of June. The official handing over the equipment took place July when William G. Medding's certificate of fitness was presented to the Board of Directors. Miles and Company agreed to replace the lamps at a cost of three shillings and sixpence as long as the mill returned the broken lamps. In the chairman's report at the Annual General Meeting of the company in October it was stated that the new electric light produced double the amount of light at a greatly reduced cost over the old system of gasolene lighting.

Even though the mid eighties were marked as a period of economic depression and increased competition the directors of the mill were still able to make a profit and to pay their shareholders a dividend. Some of the profits were put into the expansion of the mill. An extension was built onto the factory during the middle of 1886. It then became necessary to install a larger dynamo to cope with the expanded floor space. A report in the *Lyttelton Times* explained that a new larger Gulcher dynamo was installed in the mill. When it was tested by the factory's capable engineer, Mr Cederholm, the dynamo was able to sustain two hundred and fifty bulbs, more than sufficient to light the whole mill. This machine was apparently an enormous improvement on the first machine as comment was made on the wonderful "powerfulness" of the lights and their steady nature. A pressure gauge was mounted on a wall to indicate the number of volts of electricity passing through the wires. This gauge enhanced the safety of the whole machine.⁽¹⁴⁾ Not only was the new dynamo needed to ensure that the whole of the mill had sufficient light during the day but also so that the workers had light at night. The mill during this period was working two shifts and must have been a land mark at night with its lights blazing in an otherwise dark countryside.

The next event that dragged Kaiapoi away from its settler roots and into the life of national and international affairs was the Boer war.

Kaiapoi, in common with other settlements in New Zealand, had a number of individual citizens who had experienced previous international conflicts. They were usually included in parades to mark significant events. Five old British warriors marched in the Record Reign Parade. They were John Perrin who had served in the Light Battery 9th Brigade Royal Artillery, in the Crimea; H. French who served with the 31st Foot in the China War and in the Taiping rebellion with General Gordon; T. Lang who belonged to the Bengal Artillery, 3rd Company, 6th Battalion in the Indian Mutiny and wore a Lucknow medal; Corporal Wright, who belonged to the Royal Engineers of the East India Company and Corporal Jacob McGarry who served with the 11th Battery, Royal Artillery. The most notable of these men was Corporal Jacob McGarry. He was born in Parish Moris, County Antrim in 1835. In 1852, along with his six brothers, he had joined the Royal

(14) *Lyttelton Times*, 27.10.1886.

Artillery at Belfast. He was posted to Woolwich Barracks and from there he was transferred to Malta and then on to Varna in Turkey in anticipation of a war with Russia. When war did break out in the Crimea, Corporal McGarry served at Alma, Balaclava and at the siege of Sebastopol. He received a slight leg wound at Balaclava where he also witnessed the charge of the Light Brigade. The Sardinian medal for valour was awarded to Corporal McGarry for his part in spiking some guns of a Russian battery at Balaclava. At the end of the Crimean war he served in China and at the end of that duty he resigned from the Army and married Louisa Blackmore. In July 1874 the McGarry family, now consisting of three children William, Ino, and Sarah, sailed in the "Chile" for Nelson. The family, eventually consisting of four sons and five daughters, found itself at West Eyreton where McGarry worked as a general labourer. On his retirement from that job he and Louisa shifted to Kaiapoi. At a gathering in Christchurch in 1910 to mark the visit of Lord Kitchener, his Lordship remarked on McGarry's Sardinian Medal saying that it was a most rare medal. Lord Kitchener shook McGarry's hand and wished him a long healthy life.



Corporal Jacob McGarry - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

McGarry's experience of war was horrifying and yet it was to be nothing like the war that some of Kaiapoi's young men would volunteer for in 1899. The tradition of set piece battles was to be broken in the Boer War. The Boers used their intimate knowledge of the countryside to mount a guerrilla type war. It was a type of fighting that also suited the character of the colonial troops. It did not, however, suit the Imperial Army which had the command of the troops.

The Boer War seemingly had very little to do with life in Kaiapoi and yet it was an event that most people of the time related to in a strong way. It was a chance for those peoples in far away lands to demonstrate their loyalty to their mother country. There seemed to be a clearly defined enemy and a clearly defined set of objectives.

The Boers were descendants of the Dutch settlers sent to the Cape of Good Hope by the Dutch East India Company in the seventeenth century. Their life was undisturbed until the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1806 when the Cape became a British possession. The Boers did not like the more liberal attitudes of the British and in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century they began a trek north to what became known as the Transvaal and the Orange Free State to form an independent republic. All was well, until the discovery of large reserves of diamonds and gold

and the resulting flood of miners into the Boer Republic. The Boers decided to deny these outsiders, mostly British, political rights and at that point the British stepped in and demanded that the outsiders be given the appropriate status. The Boers declined and war broke out in October 1899. Although the Boer Settlers were white they were not British and there was a feeling that they must be taught a lesson in British hegemony.

There were a number of young men in the Kaiapoi district who were moved to volunteer along with thousands of other young New Zealanders for fighting duties in South Africa. Patriotic organizations sprang up in the community to support the troopers going South Africa most notably the Patriotic Fund Committee and the Red, White, and Blue Brigade Committee. The aim of both of these committees was to raise funds for the support of the men in the battlefields. The first method that the Patriotic Fund Committee adopted to raise money was to open subscription lists. The members of the first committee were the Mayor, Edwin Feldwick, and four councillors, Pearce, Parnham, Daly and Blackwell. The Red, White and Blue Brigade on the other hand began its fund raising efforts with the sale of souvenir ribbons. It seems that the same men were involved in the activities of the Brigade as were in the Patriotic Fund.

The first phase of the war went badly for the British. Their lines of command and supply were extremely long and inefficient. By contrast the Boers conducted a successful guerilla campaign that was to lay siege to the towns of Mafeking, Ladysmith and Kimberley. The reports of the war in the papers were jingoistic and those sentiments inspired the people at home to work hard raising the money required to support the war effort. There was a great deal of pride in those men who volunteered but there was, conversely, no disgrace for those who choose to stay home. There seemed to be a recognition that some young men were needed at home to keep things going. Most of the men who volunteered were members of the Kaiapoi Rifle Volunteers. The Mayor was invited to Wellington by the Mayor of that city, to farewell the first contingent to sail to Transvaal. The volunteers only went for a limited time and during the course of the war there were a number of occasions when there were welcoming ceremonies for the returning troopers. One such occasion occurred during May 1900 and was organised by the Rangiora Reception Committee. The day chosen happened to be the usual half day at the mill and it was anticipated that large numbers of Kaiapoi citizens would gather at the railway station to greet the troopers. The town was decked out with flags and the Mayor was on hand to give the official welcome. Most of those returning on that day lived in Rangiora and other places further north. Kaiapoi had a welcome home for its citizens in July. An official welcome to Sergeants Blundell and Strong, Farrier V.J.Hill, Troopers Lorimer, R. Johnston, C. Threlkeld, L. Ridley, Dunlop, Simpson and J. McGowan, of New Zealand contingents, and A. Styles of Remington's Guides was held in the Drill Hall on 22 July 1901. There was a full programme of songs and music performed by the Brass Band. There were three addresses given by the mayors of Kaiapoi and Rangiora, and Captain E.E. Paprill of the Kaiapoi Rifle Volunteers. Among the songs that were performed there was one called "The Boers have Got My Daddy." It was sung by Miss M. Baker and it no doubt summed

up the local feeling against the Boers. Each of the men were presented with a gold maltese cross to mark his return. After the formal part of the evening there was a dance.

Kaiapoi has a permanent memorial to the relief of Mafeking. Mafeking was a British military outpost and it garrison under Baden-Powell was besieged by the Boers from October 1899 until May 1900. After the relief of the town there was a great deal rejoicing all over the British world. In Kaiapoi it was decided to mark the occasion by giving an appropriate name to the new footbridge over the river between the north end of Raven Street and the new housing block near the mill.

This land, called the Korotueka estate, was owned by the Revell family. Mrs Revell decided in 1899 to subdivide the estate. The residents on the Camside petitioned the Council in October 1899 to provide a traffic bridge over the river at the north end of Raven Street. At the same time Mrs Revell offered to build a swing footbridge over the river at the same location, provided it cost no more than one hundred and fifty pounds. The Council accepted the offer and planning went ahead for the construction of the bridge. The tender was let in August 1900 to Thompson and Murphy for the sum of one hundred and forty two pounds. In the official correspondence the bridge was still being referred to as Revell's bridge but some time between the start of construction and the opening of the bridge in November 1900 the Revell family decided that it should be called Mafeking Bridge. It is still a major link in the communication network between the northern and southern areas of the town. The bridge is also an important commemoration of the euphoria felt in the community after the siege of Mafeking was broken.

One of the more extraordinary characteristics of the Boer War was the use of propaganda which almost became a war in itself. The newspapers on both sides printed vitriolic outbursts against each other. The Kaiapoi Borough Council was so incensed with reports in the German press in January 1902 that it officially recorded its indignation at the gross, vile and baseless libel on British troops. It was only after the war that it was learned that the British pursued a ruthless policy of scorched earth and rounded up Boer women and children into badly run concentration camps.

These policies paid off for the British and a peace contract was entered into in June 1902. This of course meant the return of all the volunteers. As soon as peace was declared the citizens of Kaiapoi were planning a welcome home. A Declaration of Peace Committee was set up to co-ordinate the efforts of the various groups in the town to celebrate the peace and to welcome the troopers home. The plans included a procession, starting at 6pm, to Darnley Square led by the Kaiapoi Brass Band, where there was to be a thanksgiving service led by all the ministers of religion and the Captain of the Salvation Army. After that there would be a giant bonfire.

The last welcome home for returning troopers was held on 23 September 1902. At a public meeting earlier in the month it was decided to hold a reception for the Troopers of the Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Contingents. The reception followed the pattern of the other reception nights with a concert, speeches, the presentation

of medals and a ball. There were twenty six men from Kaiapoi at this evening as well as two men from Rangiora and Nurse A. Hiatt.

During Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee year, the Queen's daughter Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, formed the Princess Christian's Army Nursing Service Reserve. This was in response to the situation in South Africa and the growing likelihood of war. When war was declared the response from nurses in New Zealand was immediate and insistent. Although the first offer made by the government to supply nurses was rejected by the British authorities, pressure from both the nurses and the government resulted in the British government giving New Zealand permission to send nurses to South Africa. The first group of six, among them Annie Hickman Hiatt from Kaiapoi, left for South Africa in February 1900. They were not given a uniform and although their passage to Durban was paid for by the Imperial government they received no other payment. Their support was maintained by subscriptions from the New Zealand public. In South Africa they were under the jurisdiction of the Princess Christian's Army Nursing Service Reserve.

Annie Hiatt was the third daughter in a family of ten children. Matthew and Mary Hiatt came to New Zealand in 1877 with nine children, their last daughter being born in Christchurch. The Hiatt family settled in the Kaiapoi area where Matthew Hiatt took up sheep farming. He also became involved in the commercial life of Kaiapoi by joining G.H. Blackwell in the Kaiapoi Produce and Milling Company in January 1883. Hiatt gave public service by serving on the Eyreton Road Board. It would seem that Annie Hiatt came from a hard working, high achieving family. She began her nursing career at Christchurch Hospital in March 1892 and passed her final examinations in 1894. She continued to work at the hospital until 1896 when, according to the records, she resigned to work with the Nurse Maude District Nursing Association. (15)

In South Africa Annie Hiatt held a number of positions. From her arrival until November 1900 she served at 4GH Mooi River. Her next assignment was on the hospital ship "Simla" which sailed from Cape Town to London. On her return to South Africa Annie Hiatt returned to Mooi River. (16) Nurse Hiatt was then placed in charge of a field hospital at Middleburg, about one hundred and seventy five kilometres east of Pretoria in Transvaal and it was there that she came in contact with the men of the first contingent. (17) Annie Hiatt returned to New Zealand with the ninth contingent. She was awarded the King's South Africa Medal. (18)

The Boer War affected all of the citizens of Kaiapoi in some way or another. They were either involved indirectly through the fund raising efforts of the local committees or they had men from their families volunteering to fight in South Africa. For many men this was an adventure that relieved them from the day to day drudgery of their lives. However in the manner of all warfare in modern times the

(15) Christchurch Public Hospital School of Nursing documents 1892-1896

(16) Kendal Sherayl, & David Corbett, *New Zealand Military Nursing*, p.6

(17) *The Press*, 23.2.1957.

(18) Kendal Sherayl, & David Corbett, *New Zealand Military Nursing*, p.6

experience changed the perception of those who took part. To the chagrin of the Imperial authorities it was found that the colonial soldiers, while not as disciplined as the Imperial soldiers, were better at coping with both the conditions in South Africa and the Boer style of warfare. On the whole the inquiry after the war found that the colonial soldiers were fitter and far more experienced horsemen than their Imperial counterparts. This finding gave the New Zealand public something to be proud of and it was probably some of this pride which translated itself into the rush to volunteer at the beginning of the First World War. New Zealand may have been the furthest corner of the Empire but it had been able to sustain the notion of British manliness.

The Boer War and the activities of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company catapulted the citizens of Kaiapoi into the world community. The Woollen Mill with the management's emphasis on modern technology and its search for overseas markets for its products had a quite subtle effect on the thinking of the people. It was gradually realized with pride that the mill not only brought the world to Kaiapoi but it put Kaiapoi on the world map.

"The fame of the productions of Kaiapoi looms would seem to be spreading in the world, judging from the fact that the Company occasionally receives orders from places so remote from New Zealand that they may well be termed "the other end of the world." Over a year ago we noted the fact that a consignment of blankets had been sent to Scotland, and now the Company has just executed a considerable order for blankets for Singapore, the Government of the settlement having ordered them for the use of the Native police." (19)

As well as the enthusiastic adoption of technological innovations the people of Kaiapoi took up a number of new pastimes in the late Victorian age. Sporting clubs in particular captured the imagination of the citizens.

The first pastime to be taken up with some enthusiasm was rugby football. The game itself was introduced into New Zealand in 1870 with the first match being played in that year in Nelson. Surprisingly it took six years from that date for the game to make its first formal appearance in North Canterbury. That first game was played in July 1876 between a team from the North Canterbury Club, based in Rangiora, and a team from Kaiapoi. The game was played in the Kaikanui Hotel paddock. Fortunately for inter-town rivalry the result was a draw. The result did not dampen the enthusiasm of the Kaiapoi men for the game. Several groupings emerged and these groups arranged games between themselves. The groups were based on localities. For example, there were teams from Sneydstown, Peraki Street and Stewarts Gully. The team from Stewarts Gully was known as the Sandhills Club and it quickly became one of the dominant teams in the area.

By 1883 it was decided that a club should be formed to represent the whole of the Kaiapoi area. A meeting was held in the Council Chambers in June to elect the

(19) *Lyttelton Times*, 10.7.1886.

first officers of Kaiapoi Rugby Football Club. Thomas Caverhill was elected president and Horace Neeve, the secretary. The first game, which ended with a victory for the new club, was played against a team from Ohoka. At the second Annual General Meeting the club decided to affiliate with the Canterbury Rugby Football Union and to adopt the colours of red and white jerseys with white knickerbockers.

The formation of the Kaiapoi Club, however, did not quell the rivalry which had grown up between the various smaller informal clubs. In 1885 another club was formed which called itself the Kaiapoi United Football Club. Its uniform was a purple jersey with a white band. The United Club asked Richard Moore who had been elected president of the Kaiapoi Club the previous year to be its first



Members of Kaiapoi Rugby Club - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

president. It was quickly realised that two clubs in Kaiapoi were untenable. A meeting was held in April under the chairmanship of C.J.Champion to clear away any misunderstandings and to form a club which represented the interests of both factions. The new president was W.R.Kane with J.L.Wilson as vice-president and C.J.Champion as the secretary/treasurer. The club captain was George Hart jun. and the committee was A. Winterborn, James Jones, John Jones, H.Neeve, Barclay, and Fantham. The subscription was set at five shillings for active members and at ten shillings and sixpence for honorary members. It was decided that the club uniform would be a black jersey and stockings with white knickerbockers. There

must have been some residual resentment because Kane's presidency lasted only seven weeks.

The new chairman was G.H.Blackwell and with him at the helm for the remainder of the year the Kaiapoi Rugby Club entered a period of stability and growth. The following year Caverhill was elected president and remained so for the next three years. In 1886 the club colours were changed again. This time the colours became blue and gold and this combination has remained the club's uniform down to the present day.

Of the early years of the Kaiapoi Rugby Club 1894 stands out as a particularly successful one. In that year the club's senior team won the Canterbury competition and the second fifteen won the Junior Flag competition. Six members of the senior team were selected for the Canterbury Provincial team. They were W. Balch, E.Scott, R. Driscoll, L.Oram, J.Moir and T. Hanna. Balch also represented New Zealand in a game played at Lancaster Park against the touring New South Wales team. In 1894 G.H.Blackwell was elected President, a position he held until his death in 1914.

The next momentous year in the Rugby Club's history was in 1896. It was in this year that the club decided to purchase the land that has come to be known as Kaiapoi Park. The area of eighteen acres was owned by J. Hurse and had been offered to the Kaiapoi Borough Council in 1895 for recreational purposes. The Mayor, E Feldwick, was enthusiastic about the proposition but unfortunately he was unable to persuade the public that the community needed a recreational park. The ratepayers were suspicious that the purchase price was just the beginning of a number of expenses to turn the area into a proper park. Although the area was called Hurse Park, it was little more than a rough area of sandhills covered by scrub. Fortunately for the present town a committee of sports people headed by the Rugby Club members pursued the idea and a trust led by Blackwell, Caverhill and Dr J.A.J. Murray was formed to purchase the area. This was achieved in the first half of 1896. The Rugby Club had acquired an area of land that has been the headquarters for a number of sports over the years.

For those men who were not interested in outdoor pastimes there was the billiard room. In this era it was run by H.Mellor and was probably located in a building on the site of the present day Hansen's Building. Billiard players seemed to attract a degree of disparagement from other members of the public and those who played the game in Kaiapoi were no exception. From time to time the Borough Council received complaints about the way the billiard room was being run and in an attempt to control it the Council passed a number of regulations governing its hours of opening. This however did not deter the players and in the late Victorian times the game flourished in Kaiapoi.

The late Victorian age and especially the 1890's was a time of rapid social change for New Zealand and naturally Kaiapoi did not escape the changes. The most significant change for society was the change in attitude towards women. In this change the temperance movement was a major force.

Kaiapoi, with its strong Wesleyan and Presbyterian base, already had a strong leaning towards temperance. From the early days of the Licensing Committees

many of the leading temperance followers were able to have themselves appointed to those bodies. Those men holding temperance views were persuaded that the best course for the social rehabilitation of certain members of society was to close as many of the hotels as possible with the view that Kaiapoi could become a prohibition area.

The Sons and Daughters of Temperance was a very strong organisation in Kaiapoi and out of this grew the Women's Christian Temperance Union. The Kaiapoi branch was formed in 1885. Its major focus was the spreading of the temperance movement. In tandem with this aim the Union was dedicated to the improvement of the situation of women. Excess alcoholic consumption by men was seen by the Union as one of the immediate causes of the straightened circumstances of many women and children. The Union realised early in its campaign against drink that the problem was hydra-like and there were a number of issues that the Union would be required to address. The most pressing of these was female enfranchisement. The Women's Christian Temperance Union took up this cause with a fierce determination. It was the firm belief of the Union that once women had the vote then the temperance cause could be advanced and along with that the social betterment of women and children.

Universal suffrage was achieved in 1893. In the lead up to the vote the women of Kaiapoi mounted a number of campaigns the chief of which was to support both



Women's Christian Temperance Union Coffee Shop, in Raven Street next Working Mens Club which can be seen on right - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

the 1892 and 1893 women's enfranchisement petitions. There were many well known Kaiapoi names on the petition, Annie Blackwell, Fanny Evans and Bessie Soulby signed the petitions and it was probably through their organisation that so many Kaiapoi women followed their lead. The pattern of signatures on the petitions showed that households signed together, indicating that the petitioners went door to door seeking support for the enfranchisement of women.

The Kaiapoi branch of the Temperance Union was very active and had a large number of members. In 1892 the branch won a banner for having the largest membership outside of the Christchurch branch. In 1896 the branch reported that it had forty members and that it held twelve ordinary meetings during 1895 as well as twelve Bible reading and prayer meetings. In addition it held three public meetings. In that same year the Rangiora branch reported that it had only nine members and held only three meetings during 1895. The Lyttelton branch reported that it had twenty one members.

The first big project for the Kaiapoi branch was the provision of Tea and Coffee Rooms in Kaiapoi. The rooms were opened on the 31 May 1892 by the Reverend G. Bond, the president of the Wesleyan Conference. He spoke of the pro-active role of the Union as opposed to the more passive role of handing out advice. He talked of the necessity of winning persons from intemperate habits by providing them with the chance of refreshments without having to resort to alcohol. The Kaiapoi branch deserved high praise for the energy it had displayed in getting the project to this stage. The Tea and Coffee Rooms which were situated in Raven Street consisted of three rooms. At the opening, one of the rooms was used as a sale



Outside "Ty Coed"
In front seat, Ted Ethel and Richard Evans,
In back seat Fanny Evans, Mrs Blamires and Reverend Blamires
Standing, Cis Evans
Sitting on step, Estelle Evans - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

(20) *The Press*, 1.7.1892. p.3.

room which for that particular day was doubling as a place to sell farm produce.⁽²⁰⁾

From the opening of the Tea and Coffee Rooms the Kaiapoi branch had to work hard to produce enough income to support the project as the sale of tea and coffee was never sufficient to allow the rooms to be self-supporting. One of the annual events held to support the rooms was a New Year picnic held at Mr and Mrs Richard Evans' Willow Farm. Sufficient

funds were usually raised at the picnics to ensure the survival of the rooms for another year. The Women's Christian Temperance Union also applied to the Council on an annual basis for a subsidy to help run the Rooms. The Council never refused the grant and it may have been the surety of that money that encouraged the Union to eventually open a creche in the rooms.

Mrs Fanny Evans was the first president of the Kaiapoi branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Fanny Evans was the wife of Richard Evans and the sister of George Blackwell. She had arrived in Canterbury in 1874 and until her marriage worked in George Blackwell's store. She seemed to have the characteristic Blackwell energy and was able to give the Union in Kaiapoi a solid base to work from. Her presidency was followed by that of her sister-in-law, Annie Blackwell.

Through *The White Ribbon*, the magazine of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, it is possible to appreciate the many concerns the Union had for women and children. The editorials in the 1890's covered such diverse subjects as prison reform, child protection, education, commercial depression, The Contagious Diseases Act, and the economic independence of married women. The Kaiapoi branch was in frequent communication with the local Member of Parliament. In July 1899 the Kaiapoi Branch wrote to the member, David Buddo, to urge him to support The Local Option Scrutineers Bill and at the same time the Branch wrote to Mr Kelly, M.H.R. Invercargill, to express support for his Young People's



Annie Blackwell - courtesy Canterbury Museum

Protection Bill. On the local scene the Kaiapoi Branch wrote to the Kaiapoi Borough Council each time nominations were called for a local Charitable Aid and Hospital Board representative suggesting that the Council consider nominating a woman to the position.

Mrs Annie Blackwell held the position of president of the Kaiapoi branch for over ten years. At the twelfth convention of The Women's Christian Temperance Union Annie Blackwell had the honour of co-ordinating the Relief Section of the Union. In her report to the Convention she stated that Relief was "Christianity in Motion." Members of the Union throughout the nation visited and provided practical help to women who were sick or otherwise disadvantaged.

The other delegate at the twelfth convention from Kaiapoi was Bessie Soulby. She too had been an office holder in the Kaiapoi Branch for many years. She generally held the office of secretary but at times she also held the position of treasurer and distributor of *The White Ribbon*. It seems that her contribution to the Union in particular and to the welfare of

women in general was typical of the service performed by many women. It is known that her name appeared on the Burgess List for the Coffee Rooms in May 1894. In her obituary it was noted that she and her husband, William, arrived in New Zealand on the "Dominion" in 1851 but as their names do not appear on that ship's passenger list it is more likely that they arrived on the "Stag" in 1850.

The Soulby's were active members of the St Bartholomew's parish and in this Bessie Soulby differed from the other officers of the Kaiapoi branch who were either Presbyterian or Wesleyan. Bessie Soulby was the first infant mistress at the Kaiapoi Borough School. She taught there from 1875 until 1880. She appears to have devoted the rest of her life to the temperance cause.

Alongside the larger role in public affairs that the Women's Christian Temperance Union gave women, there were new sporting pursuits in the late Victorian era which offered women a choice of leisure activities. The cults of physical exercise, especially working out with Indian clubs and cycling gave the more socially bold women an outlet but up until the 1890s there were no organized sporting activities exclusively for women in Kaiapoi. As so often happens it was a series of coincidents that led the Kaiapoi women to be the first in New Zealand to form a women's hockey club.

In 1890 the Reverend Hugh Mathias arrived from Liverpool to take up the curacy at Cust. The following year Mathias moved to St Bartholomew's and was able to pursue his love of hockey. He formed the first New Zealand men's hockey club and became its first president in 1895. The vice presidents were E.E. Papprell and Doctor Parsons, the treasurer was W. Butcher and the secretary E. Ansties. There were thirty two founding members. In 1898 the Kaiapoi Men's Hockey Club team won the Canterbury senior hockey competitions. The club went into recess in 1914 but was revived again in 1923. It lasted only until 1926 when it again went into recess. The club's second reopening took place in 1932 and it has been going ever since.

Apparently there were a number of women who were sufficiently interested to attend the men's practises among whom was Mrs Mathias. These women urged the Reverend Mathias to coach them. The next logical step was to form a women's club. This was done at a meeting on 8 July 1896. The Hinemoa Hockey Club became the first women's hockey club in New Zealand. The first president was Mrs H.C. Parsons. Mabel Blackwell was elected as the first captain of the club. The subscription was set at two shillings and the colours adopted were black and white. There were fifty seven names on the first membership list. The Hinemoa Club met at the Kaiapoi Park with the men.

The first women's match was played on 6 October 1897 at Kaiapoi when the Hinemoa Club challenged the Girls' Hockey Club from Christchurch. The members of the first team were Nellie Thompson, Bertha Hiatt, Mabel Blackwell, Cassie Mathews, Katie Coup, Lottie Blackwell, Bessie Hiatt, Ida Fairclough, Nena Revell, Ellen and Laura Gaarder. J Lynskey was the emergency player. The match was refereed by Frank Hiatt, Bertha and Bessie's brother. There were about one hundred spectators who saw the Hinemoa club become "the champions of the southern hemisphere" by winning the match six goals to nil. The game was played



Hinemoa Hockey Club before its first game - courtesy Hinemoa Hockey Club.



Hazel McIntosh (Pearce) and Pansy Pearce - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

in three fifteen minute spells with a five minute break between them. The breaks were probably needed as the players wore black and white striped leg-of-mutton blouses and ankle length, heavy black serge skirts. Most of the players had straw boaters, the black bands of which had H.H.C. embroidered on them. Their sticks were longer than the modern equivalent and were curved on both sides with a much larger hook. After the game, which was described as exciting, about eighty people went to the Coffee Rooms in Raven Street to have a tea prepared by the Club.

The Hinemoa Club was a vigorous and vital organization. In the first three years of its existence it did not lose a game. In that third year it also embarked on its first tour. A team travelled to Wellington to take part in the first inter-Provincial tournament in July 1900. The party consisted of sixteen and although the team lost its first game two-nil to Ngati Kura the venture was considered a success.

The five Pearce sisters, Hazel, Pansy, Myrtle, Doll and Ivy attracted attention for the Club in 1908 when they were all playing. Their mother had become President of the club in that year and remained so until 1941. It was Myrtle Pearce however who gained

the most attention for her skilful play particularly her goal shooting. She was often described as "our dashing little inside wing." Myrtle and Lilly Rule were the two Hinemoa Club members picked for the Canterbury Team in 1908 to play against Otago. Myrtle remained a force in Provincial hockey for the next six years. In 1914 she was in the Canterbury team which was the only Provincial team to defeat the All England Women's Touring Team. There were four other Hinemoa Club members in that team, Myrtle's sisters, Pansy and Doll and M.Wells and Ida Burnip. According to the reports of the match there were thousands of spectators at Lancaster Park and Myrtle Pearce scored all three of Canterbury's goals. The English women scored two goals. After the game the Canterbury Association had the winning ball mounted, inscribed and presented to Myrtle. She was selected to represent New Zealand for three games against the English.



Kaiapoi Monument - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Over a series of hui in 1898 the tribe decided to raise the money for a commemorative monument to be placed on the site of the great pa. Mr C.Hurst Seager of Christchurch was asked to design the monument. It was agreed that the monument

In many ways the physically vigorous game of hockey challenges the contemporary view of the late Victorian women. To appreciate the fervour with which the game was embraced by the women of Kaiapoi it is necessary to be reminded of the pioneering roots of the participants. For most of the early members of the Hinemoa Club the hardworking and independent lifestyle of their parents had turned Kaiapoi from a bush settlement into a flourishing town. It is little wonder then that their daughters turned to a game that is not often seen as decorous. In many ways, although the game itself was slower than the modern version, the vigour of hockey could be seen as a symbol of the vitality of the Kaiapoi in the late Victorian era.

In the late 1890's there was a more public examination by Kai Tahu of their recent past.

was to be placed in line with the old earth works on the southern side of the pa. The monument was to be a representation of a pou with a tiki on top looking out from the pa. At the base of the pou a small grotto was to be made to shelter two brass tablets, one of which would record the names of the chief defenders of the pa and the other to have the names of the Ngati Toa attackers. The pou and the carving on the top were to be made from Mount Somers limestone.

Canon Stack was asked to lay the foundation stone. It was Stack's last public duty after forty years of service to Kai Tahu. He was due to journey to England and it was felt that he would not return. At the foundation stone laying ceremony on 20 October 1898 Stack was given a brass tiki with which to tap the stone into place. In his speech Stack said that he was glad to have been asked to perform the ceremony and that he hoped that the monument would remind the people of their absent friends and old and honoured associations. He hoped that Kai Tahu would cling to the teaching of the Church and Gospel which in Stack's opinion would make them an honoured people. Kai Taituha Hape, the chairman of the Runuka, presented Canon Stack with a greenstone cross mounted on gold. Mr C.Fleuty gave him a handsome flax mat and on behalf of his wife, Kai, W.Uru presented Stack with a fine feathered bordered flax mat. (21)

The monument was completed by April 1899. There were four thousand people at the pa site for its unveiling. A party of visitors from Rapaki and Little River led by Mr T.Parata arrived by train at Kaiapoi in the morning of 1 April bringing with them a bullock and a truck load of fire wood for the umu. They were greeted by a haka after which they made their way to Tuahiwi before going on to the pa site. The Premier, Richard Seddon, arrived in Kaiapoi at twelve thirty and accompanied by the Mayor, J.L.Wilson and his daughter, the Hon J.K.Taiaroa, T.Parata and an escort under the command of Sergeant W.Uru went to the site. A powhiri was given, the main speech of welcome was made by T. Green. The Premier's reply was translated by Colonel Porter. After the formal welcome a short service in both Maori and English was conducted by the Bishop of Christchurch assisted by the Reverends Ronaldson, Dunnage, Mathias and Fraer. Mr Green then gave a brief explanation of Kai Tahu history. After the Union Jack had been run up all the participants went to neighbouring paddock to have the feast and to be entertained by dancing and singing. (22)

The large number of people at the unveiling ceremony was not an indication that all the old hostilities between the various factions of the tribe that had arisen during the Kai Huaka feud and the sacking of Kaiapoi by Te Rauparaha had been dissipated. Alternatively it was proof that the supporters of the reopening of the Pa site and the erection of the monument were able to rally all their friends and relations to the celebration. It was seen by the Pakeha present as evidence that the two races were able to live and work in harmony. The fact that the supporters of the project were able to raise three hundred and fifty pounds for the building of the monument in a short period of time was an indication to the Pakeha that

(21) *The Press*, 21.10.1898. p.5

(22) *The Press*, 4.4.1899. p.5

there was a revival of the Maori spirit. This, in fact, was the public face of part of the tribe: the real situation was hidden away within the hearts of the Kai Tahu themselves.

There were two disasters during the late Victorian era that led to changes in Kaiapoi. Just before midnight on 8 December 1887 Mrs McDonald, a resident of the boarding house owned by Mr Jefferies next door to the Borough Council Chambers, noticed smoke and small flames in a small cupboard in the dining room downstairs. Within a very short time the whole of the boarding house was a mass of flames and with that happening, the Council chambers were doomed. Luckily for the rest of the buildings on the west side of Cookson Street from May's store to the Middleton Hotel the wind did not rise enough to fan the blaze. The fire brigade using their steam fire engine and with help from the engineer from the Woollen Mill, Mr Broadley, worked hard to contain the blaze. The Mayor, Mr R. Moore, the Borough Surveyor, Mr Webster, and several of the councillors saved many of the Council records and furniture. They were assisted in this task by Sergeant MacDonald and Constable Cartmill of the local police. The boarding house and the Council Chambers both of which were wooden buildings burned fiercely with some of the embers being blown across to the north side of the river. The only injury was to one of Mr Jefferies' children who was singed during his escape from the boarding house.

The Council was able to relocate its offices to a store that had been used by Simpson and Campbell. (23) It immediately began planning a new Council Chambers. A special meeting of the Council in January 1888 accepted the design submitted by Messrs England, Seagar and Mathews of Christchurch. However when the tenders from the builders were received in February the Council decided to defer the project as the tendered prices were all too high. In July the Council passed a resolution stating that it would proceed with the new Council Chambers if it received a tender of five hundred pounds or less for the construction. This resolution caused some problems for the Council in August. A special meeting was called on 14 August to rescind the resolution in order to allow the Council to accept a tender from Salfeld and Son for five hundred and thirty pounds. The motion of rescission was passed with five of the eight councillors voting for it. There was an amendment to the resolution to accept the Salfeld tender, to one to accept a tender from James Butt for four hundred and ninety nine pounds and fifteen shillings. This was lost. It was generally the Council's policy to accept the lowest tender for any job but in this case it was felt that James Butt would be unable to complete the job for his tendered price. He lost out on the job to repair the suspension bridge in December 1888 for the same reason. With the acceptance of the Salfeld tender, work was able to proceed on Mr England's brick and stone-faced design for the Council Chamber. The new Chambers were ready for occupation in 1889.

The second disaster occurred in the late 1890's. There was a further recurrence of a diphtheria epidemic in the borough. As in 1880 it was the borough's

(23) *Lyttelton Times*, 10.12.1887. p.6.

Medical Officer who initiated the changes which resulted in the borough outlawing the use of cesspits. In March 1896 Dr J.A.J. Murray informed the Council that he was having samples of drinking water analysed for the presence of diseases. Along with that advice he recommended that the Council suppress the cesspit system and go over entirely to the pan system. The Council handed the recommendation over to its Sanitation Committee for study. Sixteen months later, in July 1897, the Sanitation Committee recommended that the Council adopt Dr Murray's proposal. In the meantime Dr Murray had been conducting further tests on drinking water from the many wells in the borough. Nothing more was done by the Council to improve the situation until July 1898 when there was an outbreak of diphtheria amongst young children in the borough. Councillor Knight recommended that the Council instruct the Borough School to close its infant department until the incidences of the disease began to level off. Councillor Simpson then moved an amendment that the entire school be closed for the present. This amendment was passed, as was a resolution that the school's water be tested. The School Committee replied to this request in August, stating that as there were no fresh cases of the disease, the school would remain open. The Council however were alarmed enough to pass a by-law requiring all ratepayers to come into the pan system. Dr Murray was able to achieve what Dr Ovenden had set out to accomplish in the 1880's.

Kaiapoi had the safest method of disposing of sewage known at that time. Although it did lower the rate at which infectious diseases occurred it did not eliminate them. The next step in the prevention of diseases had to wait until the spread of such diseases was better understood by both the medical and non-medical worlds.

The end of the century and the beginning of the new century was marked by all Pakeha settlers in Canterbury as fifty years of settlement in the province. Both major newspapers ran articles on the early settlers. These were in the form of reminiscences. Mrs Baker, Captain W. Whitby, Captain John Russell, John Sims and one other who preferred to be known as "Old Timer" recalled early days in Kaiapoi. Mrs Baker told of early farming on the Island and the others told of the port. "Old Timer" recollected that the busiest year for the port at Kaiapoi was 1867 when enormous quantities of wire and standards for the up-country stations, casks of sulphur and bales of sheep-wash tobacco to control scab, hundreds of telegraph poles for the line between Kaiapoi and Blenheim, up to two thousand tons of coal and general stock for the local businesses came across the wharf at Kaiapoi. Exports at that time included three to five thousand bales of wool a year and two hundred thousand bushels of wheat, oats and barley. The first consignment of wheat sent from Canterbury to England was sent from Kaiapoi by Birch and Company. After the formation of the Waimakariri Harbour Board in 1878 a dredge was purchased to clear the channel. It worked on the river until 1885 when an unusually high fresh cleared the channel. The dredge was then sold to some gold miners from Otago. (24)

(24) *The Press*, 6.10.1900.

Both Captain Whitby and Captain Russell worked the river before the railway line was put in. In those days cargo was charged at between fifteen and twenty shillings a ton. In order to make the trade pay the seamen would have made quick turn-around times. It was not uncommon for the ships to come in on the tide and to sail out again on the ebbing tide. Captain Whitby remembered with some pride that he had been able to make the trip from Lyttelton to Kaiapoi in the ketch "*Emerald*" in five hours.

After the opening of the railway the river trade fell away. It was revived in 1877 by John Sims. Sims had been in Kaiapoi since 1857 when he began working in the bush. When that had been worked out he began a carting business in addition to running a flax mill. By 1877 he was running a coal and timber business. It was obviously cheaper and more convenient for Sims to import coal and timber through the port. He leased two ships, the "*Croydon Lass*" and the "*Edith Reid*" to bring in coal and timber respectively and to take out produce to the other smaller ports especially in the North Island. Sims believed at the time of his reminiscences that the river was an invaluable highway to the district and that the trade on the river would increase in the coming years.

The late Victorian years were a time of rapid social and technological change in Kaiapoi. It was a town that strongly identified with the mill and without the mill it would have just been another small rural service centre. The mill gave the town links with the outside world and for that reason it seemed to have an air of both importance and dominance in North Canterbury.

Chapter Seven:

THE NEW CENTURY.

The new century in Kaiapoi was greeted with a meticulous conservatism that nevertheless reflected a high optimism for the future of the town. The long depression of the 1880's and early 1890's seemed to be over at last. Farming more certainly was becoming the backbone of the nation. Technological and scientific advances made the products from New Zealand farms sought after in the northern hemisphere and especially in Britain. The most innovative advance in this period was the perfection of refrigeration of meat to enable it to be transported to the other side of the world. For sheep farmers, the sole reliance on wool for their income was removed. This great change meant that income earned from sheep could be spread more evenly throughout the year and the extra income earned from the sale of carcasses was spent in local economies. Overall there was more than a doubling of the value of wool and meat exported from Canterbury in the years from 1896 to 1914.

In addition to the changes in sheep farming there were important changes in the dairying industry which again resulted in increased income for dairy farmers. The use of milking machines, pasteurization, and the use of the Babcock test all meant improvements both in the supply and in the quality of the end product whether it was butter or cheese.

The importance that dairying had in the North Canterbury economy at the turn of the century has not generally been recognised. The farms on the flat around Woodend and Ohoka were on rich agricultural land that had a high water table. These were ideal conditions for the year round growing of pasture grasses and therefore the support of dairy herds. The opening of the Sefton butter factory in the late 1880's encouraged local farmers to take advantage of the naturally excellent conditions for dairy herds. This factor and the gradual growth in the local economy from that time made it viable for a creamery to open in Kaiapoi in 1900. The creamery took cream from the Ohoka farmers and in turn supplied the Central Dairy Company at Addington. Many farmers on the rich but heavy land surrounding Kaiapoi made a move away from cropping to dairying in the first years of the century.

The upsurge in dairy farming was noted as one of the reasons why the local economy made such steady progress in the first few years of the new century. J.H.Blackwell in his "*Story of the Blackwell's Stores*", written to commemorate ninety years of business, recorded as much. Blackwell wrote,

— Especially important was the great development of the dairy industry and the establishment of co-operative manufacturing companies. By new, improved methods the butter industry was revolutionised, materially raising the standard of the farming community. Prices of produce were much improved and farmers received their monthly returns regularly. This reflected in improved business conditions." (1)

The history of the store in the early years of the twentieth century reflected the broader development of Kaiapoi. The small general store founded by G.H.Blackwell became an emporium in the early years of the twentieth century and its expansion mirrored that of Kaiapoi.

The first practical and outward sign of the growth of the store was seen in 1895. The old stables and bakehouse were demolished to make way for a large brick bakehouse and new stables. The baker, H.Farrer, quickly made a reputation for the store by supplying good quality bread and cake. This part of the business grew rapidly and Blackwell's bread and cakes were being sold not only in the local area but also in Christchurch.

In keeping with the precedent set by the technologically aware G.H. Blackwell, his son had acetylene gas for lighting installed in the shop in 1902, six years before the Council installed its own gas works. Gas lighting was not without its problems. At times, especially on late nights, the gas would run out and the shop would be plunged into darkness. The staff were then required to find a candle, go to the gas room and replenish the carbide stock so that business could proceed normally.

The next rebuilding project took place in 1902. The smaller wing of the main building was demolished and replaced with a large two storey block. This block housed the expanding drapery and millinery part of the business on the ground floor. The dressmaking work room was situated on the second floor. It employed twelve staff under the stewardship of Miss Holloway. The dressmaking room made it possible for the close relationship between Blackwell's store and the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill to continue to the mutual benefit of each enterprise. Clothes made in the work room from Kaiapoi cloth became a sort-after feature from the store in the early years of the century. In common with other large stores at this time, Blackwells had its own millinery department. Individually trimmed hats were an attribute of the store.

Although there were a number of different directions taken by the store it clung onto one of the hallmarks of its early days. The country rounds were not only retained but expanded to take in Coutts Island. The heavy spring cart needed by the original service to cope with the rough state of the roads was replaced by a two-

(1) Blackwell, J.H., "*The Story of Blackwell's Stores*," p.9

horse waggonette when the roading system became a little more efficient. With the advent of motorised transport the store purchased a truck to take over the country rounds. This enabled the salesman to cover a wider area in a shorter time. The country round was an essential service to the residents in the outlying districts in those days of limited transport options. Even in the relatively closely settled and flat country areas surrounding Kaiapoi country people did not have ready access to the town. The travelling service provided by Blackwells was a communication lifeline for country people which centred on Kaiapoi.

In order to provide a complete service the store not only had general goods and



Upper, looking south along High Street, Borough Council buildings on left



Lower, looking south along Cookson Street towards bridge, Bank of New Zealand, gas lamp and Hansen's Building on left, Post Office, Fire Station on right - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

drapery departments but also had a very busy grocery department. In its heyday the grocery section employed thirty people. In conjunction with the grocery department Blackwells in this period also developed a bacon and ham curing business. The store bought between four and five hundred pig carcasses annually from its farmer customers to make into salt-cured bacon and hams. The majority of these were shipped to Auckland for sale. However when it was realized that a

substantial outlay would be needed for refrigeration to sustain a year round trade the directors decided to invest the money in the expanding general business and to close down the ham and bacon business.

It is clear that the early years of the twentieth century were a period of expansion and innovation for the Blackwell store and this was echoed in the programme followed by the Borough Council. The Council agenda was of necessity more conservative than the one followed by the business enterprises of Kaiapoi.

The Borough Council's schedule included plans for a modern method of lighting for the town. Street lighting up until this time had been reserved for the corners of streets and those places, such as the bridge, that were considered dangerous on dark nights. From time to time organizations approached the Council to request that a light be placed outside their particular building. For the most part the Council was willing to erect a lamp provided the organization paid the initial costs of installation. These lamps were fuelled with kerosene and were lit each evening by a lamplighter.

In the late 1890's the Council began investigating the possibility of using gas to light and heat the town. In April 1897 the Council heard a speech from Mr Wallis of the Balcultha Gas Company explaining the benefits of using water gas. The Council was not impressed by this method. In 1898 the Council was approached by the New Zealand Acetylene Gas Company Ltd. The company offered to give an exhibition of gas in Kaiapoi free of charge. In the ten years from that first approach from the company the Borough Council explored a number of options none of which appealed in either terms of efficiency or the investment required to install the systems. In September 1907 Councillor Sullivan presented an exhaustive report on the benefits of using acetylene gas. Sullivan had made a visit to Picton and while there, he had inspected the gas works. He had also sought the opinion of the Mayor of Rangiora and the Town Clerk of Blenheim on their experience with acetylene gas. As a result of these inquiries he strongly recommended to the Council that Kaiapoi adopt the acetylene gas method. In November the Council approached the Treasury for a four thousand pound loan to help with the construction of a gas works. It also sent a loan proposal to the Public Trustee as well as appealing to the Government Life Insurance Company for a three thousand pound loan. Both the Treasury and the Life Insurance Company turned down the Council's approach but the Public Trustee was willing to lend the Council three thousand pounds at an interest rate of four and a half per cent for the project as well as requiring the Council to set up a sinking fund of one per cent.

With the loan arranged the Council was able to enter into a draft agreement, in April 1908, with the New Zealand Acetylene Gas Company to build a gas works. The building of the gas works began mid-year and by the end of the year it was supplying lighting and heating to a large number of government and commercial buildings in Kaiapoi. The only government department not to convert immediately to gas was the Railways Department. It stated that it was sure that the railway station was adequately lit. However, by November 1908 the Department had relented and the Kaiapoi station was connected to the gas supply. The gas works stood in what is the present day car park behind the Kaiapoi Service Centre.

The official turning on of the gas took place on the evening of 17 September 1908 at the band rotunda in Darnley Square. R.A. Tucker from the New Zealand Acetylene Gas Company asked the Mayoress, Mrs J.H. Blackwell, to turn on the gas, after which he presented her with a silver inkstand to commemorate the occasion. J.H. Blackwell in his speech said that he hoped that the brighter light would be the beginning of brighter prospects for the town. The company had done its part in providing public lighting for the town and the Mayor hoped that soon the residents would do their part by having their houses connected to the supply. After the turning on ceremony and the speeches the Brass Band played a selection of tunes. Favourable comments were made about the quality of the lighting and the fact that the clock tower was also illuminated. (2)

The advent of gas lighting in Kaiapoi turned it into a modern town. In the years following the construction of the gas works many private houses were connected and the Council began to trade in gas cooking and heating appliances.

As part of the programme to modernize the town the Council also embarked on an ambitious plan to provide kerbing and channelling for most of the town streets. It also set about the task of asphaltting the main thoroughfares. Dust was still a particularly bad problem in the summer and it was made worse by the increasing use of motor vehicles. Despite the use of asphalt in the busy areas it was necessary to use the water cart on a continuing basis.

Most of these improvements took place during J.H. Blackwell's first term as mayor. Joseph Henry Blackwell had not only followed his father into the family business but he also donned the mantle of public service.



J.H. Blackwell, May McDougall, Kaiapoi, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

(2) *The Press*, 18.9.1908. p.4

The turn of the century saw another sport capture the imagination of Kaiapoi people in much the same way as rowing had in earlier times. This sport was cycling. The Kaiapoi Cycling Club was formed in 1899 and was intent on reviving the Easter Games by holding a programme of cycle races. The venue for this endeavour was Kaiapoi Park. *The Press* report of the 1901 Easter sports stated that the Kaiapoi Cycling Club was successful in resuscitating the sports judged by the number of people who attended the meeting. Although the dull weather drove many of the patrons away before the end of the day two thirds of the programme was completed before the rain started. At this

meeting the most prominent rider was a local man, W. Anderson. He won the half mile, the one and a half mile, the two mile, the roadsters, and the three mile bicycle races. He also took part in the most popular event on the programme, the Challenge Race. Anderson on his cycle was to race two laps of the track against the one lap of the runner, H. Driscoll. Driscoll won by ninety yards.⁽³⁾

By 1903 the club was able to lay an asphalt track around the perimeter of Kaiapoi Park. This made for better racing conditions but it did take away the challenge of grass track racing. Bert Rich, one of the pioneer racers on a "safety bicycle", recalled a race in which he was placed on scratch. Although he pedalled as hard as he could he was unable to catch the rest of the field because of the lumpy condition of the track.⁽⁴⁾

A press report of 1904 recorded that 1800 people attended the Boxing Day cycle races. During the programme there was an attempt made on the New Zealand one mile record by Bill Arnst. He was paced by a motorcycle ridden by A.E. Gardner. On his second attempt Arnst recorded one minute fifty four seconds. The track was reported to be heavy and in parts the extreme heat had caused the asphalt to soften.

One person was associated with the Cycling Club for its entire life. He was James Mealings. In the first years of the club Mealings raced in the boys' races and in the latter years he was an official of the club.

Another sports club became established in the Kaiapoi community in the first decade of the twentieth century. The Kaiapoi Tennis Club traces its beginnings to the summer of 1909. However it did have a forerunner in 1882. The Kaiapoi Lawn Tennis Club had a court at the western end of Raven Street. The court was used for the first time on 16 October 1882 by club members. It was described as being well sheltered from the wind and a decided acquisition. To the membership



Bill Arnst with Jock Yellowlees on bike at cycle track, c.1904 George Fisk, Kaiapoi, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

(3) *The Press*, 9.4.1901

(4) Brocklebank, Charles, *Old Kaiapoi*, pp 99-100

ern end of Raven Street, in the vicinity of Adam Street, was prone to flooding and this could have affected the court.

The next mention of a tennis club was in the *Kaiapoi Record*, 11 August 1909, where it was reported that a tennis court was being put down in Kaiapoi Park for the Haeremai Tennis Club. It was hoped that the opening day would be held near the end of October and it would be marked by exhibition matches between crack players from neighbouring clubs. The secretary of the club, A.F. Rollinson, also indicated that a meeting would be held soon to elect officers and draw up rules after which people wanting to be members could contact him. From this report it seems evident that the Haeremai Club was a steering organization for the formation of a club although it is also evident, that the people involved in it, did not view it in this way.

A special general meeting was arranged for 2 September 1909. It was followed by two other meetings on 7 September 1909 and 21 September 1909 out of which the Kaiapoi Tennis Club was formed. Reverend J.S. Reid was elected as the first president with A.F. Rollinson as the secretary and Miss B. Clothier as the treasurer. There was a ten member committee with six men and four women. The opening day for the new club was held on 15 September 1909 on the grass court that was no doubt the subject of the report in the *Kaiapoi Record*. The club was keen, however, to extend its facilities and by the end of 1909 it had sought and had been granted permission to lay an asphalt court in the south west corner of the park. As with the cycling track the asphalt was liable to become soft and therefore unplayable. Consequently games were restricted to before 9a.m. and after 5p.m. when the cooler temperatures ensured a hard court.



Tennis players Kaiapoi - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

The club ran its first fund raising event in March 1911. This was a concert given free of charge by the "Frivolity Minstrels" of Christchurch. Although the Oddfellows Hall was only half full the club raised eight pounds and was extremely pleased. By early 1912 there were so many members that it was obvious that the club would have to install another court at Kaiapoi Park. Planning was well underway for this new court when the club decided to apply to the Council for permission to move the courts to Darnley Square. The delighted Borough Council readily gave its permission and work was started almost immediately. The first court in Darnley Square was ready for use in October 1912 and the second was completed in February 1914. By this time the Tennis Club was a well established part of Kaiapoi society.

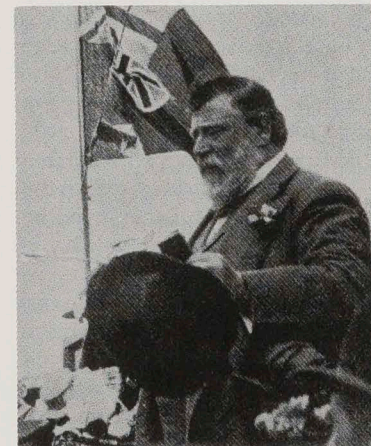
The three years between 1904 and 1907 saw the establishment of three sporting clubs that have an important part in the social life of Kaiapoi today. In 1904 the Riverside Bowling Club was established and this was followed in 1905 by the founding of the Kaiapoi Croquet Club. The croquet players were permitted to use the bowling club's rink for their games. The dual use of the facility while enabling both clubs to build up their membership can not have helped in promoting the skills of each game as each requires a different playing surface. This situation lasted until 1925 when the croquet club opened its own green next to the bowling club.

1907 was the founding year for the Kaiapoi Golf club. J.G. Yellowlees who had emigrated from Scotland at the turn of the century was both a keen bowler and golfer. He had joined the bowling club but found that during the winter there was no place he could use the golf clubs which he had brought with him. Yellowlees suggested to some of his bowling club friends that they should form a golf club using leased land to the north of Dale Street. His friends received the idea with enthusiasm and a six hole course was constructed on twenty eight acres of grazing land leased from Horace Land at an annual rental of sixteen pounds. The first president was Doctor H.A. Davies and Doctor J. Crawshaw was the first secretary. The first treasurer was the manager of the Woollen Mill, T.R. Leithead. The first committee, with some foresight, had a right to purchase clause written into its lease and the Club exercised this right in 1922. The first course was a very rough affair. Sheep grazed the area during the week, with the first golfers to arrive at the course having to move them, before play could begin. Secondly the players would have to hand mow the greens, digging the hole out with a knife. The first local rule made by the club allowed the players to lift their balls out of the tracks made on the greens by the sheep. A separate Ladies Committee was formed in 1919 with Miss A. Lynskey as the club captain and Miss M. Blackwell as the secretary. Over the years the club has expanded to a well planned eighteen hole course with around five hundred members and a substantial clubhouse which bears little resemblance to the small tin shed which served the first members of the Kaiapoi Golf Club.

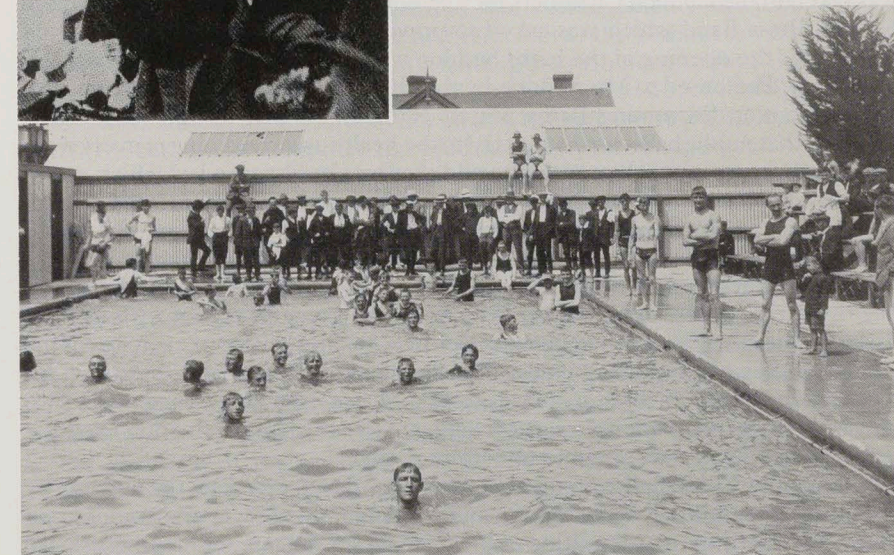
A long time eyesore in Kaiapoi, Darnley Square, came under close public scrutiny after the installation of the statue to commemorate Queen Victoria's reign. It was hoped that the square would become a focal point for the inhabitants' leisure time. Bathing had been for some time increasing in popularity. It presented a

problem for the establishment of Kaiapoi. It was not thought respectable for men to swim in public view in the river. There were attempts from time to time to restrict the practise of bathing to a certain area of the river. When it became apparent that women were also keen to swim, it was decided that the town should have a public swimming bath. The provision of this facility became the project to commemorate the coronation of Edward VII. Darnley Square was the obvious choice for the site of the swimming baths although a substantial number of people thought that the Kaiapoi Sports Ground would be a more appropriate place for the project.

In May 1902 Sir Joseph Ward wrote to the council to inform it that the government would subsidize money set aside for municipal projects to commemorate the coronation of Edward VII, at a rate of a pound for a pound up to two hundred pounds. On the basis of that information the Council decided to vote one hundred



Left: R.J. Seddon, returns thanks for the gold key, The Weekly Press, 1903, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum



Below: Men swimming in Coronation Baths - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

pounds towards the swimming baths. In June this amount was increased to four hundred pounds so that the Council could take full advantage of the government subsidy.

The construction of the Coronation King Edward VII swimming baths began on Coronation Day, 9 August 1902, with the turning of the first sod. In the following months the Council's special committee for the construction of the swimming baths explored various plans for the project. It endeavoured to obtain the plans for the Richmond and Woolston Baths and in the end found it necessary to engage an architect to draw up the plans. At a special meeting on 17 October S.K. Wright's plans for the baths were accepted with provision for the addition of a shower and a water closet. Tenders were called and in November T.J. Burnett's tender of three hundred and forty-five pounds was accepted. Work began almost immediately and was well advanced by the time the Premier, R.J. Seddon, along with Sir Joseph Ward, paid a surprise visit to the borough in December 1902. They inspected the site of the baths and whether or not invitation to open the baths was issued then is not clear but within two weeks of the visit, the Council received notice that both the Premier and his wife would attend the opening of the baths. The Council also decided at the same time to have a commemorative stone made with the names of the Mayor and councillors as well as the Town Clerk engraved on it.

Richard Seddon sent word that he would be able to be in Kaiapoi on 10 March 1903 and would open the Baths at that time. The Council immediately wrote to the School Committee, the management of the Woollen Mill and the businesses in the town requesting that they give their pupils and employees a half-day holiday to celebrate the opening of the baths.

On 10 March the Premier arrived in the early afternoon without Mrs Seddon and was taken to the Council Chambers for a celebratory lunch. During the lunch the Kaiapoi Brass Band which was asked to provide music for the occasion played outside. At the opening of the baths Seddon was given a gold key engraved with the words "Presented to Mrs Seddon by the citizens of Kaiapoi on the opening of the Coronation Swimming Baths March 10th, 1903." In his speech Seddon declared that public baths were essential to the health and well being of every well-organized community. He went on to add that he would pass a law which would make it compulsory for every house to have a bathroom as it was more essential for the working man to have a bathroom than it was for the wealthy man. It is a little difficult to see the connection between a public baths and a bathroom in a private house these days but in the early part of the twentieth century personal hygiene and healthy exercise were seen as two of the most important aspects of a wholesome society. Since the Council had done its part in providing a place of exercise for the citizens of Kaiapoi Seddon obviously felt the need to reassure the voters that his government would do all in its power to ensure that each citizen had in his own house the means to obtain personal hygiene. After the speech Seddon used the gold key to unlock the baths and to declare it open.

The public had a chance on the following Saturday to celebrate the opening by attending an exhibition of swimming and a programme of races and competition dives. The Swimming Committee of the Council set the rate for members at two

shillings and six pence for the rest of the season providing for males to be allowed to use the baths between 6am and 8am and between 5pm and 7pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. On Sundays men were allowed to use the baths between 6am and 9am and on Thursdays and Saturdays between 1pm and 7pm. Women had their use of the facility restricted to between 1pm and 3pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. For the men these opening times meant that they had a maximum of thirty four hours of swimming available each week compared with four hours for women per week. These restrictions were met with an inevitable protest and so it was decided three days later to amend the opening hours to allow women to swim on Tuesdays between 1pm and 3pm, on Thursdays between 5pm and 7pm and on Saturdays between 1pm and 4pm. This alteration to the hours meant that the men had their hours changed as well. They were now allowed to swim between 6am and 8am and 2:30pm and 4:15pm on Mondays Tuesdays and Fridays. The afternoon hours on Thursday changed to between 1pm and 4pm and the afternoon hours on Saturday changed to between 5pm and 7pm. The Sunday hours remained the same. In total the women's hours increased to seven hours per week and the men's hours decreased to twenty five hours per week. It was still not equitable and although in the eyes of the women it was an improvement, it did not satisfy keen female swimmers. In January 1905 the Council received a letter from Miss E. Fawcett asking for an increase of two hours for female swimmers.

The schoolmaster, Mr R.J. Alexander, was given a key for the use of the school pupils. The boys were allowed to swim without the supervision of the teacher provided that they paid threepence per swim for non-members and one penny per swim for members. Presumably it was not considered suitable for the school girls to learn to swim as there was no mention of any arrangements for them.

Joe Atkinson was appointed the first caretaker of the baths at ten shillings per week. There were two rules for those attending the swimming baths. Firstly people had to display good conduct and secondly bathers had to wear full bathing dress. There was a curious dichotomy of view on how the baths were regarded in the early part of the century. It was widely accepted that healthful exercise was necessary for the well being of the individual but at the same time the fact that in order to swim a bather had to wear, in terms of the current mores of the society, very few clothes, led many to speculate that the swimming baths were a place of loose morals. This attitude was reflected in the restrictions on the hours for women swimmers as it was thought necessary to protect them. In order to protect women naturally it meant that there could be no mixing of the sexes during swimming sessions.

The caretaker's primary role was to police the rules. In March 1904 an incident occurred that illustrated the type of discipline that was imposed by the hierarchy. The event was treated with such seriousness that it was, eventually, to come before the Swimming Committee of the Council. The caretaker of the baths complained to the chairman of the Swimming Baths Committee about the behaviour of H. Johnston and J. Broadley. The two individuals were written to and ordered to appear before the committee or face expulsion from the swimming club. At the meeting which was held on 29 March Johnston and Broadley were requested to

explain their behaviour and to apologise to the caretaker. Although they admitted that their behaviour was not exactly "proper" the miscreants said that they were only having a bit of fun and that they were sorry that the caretaker could not accept it as such. However, after the chairman had reprimanded them and given them some good advice on their future behaviour, Johnston and Broadley promised to "use their best endeavours in future to further the interests of the baths." (5)

It had been apparent for some time that the post office and the railway station were no longer big enough for the volume of business transacted in both of those establishments. The Council had written on numerous occasions to the Ministers of Post and Telegraph and Railways to ask them to consider building new premises for their respective departments. The Council had also enlisted the help of the local member, Mr Buddo. He, too, wrote to the Ministers urging on them the necessity for larger buildings. All of this urging may have had some influence in directing Sir Joseph Ward, and other members of the House of Representatives to pay the surprise visit to the borough on 16 December 1902. Another more personal reason may have been that the Premier's son-in-law, the Reverend Bean, came from Kaiapoi. The dignitaries visited the Woollen Mill, the site of the swimming baths, the post office and the railway station. In his report of the visit the Mayor, J. Daly, stated that judging from Ward's remarks there could be little doubt that both the post office and the railway station would be replaced with up-to-date buildings in the near future. As well as this assurance the town was very flattered to receive visitors of such stature. It was felt that the visit indicated progress for the borough. Incidentally Isaac Wilson was able to put his carriage at the disposal of Sir Joseph Ward during this surprise visit much to the gratitude of the Borough Council.

The new railway station was the first of the government buildings to be constructed. It had been obvious for some time that the old station was too small to cope with the increased volumes of passengers and freight. Most of this increase was due to the increased population in North Canterbury and some of it was due to the reduction of fares which took place in the early 1900's. This was the golden age of railway travel in New Zealand. An indication of the importance of railway travel had become apparent during the 1890's when the Government put in place an improvement plan for stations, rolling stock and lines that anticipated the spending of a substantial sum of money each year. The replacement of the station at Kaiapoi was part of this plan.

At the time the Designing Engineer at New Zealand Railways was George Troup. Troup had come to Dunedin in 1886 after completing an architect-surveying apprenticeship in Edinburgh to take a position with the railways department. After two years he was transferred to Wellington to work in the draughting department. In 1892 Troup became the chief draughtsman and in 1902 he became the Designing Engineer. His design for the Kaiapoi railway station was an exquisite wooden structure that had the characteristics of Victorian Jacobean architecture. It was half-timbered with a Marseilles tile roof. The windows were

(5) *Kaiapoi Borough Council minutes*, 15 March, 29 March, 1904

lattice and there was an attractive turret on the northern end of the building that formed part of the ladies' waiting room.⁽⁶⁾ Kaiapoi people were generally pleased with the appearance of their new station although many felt that the situation of the building did not show it off to its best advantage. "The Front elevation is in good taste but is lost to general view by reason that it does not abut on any formed street, and the outlook is towards a mass of rough scrub"⁽⁷⁾

In his speech at the opening of the station on 3 February 1904 Sir Joseph Ward



George Troup's Kaiapoi Railway Station - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

explained that the government was anxious to promote the convenience of the public and the credit of the railways. By adding little things to the symmetry of the stations in order to please the eye, Sir Joseph believed that the extra expenditure was perfectly justified.⁽⁸⁾ The town celebrated by hanging out flags and bunting. The more important of the citizens entertained Sir Joseph to light refreshments on his arrival from Hanmer Springs and also to lunch after he had opened the station and laid the foundation stone of the new Post Office.

Although the building itself was a source of pride to the townsfolk the surroundings were of great concern to them. A letter to the editor of *The Press* published on 23 May 1904 asked whether it was possible to get a working bee together to level out the access way in order to prevent ladies and others at night time from injuring their ankles and falling into traps.⁽⁹⁾ Nothing was done in response to that letter and so the journey from the station remained hazardous. By 1910 the Borough Council was so concerned at the state of the ground surrounding the station that it wrote to the Minister of Railways to request that the Ministry fill the low lying areas on the Railway reserve land as they constituted a health hazard to the citizens. The Council could not contain its indignation at the refusal of the Railways Department to spend one hundred and twenty pounds to rectify the problem and passed the problem on to the ever faithful Member of the House of Representatives, the Honourable D. Buddo. After protracted negotiations the Railways Department did fill in the low lying areas. It is fair to observe that the surrounds of the station have never complimented the architecture.

(6) Mahoney, J.D. *Down at The Station*, pp 66-79

(7) *The Press*, 4.2.1904, p.5

(8) *ibid*

(9) *The Press*, 23.5.1904.

From May 1903 there was a constant dialogue between the Council and the government over the plans for the new post office. The Council was keen to have a clock tower incorporated into the design of the building. By July 1903 Buddo was able to report to the Council that the Public Works Department had decided to draw up new plans for the office which would include a four-faced clock tower. The cost of the tower was likely to be about two hundred pounds. Buddo also reassured the Council that Sir Joseph Ward had promised there would be no delay in drawing up the plans. The tenders for building the office were called for towards the end of August.

In the meantime the citizens began to raise money for the clock. In October 1903 Isaac Wilson organized a concert for the clock fund. It raised thirty five pounds which was a considerable donation in those days. Another popular way of raising money was to hold a bazaar. This was a mixture of a bring and buy and entertainment for which the patrons paid. Bazaars were usually organized by the women in the community and the very successful one held in November was no exception. The Council passed a vote of thanks to the "organising ladies and others" who had worked so hard for the Town Clock Fund.

The tender to supply the clock was let to Stewart Dawson and Son for around three hundred pounds. All seemed to be proceeding well until the Public Works Department informed Stewart Dawson and Son that the space on the clock tower would only allow for a four foot dial rather than the five foot dial that the Council had specified. Stewart Dawson and Son was willing to send to England for a four foot dial but the Council was determined to have the bigger clock face. The Public Works Department said that the tower would have to be redesigned to accommodate the larger dial. On 28 May 1904 the Council held a special meeting to discuss the problem of the clock dial. At the meeting the Mayor, John Daly, assured the members of the Council that the Minister of Post and Telegraph, Sir Joseph Ward, had issued orders to have the space enlarged to five feet provided that the Council bear the additional cost. The Mayor further informed the Council that he had sent a telegram to Sir Joseph agreeing to the conditions. As far as the Council was concerned that was the end of the matter. The Public Works Department however had other ideas. Somehow, it was able to convince the acting Minister of Public Works, that enlarging the space to accommodate a larger dial was unnecessary and that a larger dial would spoil the proportions of the tower. The Chief Postmaster then became involved in the process although to what degree or on which side is not exactly clear. Once again Sir Joseph had to step in and state categorically that he had issued orders for the space to be enlarged. Stewart Dawson and Son was then able to proceed with the installation of the clock. In October the company wrote to the Council advising it that the clock was now in place and keeping first class time. The contractor proposed that the clock be handed over to the Council. The Council took the added precaution of employing an independent expert to check the clock before accepting delivery of it from Stewart Dawson and Son.

The clock itself was in perfect order but the design of the tower prevented the sound of the chimes from being heard clearly. Mr Buddo was asked to inspect the tower and he found that there were enormous defects relating to the escape of

sound. It was almost totally muffled. He promised to get the tower altered to the satisfaction of all concerned.⁽¹⁰⁾ As a result, the wooden louvres on the tower were widened, so that the sound could escape.

The tower was to cause more problems for the Postmaster and his family. In order for the clock winder to gain access to the mechanism of the clock he had to go through the living quarters of the Postmaster. A somewhat irate Postmaster

wrote to the Council to ask if an outside access could be built so that the family would not be disturbed by the clock winder. After some time, this was achieved by the addition of stairs on the outside of the clock tower.

In view of all of these difficulties it is not surprising therefore that there was never an official opening for the post office. The only ceremony was the laying of the foundation stone by Sir Joseph Ward in his capacity as Postmaster General on 3 February 1904. The stone records this event along with the names of the Minister of Public Works, W. Hall Jones, the Mayor, J. Daly, the local Member



Post Office, Kaiapoi - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

of Parliament, David Buddo, the Government Architect, J. Campbell and the builders, Gulliver and Rogers. Notwithstanding the difficulties the building was then and remains today, as one of the more substantial buildings in Kaiapoi.

The building of the new post office meant the disappearance of an old Kaiapoi landmark. The striking clock made it unnecessary for the town to retain the town bell. In March 1905 the Council decided to remove the Old Bell House buildings and the town clock. In April the town clock was taken from the Bell House and placed in the Council Chambers. The old buildings were then removed and an era came to a close. There was no lamentations over the disappearance of the Bell House as the new clock tower more than compensated for its loss. The clock tower

⁽¹⁰⁾ *Kaiapoi Borough Council Minutes*, 13.10.1904.

was a symbol of the prosperity, progress and future of the community and the old Bell House was considered a relic of the past. In January 1909 the old bell was hung in Councillor Hayman's paddock in Peraki Street to act as a fire alarm.

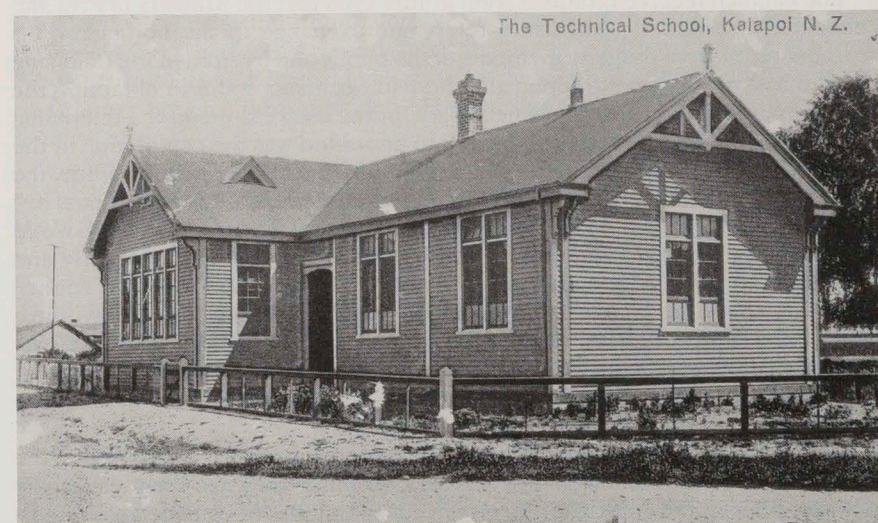
In 1904 the Council decided to construct a drinking fountain outside the post office. The establishment of the drinking fountain turned into a quite a saga. It became very difficult for the Council to find a supply of water for the fountain. The Council first approached the manager of the Bank of New Zealand for water from the Bank's artesian well. The manager did not think it had enough water to supply the fountain and so the Council then asked Hansen who owned the shops on the opposite corner to the post office to supply water from his well. Hansen was amenable to the idea but it was found that there was not enough water pressure to supply the fountain. The Council, however, did not give up the idea of the provision of the drinking fountain. In July 1908 the Council tried once again to install the fountain. The Kaiapoi Borough Council minutes of 13 October 1908 record that first motion to put the fountain outside the post office in Charles Street was lost. However by August the Council had secured a guarantee of a supply of water from the Post Office's artesian well. Four years after the fountain was first proposed it was installed outside the post office on what became Williams Street.

The new century saw a change in the emphasis of education throughout the country. George Hogben was appointed Inspector-General of Education in 1899. Hogben had been the Principal of Timaru Boys' High School and an Inspector with the North Canterbury Education Board. With his appointment as Inspector-General he was able to start a series of landmark reforms to the shape of education in New Zealand that culminated in the Education Act of 1914. Hogben's aim was to make education, and especially secondary education, more accessible for every young person. Secondary schools in New Zealand at the time of Hogben's appointment were academic institutions for fee paying pupils based on the model of the English grammar schools. There were three Acts passed by Parliament that went some way to realising Hogben's aspiration of making education more relevant to the needs of the community. The Secondary Schools Act of 1903 compelled secondary schools to accept free-place pupils and to submit to regular inspections. The incentive for opening up the school to free-place pupils lay in the ability of the school to apply for a grant to build extra classrooms. This Act, Hogben hoped, would make secondary education universal. At the time of the passing of the Act there was no secondary school in Kaiapoi. However the Act encouraged the Borough School to establish a secondary department under the headmastership of Robert Alexander who had been the headmaster of the Borough School since 1879. The Borough School thus became a District High School between the years 1903 and 1920.

The other two Acts had a more direct and lasting influence on the direction of education in Kaiapoi. They were the Manual and Technical Instruction Acts of 1900 and 1902. Many secondary schools refused the liberal grants offered under these Acts to introduce practical subjects into their syllabuses because it would have meant that they would have had to submit to a more rigorous inspection

from the Education Department. Education Boards, while not keen to open up their District High Schools to practical subjects, were prepared to set up technical classes under the leadership of managers. It was appreciated by the population in general that children needed to be not only literate and numerate but also technologically competent. This was especially appreciated in Kaiapoi where the benefits of a technical education had a direct relevance to the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill, the main employer in the town, as well as to the farming enterprises in the hinterland.

In Kaiapoi the Borough School Committee initiated the change in the type of education offered in the town. In February 1904 the secretary wrote to the Mayor asking him to call a meeting of the Technical and Manual Classes Committee to discuss the establishment of a school in the borough. The members of the committee were Messrs Moore, Ellen, and Bean and over the next few years they negotiated with the Council to obtain land on which to site the school. In March 1907 the committee explained to the Council that if it could secure a suitable site then the Education Department would build the rooms for the technical classes. The committee suggested the land next to the fire station would be ideal. However by May the committee was applying for a portion of Black Street to be closed so that the technical class rooms could be built there. In June the adjoining land owners were notified of the Council's intention to close a part of Black Street and by September 1907 the relevant portion of the street was closed. The Council offered the Technical Classes Committee a twenty one year lease at a nominal rent of ten shillings per year. The committee, however, saw the need for a longer leasetime and was able to negotiate a forty year lease which was signed between the parties



The Technical School - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

in July 1908. The buildings were completed in 1911. Until that time the school was located in a number of temporary premises.

The Technical School was officially opened on 1 June 1911 by the Honourable David Buddo who was at that time the Minister of Internal Affairs. The school consisted of two classrooms for boys and girls. The main room contained carpenters' benches and tools. When the school had started in 1904 it had had ninety six children in its day classes and one hundred and seventy seven adults in its evening classes. This number had increased to two hundred and five adults by the official opening. Classes were offered in woodwork, cookery, dressmaking, millinery, book keeping and wood turning. It was hoped to establish a strong wool classing section which was of prime importance to the agricultural district which was served by Kaiapoi. It was envisaged that agricultural education would also be established. In his speech at the official opening the Mr. Buddo said that the institute was of great value in developing practical ideas in education and in a manufacturing town such as Kaiapoi it was only right to foster ideas that would lead to better workmanship. (11)

Kaiapoi in the first few years of the twentieth century acquired some amenities that characterised the maturing of the town as a community. Although there had been telephones in use for the business houses and medical practitioners from the time of its introduction to the district by Isaac Wilson, the instrument was not commonly found in private homes. It was regarded as a luxury item that the ordinary household could not afford. However during the more prosperous times of the early twentieth century more people began to see the telephone as an item of necessity.

The Council received conformation in July 1906 that the Ministry of Post and Telegraph proposed to establish a telephone exchange in the borough. This created interest from ordinary members of the public and by April of the following year the Mayor was able to report that he had been successful in obtaining the minimum number of subscribers necessary for the establishment of a telephone exchange. All that remained for the work to be started was the completion of the forms to the satisfaction of the Post and Telegraph inspector. At the end of July the Mayor made a further statement that the minimum number of six subscribers had increased to eleven. Kaiapoi citizens in general were able to be linked to the world outside their immediate community as well as being linked more directly and immediately to their neighbours. In September 1907 it was reported to the council that R.O. Dixon from Eyreton was having a telephone installed. The Mayor in a letter to the Minister of Railways stated that it was imperative that the railway Station be connected to the exchange if outlying country districts were now being connected. As with the installation of acetylene gas lighting the Railways Department was behind the other businesses in Kaiapoi.

A noteworthy development in the town in the early years of the century was the building of a band rotunda. In itself a band rotunda does not seem especially significant but in the context of society in Kaiapoi it was of considerable impor-

(11) *Lyttelton Times*, 2.6.1911. p.5

tance. In March 1907 the Secretary of the Kaiapoi Brass Band wrote to the Council asking if it could assist in the provision of suitable accommodation for outdoor performances. The letter was accompanied by a petition which had been signed by one hundred and thirty ratepayers and residents. This was a significant proportion of the borough's ratepayers and as such the Council could not ignore the request. Outdoor concerts by bands were a feature of Edwardian society. Many of the band rotundas in towns and cities throughout New Zealand were built during this era and Kaiapoi was no exception. The Council's response to the petition was to indicate that it favoured any project that may be arranged to provide funds for erecting a band rotunda. In July 1907 a gala was held on Labour day to raise funds for the rotunda and by November it had been decided to build it in Darnley Square. The Council, in making the decision to locate the rotunda on this site was endeavouring to carry out the long desired aim of making the Square the focus of the leisure activities of the community. Band concerts in the Square were the epitome of Kaiapoi Edwardian Society. Unfortunately the physical surroundings of the Square did not quite match the ideal and so there had been not quite the public response that was expected by the Kaiapoi Brass Band when it first asked for help to build the rotunda. In March 1912 a deputation of ratepayers asked the Council to agree to the rotunda being moved to a more central site opposite the Coffee Rooms. Messrs Blackwell, Bean and Hoskings spoke strongly in favour of removing the rotunda. It was thought that the concerts would be better patronized if the rotunda was near the centre of the business district. Concerts could be held on Friday evenings and the type of music could also be more varied. The Council approached the Waimakariri Harbour Board to arrange the lease of a site on the river bank at a reasonable rental. At its August 1912 meeting the Harbour Board resolved to permit the Council to resite the rotunda on the south side of the river in the locale of Beswick's old wharf. The rotunda was finally moved from Darnley Square in August 1913 to its new river side location by the Clark Brothers' company free of cost. James Strachan also provided his traction engine, without charge, for the removal effort.

Another aspect of Edwardian society was the annual holiday at the seaside. Kaiapoi was especially favoured in this respect as it had two beach areas within a short distance of the town.

Kairaki, situated on the northern side of the mouth of the Waimakariri River, could be reached from Kaiapoi by a half hour launch trip. From the early days of Kai Tahu dominion, Kairaki was an important mahika kai area. The river mouth had a plentiful supply of a variety of shell fish as well as other species of fish. For the early European settlers it provided a pleasant picnic area as well as an excellent sea and river fishing locality. In addition there were relatively safe bathing and boating sites.

Early Pakeha settlers in the Kairaki region used it as a cattle rearing area. The first settler at Kairaki was David Tibbitts. His sod hut was the first Pakeha building in the area. In the early 1860's Jane and Isaac Saunders settled in The Pines area. They too farmed cattle. Their land ran in a strip, just beyond the sand dunes, from The Pines to Woodend. Also in the 1860's Kenneth McIntosh and David Heney

took up blocks of land to the west of Tibbitts's and Saunders's blocks. They also farmed cattle. Heney was a dairy farmer who exported his salted butter to England. McIntosh, although he had cattle to begin with, set about draining his block of land and was able to create a good sheep farming block. From time to time however his farm was flooded and he lost stock. He was to become well known as a Clydesdale horse breeder.

By the turn of the century many people were beginning to become interested in either owning or leasing land in the beach areas which were under the control of



Kairaki showing a gathering, possibly connected with the tower beside building in middle distance. Note, what appears to be clumps of young marram grass plants in foreground - courtesy Canterbury Museum

the Canterbury Plantation Board. In 1904 the beach reserves were vested in the Council with the Domain Board taking responsibility for them. Soon after the vesting, Hector McIntosh, the son of the pioneer, applied for the lease of some ground at Kairaki. It was granted subject to a small grant from the Domain Board to McIntosh for the planting of marram grass. The Domain Board, alert to the fact that there was a demand for beach sections by 1906 was requesting the right to grant small section leases. It took another fifteen years before the leasing of beach sections was regularised. The passing of the Reserves and Other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act 1921-22 allowed the Borough Council to assume control of the land and consequently the leasing. In the interval between the 1906 request and the passing of the legislation, the Domain Board did lease land to those seeking it for a small annual rental.

The early years of the twentieth century saw the establishment of both Kairaki and The Pines as resort areas. The Borough Council, through the Domain Board, was keen to see the beach reserves promoted as a tourist attraction. The locality had

in abundance what Edwardian society felt was essential for healthy living, that is fresh air and space for recreation.

Although Kairaki and The Pines were attractive for these reasons facilities for camping and even picnicking were non-existent. In a delightful recollection in *Old Kaiapoi* a resident recalls a day at The Pines during the summer of 1890. Six children, resident in Sneyd Street, were packed off by their mothers for a day at the beach. They walked to Beach Road where they were lucky enough to get a lift in a dray to the beach. Apparently they spent some time on their arrival playing on the sea's edge, paddling and picking up shells and other interesting treasures. All this activity made the children very thirsty. All they had in their picnic basket was a bottle of "Boston Cream." This was a sweet syrup which had to be diluted with water before it could be drunk. The children had, in their excitement, forgotten to call into the last farmhouse before the beach to get some water. There was no fresh water at the beach. In desperation, the children drank the syrup which of course only increased their thirst. They then drank the sea water, at which point they felt they were going to die. Their day at the beach was ruined because of a lack of fresh water.

The children's experience was probably not isolated and as the popularity of the Beach Reserves grew the pressure on the Borough Council to provide basic amenities also grew. The first artesian bore was put down in 1912 at the north end of the Beach Domain and at about the same time fire places were built so that

holiday-makers could boil water and cook food.

The Plantation Board, while it had control of the area, had planted a number of pine trees at Kairaki. Seeds from these trees generated northwards along the coast giving the area just to the north the name, The Pines. The whole area and its potential as a tree plantation region interested an individual who was to have a great influence in Kaiapoi for the first fifty years of the twentieth century. He was Charles Morgan Williams.

Morgan Williams, as he was always known, was born in Newton, Montgomeryshire in 1878. He was educated at Woodbridge Grammar School, London, where he began a lifetime interest in the principles of socialism. His down-to-earth approach to the ideology of socialism meant that he was not an intellectual dilettante. At the relatively young age of sixteen



C. Morgan Williams, May McDougall, Kaiapoi photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

he was already the secretary of the Clapham branch of the Social Democratic Federation. This position was the beginning of his work for the socialist cause. As part of his socialist philosophy Williams saw farming as the only truly free life style. He had, as he was growing up, stayed with his mother's Welsh farming relatives and had enjoyed the farming work immensely. Williams' first job at the end of his schooling was as a clerk in the Inland Revenue Department. The constraints of office work did not suit this young man. A couple of coincidental events helped him to make a complete change to his lifestyle.

Williams had become very interested in the social laboratory that was New Zealand under Richard John Seddon's Liberal Government. Under Seddon's ministers, especially William Pember Reeves and John Mackenzie, the social fabric of New Zealand was changed. Reeves was responsible for a number of profound changes made to the labour and industrial laws of the country. The most momentous alteration in the work relationship was brought about by the passing of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act in 1894.

Also in 1894, MacKenzie, the Minister of Lands, was responsible for the introduction and ultimately the passing of the Lands for Settlement Act. This Act provided for the compulsory purchase of land by the crown under certain conditions. It led to the division of the large colonial estates, such as the Cheviot Estate, into smaller land holdings. The land was then able to be more intensively farmed by a larger number of land owners. This certainly would have appealed to Morgan Williams' sense of social justice. Two other measures introduced by the Liberal Government that probably also appealed to Williams' sense of justice were female enfranchisement in 1893 and the provision for old age pensions which became law in 1898.

It was the outbreak of the Boer War, however, that gave Williams the chance to come to New Zealand. The shortage of labour caused by the large number of men volunteering to go to the war meant that those who were left behind were required to work overtime. Williams thus had the chance to save enough money from his overtime work to be able to emigrate to New Zealand in 1902. He chose to come to the Kaiapoi area because a former Newport man, Richard Evans, whose wife was related to the Williams family, was farming there on a property called Waverley. Evans had offered the young Williams a job. He worked at Waverley until the beginning of the harvest season when he joined a harvesting gang. Williams felt that the best way to get to know the country side and its people was to join one of the gangs and move about working under a variety of conditions and meeting a assortment of the district's people. The end of the harvesting season gave Williams the opportunity to see a bit more of the country. He took a labouring job in Balclutha. At that time Balclutha was the principal town in the "dry" South Otago district. Williams was able to observe at first hand how an alcohol free area operated. He noted that while the consumption of liquor did not cease, it was, nevertheless, greatly reduced. He thought that this must be to the benefit of the whole population. While in Balclutha he joined the temperance organization, The Sons and Daughters of Temperance. At the beginning of the 1904 harvest season Williams returned to Kaiapoi to take up his job with the harvesting gang.

By 1905 Morgan Williams had gained enough experience and had a small amount of money saved to be able to start farming on his own account on leased land in the Tram Road area. Although the 1905 potato season was generally a disastrous one for the district because of the prevalence of the Irish potato blight, Williams was able to obtain a quantity of blight free potatoes and with the profit he made from the sale of them he was able to buy cattle and seed potatoes for his block of land. During 1906 Williams resumed his interest in the temperance movement by attending the Band of Hope meetings in Ohoka. It was at one of these meetings that he met a schoolteacher, Katie Breeze.

1907 turned into a land mark year for Williams. Firstly he had the opportunity of purchasing a block of land in Tram Road and secondly he and Katie were married.

The farm, which Williams named Maesgwyn, was in need of development. It needed draining and fencing as well as work on the house to make it more comfortable. The land was suited to dairying. With finance from Richard Evans Williams bought the first milking machine in North Canterbury. This was the start of a farming career centred around the farming and breeding of Ayrshire cattle.

As part of the development of Maesgwyn, Williams began planting trees for shelter and this began his passion for trees. In about 1910 Williams realised the potential of the Beach Reserves as a plantation area.

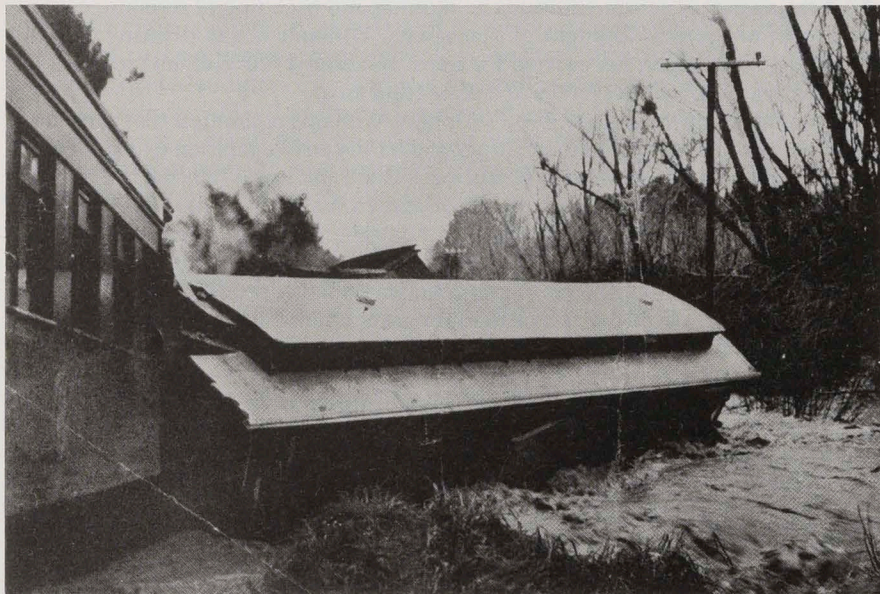
In an interview in the late 1960's Morgan Williams recounted that the Beach Reserves of the early part of the century had hardly any vegetation except marram grass. Sand had drifted inland as far as Beach Road and it was felt that the planting of lupins would halt this drift. Williams disagreed with this solution as he was sure that the root system of the lupins would smother the pine seedlings. He had observed that naturally dispersed pine seeds established more quickly if they lay on the shady side of clumps of marram grass. Williams then began deliberately planting pine seeds in the lee of marram grass clumps and he was moderately successful in this endeavour. The Pines thus became the only name that was suitable for the area.

Not all the significant events in Kaiapoi at this time were of such a positive nature. On 24 June 1905 there was a railway crash at Chaney's Corner which took the lives of two Kaiapoi citizens, J. Richards and R. J. Alexander.

In mid June 1905 there was an unseasonably warm patch of weather. This brought heavy rain in the mountains. The rain combined with snow melt caused by the warmer temperatures sent a torrent of water down the mountain rivers. The Waimakariri River was in high flood in the Bealey area on 23 June. As part of the early warning system several telegrams were sent to Kaiapoi from Bealey telling of the height of the flood and the probable damage it would cause in the lowland areas. A resident in Oxford reported that the sight of the flood from the Gorge Bridge was impressive. The water had spread out below the bridge to a width of at least a mile and a half. The flood water had reached the Empire Bridge on the Main North Road by about eight o'clock on Saturday morning and at this stage in the flood the water was carrying a large amount of debris. Near Chaney's Corner the Waimakariri had burst its banks and the water inundated the surrounding countryside. The railway

embankment in that locality had been constructed from light sandy soil. As the water rose up against the embankment the soil acted like a sponge and absorbed as much of the water as it was able. The absorbed water changed the structure of the embankment. It was no longer able to support the weight of a train. All the residents in the vicinity had their houses flooded. Mr Chaney told *The Press* reporter that the height of the water in his cottage was sixteen inches above the last highest flood. Many sheep, cattle, pigs and horses were drowned.

The accident occurred on Saturday afternoon a short distance north of the Chaney's Corner station in the locality known as Irishmans Flat. The driver of the train, Alexander Duffey, had been proceeding slowly because of the amount of water which had been dammed up against the embankment. The passengers reported that they felt that the train was quite safe as the water had not reached the top of the embankment. Neither the driver nor the passengers were aware of the weakening of the embankment itself until it collapsed under the weight of the train. Duffey reported that as the accident happened, the engine lurched to the left of the track and fell sideways off the track. This would indicate that the embank-



Chaney's railway accident, overturned front guard's van, 28 June 1905, *The Weekly Press* photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

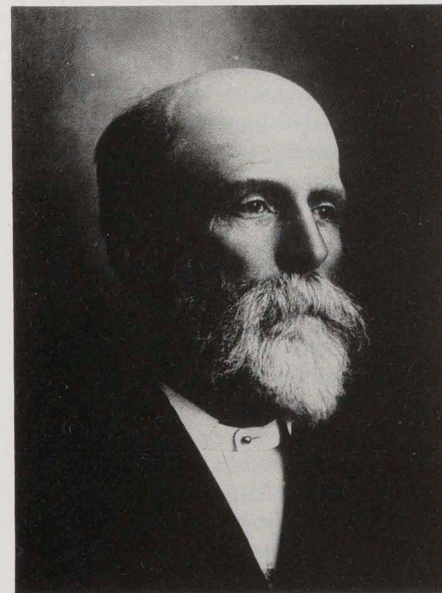
ment had become unstable on its western side where the water had ponded. There were two vans following the engine. The small "roadsider", carrying meat and the ordinary brake van were smashed to pieces as they telescoped into the engine. The first carriage, after the vans, slipped into the hole that had been created and the second carriage rammed into the back of the first carriage at head height. Alexander

and Richards had been standing on the rear platform of the first carriage and so there was little hope that they could survive such a collision. George Clothier who had been standing on the front platform of the second carriage had both of his legs broken because they were trapped between the two carriages.

J. Lothian Wilson, *The Press* reporter, and Joseph Sherris, the bridge inspector, raised the alarm. They first made their way to the Chaney's Corner station but they were unable to use the telephone there as the building was locked. They went on to Belfast where they were able to use the meat company's telephone to let the authorities know of the disaster. Two trains were sent to the accident site. One came from Christchurch and collected most of the passengers and the injured Mr Clothier. The other came from Kaiapoi to collect the bodies of Alexander and Richards and the remaining few passengers.

At the inquest into the deaths Sherris stated that he had been an inspector on the Christchurch-Kaiapoi line for the last thirty years and that the last time there had been a comparable flood was in 1887. He was observing the line most carefully during the journey and he was sure that the water level was at least seven inches below the line.

Kaiapoi was shocked as was the wider community over the deaths. The Premier sent a telegram of condolence to the community. Especially difficult for the people of Kaiapoi was the death of Robert Alexander.



R.J. Alexander - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Alexander had been the headmaster of the Kaiapoi Borough School for twenty five years and had become a much respected member of Kaiapoi society. He had been born in Saxmundham, Suffolk where he attended the National School. At the end of his schooling he became a pupil teacher, staying in this job for five years. At that point he won the Queen's Free Scholarship. This enabled Alexander to have free board, residence, and tuition for two years at the Metropolitan Training Institution in London. At the end of his training Alexander took up a position in charge of the boys' department of the National School in Aldeburgh. In 1871 he left England for Queensland where he became the headmaster of the Roma school, three hundred miles west of Brisbane. After six years in this post Alexander moved to Kangaroo Point to take up the head position of the boys' school there. The climate, however, was too humid for his family and so, for a complete change, the Alexander family moved to Port Chalmers in April

1879. In May, on the resignation of first headmaster, Mr E Raynor, Alexander gained the headmastership of the Kaiapoi Borough School.

In the twenty five years of his tenure Alexander maintained a keen interest in all of the latest developments in education. He was especially interested in physical education. He extended this interest to the Kaiapoi Cadet Corps. It was estimated that about three hundred boys passed through the Corps during the nineteen years Alexander was the captain. The Kaiapoi Corps won the championship drill contest held in the context of the Public School Sports in 1903 and 1904.

As well as being involved in education Alexander was a director of the Northern Building and Loan Company. He was also the vice president of the Kaiapoi Football Club. His commitment to his adopted town was complete. At a meeting of the Kaiapoi Borough School Committee following the accident the chairman, G.A. Ellen, said that Alexander had become so incorporated with the town that his death was a personal bereavement to nearly every family in the town.

That each family felt genuine sorrow at the death of Alexander was demonstrated at his funeral. There were four hundred people in the funeral procession, all of them representing some facet of his service to the community.

The other accident victim, John Richards, had arrived in Kaiapoi in 1874, emigrating from Cornwall. He and his wife had settled on a farm on Kaiapoi Island. This venture can not have been successful as Richards turned to contracting. He planted many of the first trees in the Domain and helped form Beach Road. In later years he had returned to farming in the Camside district with his eldest son. His funeral was held on the same day as Alexander's and although it was smaller in terms of numbers, nevertheless there were representatives from many of the clubs in Kaiapoi in attendance.

The accident site attracted a large number of sightseers. J. Lowthian Wilson reported that the roads to the site were choked with many sorts and conditions of vehicles. At the site itself people scrambled over the engine and the carriages, many of them taking splinters from the carriage on which the fatalities had occurred. Public interest in the accident was aroused by the unusual circumstances surrounding it and by the graphic descriptions written by J. Lowthian Wilson, who happened to be on the train at the time of the accident. Interest was probably further enhanced on the publication of photographs, taken by Lowthian Wilson, of the crash site in the Weekly Press of 28 June.

There was a sequel to crash in the Supreme Court exactly a year later. George Clothier claimed two thousand pounds damages from the Minister of Railways for the injuries he received in the accident. The case was heard before Mr Justice Denniston and a special jury. Over the three days of the trial the court heard evidence from the passengers and the railway employees as to the state of the track at the time of the accident. It was clear that although the passengers were apprehensive about the state of the track the railway employees were certain that all possible precautions had been taken in the face of the rapid rise in the water levels at the site of the accident. The jury however found for Clothier and awarded him fifteen hundred pounds in damages. The judge also awarded costs at the highest scale. This was a satisfactory conclusion for Clothier. At the same time

Richards' widow also claimed two thousand pounds damages. She was awarded seven hundred pounds, her nineteen year old daughter was awarded one hundred and four pounds and her twelve year old daughter was awarded one hundred and seventy five pounds and ten shillings.

The fact that both Clothier and the Richards family received payment for the suffering they endured raised some bitterness in the community. A report in *Truth* stated that although leave was granted to the other persons affected by the accident to pursue a remedy in the Supreme Court no such concession was granted to Mrs Alexander. It was stated that of the three families, the Alexander family was the worst off and it was a miscarriage of justice not to allow a claim for the family to be pursued. Although Mrs Alexander had presented a petition to the House of Representatives the *Truth* felt that given the lack of enthusiasm of Hall-Jones, the Minister for Railways, for her position it would have as much success as "— as whistling psalms to a dead horse." (12) Eventually Mrs Alexander was able to secure nine hundred pounds damages from the Railways Department.

The railway accident left a deep and lasting impression on the Kaiapoi community. Mrs Alexander presented her husband's library of educational books and his cabinet of geological specimens to the school. The school in turn established a memorial prize which is awarded annually to a Form Two pupil for general excellence. The community showed its appreciation of Alexander's work by erecting an elaborate head stone to him.

It is possible to speculate that one of the legacies that Alexander left the youth of Kaiapoi was a fondness for the outdoor life. If this is so then it becomes easy to understand why a young boy should start a movement in Kaiapoi that still has significance for many young people throughout New Zealand. The boy was R.M. Mallasch and the movement was the Boy Scouts.

If the connection with Alexander in this movement is tenuous then the connection with the Boer War is undoubted. The hero of the defence of Mafeking was Robert Baden-Powell. His methods of survival which he had documented in a book, *Aids to Scouting*, published in 1899, were put to the test during the seven month siege of Mafeking and found to be successful. The success of the Boers in holding out against the most powerful nation on earth and the contrast between the more physically fit colonial troops and those of the mother land shook the assumptions of the army hierarchy. It was no doubt due to his heroic stand and methods, that on his return to England in 1903, Baden-Powell was appointed Inspector General of Cavalry. After a year he saw the need for a formal course of instruction. In 1904 Baden-Powell established the Cavalry School in Wiltshire. The school was successful and in 1907 he was promoted to Lieutenant-General. Coincidentally in 1907 Baden-Powell heard that his *Aids to Scouting* was being used as basis for training boys in woodcraft (outdoor survival). The relative failure of the British troops in South Africa had led to a movement stressing the importance of outdoor training. This knowledge combined with the experience he had obtained with the Cavalry School motivated Baden-Powell to run a trial outdoor camp for

(12) *Truth*, 21 November 1906.

boys on Brownsea Island. During that camp Baden-Powell wrote an outline for the proposed Boy Scout movement. This outline was issued in 1908 as *Scouting for Boys*, and it became the manual for boy scout troops throughout Britain.

In 1908 Rudolf Mallasch had obtained Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* from T.G. Blackwell's bookstore and had organized his friends into a troop. His father, T.H.Mallasch, was so impressed with the achievements of the boys that he took over and organized two platoons thus forming the first Boy Scout troop in New Zealand. The members of the platoons were Rudolf Mallasch, Burton Hoskin, Eric Grey, Hugh Blackwell, - Harrison, - Templeton, - Purdie and two or three Parnham boys. They met in the Mallasch home in Cam Road and drilled in the paddock behind the house. It was these platoons that came to the notice of Colonel Cosgrove and inspired him to form other groups in Woodend and eventually throughout New Zealand. However without the initial enthusiasm of R.W.



Boy Scouts outside the Methodist Church on corner of Peraki and Fuller Streets, I.N. Eagle, Kaiapoi photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Mallasch and then the organisational abilities of his father the scouting movement would have been slower to take hold in New Zealand. The Scout Association still has a substantial presence in Kaiapoi with the establishment of the Blue Skies training centre in the town.

By 1910 a similar organisation had been formed for girls. The Kaiapoi Girls' Peace Scouts troop was led by Miss Evans. Its motto was "Be Always Ready or Ready aye Ready" and its philosophy was doing good works. In March Major Cosgrove addressed a meeting of factory girls on the benefits they would derive from belonging to the organisation. He said that the organisation did not aim to encourage tomboyish behaviour but rather to show girls they could be circumspect

in their behaviour, demand a high standard of morality from young menfriends and cultivate womanly graces. The Girls Peace Scouts eventually gave way to the Girl Guide Movement.

Kaiapoi was taking on more and more the role of an industrial town. Both the workers and the employers were aware of the need to make working conditions as congenial as possible. At the beginning of the establishment of the Woollen Mill the directors, especially Isaac Wilson and G.H.Blackwell, were at pains to make the working environment pleasant. The mill workers had their own subsidized illness and accident scheme. They also had their own social club which in addition to arranging social occasions also took on a welfare role. There were however times when there were problems between the workers and the employers. The passing of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act in 1894 made it possible for workers to organize themselves into unions and to take their problems to the Arbitration Court for an impartial solution. The first time this happened in Kaiapoi was in the early 1900's when the Woollen Workers Union began to press for a reduction in working hours. The union indicated in 1902 that it wanted a reduction in working hours from forty eight to forty five. The management, in refusing to the request, used the time honoured argument that a reduction of that type would seriously hamper the operation of the mill and thus seriously affect the workers. The management was correct to a degree, in this dispute, as the factory was fully committed to producing cloth for the contingent orders for the South African War. The union, while conceding that the hours issue was not vital, was able to insist that piece work was abandoned even although the management said that the women doing piece work were well treated and well paid. Thus, in this first dispute, both sides were winners which was a reflection both of the way that the arbitration process worked and the generally good conditions at the mill.

In 1905 a Shop Assistants Act was passed which limited the hours that assistants worked to fifty-two a week. A public meeting was held on 15 May 1905 to explain the implications of the Act to the local shop owners. J.H.Blackwell clarified the situation by pointing out that shops could open for nine hours on four days of the week, five hours on the half day and eleven hours on Saturday. He proposed the motion, that the meeting agree to a 6pm closing daily and a 9pm closing on Saturday. After some discussion Messrs T.Sullivan, J.Daly, and D.Brown advocated a later hour for closing on Wednesday which could be achieved if the shop assistants did not start work until 10am. This suggestion was not adopted and Blackwell's motion was passed by thirteen votes to four. As well as deciding on the important issue of the hours of work, the meeting considered a more domestic issue. It was to ask the Railways Department to deliver parcels to the businesses rather than leave them at the station for collection. In considering the two issues it became clear that an association of businesses was needed to speak on behalf of the business people in Kaiapoi. The meeting, therefore, decided to form a Retailers Association. (13) As a result of this meeting the Mayor, A.Pearce, and the Town Clerk visited at least thirty four shop-

(13) *The Press*, 16.5.1905.

keepers the following morning with a petition to request the Minister of Labour to authorize the closing of the shops in Kaiapoi at 6pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays Fridays and 9pm on Saturdays.

At the Council meeting the following week Blackwell requested that the Council certify the petition and send it on to the Minister of Labour. This created a furor. Councillor Sullivan said that the matter of shop closing hours had been sprung on the shopkeepers rather hastily and that a counter petition had been circulating which had been signed by thirty nine persons including some who had signed the petition taken around by the Mayor. This seemed to Sullivan to be a good enough reason to call a second public meeting on the matter. The Mayor, on the other hand, felt that it was a matter for the Retailers Association, which contrary to Sullivan's views, had been properly established with himself as chairman and the Town Clerk as secretary. After more acrimonious discussion Blackwell's motion was put and carried. Even so Sullivan did not stop calling for a further meeting. The Mayor, however, overruled him and the Council went on to its other business.⁽¹⁴⁾

By June the acting Minister of Labour had gazetted the shop closing hours in Kaiapoi. This move caused consternation and confusion in Kaiapoi. Many shopkeepers thought that the matter was to be discussed again at another public meeting. Some of those opposed to the new closing times sent telegrams to the Honourable D. Buddo asking him to have the regulations suspended until there was an agreement reached between the two factions. The confusion arose because the regulations had come into effect on a Wednesday which had been for some time a late night for shopkeepers who were taking into account that many of their customers, especially those employed at the Woollen Mill, could not shop again until Friday because of the half day holiday on Thursday. All the business premises including those of the Mayor and several Councillors stayed open on that night. It was said that they had permission to do so from the local shop inspector (Constable Simpson) but that from the following week the shops would have to abide by the gazetted regulations. Many store owners became discontented with the way the matter had been handled because although they had been told that the hours of closing had been set by the law, they read in the same gazette that the hours of closing in New Plymouth were more like the ones that Councillor Sullivan had proposed.⁽¹⁵⁾

The Retailers' Association was launched in controversial circumstances and it was some time before it earned the trust and respect of all the retailers of Kaiapoi. The shop closing hours debate was a local issue that divided the wider community as well as the retailers.

The community was not divided over the half day holiday though. Thursday had become the official half day. It was required by law that each Council decide at the beginning of each year which day was to be the half holiday for the ensuing year. It had become the custom to choose Thursday but there was a strong lobby to shift the half holiday to Saturday. The management and workers at the mill were

(14) *The Press*, 25.5.1905, p.4

(15) *The Press*, 8.6.1905, p.9

strongly of the opinion that Saturday was a more convenient day for a shut down of the factory. Not only was it better for the machinery but it was also better for the workers. Every year the Council sent a letter to the government asking that Saturday be declared the universal half holiday. The local Member of House of Representatives, the Honourable David Buddo, lobbied throughout his term for a change in the half holiday. The change did not occur until 1923 when the Council held a referendum in conjunction with its local body elections following its receipt of a petition from one hundred and thirty ratepayers asking for one to be held.

Another issue, although in essence a Christchurch local matter, spilled out to Kaiapoi during 1908-1909. It was not as divisive as the 1905 Shop Assistants Act but it was just as controversial as it signalled a move towards stronger party politics in both general and local body elections. By and large the Labour party politicians favoured the establishment of a port at Christchurch with the construction of a canal from Sumner. In February 1909 a joint meeting of the Rangiora and Kaiapoi Borough Councils was held so that the proponents of the canal and port could explain their position to the Councils and ask for their support. The Mayor of Christchurch, C. Allison, T. E. Taylor M.H.R., and Doctor H. T. J. Thacker explained to the joint meeting that they needed to have special legislation put in place in order to have the canal built but that was not possible as the Canal League was not a public body. The members of the League wanted to assure the North Canterbury local bodies that it did not envisage rating them for the development of a canal and port should it go ahead, but that they would benefit, as the canal would mean more trade. The proponents felt certain that port fees would be lower and maybe railway fees would also be forced down. The North Canterbury response was entirely pragmatic. The prevailing view was that there was already a splendid canal in the area. It was called the Waimakariri River. Those representing Kaiapoi did not wish to put their port at risk.

Since the interest generated in the port by John Sims and his shipping ventures there had been a small but steady flow of traffic in and out of the port. Unfortunately the Waimakariri Harbour Board was always struggling for funds. In the 1880's the Board had borrowed funds to buy a bucket dredge, the "*Hinemoa*". The dredge was not efficient enough for the job and so when it was swept out to sea during a flood in 1897 it was not replaced. For the next ten years the river was not dredged and the Board was faced with a number of compensation claims from ship owners who had had their vessels damaged on the bar. John Sims however was not deterred by the conditions. In the 1890's he added two Australian-built schooners to his fleet. On the arrival of the ships in Kaiapoi there was a public naming ceremony during which Sims's daughter Emma named the ships the "*Joseph Sims*" and the "*Emma Sims*". The Board was keen to promote the harbour and so by 1906 it was clear that it needed to invest in another dredge to keep the channel clear. During 1906 the chairman of the Harbour Board, William Doubleday, and one of the board members, B. Lissaman, visited Timaru, Dunedin and Invercargill to inspect the dredging operations in those ports. Although the dredges in use in those ports were larger than would be required on the Waimakariri they did see a type of dredge that would be able to clear the navigation channel and to reclaim nine or ten acres of

foreshore. The reclaiming of the foreshore would improve the river sites and lessen the effect of flooding on the embankments. It was calculated by the Board that if the silt that had collected in the channel over the previous thirty five years was removed then the same period would elapse before it needed to be cleared again. Therefore a loan extending over twenty five years to purchase a dredge would be justified in terms of the improvement obtained for the port. A private member's bill passed in 1907 made provision for the Board to raise a loan of up to three thousand pounds. The Waimakariri Harbour Board then made plans to build a pontoon type dredge fifty feet long. The dredge was named the "*Kaiapoi*" and began work in the river towards the end of 1907.

At the same time as the Board was investigating the possibility of purchasing a dredge, the formation of the Kaiapoi Shipping and Trading Company took place. This company took over the business of the old Milling and Produce Company as well as part of John Sims' operation. Its first ship was a small steamer called the "*Wootton*". It was apparent at a very early stage that the "*Wootton*" was not large enough to cope with the volume of cargo coming in and out of the port. The Company then decided to have a one hundred and eighty one ton steamer built especially for the Kaiapoi trade. The steamer, the "*Kairaki*" was first seen in Kaiapoi in 1909 and from that time on she proved her worth in the river trade. Most of the trade was with the provincial North Island ports and the West Coast. One of the more unusual statistics was the large number of sheep imported by the



Welcome to "*Kairaki*" 1909 - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Company. It landed sheep in Kaiapoi in order to send them onto the sales at Addington. This fact alone would explain the cool reception that the Canal League received in North Canterbury.

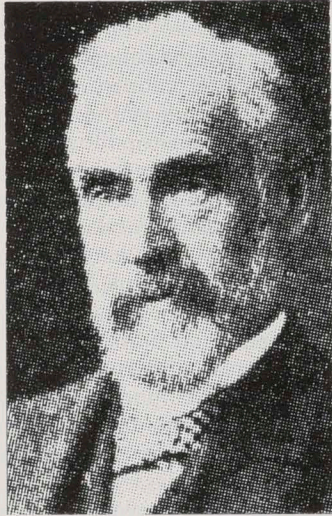
From about 1909 onwards the citizens of Kaiapoi, in common with most of the rest of New Zealand, became more concerned with the deteriorating international situation. In March 1909 the Premier had alerted the country to the serious position of the Royal Navy. It was feared that as a result of the accelerated building programme of the German navy, it would soon outstrip the Royal Navy in size and strength. The Mayor, J.H.Blackwell, asked the Council to send a wire to the Premier expressing the Council's approval for the prompt action of the government in voicing the desire of New Zealand to take a fair share of the necessary Imperial burden. In May the Council was concerned enough about defence matters to issue an invitation to the Honourable R.McNab to speak at a public meeting. McNab declined the invitation but the Council was not discouraged. In June the secretary of the National and Navy League wrote to Council seeking its support for the idea of universal military training. With an alacrity bordering on the fanatical, the Council arranged a public meeting for the National and Navy League to explain its concepts for national defence. The meeting was held towards the end of July. At the meeting a resolution was passed supporting the adoption of compulsory military training. The Council decided at its August meeting to send the motion to the Minister of Defence.

Kaiapoi's strong temperance background was revealed once again in relation to this resolution. In October the Council decided to add a further resolution to the compulsory training one. It proposed that all canteens at encampments should be abolished. The resolution had the wholehearted support of the Council members and also the ratepayers. This point of view was uniquely Kaiapoi and it complimented the firm belief that citizens had a duty to respond to any calls to defend the nation. This stance was responsible for the extensive response to both the formation of the Volunteers and to service in South Africa. Given this strong attitude it was not surprising that the Council in 1913 refused a request from R.Williams of the Christchurch Passive Resisters Union to hold open air meetings every third Saturday evening in the band rotunda. The Council's reply was that the band used the rotunda every Saturday.

Many of those people who had come to Kaiapoi as settlers in the early days and who had bought with them the non-conformist philosophies that characterised the prevailing outlook of the officials in Kaiapoi died in the first decade or so of the twentieth century. One of these was James Bugg, a long serving Councillor, who retired from the Council in May 1906 having served since 1888. His strong interest in the welfare of the town continued after his retirement. In 1908 he made a presentation of trees to enhance the surroundings of Darnley Square. He died on 28 June 1910.

The second remarkable pioneer to die was Isaac Wilson. Without his drive and commitment Kaiapoi would not have achieved worldwide fame through the production of high quality woollen goods. The retention of the mill in Kaiapoi

and the dedication of the mill to quality products was due to the motivation of its first chairman. He also served his church and in doing so was committed to the temperance movement.



J. Lowthian Wilson - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

The third remarkable pioneer to die during this time was G.H. Blackwell. His death in 1914 bought to an end a exceptional career. This most uncommon man, who nevertheless had a common touch, had committed to the town nearly all of his adult life. He had served not only as a mayor and a councillor but he was the first Superintendent of the Fire Brigade a position he held for thirty two years. He was the president of the Rugby Club as well as of the Tennis Club. He was actively involved in his church and as a result of that he was committed to the temperance movement. His business interests in his store and the Woollen Mill were the cornerstones of commercial life in Kaiapoi.

A happier event in August 1913 also served to remind the town of its roots. According to *The Press*, in an office in Cookson Street well known as the "woollen mill," J. Lowthian Wilson celebrated fifty years as the paper's North Canterbury reporter. The office had become more than a press agency, it was a repository of fifty years of history collected by Lowthian Wilson. His particular love seemed to be reporting the early elections. Lowthian Wilson recalled with relish many of the elections which had degenerated into knock-down-drag'em-out brawls. He especially recollected the election of Edward Richardson which resulted in the candidate receiving injuries which caused him a life time of pain. Just after his election Richardson was being dragged across the bridge in his gig by his supporters when one of his opponents decided to tip him into the river. Richardson received his injuries in the ensuing fight, and had to be taken to Lowthian Wilson's house where he was cleaned up and smuggled out again to continue his journey to Christchurch.

The other event that Lowthian Wilson remembered with some fondness was the 1864 gold rushes to the West Coast. Wilson was able to publish a letter from William Everest to his brother David, of the Kaiapoi Exchange Hotel, telling him of his discoveries, under the heading of "The Ohohonu Goldfields". The publication of the letter resulted in hundreds of gold-seekers pouring through Kaiapoi on their way to the goldfields via the Horsley Downs to the headwaters of the Hurunui River and down to the Greenstone Creek. This route was only used by the diggers until the Otira route was opened up in 1867. It was however a time of excitement for *The Press* reporter.

In his long career J. Lowthian Wilson interviewed all the notable men of the era, such as Sir George Grey, Sir Julius Vogel and Sir Harry Atkinson. He reported on

the commonplace and the exotic and as *The Press* noted his documentation of the those fifty years was a valuable resource for historians. (16) J. Lowthian Wilson during these years also took time to be involved in public service. He was the long time secretary of the Mechanics Institute as well as serving on various committees such as the Record Reign Committee. Wilson was a Borough Councillor and in 1898 was Mayor of the Borough. His mayoralty was marked by a number of quarrels between himself and the councillors mainly because of the autocratic fashion he ran the Council meetings.

The commercial foundation that Isaac Wilson and Blackwell laid down and the example of long public service that Bugg and Lowthian Wilson provided, was not squandered by the succeeding generations. In the second decade of the twentieth century Kaiapoi began a rebuilding programme that reflected the general prosperity of the town and to a certain degree the solid values on which that prosperity had been nurtured.

The death of Edward VII in May 1910 and the succession of George V gave the necessary impetus to the building programme. As the Government had done with the coronation of Edward VII it offered local bodies a subsidy on projects that would commemorate the new King's coronation. At the time that the Kaiapoi Borough Council was searching for a project, the Mechanics' Institute decided to offer its assets to the Council. Since its inception in the 1860's the Institute had run a circulating library. It had also acquired land and buildings which were used for housing the library and for meetings and lectures. In January 1911 the secretary of the Institute wrote to the Council offering to it the land and assets of the Institute. By April of that year the Council had set up a committee to oversee the handing over of the property and to liaise with the solicitors over the legal implications of the gift. In the same month the Council received details of the coronation subsidy. It was decided in June to apply for the full subsidy in order to construct a Coronation Circulating Library and reading room. At that same meeting it was decided to have the foundation stone ceremony on the day of the coronation. The library was to occupy a site next to the new fire station on the corner of High Street and Raven Street. The Council had previously raised a loan to build the fire station and so it seemed good sense to construct the library alongside it. The whole complex received the sobriquet "coronation" even although the Council had determined to rebuild the fire station before the subsidy for coronation projects was received. The architect for the library was F.J. Garnett. His plans were accepted by the Council in September 1911 and tenders were called for the construction of both the fire station and the library shortly afterwards. The successful tender was from Alfred Pearce, a former Mayor and local contractor.

The foundation stone was laid by the local member, the Honourable D. Buddo, on 27 December 1911. In his speech Buddo paid tribute to the work and the generosity of the Mechanics' Institute. He expressed the wish that the library would carry on where the Institute had left off in providing the means for self education. He also hoped that the records of the pioneer settlers would

(16) *The Press*, 16.8.1913. p.13

find their way into the library where they could be preserved for succeeding generations.

The official handing over the Institute's property took place in January 1912. Councillor Revell moved at the 9 January 1912 meeting of the Council that the Council record its hearty appreciation for the public spirited action of the trustees and members of the Mechanics' Institute in presenting its freehold property and library to the town.

F.J.Garnett presented the certificate of completion of the new complex at the end of August 1912. The buildings were officially opened by the Mayor, R. Wylie, on 5 September 1912. The library was open for lending on Wednesday and Saturday evenings with members of the Library Committee taking turns to act as librarians for the first three months.

As the world drifted slowly towards World War One Kaiapoi was caught up in patriotic fervour that appeared to grip every community in New Zealand. The Council offered to entertain a detachment from the five hundred men of the ship's company H.M.S. New Zealand when they visited Rangiora in March 1913. The community wished to show how proud they were of the servicemen and the part they would play in any future defence of the realm.

At the 4 August 1914 Council meeting the Mayor moved that the Prime Minister be congratulated on the offer of an Expeditionary Force to assist the Empire in the present crisis. There was no hint, of course, of the terrible toll that the First World War would inflict on small communities like Kaiapoi. The citizens were keen to play their part. It was a matter of honour for them that their young men volunteered to fight. However the experience of the Boer War did not go unheeded. A fifty pound grant to the Patriotic Fund by the Council towards the end of August was given with the proviso that it would be used to alleviate any distress experienced by Kaiapoi men at the front or of their dependants at home.

The turning point for New Zealand's nationhood has been perceived by many as the campaign at Gallipoli. The bravery of the soldiers in the face of overwhelming physical odds was and is a source of great pride. The Council passed a motion in May 1915 that epitomised the sense of pride and the profound sense of regret that such an episode in the country's history should be achieved at such a cost.

"That we express our sense of pride at the news of the magnificent valour of our men at the front and the splendid manner in which they have upheld the honour of New Zealand. That we deeply honour the memory of those brave officers and men who have given their lives for their King and Country and express our sincere sympathy with their relatives and friends."

Throughout the years of the Great War the Council sent letters of sympathy to the families of men who were either wounded or died in the course of their duties in the war. It makes depressing reading as it is clear that at every meeting a letter was sent to a family in the district.



Executive Kaiapoi Patriotic Committee
Standing J.W. Barnard (Chairman 1914) L.B. Evans, H. McIntosh, T.R. Leithead.
Sitting C.H. Wright (Secretary and Treasurer), J.H. Blackwell (Chairman 1915-19), E.E. Pappill, I.N. Eagle, Kaiapoi, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

All of the work raising money to support the troops was done by the Patriotic Committee which was headed by the Mayor, J.H. Blackwell, and the two women's organisations, the Lady Liverpool Committee and the Red Cross Committee. All three organisations held concerts and bazaars to raise money. Each committee was part of a national network and as the war went on the national organisations imposed targets on the local committees. For example at a meeting in November 1915 the local body representatives between the Waimakariri and Ashley Rivers resolved to raise seven thousand pounds for the Canterbury Patriotic Fund. One of the most popular schemes for raising money were the "Queen Carnivals". Each business and organisation picked a woman to represent them as a "Queen". It was then the duty of the "Queen" to help in the raising of money. The "Queen" who raised the most money was then declared the winner of the Carnival.

In addition to raising money the women's committees held sewing and knitting bees to make extra clothing such as socks and scarfs for the comfort of the men at the front. The organisations also acted as welfare agencies for the families of those who were away. The women, in particular, visited the families to make sure that they were not suffering too much with the absence of, in most cases, the main bread winner. Gifts of food and clothing were often provided for the families. The

work of the Lady Liverpool Committee was recognised after the war with the awarding of the M.B.E. to Mrs J.H. Blackwell who was the president of the group throughout the war. The strong influence of the Wesleyan ethic of service and hard work was evident in the exertion of the committees. The sober outlook of the Kaiapoi Patriotic Committee was recorded in its response to a suggestion from the Taumarunui Patriotic Committee that money could be raised through the running of lotteries. It was thought that the public should be encouraged to subscribe directly to the fund without the element of speculation.

Apart from the intense work done by the committees Kaiapoi citizens were caught up in the larger debates of the Great War. Towards the end of 1915 the Christchurch Citizens Defence Corps proposed that the Government should, in the interests of the Empire, introduce a Bill making conscription compulsory. As part of their campaign the Defence Corps sought the support of the local bodies. The Kaiapoi Council considered the Corps' suggestion in January 1916. After some discussion it was decided that the Council favoured the continuation of the voluntary system and that the Council would assist in every possible way to make voluntary recruiting a success. However the Council did give itself room to change its mind by suggesting that if the voluntary system failed it would support compulsion. A request to the Council from Lieutenant Stark to use the Beach Domain as a concentration camp brought the physical presence of the war closer to Kaiapoi. These camps were specialised training camps for the volunteers where they received intensive training over a short period of time. Permission was granted but it does not appear that the Beach Domain was ever used as a concentration camp.

During the last two years the citizens had to adjust their way of life to support the war effort. There were shortages of manufactured goods from overseas, like tyres for cars and trucks. The government also imposed restrictions on all the communities under the National Efficiency Scheme. The Kaiapoi Council made every effort to meet the targets imposed on it and it does not appear that the citizens were unduly inconvenienced.

The theory of white racial superiority was put to the test during the First World War. The Imperial government did not want coloured men serving along side white men. As early as 7 August 1914 the Honourable A.T. Ngata raised the question, in Parliament, of Maori fighting for the Imperial cause overseas. He told the House that many Maori men wished to serve in the war. They would be content to serve in Egypt or India if they were not permitted to go to the front. He also acknowledged that if Maori were not accepted they would have to serve at home. In reply, the Prime Minister, W. F. Massey, said that the New Zealand government did not have the power to make a decision on who would serve in what theatre of war. It would have to wait for the Imperial government to make any decision to accept or reject the Maori offer to fight. In the meantime the New Zealand government indicated that it would be pleased to use their services within the country if that proved to be necessary. However in the next month the Imperial government did accept the involvement of the Indian troops in the war and that was seen as a signal that the Maori

offer would be accepted. Mr Ngata reported that although many Maori were used to roughing it in their rural setting they were not trained in military discipline. The solution to this deficiency was to set up concentration camps in Maori districts. On 16 September the Prime Minister announced that the Imperial government had accepted the offer of the Maori to serve overseas. Two hundred Maori were to serve in Egypt. The two hundred were to be as representative as possible of all tribes.

There were some notable exceptions to the general joy that greeted the announcement. The tribes of the Waikato region suspicious of Pakeha intentions did not want to serve. Kai Tahu men, however, were willing to volunteer. They had volunteered to fight on the Imperial side during both the Land Wars in New



*Tuahiwi Branch of the Lady Liverpool and Mrs Pomare's Maori Soldiers' fund Committee
Standing, Hamuera Rupene, Mrs Mata Hutana, Mrs Reita Tainui, Tehau Koraka, Mrs R.M. Mutu (O.B.E.
Member of Executive, representing the South Island) Mrs Tini Tirikatene, Tare Puruti
Sitting, Miss Wikitoriu Tirikatene, Mrs Hutika Croft, Mrs Mere Taituha (vice-president), Mrs Miria Puruti
(president), Mrs Ani Teatika (secretary), Mrs Tini Momo, Miss Hera Rupene, H.D. Bettger, Rangiora
photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum*

Zealand and the South African War. A Mounted Rifle Corps volunteer unit at Tuahiwi had been formed in October 1897. Taituhu Hape presided over a meeting during which Sergeant Hopera Uru of the Record Reign Contingent explained the duties and discipline required of corps volunteers. Uru was of the opinion that Maori should combine with their Pakeha friends for defence. The meeting approved the setting up of the Corps and a number of young men volunteered. Kai

Tahu continued to have an interest in defence and they were among the first to volunteer for duty with the Maori contingent.

Naturally fighting in a war has a price and for Kai Tahu it was high. As a people they could ill afford to lose any young male members but that is just what happened. The fiftieth jubilee celebrations of St Stephen's church in 1917 was tinged with sadness. Archdeacon Woodthorpe read out the names of twelve local Maori who had been killed in the war. Those twelve represented a substantial proportion of the Kai Tahu male population. Although there was a public welcome to the Kai Tahu survivors of the war not enough recognition of their part in the war and of the devastating effect that the number of dead had on the tribe has been acknowledged or documented.

The war and the possibility of a reliable alternative to gas hastened the further modernisation of the borough. In 1910 the government had passed an Act permitting the construction of eight hydro-electric power stations. In the period before the passing of the Act, Canterbury people had been investigating the possibility of building a hydro station in the province. The Waimakariri had been looked at as a possible location but it had not been seen as an efficient site by an American expert who favoured Lake Coleridge. The natural drop between the lake and the Rakaia River valley was seen to provide an ideal site for a hydro-electric station. It was not surprising that the government took advantage of the work already done in its decision to build the Lake Coleridge station first. The three generator station was opened in November 1914 and in the next few months Canterbury local bodies began investigate the possibility of using electricity for lighting. (17) In March 1915 the Kaiapoi Borough Council held a special meeting to receive a report from Mr Dickinson, who was an electrical engineer, and the Town Clerk on the cost of installing electrical lighting and the profits that the Borough could expect from such a venture. It was decided at that meeting that the Council would write to the Minister of Public Works to inform him that it was considering taking advantage of the Lake Coleridge scheme. The Council wanted to know precisely the terms under which it would obtain power. It also wished to know why the Temuka Council had been offered special terms as a bulk consumer whereas it was understood by the Council that the Public Works Department would retain the special terms if Kaiapoi were to come into the scheme. The Minister replied in April that the Department would be pleased to discuss the supply of electricity to Kaiapoi.

As soon as the war broke out it was clear that there could be no certainty of supply of carbide for the gas plant. At the time that the Council received the Minister's reply on electricity, it was awaiting a shipment of six tons of carbide. It had been told that the shipment was due in Melbourne towards the end of April. The arrival of this shipment of carbide became quite uncertain and confused and this must have contributed towards the Council's determination to switch the borough over to electricity. The Council was informed in July 1915 that the five tons of carbide that it had received in June was its 1914 supply and that the

(17) *The Encyclopedia of New Zealand* Vol 1 p.379

remaining one ton would arrive as soon as possible. The New Zealand Acetylene Gas Company then went on to explain that the 1915 supply of carbide was due to leave London shortly but that it would be subject to a surtax of two shillings and sixpence. The company even got this charge wrong and it had to write in August to inform the Council that the surtax would be six shillings, more than double the amount it had quoted in its earlier letter.

The Council held another special meeting in January 1916 with the Department of Public Works' electrical engineer, Mr Burke, during which the approximate capital costs of installing electricity in the Borough were discussed. It was decided to go into matters in more depth and while this process was taking place the Council received more bad news from the New Zealand Acetylene Gas Company. The company, owing to government requirements, was unable to make further carbide shipments. It was therefore clear to the Council that it had to make the change to electricity.

At the 26 April 1916 the Council received an estimated cost of reticulation of electric power from the Public Works Department. It appears that the councillors were a little wary of the amount of money that was required for the scheme as they did not make the commitment to go ahead with the Public Works plan. Instead the Council decided to explore the possibility of buying power from the recently formed, but not yet operational, North Canterbury Sheepfarmers' Freezing Export and Agency Company Limited. That avenue was closed to them when the directors decided at their July meeting that the company could not supply the needs of the town and their own works. The lighting and heat situation was relieved a little in June with the news that the New Zealand Acetylene Gas Company had acquired four tons of lower grade carbide which it was passing on to the Borough. Another ten tons of 15/25 carbide arrived in November. It was obvious that the strain imposed on the Council by the uncertainty of carbide supply tipped it towards making the decision to have the Public Works Department reticulate the borough. After further correspondence between the Council and Mr Burke and a public meeting seeking the approval of the ratepayers to raise a loan for the scheme, a draft agreement to reticulate the Borough was arrived at in January 1917. The loan of three thousand, three hundred pounds was raised and work on installing the electrical system began in March 1917. For the rest of the year the Council had rely on irregular supplies of carbide to keep its light and heat system functioning. It must have been with great relief that it was able to announce that on 31 December 1917 that the last of the gas connections would be cut off and that it was going to dispose of the gas making equipment. The electrical reticulation system was officially given to the borough by the Public Works Department in April 1918. At that time at least two hundred and fifty householders and businesses had electrical connections.

The war years also saw the establishment of the freezing industry in Kaiapoi. This industry was to become as important to the town's identity as the Woollen Mill. As if to cement the importance of the Blackwell family to the development of Kaiapoi it was George Blackwell's son, Joseph, who was largely instrumental in securing Kaiapoi as the site for the Freezing works.

In 1883 T. Borthwick and Sons Ltd opened a Freezing works at Belfast. This venture was to service North Canterbury as well as other regions in Canterbury. It became evident over the years that the Belfast works was not large enough to cope with the numbers of animals being sent for slaughter. The shortage of space became especially critical during the early war years. A group of North Canterbury farmers then began to investigate the possibility of establishing a co-operative venture in their own area. Their plans attracted criticism from Sir George Clifford, the chairman of the Belfast company. He was of the opinion that a farmer co-operative company could not be successful. The proponents of the co-operative, however, had the models of the successful North Island co-operatives to follow, especially that of the Waiarapa co-operative. There were several advantages to the farmers. The works would be owned by the farmers for the benefit of themselves and this would ensure that all benefits would accrue to farmers.

The establishment of a small, centrally situated works for the four North Canterbury counties of Amuri, Cheviot, Kowai, and Waipara was thought to ensure that stock would arrive at the works in prime condition. The North Canterbury township of Waipara was selected by the steering group as being the most suitably located settlement for the project. A letter written by a sheepfarmer from Amberley, first printed in *The Press*, was used in the publicity material for the new company under the caption of "A Progressive North Canterbury Sheepfarmer Writes." In the letter it was stated that as a sheepfarmer in North Canterbury the writer appreciated the enterprise of the organizers of the new Freezing works because of the nearness of the works to a large and ever-increasing source of supply.

The first meeting of the provisional directors of The North Canterbury Sheepfarmers Co-operative Freezing Export and Agency Company Ltd. took place on 28 April 1915 in the office of the provisional secretary in Christchurch. The company had been floated with a capital of one hundred thousand pounds divided into twenty thousand shares at five pounds each. George Dean Greenwood of "Teviotdale", Amberley, was voted into the chair. Greenwood told the meeting that conditions for the establishment of a Freezing works were the best they had been for twenty years. He also reported that the local member of Parliament, George Forbes, was taking steps in conjunction with the government to reserve land at Glenmark for workers' cottages. At this meeting it was reported that over one hundred and twenty farmers had been allocated shares and that this represented over a quarter of the company's capital.

Duncan Rutherford, William Banks, Frank Courage, Benjamin Glass and Greenwood formed a committee to inspect the proposed site at Waipara with the intention to report to the next meeting of the provisional directors. At the 5 May meeting the site committee recommended that in addition to the hundred acres granted by the government, the company should buy the adjoining one hundred and fifty two acres. Although he supported the Waipara site Rutherford raised the idea that either Rangiora or Kaiapoi would be a better paying proposition. This suggestion was countered by Thomas Stone who said that to consider any other site would be to break faith with the shareholders. Glass was instructed to proceed with

the survey the water resources of the area. His survey showed that there was sufficient water for the works.

While the provisional directors were negotiating for the purchase of the Waipara site, a group of Kaiapoi men were preparing a submission to the company to persuade it to consider Kaiapoi as the site for the works. At the 9 June meeting a deputation headed by J.H. Blackwell was allowed to address the meeting. The deputation presented a lengthy and detailed submission. It was divided into fourteen parts covering everything from a proposed site to the raising of capital in the area.

The site, on which the deputation had already acquired an option, was situated on the south eastern boundary of the town. It had a railway siding and was adjacent to the North Branch of the Waimakariri. There was excellent drainage from the site to the South Branch of the river and out to sea. The water supply from a bore on the site was estimated to flow at sixty gallons a minute. The river frontage according to the deputation was a superb advantage. The company could build its own wharf and thus facilitate the landing of cattle. It was thought that farmers in the Kaikoura region would support a works at Kaiapoi if they were able to ship their stock directly to the works. Kaikoura farmers already used the port at Kaiapoi in preference to Lyttelton. The deputation told the meeting that in the last year sixty thousand sheep and twelve thousand lambs had been put through the port. The deputation had calculated that freight costs to Kaiapoi up the river from Lyttelton would be three shillings and two pence cheaper than similar costs to Waipara. This saving in freight costs would be echoed in a saving on timber. Timber would be about the same cost at Kaiapoi, as it was at Lyttelton, whereas it would be about two shillings per one hundred feet dearer at Waipara. The example of importing the timber directly up the river for the Belfast works was given to support the deputation's contention that setting up costs to the company would be less if the directors decided on Kaiapoi. The only problem that the deputation saw in the use of the river was the bar. However the deputation had been assured by the Waimakariri Harbour Board that it was going to put the bar in a workable condition.

Kaiapoi was within driving reach of the main stock markets of Addington, Rangiora, Oxford, Cust and Amberley as well as having rail access at a cheaper rate than to Waipara.

Blackwell commented that an important component for the works was labour. In Kaiapoi there was already a pool of skilled workers who in the main worked at Belfast but who lived in Kaiapoi. It was thought that these men would be willing to work in Kaiapoi. Labour would be attracted to Kaiapoi because the cost of living, as well as rents, was cheaper. The Borough Council was in the process of negotiating for an electrical supply from Lake Coleridge and this undoubtedly would make it cheaper for the company to obtain electricity. Blackwell stressed that ten thousand pounds worth of shares would be taken up immediately if the works was sited at Kaiapoi.

Directly after the deputation had addressed the provisional directors, it went into a meeting with the shareholders. The deputation had a tougher time at the shareholders meeting. The shareholders were determined to keep the location of

the works at Waipara although they did concede that there ought to be an inspection of the Kaiapoi site. However a hand vote taken at the end of the meeting showed that the majority of the shareholders were in favour of the Waipara site.

The Kaiapoi deputation of Blackwell, McIntosh, Parnham, and Parish was asked to meet with the newly elected directors of the company on 19 June.

At this meeting Blackwell stressed that he did not want go over old ground but that he wanted to emphasise that the publicity given to the outcome of the vote taken at the shareholders meeting had increased the interest of farmers in the Kaiapoi district in having the works sited in the town. As a matter of information he wished the directors to know that the deputation had spoken to the landowners of the site and that they had been able to persuade them that eighty pounds per acre was a reasonable price for the land. This represented a twenty pound drop in the price that the land owners had asked for. Even though the land was dearer than that available at Waipara, construction and freight costs were by comparison much lower so that the price of the land should not, in the deputation's opinion, deter the directors from considering the Kaiapoi site.

With the increased interest in the works Blackwell was sure that the deputation could guarantee the company at least fifteen thousand pounds. There had been intense canvassing in the Oxford district by Mr Parish and he had found that the vast majority of farmers were willing to support the company if the works was built at Kaiapoi. There had also been canvassing in the other districts between Kaiapoi and Oxford and here it was found that although most of the farmers supported the idea of the works at Kaiapoi they did not want to openly declare their support in case they should lose the space promised for their stock at Belfast for the coming season.

The deputation faced a number of searching questions from the directors. Blackwell was able to reassure them that the Borough Council would not be putting any obstacles in the way of the company and that the problem of the bar was being addressed by the Waimakariri Harbour Board. He reiterated that in the deputation's estimation Kaiapoi was the ideal site from all points of view. The directors for their part seemed to be genuinely interested in at least inspecting the site.

In adopting this stance the directors appeared to be heading for a confrontation with the shareholders many of whom had bought shares simply because it had been proposed that the works were to be situated at Waipara. The directors had to look for ways that would satisfy the shareholders as well as being the best investment for the company. Greenwood suggested that the ideal solution might be to have a killing works at Waipara and a freezing works at Kaiapoi. In spite of the clear indications that they were considering the site at Kaiapoi the directors gave Greenwood the power to purchase the land at Waipara. At the 26 June 1915 meeting of the directors, Greenwood reported that the government under the current legislation had the power to sell just five acres at a time. This restriction would be lifted later in the session when the land bill in front of the House became an Act. A resolution proposed by Stone was then passed by the directors stating that as soon as sufficient capital had been subscribed (fifty thousand pounds) then the directors would begin building the



Opening of Freezing Works March 1917 J.T. Mitchell, Christchurch photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

works at Waipara. It seemed, therefore, that the Waipara supporters had won the day but they had not counted on the tenacity of the Kaiapoi deputation.

The deputation was represented by Blackwell, H. McIntosh and Parnham at the 26 June meeting. It wanted to know if the works would be constructed by February 1916. This question put the directors in an awkward position and to deflect it they assured the deputation that provided the company had sorted out the problems of the site and had raised enough money then the works would be erected by February. The deputation retired and it was then that the directors decided to tell it that if it could raise thirty five thousand pounds then the company would build two works, one at Waipara and the other at Kaiapoi. The deputation was dismayed. Blackwell said that it could not raise that amount of money and suggested that it could raise between twenty and twenty-five thousand pounds. It was understood by the deputation that the directors would still consider Kaiapoi if it managed to raise the required capital.

In a circular sent to the shareholders after the 26 June meeting the directors stated that they would only build a works at Kaiapoi provided that district contributed thirty five thousand pounds. The directors urged the northern farmers to take up more shares so that the works at Waipara could proceed. The Kaiapoi deputation countered this by having their argument for a works in its locality published in *The Sun* newspaper on 3 July 1915.

The northern shareholders responded to the directors' call to the extent that by the shareholders extraordinary general meeting on 7 July Greenwood was able to state that with the taking up of six thousand seven hundred shares the works would be built at Waipara. A second works at Kaiapoi would be considered if the Kaiapoi

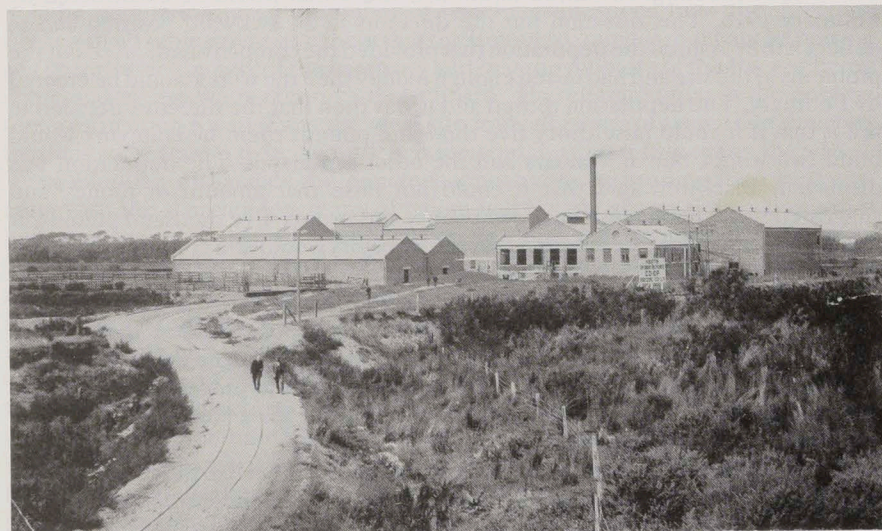
catchment raised thirty thousand pounds. At about the same time two of the directors, Edward Burbury and William McRae, were undertaking a tour of inspection of the North Island freezing companies. This tour was designed to gather information about the best type of building, machinery and personnel that the company would need to make a success of its venture.

In the course of that tour it became apparent to both men, who were strong supporters of the Waipara site, that in fact, the best site for the works would be at Kaiapoi. Burbury and McRae's report was presented to the 17 July meeting at which the Kaiapoi deputation was again present. Blackwell reported that twenty five thousand pounds had been raised by Kaiapoi people, the majority of whom were farmers and therefore potential suppliers of the works. He reassured the directors that there would be no objection from the local bodies and that the whole town was behind the aim of having a freezing works built in Kaiapoi.

The next development took place at the 21 July meeting when Greenwood told the Kaiapoi deputation that the company was favourably inclined to build a works at Kaiapoi provided the question of land for the site could be settled. He still insisted that the works at Kaiapoi would be in addition to the one built at Waipara. At the following meeting, 28 July, the directors passed a resolution to buy the land at Kaiapoi.

The works at Kaiapoi were to be known as the main works and construction was to begin as soon as practicable. The company still intended to build a smaller works at Waipara when it was considered opportune to do so.

The directors' decision to build the works at Kaiapoi angered the northern farmers. A deputation, led by D.T. Doak and W.W. Foster, representing the Omihi



General view from railway of Kaiapoi freezing works 1917 - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

farmers, attended the 4 August meeting. The Omihi farmers had been strong supporters of the original plan to build the works at Waipara and were therefore bitterly disappointed with the directors' decision in favour of Kaiapoi. They did not think that they could support the company any longer. They certainly wished to reduce their holdings in the company. This turn of events was not a problem for the company because as soon as Kaiapoi was selected to be the site for the main works, many people in the Kaiapoi district either bought shares or increased the holdings that they already held.

There were also two other deputations which met with the directors of the company at various times. The first one was from the Oxford district and it called on the provisional directors before the first Kaiapoi deputation. The second deputation was from the Rangiora district and it appeared before the directors just after the decision to site the works in Kaiapoi had been made. Both deputations wanted the company to consider their districts as sites for works. Neither of the deputations had the persistence and commercial acumen of the Kaiapoi people and they did not receive more than a single hearing from the directors.

The Kaiapoi deputation attended the 4 August meeting to request representation for the district on the Board of the Company. Blackwell was insistent that there should be more than one representative from the district. However Greenwood suggested that the district nominate one person for the vacancy on the Board and thus avoid the necessity for calling a shareholders' meeting. In taking this attitude Greenwood was avoiding a public showdown with the northern stockholders who were still bitter over the decision to site the works at Kaiapoi. The Kaiapoi people were satisfied with the suggestion as it assured them of getting "their man" on the Board. The Kaiapoi deputation had by this time turned itself into a committee. The committee was commercially astute enough to safeguard its interests by withholding the options on the land until it was sure that the company was not going to change its mind on the site and until they had representation on the Board. This was achieved at 4 September 1915 meeting when J.H. Blackwell was voted on to the Board to fill the vacancy. At the following meeting the options on the land were handed over to company.

The company had appointed James Reay as engineer and works manager on 11 August. He was consulted by the Board on the best plan for the buildings and the best type of machinery.

By the 20 October meeting the plans for the buildings were submitted and accepted. The Company agreed to provide storage capacity for 75,000 and stands for twenty four butchers who it was estimated would kill 2,000 a day. The estimated cost of the construction was twenty five thousand pounds. There was provision made for a second storey to be put on the cold store at a cost of a further six thousand pounds. It would increase the storage capacity to 100,000 carcasses. Tenders were immediately called for the construction of the works. The successful tenderer was W. Williamson who had submitted a tender for thirty thousand five hundred and thirty four pounds.

The ceremony to lay the foundation stone took place on 25 May 1916. Already by that date the tallow department, the cool store and the slaughter house were



One half of mutton killing board with beef department on left 1917
Left to right Walter Dunn, Solomon Paikin, Ernie Reeves, Bill Logan, Clem Attewell, Chris Wilson, Jim —, Chris Parsons, Bill Freeman, Jim Walker, Arthur Grimmer, Joe Young, Bill Chaney, Fred Neale, Ernie Dixon, Fred Clarke, Jack Taplin, W. Hulle, Herman Barret, — Dixon - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

partially completed. The directors had invited the Minister for Internal Affairs, Honourable G.W.Russell, the member for Kaiapoi, the Honourable D.Buddo, J.A.Pannett and E.W.Rolph from the Canterbury Farmers' Co-operative Association to the festivities. As well as the official guests, several hundred people also attended. During the luncheon which followed the stone laying, George Gardner, a farmer from Medbury proposed the toast to the company. He said that it was a red letter day for Canterbury farmers in that they were celebrating the beginning of a co-operative venture that was going to have an important effect on one of the principal things that affects farmers, the freezing industry. He could have also added that it was a red letter day for Kaiapoi The siting of the works in the town was certain to have long term effect on it.

By October 1916 good progress had been made on the buildings under the watchful eye of Reay. In the last quarter of 1916 the Company began to employ its managerial staff. Applications were called for the positions of foremen as well as for the manager of the works. The company interviewed three applicants for the managerial position, settling on James Stewart from the South Otago Freezing Company. He was employed on contract for three years at a salary of six hundred pounds per year.

The works began operation on 18 December 1916. It ran for a week before the Christmas break, beginning again immediately after the New Year. The official

opening of the works took place in March 1917. In the first season the works processed 93,706 sheep and lambs and 1,875 cattle. These numbers made it evident that the cold storage space planned for would be needed. Construction on the additional cold storage area was begun in August 1917 with a pound for pound subsidy from the government. The company had a successful start to its operations in Kaiapoi and the town gradually took on the dual identity of a works town and a mill town.

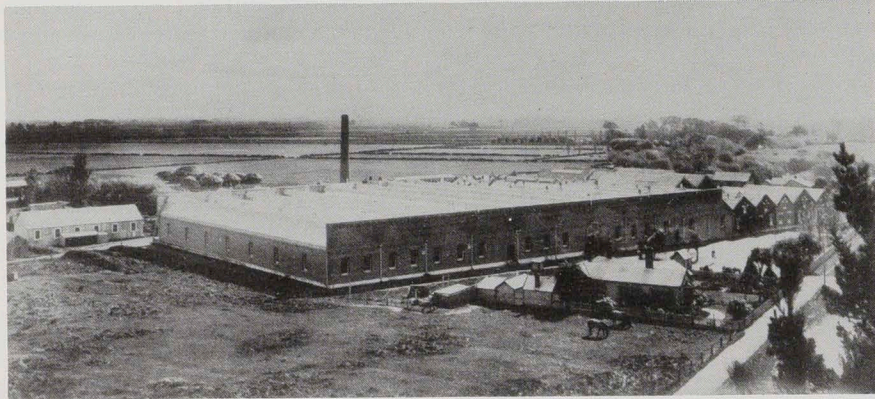
The Kaiapoi Woollen Mill had difficulties with the supply of labour for its operations that did not seem to be evident in the operation of the Freezing works. By 1907 the directors of the mill had installed the most modern machinery available but despite this innovative approach they were not able to utilize it fully as they were desperately short of skilled labour. It was estimated that the mill could have employed between one hundred and one hundred and fifty skilled workers. The directors lamented the fact that the union was unable to supply them. It was the policy of the Directors to manufacture only pure wool products. This was not universal in the other mills in New Zealand and was another reason why it was so hard for the Kaiapoi mill to obtain skilled workers. The labour shortage was still a problem for the mill as late as 1912 when there were long delays in the supply of large orders due to a lack of labour.

In the next two years the mill faced a number of challenges that in many ways made it a stronger company. G.H.Blackwell attended his last meeting as chairman on 6 October 1914. During Blackwell's illness James Frostick was acting chairman and on the death of Blackwell in December, Frostick was elected president of the company and the chairman of directors. At that same meeting J.H.Blackwell was elected on to the directorate to fill the vacancy caused by his father's death. This was the first challenge that the mill faced. Frostick adopted a steady as she goes policy with the company although it must be stated with the outbreak of the First World War he did not have a great deal of choice.

The war was the second challenge faced by the company. It had three main effects on the management of the mill. Firstly, on the strength of its experience obtained during the Boer War the company was able to secure contracts to supply the cloth for the services' uniforms. It was also awarded the contract to supply blankets. This meant a steady income for the mill at a time when it may have had some difficulty in supplying what was, at the time, considered luxury goods.

Secondly, and most seriously for the mill, the war aggravated the labour shortage. In 1915 the directors reported that thirty one men on the staff had gone to war and that another four were about to depart. The company decided to make provision for these men. Married men were to receive two thirds of their normal wage and single men one third for six months, after which there would be a review of the situation. It was probable that the grants would then be extended for a further six months. The maximum grant that a man could receive was two pounds a week and each recipient had to have been employed by the company for at least two years. At the Annual General Meeting in 1917 the shareholders decided that the company ought to support men on military service for the duration of their service.

Thirdly, the war not only caused severe labour shortages but also caused shortages in the supplies of wool and dyes. All the dyes were imported and so it was understandable that they were hard to obtain. It is less easy to understand the shortage of wool. It must be remembered that New Zealand companies were



Kaiapoi Woollen Mill 1910, Steffano Webb photographer, - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

not the only competitors for the country's wool clip. As there was a general world wide shortage of wool, prices rose and made it harder for local companies to buy wool.

By the end of the war the company had ninety one men on it's Roll of Honour. Twelve of these men were killed and nine were wounded. In 1919 sixty nine men had returned to work with the company and ten were reported as still absent.

The end of the First World War was greeted with relief in Kaiapoi. The Borough Council received a telegram from the Prime Minister, W.F. Massey, at its 5 November meeting informing it that an armistice had been signed with Turkey on 30 October and with Austria on 5 November. It was decided that there would be a public holiday for the remainder of 5 November. All businesses and schools were closed and citizens were urged to fly flags from every vantage point. It was then discovered that the Council did not have a New Zealand flag and so it was decided to obtain one immediately.

On 12 November there was great rejoicing in Kaiapoi when it became known that the Armistice with Germany had been signed. The shops, the schools, and the Woollen Mill were closed. Flags were immediately flown and every bell, whistle and other noise-making devices were set going at the same time. A well attended meeting in front of the Council Chamber was held. After the National Anthem had been played by the 13th Regimental Band, J.H.Blackwell, the Mayor, read the official telegrams. Later in the morning a Divine Service was held at the band rotunda. In the afternoon a procession was held, finishing in the Park where sports were held for the children. On the following day the shops and the mill were closed and in the evening there was a

torchlight procession to Darnley Square where there was a concert and a huge bonfire. (18)

The war years in Kaiapoi were as soul sapping as anywhere in New Zealand. A large proportion of the country's young men volunteered for service in the war. This resulted in New Zealand losing more men per head of population in the war than any other participating country. For Kaiapoi this meant a lost generation and for a town which had been suffering from a shortage of skilled labour before the war it became a critical factor. If the deaths that were caused by the influenza epidemic of 1918 were added to the war casualties then the situation was perilous.

In an unfortunate set of circumstances the deadly influenza virus which was sweeping the world reached northern New Zealand at about the same time that peace was declared. There were large gatherings of people which facilitated the spread of the virus.

Passengers on the "Niagara" which berthed in Auckland on 12 October were blamed by their contemporaries for bringing the virus to New Zealand. The "Niagara", although a crew man had died of pneumonia before reaching Auckland, was not subjected to any quarantine measures. It was thought at the time the Health Department had waived such regulations because the Prime Minister, W.F. Massey, was on board. Certainly a large number of patients were taken to Auckland Hospital from the "Niagara" all suffering from the disease. Recent research has shown that there were two strains of 'flu present in the country during 1918. The first one, which although it laid many people low, was mild. It was present in the country before the "Niagara" arrived. The second strain was the killer. Medical research has shown that the two strains were linked through the complex immune patterns built up by the first strain. The second strain was much more virulent than the first and had the added feature of being particularly fast breeding. It therefore overwhelmed its victims more quickly than the first strain. (19)

The influenza virus made its appearance in North Canterbury during October 1918. The Mayor reported that this strain was prevalent although more or less mild. The killer strain made its appearance in the first week of November. Again there was an unfortunate mix of circumstances in that this was the first Christchurch Carnival week in peace time. Large numbers of people were eager to celebrate the peace and enjoy the festivities of the week. On 11 November the reports about the seriousness of the epidemic in the morning paper were so alarming that the Mayor, J.H.Blackwell, called a conference of Doctor J.H.Crawshaw, the chairman of the Sanitary Committee, Councillor Bryden, and the Town Clerk, C.H.Wright, to discuss the precautions that might be taken to lessen the impact of the disease in Kaiapoi. These men formed an informal committee to look at measures to combat the illness in Kaiapoi.

The committee decided to provide a public inhalation chamber immediately. The provision and supervision was to be in the hands of Councillor Bryden. The chamber was used by a large number of people during the four weeks of its

(18) *The Press*, 13.11.1918., p.7.

(19) Rice, Geoffrey, *Black November. The 1918 Influenza Epidemic in New Zealand.* pp 4-5 and 14-16

operation. Records indicate that there were two thousand three hundred visits made to the facility. Each person inhaled a sulphate of zinc spray and it was thought that this was highly effective as a preventative against the disease. Unfortunately it was more than likely that more people caught the virus by visiting the inhalation chamber than were prevented from catching it. The large numbers congregating around the chamber waiting for their turn provided ideal conditions for the spread of the disease.

The more effective action taken by the committee was the decision to have a circular printed and distributed to each household. The circular detailed the precautions that people should take to avoid catching the illness and instructions on how to care for people who were sick.

On the following days (12 and 13 November) large crowds were gathered in Kaiapoi to celebrate the Armistice with Germany. It was felt by the committee that although these celebrations were held outside the spread of the virus was facilitated. On 15 November a public meeting was held outside the Council Chamber to set up an organization to cope with the epidemic. The meeting decided to establish five divisions to deal with the expected emergency.

The first division was to concern itself with a district visiting scheme. The town was divided into twelve blocks and under the chairmanship of Mr Hirst, volunteers went from house to house reporting to the central office any cases of sickness and need that they found.

Secondly a women's committee was formed to provide food and other delicacies for those who were too ill to provide for themselves.

It was realised that information and fast transport were also needed. The third and fourth divisions covered those aspects. In the times prior to the universal installation of the telephone, a messenger carrying the information from one point to another was the quickest and most reliable way of keeping the organization in touch with the needs of the community. A brigade of five messenger boys with bicycles was recruited. They were Reg Chappell, Douglas and Gordon Bate, Eric Grimwood and Stan Wright. At the end of the emergency these boys were commended for their good service. At the same time it was realised that motor-cars would provide a much quicker service for the movement of information, goods and personnel. A committee of car owners was formed. Messrs Hector and Ken McIntosh, Wylie, Barnard, Doubleday, Sneyd, (the manager of Supply Stores), Edwards, Papprell and Baker all undertook their share of the work. The Mayor, in his report made special mention of L.B.Evans who took a fortnight off work to drive the doctor from case to case. This allowed Doctor Crawshaw to at least rest while he was being driven to each new patient.

The fifth division was the central office. It was set up in the Council Chambers and run by Mrs Len Wilson on a voluntary basis. The office stayed open between nine in the morning and nine in the evening during the two weeks of the emergency. The central office co-ordinated all the information from which an overall view of the state of the community could be gained. It was the place where members of the public could receive information.

On 16 November the committee was fortunate to be approached by Nurse Price who offered her services. She was immediately engaged as the town's visiting nurse



Nellie Robertshaw, 1928 I.N. Eagle Kaiapoi photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

and was joined four days later by Nurse Nellie Robertshaw. These women were in the vanguard of the fight against the virus. Their prompt action in visiting suspected cases helped to minimise panic in the community. Their front line duties included sorting out the less serious cases from the more serious ones thus using the doctor's time more efficiently. At times they were joined by Nurse Emerson who had charge of the hospital. Using a car Nurse Price was able to make over seven hundred visits in a fortnight. Nurse Robertshaw, on her bicycle, made two hundred and eighteen visits. Together the nurses made about one thousand home visits. Their work was unrelenting but in that time of crisis it was absolutely necessary in order to cope with the epidemic.

Doctor Chesson, the District Health Officer, had closed all public places, including schools, in the week beginning 13 November. This decision gave the Kaiapoi committee the chance to use the school buildings as hospitals. Nurse P.T.Emerson had been directed to Kaiapoi by the Public Health Department on 18 November. The next day, in consultation with Doctor Crawshaw and the Hospital Board, it was decided to take the Technical School buildings as a temporary hospital with Nurse Emerson in charge. During the next twenty four hours a band of volunteers under the direction of Hector McIntosh and Thomas Leithead worked hard to have the hospital ready for its first patients on 20 November. The Secretary of the North Canterbury Hospital Board, Mr Wharton, supplied equipment and staff for the hospital as did the Nurse Maude organization and the Public Health Department. The nursing staff were helped by V.A.D. volunteers from Kaiapoi and Christchurch. The night supervisor was Sister Goldsworthy. Mrs Leithead headed a committee of women who did the cooking for the hospital. Most of the food was donated by the townsfolk. During the month that the hospital was open forty seven patients were admitted; nine of these people died and thirty eight went on to the convalescent hospital.

The convalescent hospital was set up in the Borough School buildings. It too was established in a remarkably short time. The volunteers began working on it on 23 November and the school was ready for use on 25 November. It was necessary to have somewhere for those in recovery to go until they were fit enough to return home so that the beds in the hospital could be used for the acute cases.

Groups within the community made a considerable difference to those who were afflicted. The Kaiapoi Working Men's Club provided free stimulants for the patients in the hospital. Liquor to the value of twelve pounds was donated to the

hospital. Miss Meadowcroft offered her home as a children's hostel. In a large number of cases both parents were victims of the virus and so many children were left without care. The Meadowcroft home was made ready but fortunately it was not needed as it was found that the majority of the children in this situation were cared for by adult relatives who had not caught the flu. A small number of children were looked after for a short time by Mrs Blackwell until they could be cared for by their families.

The visiting nurses found a significant number of what they termed necessitous cases. These were reported to the central office and were alarming enough for the committee to recommend that the Borough Council set up a Relief Committee to help these people. The committee of three, the Mayor, Councillor Barnard and the Town Clerk, came into being on 3 December. It dealt with applications for relief that needed immediate attention. As well as setting up this committee the Council joined the Mayor of Christchurch in asking that all local bodies petition the central government for a grant to relieve the acute distress caused by the influenza epidemic. Coming as it did at the end of the war the epidemic left a number of families in straightened circumstances. Throughout the war some families had struggled along on the army's meagre pay supplemented by whatever the family could earn. As a consequence, when the 'flu struck, many families did not have enough reserves to support themselves.

In the Mayor's report special mention was made of the work of Doctor J.H.Crawshaw. Throughout the time of the epidemic with the exception of three or four days, the doctor worked entirely on his own in caring for the district. During the most critical days the doctor was available twenty four hours a day for the most serious cases. It was a wonder to the townspeople that Doctor Crawshaw was able to stand the physical strain of situation. He certainly gave all his attention to the care of those suffering from the flu.

The Woollen Mill, as the largest employer in the district during the epidemic, reported that it did not have many casualties. Better health was assisted by a management decision instituting a daily scrub out of the factory with disinfectant. The other large employer, the Freezing works, was not in operation at the time of the outbreak of the epidemic although, because of the problem, the chairman postponed the December directors' and shareholders' meetings.

With the influenza epidemic following so closely at end of the First World War it is understandable that there seemed to be so little delight in the community at the prospect of returning to peace. The energies of the townsfolk were switched, almost without warning, from supporting their lads in battle to surviving a deadly disease themselves. By the time the convalescent hospital closed on 23 December the community appeared to want to rest and recover rather than to celebrate.

The organizational skills of J.H.Blackwell evident during his mayoral terms and his fight to have the freezing works sited in Kaiapoi, were put to the test during the campaign against the 'flu virus. He initiated the steps taken by the community to minimise the effect of the disease. These steps were taken as soon as it was realised

that the situation was serious. However, even with all the precautions and the planning, seventeen people died in Kaiapoi during the epidemic. As the 1916 population stood at 1560 this represents a death rate of just under eleven per 1,000 people. The North Canterbury statistics show that only Amberley exceeded this death rate.⁽²⁰⁾



Nurses and Doctor Crawshaw outside Technical School buildings used as a hospital during 1918 influenza epidemic - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

These figures raise some intriguing questions. Firstly it is feasible that the death rate might have been higher if the town had not been organized to meet the needs of the situation. The obvious reason for the comparatively high number of deaths in Kaiapoi was that it was a town and therefore the inevitable contact between victims and healthy people required to spread the illness was easier. Even at the time, however, it was noticed that the 'flu seemed to be worse in the country areas than in the towns and certainly the statistics bear out that assumption. The comparison between the Kaiapoi death rate and the Rangiora death rate shows that the latter rate was about half that

20) *ibid*, p200

of Kaiapoi. The 1916 population of Rangiora was 1808 and the 9 deaths attributed to the epidemic computed into a rate of just under five per 1000.

The statistics for North Canterbury show that there was one registered Maori death during the epidemic out of a 1916 population of 145. It is unlikely that this single death was the only one attributable to the epidemic. Although the statistics for Maori throughout New Zealand for this period are sparse, sufficient exist to indicate that the death rate for Maori was much higher than that of Pakeha and it is reasonable to assume that more than one Kai Tahu person died from the disease.

The other characteristic of the 'flu was that it seemed to be most virulent in the young and healthy. This attribute could explain why country people were more vulnerable to the disease and could well explain why Kaiapoi's population suffered such a high death rate.

Whatever the reason for the high rate in Kaiapoi, that number of deaths in the community in addition to those who died during the war was a significant proportion of the population. In effect Kaiapoi lost a generation and it took at least another generation for the survivors of this double tragedy to come to terms with the implications of what had happened.

In April 1919 a postscript was added to the burdens of many of the families affected by the 'flu. Doctor Crawshaw reported to the Borough Council that several of the patients of the Technical School Hospital had been sent accounts for their care during the emergency. It had been understood at the time that no charge would be made. The Council wrote to the Hospital Board asking for an explanation. The Board replied in May, expressing its view that patients were expected to pay for their care unless they could show evidence of an inability to pay. In the face of this there was little the Borough Council could do to write off the accounts of those patients who had received them.

The coming of the twentieth century saw the establishment of Kaiapoi as a blue collar workers' town. The Woollen Mill continued to be the biggest employer in the town but it was joined midway through the second decade by the Freezing works. These two establishments created a camaraderie among their workers that is difficult to explain. To outsiders, those who lived and worked in Kaiapoi were different. It maybe that the suspicion between Kaiapoi and the surrounding communities grew from this time when so many in the town were engaged in blue collar work.

The early years of the twentieth century were also characterised by a notable willingness on the part of the town's leaders to adopt the latest technological innovations to the town. The town was the longest established Pakeha town in North Canterbury. The pride that the town's leaders took in the splendid development their area was evident in the way they wanted the town to be promoted.

Chapter Eight:

PEACE, PROGRESS, POVERTY AND WAR.

The end of the "war to end all wars" created an ambivalence about the future. On the one hand there was a general feeling of optimism characterized by the determination of all peoples to get on with their lives and with commerce. This was particularly important for New Zealand in that trade for primary products looked especially promising. War-devastated Europe was clamouring for basic food-stuffs. New Zealand was ideally positioned to meet that call and supply much of what was required.

On the other hand there was deep regret and an enormous sense of loss. There was a determination to preserve for future generations the memories of those



Kaiapoi traffic bridge decorated for peace celebrations 1918, looking south. Fire Station on left - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

who had lost their lives. In July 1919 the Borough Council placed on record its gratitude at the signing of the Peace Treaty and its deep appreciation of the heroism and sacrifice of the Allies who had made such a victorious peace possible. However such sentiments seemed to evoke a hollow ring in view of the considerable sacrifices that the small Kaiapoi community had made. Thirty five of the one hundred and seventy soldiers who went from the district were killed. The Patriotic Committee did not want those men forgotten and wished to have a permanent memorial erected for them.

At a public meeting held in July 1919 the Committee received overwhelming support for the building of a memorial hall. The Patriotic Committee pledged to raise, itself, two thousand pounds of the estimated cost of seven thousand pounds for the project. The meeting asked the committee to make the necessary arrangements with the Waimakariri Harbour Board to establish a site for the hall. The committee was also empowered to seek Council permission to build a hall. Unfortunately this initial enthusiasm was not sustained. By March 1920 the War Memorial Committee had decided to rescind the resolution to build a memorial hall. In the opinion of the committee, a more fitting memorial would be a statue of a private soldier of the Expeditionary Force.

The statue was to be sited on the riverbank between the traffic bridge and the band rotunda. A Christchurch sculptor, W.T.Trethewey, was commissioned to produce the statue. By January 1921 Trethewey had formed a model and had advised the Council that he was awaiting the arrival of stone from Italy. The model was duly submitted to the Council and the work proceeded. The statue was completed in time to be unveiled on Anzac Day 1922.

The Kaiapoi memorial statue is a striking monument with a poignant and haunting quality. The soldier is looking to his left and into the middle distance. He has a strained and careworn face, carries a fixed bayonet and is leaning on a broken gun carriage wheel. The statue captures the futile nature of war in a way that no words could ever do. It brilliantly records and reinforces the sizeable contribution that Kaiapoi made to the war effort.

Another reminder of the sacrifice and of the sense of victory that all communities in New Zealand shared was the presentation from the government of war trophies. In March 1920, notification was received in the town from Major Ross, the commander of No 9 Group of the New Zealand Defence Forces, that there were one hundred and fifty machine guns captured by Canterbury units ready for distribution to local bodies in the Canterbury military district. The Council was asked how many it would like. In reply the Council intimated that if it were possible it would like to have the one captured by Lieutenant H. Ellen's company. This first request was ignored by Major Ross who replied in September that the town had been allocated four guns. The Council decided to direct its request for Lieutenant Ellen's gun to the Defence Department. In February 1921 Corporal W. Reynolds informed the Council that three guns had been despatched to Kai-

apoi and that enquiries were being made to confirm that Ellen's gun was among them.

The distribution of war trophies played a positive part in the process of healing that needed to take place after the war. The trophies offered tangible evidence that the country belonged to the victorious side. This was some modest compensation for the trauma that the war had imposed on the Kaiapoi community.

As with any traumatic experience, Kaiapoi in the 1920's had to learn to put the war behind it and get on with the business of living. It seemed that life was pretty good. The return of the soldiers, hungry for a normal life, created an unprecedented demand for peace time goods. As production had generally been geared towards the war effort this demand was largely unsatisfied and the inevitable consequences of supply and demand determined that prices of commodities rose. The prices paid in the international market for the New Zealand primary products of wool, meat and dairy products rose at a phenomenal rate in the three years after the end of the war. It was a boom time. Peace, it seemed, brought prosperity. Kaiapoi was ideally placed to take advantage



Unveiling of war memorial

Back row W.H. Childs, R. Dunn, J. Hurst, —, F. Thorn
Middle row, J.B. Yellowlees, R. Evans, —, H. Trousselot, —,
Reverend W.B. Scott (in uniform), T.R. Leithead,
Front Row, H. McIntosh, —, J.H. Blackwell (Mayor 1916-23), C.H.
Wright (Town Clerk), —,

of the strong post-war economic conditions.

The Kaiapoi Woollen Mill was perfectly situated to exploit the economic growth. The directors of the company, however, found the economic signals a little confusing. The immediate problem faced by the directors in 1919 was the sudden rise in price of wool. Coupled with this was a recognition that the old economic order was changing. The collapse of the moribund Tsarist regime of Russia and its

replacement by a Bolshevik system indicated to the directors of the mill that dramatic changes were occurring in both the economic and the political spheres.

The directors adopted a positive attitude in the annual report of 1919 and indicated that sooner or later every person would be entitled to his dues. In taking this view the Board examined the situation carefully and adopted some forward looking management practices. One of the first steps was to establish an Employees' Committee and in doing this the Board followed and adapted part of a model created in Britain by the Whitley Council. Also known the Joint Industrial Council, the Whitley Council grew out of a concern with the apparent breakdown of industrial relationships. Presided over by J.H. Whitley the Investigating Committee examined the problem for three years between 1916 and 1919 and brought forth a number of recommendations. Its main proposal was for joint councils of representatives of management and labour to be set up to promote better industrial relations within each workplace. This system found favour with the directors of the Woollen Mill.

The Employees' Committee at the Woollen Mill was appointed by the workers and had the task of presenting the problems of workers to the directors. A significant departure from the Whitley recommendation was that there was no attempt to make the Employees' Committee a joint system of management and labour. The Board, however, acknowledged that the Whitley system ought to become universal.

Accommodating the concerns of industrial workers had always been a feature of labour relations in Kaiapoi. This was based on practical considerations. After the war, the added feature of fear by employers that the Bolshevik revolution may spread throughout the world if there was no attempt to look to the concerns of the workforce, motivated most of them to search for ways to improve their workers' conditions. The directors of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill were not immune to such concerns. The directorate, in a further effort to improve the lot of the workers at the mill, decided to establish an Employees' Welfare Fund. The Fund was seen as a way of commemorating the peace as well as assisting the workers. It followed a precedent set in the early years of the company when Isaac Wilson set up a fund to pay workers compensation if they were ill or injured at work. From its beginnings, with a donation from the company of one thousand pounds, the Welfare Fund was able to subsidise a Welfare Society which ran a weekly, free medical clinic. In addition a deposit system was instituted for a superannuation scheme where each deposit attracted seven percent interest computed monthly. Each of these programmes was designed to forestall industrial unrest at the mill and in this there was some success. However, the directors were soon to have some problems that were not within their control.

During 1921 it was reported that the company had found export markets for its rugs in the United States, Canada, France, Spain and the South American republics. The mill was working all shifts and those who wanted a job were readily able to obtain one. But within the space of one year the outlook was completely reversed. High prices for wool had continued. There was a consequent rise in price for the goods produced by the Woollen Mill. At the same time cheaper goods were

being imported. During 1921-1922 foreign goods to the value of many of millions of pounds sterling poured into the country undercutting prices in general and the profitability of the mill in particular. The directors imposed a regime of financial stringency on the mill. The factory was forced to cut down on shifts and many workers found themselves on part time work.

Notwithstanding the increasingly difficult times, the company did expand the facilities for its staff. In 1921 the company decided to provide a hostel for the women workers whose homes were out of Kaiapoi. When this was first discussed the directors felt that the ideal position would be to provide hostels for both men and women. The financial situation however deemed that idea impractical. The directors settled instead on a hostel for women. Women workers could then be assured of comfortable lodgings and the benefit of the companionship of other women. The Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) was approached to ascertain whether it was willing to take charge of the hostel if the company provided the building. As this venture was a first for New Zealand, the Y.W.C.A. took a little convincing that it would be successful. In the end it agreed to trial the scheme.



The Willows, G.H. Blackwell's home, which became the Woollen Mill's hostel for women - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

In order to complete its part of the agreement, the company bought a house previously belonging to the late G.H. Blackwell in Charles Street, in what was described as the best part of Kaiapoi. The house, a large one with twelve rooms, was set in two acres of grounds and had an asphalt tennis court as well as other facilities for healthy and proper amusement. The hall, stairway and sitting room were carpeted. There were comfortable furnishings in the sitting room

which had, in addition, a piano. The variety of pictures on the walls were selected by J. Jamieson of Christchurch. There were twenty two beds available in the hostel all of which were covered with blankets and rugs made at the mill. Although the hostel was known as the Mill Hostel and young women working at the mill had a special claim for admission, the rules and regulations of the hostel were set by the Y.W.C.A.

The hostel was opened on 3 September 1921. At the opening, the chairman of the company, J.A. Frostick, thanked the women's committee for working so hard to get the hostel ready. The women's committee was composed of women already well experienced in this type of work through their efforts during the 1918 Influenza Epidemic. They were Mesdames G. Bowron, A. Kaye, T.R. Leithead, J.H. Blackwell and Miss Law. Mrs Bowron was the Y.W.C.A.'s representative on the committee.

The provision of the hostel was a recognition by the company and, to a lesser degree, the community, that the war had changed social perceptions. It was no longer a scandal for ordinary young women to seek paid employment away from their homes. However, in the dichotomy that often results from social change, there had to be certain guarantees in order to make the situation attractive to both the women and their families. Seen as vulnerable by society in general, young women had to be categorically assured of proper care once they had left home. The provision of a supervised hostel served just that function. It may be viewed as indicative of foresight on behalf of the company, but essentially it was a pragmatic response to avoid potential embarrassments that the less disciplined times of the post war years promoted. In his opening day speech Frostick emphasized that the parents of the young women living in the hostel could have great confidence in the Y.W.C.A. and its management. It was also a relief to the directors to know that the Y.W.C.A. had control of the hostel.⁽¹⁾

In the next year, following the success of the women's hostel, the company decided to acquire property for a men's hotel. It was decided to purchase Richard Evans' property. The original house was sound although the latter additions at the back were borer-invested. There was room in the house for thirty men and staff and there was plenty of room in the grounds to build additional workers' cottages. The logical step for the directors was to approach The Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) to supervise the men's hostel under the same conditions that the Y.W.C.A. had agreed to assume responsibility for the women's hostel. Initially the Y.M.C.A. was even more reluctant than the Y.W.C.A. to become involved in supervision of the hostel. After some negotiations the organisation agreed to become responsible for the hostel for an annual fee of fifty pounds on the condition that the hostel was fully furnished.

Over the Christmas New Year period of 1922-1923 the Y.W.C.A. rather than the Y.M.C.A. rented it for use as a summer camp. In January 1923 it was decided to dispose of the fruit from the "*Ty-coed*" orchard at the best possible price and to

(1) *The Press* 5.9.1921.p.2.

engage Ford and Hadfield to let the property. The time was obviously not right for the establishment of a men's hostel. It may have been that a decision by Blackwells to convert its old shop into a boarding house at this time meant that the Kaiapoi market for accommodation for single men was saturated.

In common with the directorate of the Woollen Mill the management of Blackwell's store had difficulties in interpreting the roller-coaster economics of the early 1920's. It was also a time for new adjustments for the Blackwell family. When he started work in the store in 1914 H.H. Blackwell was the third generation of the family to come into the business. In 1915 he joined Ballantynes in Christchurch for a few months to gain experience in another shop. However at this time H.H. Blackwell did not appear to have his heart in the business. He was more interested in flying. As soon as he was old enough and able to gain admission to Walsh Brothers' Flying School in Auckland Blackwell left Kaiapoi to train as a pilot. On completion of his training in Auckland Blackwell went to England where he gained a commission as Flight-Lieutenant. After some further training in England he flew with the Royal Flying Corps in France for two years until the end of the war. H.H. Blackwell returned to Kaiapoi in June 1919 where he restarted his career in the shop. At the same time he had to make an adjustment to civilian life that was not always easy. His father, J.H. Blackwell, was still very much in charge. At times this must have rankled with the younger Blackwell who had become accustomed, in his flying career, to making the decisions.

The first three years after the end of the war were a boom time for the store. Unlike the Woollen Mill the store was not affected by the flooding of the market with cheap imported goods. In fact the opposite was true. The business flourished and so much so that it was decided to build a new store. The old building, in its location at the corner of Black and Hilton Streets, was seen to be a little removed from the main development of the commercial district of the town. Consequently a site on the corner of High and Raven Streets was purchased from David Brown. This site had a large boarding house and shops on it which were demolished to make way for Blackwell's new store. The Christchurch architectural firm of J.S. and M.J. Guthrie, designed a handsome two-storied brick and plaster building which dominated the landscape. It was constructed by W. Williamson of Christchurch who had incidentally been the contractor who had worked on the Freezing works. The ground floor was in three main sections. The drapery division included dress, silk, hosiery, manchester and fancy departments as well as a ladies' boot department. There was a large show room to the rear of the drapery section which displayed spring millinery at the time of the official opening. The second division comprised the men's mercery with a men's and boys' boot department. The divisions were completed with a grocery including crockery, hardware and seed departments. The grocery counter ran the full length of one side. The provision counter was highlighted by a marble top and white tile surround. In addition to these supplies the shop provided pastries and confectionary from its bakehouse. The top storey of the new Blackwell's store contained a furniture show-room, a dressmaking workroom and fitting rooms, a store room, a rest room for the

staff and a tearoom. In addition, the general office as well as J.H.Blackwell's private office, was located on the top floor.

Blackwell's store was outfitted with the most up-to-date technology. Each department was connected to the cash office at the rear of the building by a railway cash system. This meant that all transactions were centrally controlled with no department being responsible for the management of the daily cash flow. The electrical lighting and the radiator heating, installed by G.W.Davies and Company of Dunedin, gave the shop interior a very modern appearance.

The section upon which the shop stood ran through to Hilton Street allowing the business to build a new two storey bakehouse next door. This also allowed for the shifting of the large iron grocery bulk store onto the section from an old site in Hilton Street.

Understandably the opening of the new Blackwells in September 1921 was a notable occasion. This was particularly so for it coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the company. The double celebration was marked by a reception in the shop and a euchre tournament hosted by Mr and Mrs J.H.Blackwell. The only sad note to the evening was brought about because Annie Blackwell was unable to be present due to ill-health.

Blackwells was not to be immune from the economic vagaries experienced by the Woollen Mill. All looked well for the business until 1923 when prices for primary products slumped. J.H.Blackwell reported that the burst of the inflation bubble hit with little warning. Wholesale and retail imported and manufactured goods were especially hard hit with some prices falling by half overnight. (2) This meant that the prices for goods already in the store had to be cut in order to sell. A shop such as this, as with many businesses in this period, could not afford to sustain losses. In order to make up a little ground a number of employees had to be dispensed with. These added to the growing numbers of unemployed in the district. The sudden decline in profitability was all the more acute for Blackwells in that the business had just committed itself to a major reorganization characterised by the new shop and bakehouse.

The other major employer in the town, the Freezing works, suffered the same problems as both the Woollen Mill and Blackwell's store. The year after killing commenced the works expanded its cold store facilities to cater for one hundred thousand carcasses. In order to encourage this development the government provided a pound for pound subsidy for the construction. From the time of the construction of the new cold store until the end of the First World War the company went from strength to strength. In 1919 the volume of stock was such that the works did not have sufficient processing capacity. The works responded to this situation, initially, by restricting the numbers of cattle it killed. In an effort to overcome the problem during the off season the company decided to make further additions to the killing board and the cold storage facility. For the second time in four seasons the works expanded. High prices for primary products immediately after the war as well as the increased volumes meant gains for the works.

(2) Blackwell, J.H., *The Story of Blackwell's Stores* p12.

At the Shareholders' Annual Meeting in 1921 some of the shareholders complained that the suppliers were missing out on the higher prices for their products at the end of the season. However it was explained that the company could not afford to have a floating price because it could not plan a sensible economic direction with such a system. One of the directors, Thomas Stone, explained that at the beginning of that season the company could not gamble with a whole season's output. From the Freezing Company's view-point prices had to be stable. If prices rose for the company it would be forced to either cease operations or run the works at a loss. Either way, according to Stone, the shareholders would lose. However there seemed to be no account taken of the fact that while the prices received by the works for the carcasses were higher the costs of production remained at the early season level. All businesses during this period were run on very controlled budgets which strived always to return a profit. A controlled budget did not make it possible to take into account the fluctuations in price for a product throughout the season. The North Canterbury Sheepfarmers' Co-operative Freezing Export and Agency Company Limited was no different from any other business and inevitably adopted the same course for its budgeting.

Working in the Freezing works at that time was a very different experience to that of the present day. The modern concept of the chain and specialised mass production had not been developed. Each animal was slaughtered and its carcass dressed by a single operator. All employees in the works had to be highly skilled slaughtermen and/or butchers. Although each man had a variety of jobs to perform the work was hard and unrelenting. A kill quota had to be met and this often involved working long hours especially during the peak of the season.

The annual reports of the company for the years from 1918 to 1924 give evidence of growth for each year except 1922 when there was a sudden dip in the prices it received for all its products. There was a consequent reduction in salaries, office expenses and directors' fees suggesting that a balance in the accounts during the 1922 season could only be met by a sharp reduction in working expenses. A changed balance date from August to September created a thirteen month year for the 1922 accounts, but it was noted with disappointment that of the thirteen months, seven were unproductive. The company still managed to pay out a six per cent dividend to its shareholders. The following year, 1923, was also recorded as being a difficult for although prices were high a shortage of stock resulted in decreased earnings. Diversification was seen to be an answer to some extent. The 1923/24 season found the company killing pigs for both the export and domestic markets. By 1924 it seemed that the "wobble" in the economy was well and truly over. The works expanded once again to accommodate the higher number of pigs being offered for slaughter. It seemed that the works could do no wrong. The company's brand was gaining a good reputation on the Smithfield market and profits for the year were comparable to all the previous years except 1922. Notwithstanding the improvement the difficult economic period during 1922 was to have some lasting effects on the town.

Although all of these businesses were fundamentally sound and profitable and the sharp downturn was only experienced for a short time, some alarm bells

sounded in those organisations in the Kaiapoi community that were concerned with the social welfare of their members. The most vocal among these was the newly formed Returned Soldiers Association (R.S.A.). The Kaiapoi branch was established in June 1918 after a meeting called and presided over by W.H.Stark. The chief concern of the R.S.A. in Kaiapoi was with the welfare of those men returning from active service. The branch, in common with all other branches in New Zealand, strove to settle the ex-soldiers back into some sort of normality after the horrific experiences many men had endured during the war. The Kaiapoi Branch became very active in promoting employment among its members by speaking frequently with the Borough Council and other employers in the district. In June and July 1921 the organization negotiated with the Council over the employment of ex-soldiers. In June the Repatriation Officer wrote to inform the Council that there were a number of ex-soldiers out of work in the district and to request that it assist with the situation. This appeal was followed in July with a formal request from the Kaiapoi Branch to the Council expressing the wish that priority be given to returned soldiers for casual labouring jobs. The Council was able to assure the Association that it would respond as requested.

By June 1922 other voices were joining that of the R.S.A. in seeking to rectify unemployment. During that month the secretary of the North Canterbury Unemployment Committee requested the Council to put as much work as possible in hand so that those the committee represented could have work during the difficult winter months. The committee followed this up by a deputation by two of its members, Messrs Fielder and Black, to the Council endorsing the need for work in the community. The newly formed Beautifying and Burgesses' Association suggested to the Council that it could provide a pound for pound subsidy on the money collected by the Returned Soldiers Association on Poppy Day to set up a fund to relieve unemployment. The R.S.A. supported the idea and suggested that the Council and the Association administer the fund.

The Council undertook initiatives of its own. It wrote to the government requesting subsidisation of the Council's scheme to plant pinus insignis and marram grass on the seaside reserves with the use of unemployed labour. The government declined this request and in so doing opened up the debate on which authority, local or national, had responsibility for the Beach Reserve land.

If the response from the government to the Council's request for a subsidy was disappointing then the local community response must have given the unemployed some hope for their future situation. A joint committee was set up to investigate the problems experienced by the unemployed and endeavoured to procure work for them. The committee consisted of the chairman of the Waimakariri Harbour Board, the president of the Returned Soldiers Association, the acting secretary of the Beautifying and Burgesses' Association, the chairman of the Works' Committee, the Mayor and the Town Clerk. This initiative and those promoted locally ensured that the community coped more than adequately with the difficult 1922 period. However by 1923 a recovery had begun. In the latter year the larger employers in Kaiapoi began to re-employ and the immediate difficulties

had been overcome. Generally the period was characterised by a response which was quick and practical and represented the nature of Kaiapoi at the time. This was coupled with the Christian and especially the Wesleyan ethic of care for one's neighbours demonstrating that even in the brash 1920's Kaiapoi adhered to its old values.

The experience of the 1918 influenza epidemic revealed a need for a public health nurse for the district. In order to care for and protect the more vulnerable members of the Kaiapoi district it was realized that such a person was essential. Prompted by this view the women's organizations in the town decided to request a public nurse for the district. In June 1921 the secretary of the Methodist Ladies Guild forwarded a copy of a resolution, passed at a meeting of 6 June, to the Council. The Guild considered that it was essential that the area had the services of a district nurse. The resolution emphasized that if the Council was willing to inaugurate a scheme to finance a nurse then the Guild would assist in raising that finance. The Council responded positively with Councillor (Dr) Crawshaw empowered to collect the relevant information for such a scheme. On receipt of this information the Council was to investigate the matter itself. At the following meeting of the Council, Councillor Crawshaw advised once a need had been shown for a district nurse then the Council should favour it. Councillor Crawshaw indicated that he was prepared to meet with the Methodist Ladies Guild and discuss the matter further. It was also recommended that the Mayor should call a public meeting to discuss the project. However, there must have been some needless delay, at least in the view of the Ladies Guild, for in August of that year the Guild took a deputation to the Council to request the holding of a public meeting for the purposes of employing a nurse for the borough and surrounding district. A meeting was held and a further deputation met the Council in November 1920. At that meeting the Council agreed to bear the costs of distributing circulars and collecting guarantees of support from each household to obtain an accurate indication of support for a district nurse. Although the need had been identified by the Methodist Ladies Guild there was no widespread community support for such a scheme and the idea was dropped.

Housing became a vital concern of the Council in the 1920's. The economic maelstrom of the immediate aftermath of the First World War gave rise to issues of unemployment and of public health. These were capable of relatively straight forward solutions compared with the provision for housing. This issue was more complex especially in the context of financial and social requirements.

In June 1920 the Council took the innovative step of forming a housing committee. The committee was charged with the responsibility of ensuring that there was adequate housing available in Kaiapoi to satisfy the present needs as well as those of the future. At that time the government was offering help with housing schemes. The Kaiapoi Borough Council applied for aid from the government housing scheme. The new Member of Parliament for the district, David Jones, dealt with the matter in August 1920 intimating to the Council that the government would consider that ten houses was the maximum number allocated to Kaiapoi from the quota of money available for the region. The Council, however, insisted

that eighteen houses should be built to fulfil the need for housing in Kaiapoi and that the block of land for them should be purchased immediately.

Towards the end of August the Council received a further letter from the local Member of Parliament stating that the government was prepared, after all, to build eighteen houses, provided the price of construction was satisfactory. It indicated that Kaiapoi builders were being approached and that it would be an excellent idea if the Council would consider combined action with the government in order to lower the cost of the scheme. Nothing further was heard of the scheme until April 1921 when the Prime Minister formally advised the Council that land for a housing scheme had been purchased in September and that tenders for the erection of a number of houses on the site had been called. Only one tender was received and that was in excess of the Housing Department's estimate of the cost. The Prime Minister expressed some disappointment and indicated that if a satisfactory tender was not received from a Kaiapoi builder then it would consider employing one of the builders constructing workers' cottages in Christchurch to build suitable houses in Kaiapoi. Obviously, in the government's view, the Kaiapoi Borough Council was not helping the scheme by ensuring that a Kaiapoi builder came up with an appropriate price for the construction of houses.

At the Council's first meeting in September 1921 it was resolved to write to the government to explain that there was an urgent need for houses in the borough and to enquire when construction would commence on the houses that had been proposed. The response, which came not from the Prime Minister as previously, but from the Department of Labour indicated that due to financial stringency the government had been forced to suspend the erection of further dwellings for the present. The Council was in a dilemma. The need for housing was clearly evident but the means by which it could be obtained were complicated and out of reach of the Council. Once again the Council sought help through the local Member of Parliament. In October Jones advised the Council that he had contacted the Superintendent of the Advances to Settlers Department and had received an indication that the Department was willing to lend the Council five thousand pounds at five and a half per cent interest rate to proceed with the development. There was further encouragement from the Superintendent who advised that if the Council took up the loan his Department would be willing to consider a further five thousand pound loan, the following year. David Jones had approached the Minister of Labour and had obtained an assurance that the Department was willing to sell the land it had acquired in Kaiapoi, for the scheme, to the Council. Furthermore the Housing Department was willing to give the Council, free of charge, the plans it had drawn up for the cottages.

The speed with which this matter was dealt with by the government seemed to indicate an eagerness for it to handover responsibility for housing to the Council. The response of the Council was more cautious. It set up a committee composed of Councillors Trousselot, McIntosh and Leithead to go into the matter thoroughly and to report at a later date. The fact that the Council did not give this committee a definite date by which to report back indicates that, although the need for housing was evident the Council was going to take a prudent and restrained approach to the

government's offer. At the final Council meeting in November the committee recommended that a meeting be held with those who wished to build houses under the scheme to discuss the implications of the proposal.

This meeting was held in December but it did not reveal any desire on the part of the public to undertake immediate steps to construct the houses. Nothing more was heard of the scheme until 1923.

In 1923 the housing scheme was revived. Several factors combined to make the timing more propitious. Firstly the country had recovered from the financial problems that it had experienced in the 1922 period. Secondly in the same period the government had transferred all its housing projects to the newly established State Advances Department. In Kaiapoi the change of local Member of Parliament to the Honourable David Buddo was helpful. Although Jones had seemed to do much to advance the cause of a housing scheme in Kaiapoi it appeared that he was unable to manipulate the system to the benefit of his constituency in quite the same way that the wily Buddo, with all his experience, was able to do. The last factor was the substantial flood of May 1923 which put additional strain on the already stretched housing pool in Kaiapoi.

At a meeting of the Kaiapoi Borough Council on 12 June 1923 the Mayor, J.H. Blackwell, moved that the government should be asked to consider constructing houses on the land it already owned in the Borough. It was to be pointed out to the government that the flood had aggravated the acute housing shortage in Kaiapoi. In effect the Council was asking for Buddo's help in order to obtain the assistance it needed to ease the housing shortage in the township.

By July Buddo was able to present the Council with a letter from the Minister of State Advances. The letter informed the Council that a Bill had been introduced into the House which would widen the scope of the workers section of the State Advances Act to enable workers to apply for assistance to purchase sections and build houses. The Minister felt that this would alleviate the situation in Kaiapoi. At a special meeting of the Council in September a resolution seeking the approval of ratepayers for a five thousand pound loan was tabled. Confirmation of the resolution was obtained in October and thus the Council was ready to take advantage of the amendment to the State Advances Act.

The passage of the amending Bill was completed by October 1923 when Buddo was able to advise the Council that he had written to the Minister of State Advances to request an early approval of a five thousand pound loan for the borough housing scheme. At its next meeting the Council approved the construction plans for the workers' houses and began to notify the applicants for those houses, that the sections were being conveyed to the Council.

In doing this the Council was adopting what was known as the "Waipukurau Scheme." In June 1923 the Town Clerk of Waipukurau, G.E. Fowler, a former resident of Kaiapoi, had written to the Council to explain the system which the Waipukurau Council had instituted for its housing scheme. Under the system the Council raised five thousand pounds by special order. Fowler explained that the special order was merely formal and did not need the consent of the ratepayers. The Council then advertised for applicants for houses.

The seven successful applicants were then advanced seven hundred pounds, with the Council retaining one hundred pounds to cover legal costs. For their part, the applicants were required by the Waipukurau Council to convey their freehold sections to it, as a collateral for their loan. The applicants also had to place the plans for their houses before the Council. The Council then called for tenders, with each house being a separate tender. If the tendered price for a house was more than the seven hundred pounds allocated, the applicant had the choice of either finding the difference or modifying the plan so that it did meet the requirements. The attraction of the scheme was that the houses built under the scheme were scattered throughout the community and that each was tailored to the individual needs of the applicants. At the time that Fowler was writing the Waipukurau Council had built twenty houses under the scheme and was in the process of building another seven. (3) In Kaiapoi seven houses were built following the Waipukurau model, most of which were ready for occupation towards the end of 1923.

This was the Council's first foray into the provision of housing for its citizens. Notwithstanding the stop-start nature of the Council housing scheme, over the years, from the formation of the first Housing Committee in 1920, the scheme was successful in providing much needed housing at a price that was affordable for the new owners.

At the same time as the Council was grappling with the housing problem the Kaiapoi Woollen mills was putting in place a housing programme of its own. With the pick-up in the economy in 1923 it became obvious to the directors of the company that the mill was desperately short of skilled workers. In June 1923 it was noted by the directors that the Kaiapoi mill needed sixty eight more workers. Unfortunately it was impossible to obtain that number from the New Zealand labour pool. Towards the middle of June the warehouse manager, C. Bowie suggested that while the mill manager, Mr Leithead, was in England he could recruit workers for Kaiapoi. In the view of the Board of Directors this was a splendid idea and in order to make the immigration scheme as successful as possible it asked the Reverends Scott and Knight and Mr Kenner of the Y.M.C.A. to form a committee to oversee the settlement of any new workers from Britain. The first concern of those gentlemen was the shortage of housing in the borough. Although they assured the Board that they would do all that was possible, to assist the implementation of the scheme they felt that it would fail if the Board did not address the problem of accommodation.

By the end of July J.H. Blackwell, who had been instructed by the Board at the beginning of the month to make inquiries into the feasibility of the company building workers' cottages, reported back that five roomed cottages could be built in Kaiapoi for six hundred and eighty five pounds excluding the price of drainage, water and fencing. The Board assented to the plan and called for tenders to erect five cottages. By 24 August the company had received seven tenders and from these it accepted that of W.C. Tourell. The acceptance of the tender was a logical extension of the company's policy to provide accommodation for its workers, albeit

(3) *Kaiapoi Record*, June 1923.

that without the combination of a severe housing shortage and the desire to attract skilled workers to Kaiapoi, it is probable that the company would not have ventured into the house building market.

August 1923 turned out to be an eventful month for the Kaiapoi Woollen Company. At the 29 August meeting of the directors James Frostick indicated that he would step down as chairman of the Board after holding the position for ten years. He was succeeded by J.H. Blackwell. At the same meeting the Board received a cable from Leithead notifying it that he had arrived in Galasheils and requesting confirmation of the decision that he was to recruit workers for the company.

The confirmation Leithead sought was cabled back and he began his recruitment drive. It was not as easy as, either the company or Leithead, had imagined, to secure workers from the Galasheils area for the mill at Kaiapoi. By December, however, he had been able to attract forty workers for the factory. Rather regretfully Leithead cabled to the company that there was little hope of attracting hosiery workers unless they were guaranteed three pounds a week and that there was no hope at all of securing the services of clothing workers. The forty workers that he had managed to recruit were described as factory operatives and they sailed for their new homeland in the "*S.S. Suffolk*" on 29 November.

The Board determined that the single women among the forty new arrivals would be accommodated at the Y.W.C.A. hostel and the single men at "*Ty-Coed*". Married couples among the group would have special arrangements made for them until their financial position could be worked out. All of the recruits would be given free accommodation for the first two or three days until they started work.

The five cottages were completed by the end of February and at the completion date two of them had been sold at eight hundred and fifty pounds each thus yielding the company a small profit. The other three were sold over the next few months. The venture into providing housing for the workers at the factory had been satisfactory for both the company and the workers.

If the Council and the Woollen Company were successful in providing the desperately needed houses, then the Waimakariri Harbour Board was much less effective in its aim to have a prosperous port established at Kaiapoi. The port trade which had been stimulated in the early years of the century by the activities of John Sims and to a lesser extent by his successor, the Kaiapoi Shipping and Trading Company, had faded. The Board had struggled to maintain the port in more recent times. The 1913 plan for stabilising the entrance to the harbour through the construction of a training wall had to be abandoned in 1914 as a consequence of the outbreak of the First World War. Furthermore, the Kaiapoi Shipping Company ran into trouble when the "*Kairaki*" one of its two ships was lost in a storm off the Greymouth coast in 1914. This left only the "*Wootton*" to service the port. This, she did, at ever increasing intervals until 1915 when the vessel ceased visiting the port altogether. For most areas this would have signalled the end of the port but this was not the case for Kaiapoi. The cessation of the "*Wootton's*" visits encouraged a group of citizens to form itself into the Waimakariri Harbour Improvement League. In doing this it was continuing the traditional belief in the

viability of the port that began with Sewell's observations of the potential of the river, as long ago as 1853.

The League decided to revive the plan to build a training wall. The Waimakariri Harbour Board had apparently commissioned a report on the harbour from the Government Engineer, F.W. Furkert, which covered seven areas of concern for the Board. The report was to give rise to the first instance of lobbying by the League. Furkert had been unable to meet the Board at its regular meeting but he was able to be in Kaiapoi on the following day. He met with H.C. Revell and a number of other Kaiapoi businessmen whom he subsequently described as vitally interested in the question of harbour improvement. He did not meet the members of the Harbour Board. In attending the meeting with Furkert the members of the League sought to ginger up the activities of the Board which they viewed, as moribund.

All seven questions dealt with in Furkert's report were relevant to the viability of constructing the training wall both from an engineering and a commercial perspective. It appeared to the League that once the Harbour Board had received the report nothing more would be done. The League therefore, embarked on a lively campaign of letter writing, especially to the *Kaiapoi Record*, and the calling of public meetings. At a meeting on 22 March 1915 chaired by the president of the League, T.R. Leithead, it was decided to run a ticket of League members for the forthcoming Harbour Board elections. In addition to this, the League decided to begin a vigorous public education crusade to inform people of the advantages of a cheap shipping service to the area and of the improved drainage of the flood-prone Waimakariri if the wall was built.

The finance committee of the League under the chairmanship of J. Lowthian Wilson did a splendid job in this respect. At the April 1915 meeting of the League, the finance committee presented a comprehensive report covering the activities, or more correctly in the view of the finance committee, the inactivity of the Board since its inception. In an editorial the day before the committee's report was presented, the *Kaiapoi Record* asked what the Harbour Board had been doing since 1878. The answer was a resounding "Nothing!"⁽⁴⁾

Stung into action by these attacks the Waimakariri Harbour Board wrote to the Minister of Marine after its July meeting. In its correspondence, the Board outlined the success of the harbour during its lifetime and requested a substantial grant to carry out the improvements that had been recommended in the report undertaken by the chief Public Works Engineer for New Zealand and supported by the investigation done by Marine Department Engineer F.W. Furkert. In the view of the Board, the improvements would develop the natural asset and public utility of the harbour thus adding to the productive power and consequently the prosperity of a large area of North Canterbury.⁽⁵⁾ The letter also explained that the Harbour Board, although it was composed of delegates from the Eyre County Council and the Rangiora County Council as well as from Kaiapoi Borough Council, had no rating powers and therefore was depend-

(4) *Kaiapoi Record* 14.4.1915.

(5) *Kaiapoi Record*, 7.7.1915.

ent on raising revenue from the endowments it had been given at its inception. Obviously the Board was inviting the government to enact a set rating area.

Before it could proceed with a formal request to the government to introduce legislation setting a rating area, the Harbour Board needed to get the agreement of all the local authorities, to the notion that improvements were needed at the port. A conference was called. Not unexpectedly there was no agreement with the Harbour Board's suggested improvement plan from the delegates representing the Eyre and Rangiora Counties. The delegates did not wish to impose a further rating levy on their citizens when it would not directly benefit their respective areas. There was an assumption that an improved harbour at Kaiapoi would attract the coal and timber trade from the West Coast. This assumption was questioned by one of the Rangiora County delegates, Fred Horrell. Horrell was sure that when the railway link was complete, all coal and timber would come into Canterbury through that link, rather than through the two bar harbours of Greymouth and Kaiapoi. Horrell also questioned the projected increased use of coal for energy in the region, as there appeared to be an increasing use of hydro generated electricity from Lake Coleridge. In both of these aspects Horrell was to be proved right, but at the time his questions were seen as obstructive by the delegates from Kaiapoi. In fact the September 1915 conference was only the preliminary skirmish in a battle which continued even after the passing of the Waimakariri Harbour and District Empowering Act in April 1916.

Horrell also sat on the Lyttelton Harbour Board and he used his position there to cast doubts on the plan to have legislation passed to enable the Waimakariri Harbour Board to set a rating area. However, his views were opposed by the chairman of the Lyttelton Harbour Board, Dr Thacker, who saw an improvement to the harbour at Kaiapoi as a means of advancing the cause of the Christchurch canal scheme with the ultimate aim of diverting trade from Timaru harbour to Lyttelton. This response must have surprised Horrell but it did not deter him. He became all the more tenacious in his opposition to the proposed Bill.

At a further conference of the concerned local bodies in October 1915, Horrell attempted to have consideration of the proposed Bill put off until a full report had been presented to all the ratepayers of the various local bodies at the conference. In Horrell's opinion the report ought to contain definite costings of the improvements as well as correctly researched estimates of the benefits that would accrue to the region from such expenditure. Using Lake Ellesmere as an example, Horrell also questioned the assumption that the bar would ever be satisfactorily controlled. His objections were formulated in an amendment to the original resolution proposed by J.H. Blackwell seeking approval for enabling legislation for a rating area. The amendment was supported by two members of the Board, James Wright and B. Lissaman and the Eyre County delegate, R.O. Dixon. Unfortunately this support was not sufficient to pass the amendment and Blackwell's resolution was to prevail. This did not occur before a great deal of detailed and often acrimonious discussion.

Having failed to upset the vote at an official level, Horrell turned his attention to gaining as much public support as he could from the ratepayers in the Rangiora Riding of the county council. Horrell called a number of public meetings at which he presented his original objections to the scheme but embellished them with the spectre of increased rates for his constituents for the ultimate benefit of the citizens of the Kaiapoi Borough. He appealed to their national pride by telling them that the Midland Railway, when completed, would be a national asset, contrasting this with the Waimakariri Harbour as an asset only for the Kaiapoi district. Horrell was firmly of the opinion that wharfages at the improved harbour would be too high to permit economic passage of goods. Horrell further stated that the Railways Department never overcharged for freightage and only required a small profit to pay for running expenses. (6)

Horrell's campaign gained widespread support in the Rangiora Riding. It alarmed the Waimakariri Harbour Improvement League sufficiently for the League to issue a pamphlet entitled "*Facts for Ratepayers*". The pamphlet outlined the steps that had been taken and the benefits that would be derived from construction of the wall and the subsequent increase of trade on the river. It concluded by reassuring the ratepayers of the district that the harbours at Greymouth, Westport, Waitara, Wanganui and others had been, only a few years previously, in the same position as the Waimakariri Harbour. With improvements similar to those proposed for Kaiapoi they were all viable businesses.

A petition was presented to the House of Representatives on behalf of Horrell and others in the rating area in June 1916. The petition indicated that the ratepayers were emphatically against the provisions of the Bill and that the proposed expenditure under the Bill was an absolute waste of ratepayers' money. The petitioners declared that the transport requirements of the region were adequately met by the government railways and the Port of Lyttelton. They requested that the Bill not be proceeded with. They failed and the Bill was passed towards the end of 1916. The Act included the Rangiora Borough Council as part of the rateable area. This was an odd inclusion as the Borough Council had taken no part in the discussions and had not been part of the original plan put forward by the Harbour Board. It can only be assumed that by including the borough the legislators felt that the numbers of Rangiora ratepayers would balance the Kaiapoi vote in any poll taken to approve the raising of a loan to improve the harbour.

In September of the following year an amending Bill was introduced by David Buddo to exclude the Rangiora Borough Council area from the Waimakariri Harbour rating district. During the debate on the second reading of the Bill there were strong indications that the borough was included to give weight to any dissenting vote from ratepayers in any poll seeking approval for the raising of a loan. The Minister of Internal Affairs, the Honourable G.W. Russell, indicated in the

(6) *The Sun*, 15.4.1916.

House that the people of Rangiora were quite prepared to stay out and that he had the authority of the Mayor of Rangiora to express that view. The Member for Hurunui, G.W. Forbes, stressed the importance for the new Freezing works, of a port at Kaiapoi and that by excluding the Rangiora Borough, the promoters of the harbour scheme would be sure that they could get the necessary approval for the raising of a loan to carry out improvements. In answer to a question from an unidentified member about why the borough was included, Forbes frankly stated that it was put in to kill the Bill.⁽⁷⁾ The amendment was passed and so the scene was set for the loan to be raised and for the works to proceed.

After all of this was achieved it was subsequently deemed not responsible of the Waimakariri Harbour Board to raise a loan to build the training wall because of the war effort. Consequently nothing more was heard of the scheme until 1919. The matter was raised in a letter published in *The Sun* newspaper on 4 July, 1919 in which the writer asked why nothing had been done about the improvements to the harbour. There was no direct response to that enquiry which indicated that not a great deal was happening at all. However, in October a report was published under the name of the chairman of the Harbour Board, W. Doubleday, for the Ways and Communications Committee of the Canterbury Progress League. The report outlined the history of the harbour from 1859 to 1914. It came to the same conclusion that all other reports made prior to 1914, that when the bar was in a sailable and reasonably stable condition then the Waimakariri Harbour was an asset to North Canterbury. Somewhat pointedly the Doubleday report did not record an outline of the controversy that had dogged the Harbour Board since 1914. Perhaps the writer did not think it prudent to reopen old wounds particularly as the difficulties were seen in the context of fear of domination by the Kaiapoi ratepayers over the surrounding district.

A few months later the spectre of Christchurch and North Canterbury losing port trade to Timaru prompted a correspondence to *The Sun* to request a revival of the canal scheme. According to one of the correspondents, the Mayor of Christchurch had sounded a note of warning about trade in Canterbury when he had heard that the Kaiapoi Freezing works was sending consignments of frozen meat to Timaru for export. The correspondent, under the grand pseudonym of "*The Country's Progress*", went on to express the view that as the river at Kaiapoi afforded a fine harbour it was in the best interests of the province to develop it.⁽⁸⁾ This correspondence was followed shortly thereafter by an article by D.G. Sullivan M.P. who postulated that neither the Christchurch canal scheme nor the Kaiapoi Harbour improvements were feasible because of the continuous depositing of sand in Pegasus Bay by the Waimakariri River. His solution was a road tunnel to Lyttelton.⁽⁹⁾

Proponents of the Waimakariri Harbour improvements were not impressed by such suggestions. Two Christchurch city councillors, J.O. Jameson and F. Burgoyne,

(7) *The Press*, 7.9.1917.

(8) *The Sun*, 17.2.1920.

(9) *The Sun*, 19.2.1920.

organised a launch trip down the river from Kaiapoi for a group of fifty people. The group was made up of representatives from The Canterbury Progress League and all the surrounding local bodies from Lyttelton in the south, Oxford in the west and Waipara County in the north. The notable absentees were the delegates from the Rangiora County Council. Their absence was explained as an unfortunate oversight when the invitations were sent out. It was hoped by Jameson and Burgoyne that most delegates would be impressed by the potential of the river and support the Harbour Board in its efforts to revive the training wall scheme. Doubleday explained to the delegates that the Harbour Board had requested a re-assessment of the proposal. The Board Engineer, H.F. Toogood, had made an examination of the river mouth and concluded that the scheme was still viable even at the increased cost of thirty thousand pounds. No dissenting views were presented. All the delegates agreed with Burgoyne when he stated that the transportation of goods by water was superior to rail on the question of cost and that a port at Kaiapoi would not only benefit that area but the whole of the Dominion. This was the same kind of logic and appeal to national pride that Horrell made when arguing for support of the railway system over an improved port at Kaiapoi.

At the invitation of the chairman of the Waipara County Council, R. Evans, a meeting of representatives from all the surrounding local authorities was held in Kaiapoi on 22 June 1920. The meeting was to decide whether or not to proceed with the proposed construction of a training wall at the river mouth and the development of the harbour area at Kaiapoi. Evans himself moved:

"That this gathering of residents of North Canterbury and members of local bodies north of the Waimakariri representing the counties of Cheviot, Amuri, Waipara, Kowai, Ashley, Oxford, Eyre and Rangiora, the boroughs of Rangiora and Kaiapoi and Town Board of Amberley considers that the development of the Waimakariri harbour for coastal trade as an auxiliary to Lyttelton harbour developments, will be of great benefit to North Canterbury; that we approve the Waimakariri Harbour Board's proposals at the river mouth and favour the enlarging of the Waimakariri Harbour Board district to include the areas abovementioned." (10)

Most of the speakers were in favour of the motion. Only Fred Horrell sounded a note of warning. He thought that the estimate of cost would be one hundred thousand pounds, if not more, rather than the sixty thousand pounds mentioned by most of the speakers. Horrell's objections at this meeting were mild compared with his objections during the period before the passing of the Waimakariri Harbour District and Empowering Act. Maybe this time he did not have the energy for a prolonged fight or maybe he could see that the weight of numbers was against him from the start.

(10) *The Press*, 23.6.1920.

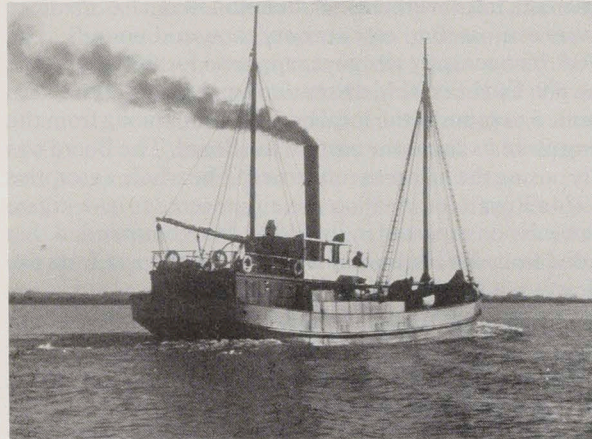
In October the new Act was passed giving effect to the motion passed at the June meeting. The first meeting of the expanded Harbour Board took place in November 1920 with R. Evans elected as chairman. The Board planned to construct the training wall as well as new wharves, a cattle landing, a turning basin and it proposed to carry out channel improvements. A decision was also made to purchase a slip. All of this was estimated to cost seventy thousand pounds. The Board subsequently achieved the necessary ratepayer approval for the raising of a loan but almost as soon as the poll had been held dissention among the various local bodies began to appear. This led to some of the local bodies withdrawing from the scheme and others presenting protests about the costs to the Board. The Board was left impotent as far as actually raising the loan was concerned. The whole enterprise became so tangled that by 1924 a Royal Commission was empowered to investigate the problem. The Royal Commission reported in July 1924. It recommended that all the local bodies be excluded from the Harbour Board rating area apart from the Kaiapoi Borough Council. It was not possible for the Borough to raise a loan of the magnitude required and so the whole harbour improvement scheme was abandoned.

The despondency in Kaiapoi over this decision was offset by nature providing a solution. In May 1923 there had been a tremendous flood which had resulted in the Waimakariri River cutting a new outlet to the sea. The outlet was half a mile north of the old one and quite close to Kairaki. By 1924 this outlet had improved to the extent that the water on the bar was ten and a half feet deep at high tide. The flood had done what the proponents of the training wall had hoped to have undertaken with the scheme. At the same time the flood had provided the evidence so forcibly put by opponents of the scheme, that the river could not be trusted to flow in the same bed from year to year.

The outlet, now naturally provided, encouraged the Kaiapoi Shipping Company to once again send the "Wootton" to Kaiapoi. Nearly nine years had elapsed since the last visit of the "Wootton". The ship was greeted with much joy by the Kaiapoi citizens. On the day of her arrival the "Wootton" had left Lyttelton at eleven o'clock in the morning and had reached the Waimakariri River mouth at just after one in the afternoon. High tide was still a couple of hours away but Captain Larsen had wanted to be there in plenty of time in order to observe the signals correctly. The beacons on the south spit were easy to pick up but the signal balls on the Kairaki side were more difficult to observe. This was because they were black and in the intervening years since the last visit of the "Wootton" a row of pine trees had grown up and thus made it difficult to sight the signal balls. However by sailing close to the shore the signal could be ascertained and by quarter to three the signal was changed from three balls to four indicating that it was safe to navigate the bar. The "Wootton" proceeded cautiously over the bar with a sailor positioned amidships with a pole to take soundings. Right on the bar he reported a depth of ten feet which gave the ship sufficient clearance and although she did touch the bottom just inside the spit no damage was done.

There was a crowd of people on the sandhills at Kairaki who cheered as the "Wootton" went by. A launch embarked from Kairaki carrying members of the

Harbour Board and the Mayor of Kaiapoi, H.McIntosh. The official party transferred from the launch to the ship and proceeded along the channel which had been marked earlier in the day by the harbourmaster, Captain Featherstone. When the



"Wootton" on Waimakariri River, Batch, Christchurch, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

"Wootton" came in sight of the bridge and the wharf she let out a whistle which was matched by a cheer from the on-lookers on the bank. She berthed at twenty five past three, nearly four and a half hours after leaving Lyttelton. A number of dignitaries made speeches. Chief among them was the Rangiora representative on the Harbour Board, Mr J.J.Mathews, who said that although he had been elected to the Board opposed to the Harbour Improvement scheme, what he had just experienced had convinced him that the scheme was credible. On behalf of the ship owners J.H.Blackwell made a request that now the bar was navigable it should be kept that way.



Loading wheat and potatoes on "Wootton", I.N. Eagle, Kaiapoi, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

After the speeches had finished the Kaiapoi children rushed on board followed by the adults. One of the boys who had clambered up on to the wheelhouse accidentally stood on the wire that operated the whistle. He got such a fright at the resulting blast from the whistle that he fell off the wheelhouse onto the crowd below. His fall was harmless but it caused a great deal of laughter.

The joy of the citizens at the reopening of the Kaiapoi harbour was

to be shortlived. The berthing of the "Wootton" in May 1924 was to be the only visit that the ship was able to make to the port. Fred Horrell's prediction that the completion of the Midland railway would kill the shipping trade between Kaiapoi and Westland was proved correct. The opening of the Oтира tunnel and the replacement of small ships on the coastal trade routes by bigger more economical ships meant that it was no longer feasible to use the port at Kaiapoi. For these reasons it was fortunate that the Harbour Board was never able to raise the loan to build the training wall. Not only would it have become a Board without a harbour, it would have produced a debt that it could not have serviced.

The years between 1921 and 1923 were remarkable for the number of natural disasters that impacted upon the Kaiapoi area. There were two earthquakes. The first in 1921 and the second in 1922. There was a flood in 1923 which was rated in terms of severity, alongside those of 1868, 1887 and 1905.

The earthquake in 1921 was felt at 8.45 on the morning of 6 November. It was described as very strong and with an east-west movement. The main shock was followed by an aftershock half an hour later and another twelve hours later. No doubt there were a number of small aftershocks between the larger ones but none of these were recorded. Despite the reported severity of the earthquake very little damage appeared to have occurred. However some idea of the effect of a sudden quake on the population was recorded in *The Press*. A woman in North Canterbury wrote to her mother in Christchurch outlining her experiences. She and her husband were about to have breakfast when they felt the shock. They ran outside where they found the baby holding on to a box while the bricks of the chimney fell about it in all directions. The couple's other children seemed to enjoy the experience, their mother reported. They thought it was a joke when they were knocked over by the shaking. After the shaking had subsided the family returned to the kitchen where they found the tea spilt out of the cups, milk everywhere, crockery all over the place and the wallpaper ripped from the walls. It seemed that only the pictures on the walls remained intact. The horses were apparently scared as they ran about the whole day. The dogs barked all through the following night.⁽¹¹⁾

The 1921 shock was not as severe as the one that struck on Christmas Day 1922. This earthquake was felt in the middle of the afternoon and was reported as the most severe in the region for twenty years. It not only damaged buildings and their contents but also uprooted trees and caused fissures in the land. The most alarming of these fissures occurred at Waikuku Beach. *The Press* reported that hundreds of people were picnicing at the beach when the quake struck. It tossed a large number of cars around and caused fissures to open up in the sand. Sea water rushed out of these rifts. This phenomenon was more alarming to the picnickers than the cars being tossed about. Although the settlements around Kaiapoi, as well as Rangiora, reported extensive damage, Kaiapoi itself appeared to have been only slightly affected. The damage was said to be limited to a few chimney tops being shaken

(11) *The Press* 7.11.1921, p.6.

down and ornaments and china broken in various houses.⁽¹²⁾ In its general report on the earthquake *The Press* commented that it appeared that

“the gentler sex seemed more affected by the shock than the men. In some cases women rushed from different houses and formed huddled groups in the roadway where they remained until the tremors had ceased.”⁽¹³⁾

Although this type of reporting seems quaint it does indicate the real terror that a severe earthquake induces in the population. There is no doubt that some of this fear was felt by the population of Kaiapoi even though the damage to property in that area was described as slight. Many of the population on that holiday were probably away from home, either at the beach, watching the M.C.C. team play the Canterbury cricket team at Lancaster Park, or visiting their relatives and friends in different centres. The shocks would have caused general alarm about the state of properties in Kaiapoi, but when it was realised that property damage in the borough was not severe in comparison with other centres the common response was to say that the damage was minor. In fact some householders and businesses had an enormous task cleaning up the mess that the shaking has caused.

The damage from the 1922 earthquake was more easily repaired than that caused by the flood of 1923. Without indicating the actual figures *The Press* stated



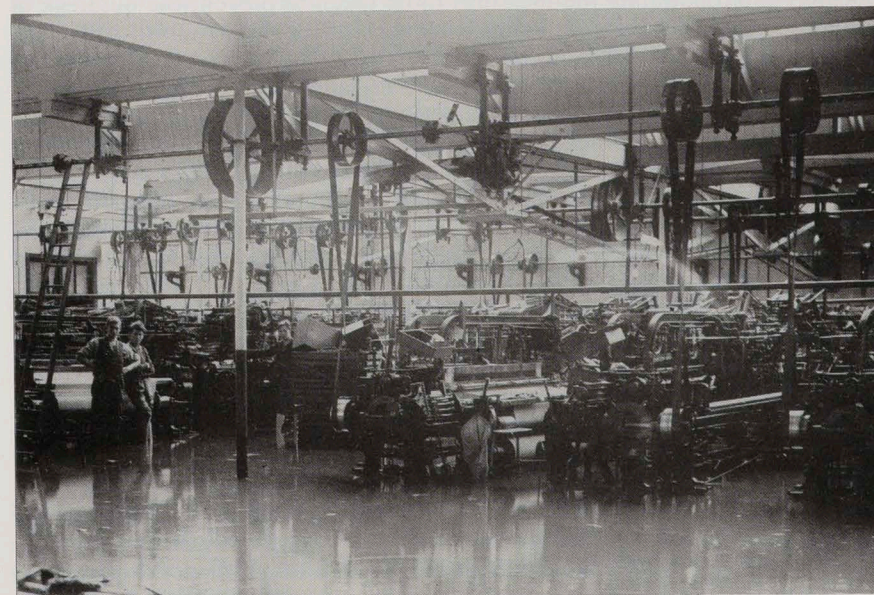
7 May 1923 flood in Peraki St., Roman Catholic Church in foreground, Methodist Church in background, Douglas Jones, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

(12) *The Press* 26.12.1922, p.8.

(13) *ibid*

that the rainfall experienced in the Province from 4 May until 7 May 1923 was the highest for twenty years. The most affected area was North Canterbury where none of the rivers were able to cope with the enormous runoff from the hills. Household-ers in Culverden, Amberley and Leithfield were forced to abandon their houses to the flood waters which were reported to be three feet deep in some places. However it was Kaiapoi that sustained the most extensive damage.

The rain had increased the volume of water in both the Ashley and Waimakariri Rivers to the extent that they were rendered incapable of coping with similarly increased volumes from their contributing streams. In the case of the Waimakariri, the Eyre main drain and the Cam which drained into the North Branch, contributed to the flooding in the township. The low lying part of the town between the Cam and Ranfurly Street was completely inundated. Much damage was caused in this locality especially to the Woollen Mill. The dye house and the milling room were particularly affected by the flood waters. In the weaving shed the water reached a depth of twenty-one inches which was the height of the warps on the backs of the looms and the cloth beams on the front of the machinery. The mill manager had a number of the hands working hard on Monday evening, 7 May, to shift goods and materials from the floor but they were forced to abandon their task when the water rose to dangerous levels. Water in the dye house caused pollution of the water ways as the chemicals used in the dyeing processes were swept out by the water. Further pollution was caused by flooding of the septic tank. Liberal use of lime chloride was recommended by the Medical Officer of Health, Doctor



1923 flood in Woollen Mills, Douglas Jones, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Telford, in an effort to reduce the risk of disease after the water had subsided. No doubt this compounded the chemical problem in the rivers but was an effective way of dealing with an immediate problem of septic tank pollution. The mill had to cope with the soaking of a large number of bales of wool which were stored in stacks. The upper bales had to be shifted before the drying out process of the wool in the floor level bales could begin. This was an enormous logistical problem on its own but the mill management also had to cope with the general drying out and cleaning up of the buildings and plant before work could start again. By 9 May the buildings were clear of water and by the start of the following week a degree of normality had returned to the mill.

On the south side of the town the Eyre River flooded Sneyd, Broom, Otaki, and Akaroa Streets. In Fuller Street the waters reached as far as the Wesleyan Sunday School building. For most people the only practical method of getting about was by boat. As well as the superficial damage caused to buildings by water and flood debris, a number of buildings suffered structural damage which in most cases meant they were unfit for occupation once the flood waters had drained away. Obviously roads and footpaths were damaged beyond recognition.

These problems led to the establishment of a Flood Relief Committee the members of which were the Mayor, J.H.Blackwell, the Town Clerk, C.H.Wright, Doctors Gillet and Ramsey, Captain Armstrong, and the Reverends L.A.Knight, J.Hiddlestone, F.Robertson and W.B.Scott. In the immediate aftermath of the flood the committee organised a house to house delivery of a leaflet prepared by Doctor Telford outlining the measures to be taken to prevent the outbreak of disease. The committee also arranged for the collection of rubbish from each household by the borough collector.

The Flood Relief Committee also oversaw the collection and distribution of the flood relief fund. One of the first promises of a donation to the fund came from the Hinemoa Hockey Club which decided to give half the proceeds of its annual social to the Fund. The local Member of Parliament, David Buddo, on behalf of the government, intimated that it would subsidise any fund at a rate of a pound to a pound up to three hundred and fifty pounds. This went some way to helping the borough recover from the flood, but as in all such disasters the need for a permanent solution to the problem was urgently required.

The Council set up a special sub-committee to investigate the question of general flood protection for the town. The members of this committee were Councillors Revell, Thorne, Gordon, and Joyce. It was headed by the Mayor. In essence, the efforts of the sub-committee became an extension of the work done by the Rivers Commission. This body had reported to Parliament in June 1921. The Commissioners had recognised the danger that the Waimakariri posed not only to the settlements on its flood plain, but also to Christchurch. In a study conducted by the Commission it was found that the cut made by the Canterbury Provincial Government in 1863-64 resulted in a new North Branch being formed. The exit to the old North branch was blocked off by a stop bank positioned across the outlet. The only function of the old North Branch, at the time of investigation, was to drain off the surplus water from the Eyre and Rangiora swamps. However,

much of this task was being impeded by the undermining of the groyne at the entrance to the old North Branch by flood waters. There was very little water flowing down the South Branch the bed of which had not only silted up but was also overgrown with vegetation. The main water flow down the new channel was assisted by the construction of groynes and the growth of shingle banks on the southern side. In spite of this, problems that could lead to flooding were still occurring in the river. The bed itself was building up, especially downstream of O'Callaghan's Road, Coutts Bridge and the Empire Bridge. The building up of the bed led to a consequent increase in the flood level. That factor, combined with the general flattening out of the river slope, resulted in ponding at the east end of Coutts Island. The Commissioners concluded that the channels in the new North Branch on the downstream side of Coutts Island would be unable to carry flood waters thereby posing a threat to Christchurch. They also concluded that the flooding of Kaiapoi was caused, in some instances, by the flooding of the Cust and Eyre Rivers and the flood overflow from the Ashley River. A flood overflow was caused, in the Commissioners' view, by insufficient stopbank heights and an inadequate outlet near Kaiapoi.

A more constant and a more insidious problem than flooding, was identified by the Commission, in the steady erosion of the river banks. Not only was valuable farming land lost through this problem but the erosion of the land added dramatically, to the build up of the river beds.

The Commission's solutions for the difficulties presented by the Waimakariri River system were threefold. Firstly it recommended the raising of the existing stopbanks and groynes to a level two feet above the highest recorded flood level. Secondly, erosion of the north bank was to be contained by the construction of permeable groynes along the eight mile section downstream from a point one mile north of McLeans Island. Thirdly the ponding on the eastern end of Coutts Island was to be relieved by the construction of a new channel.

The Commission presented two channel schemes. The first was to cut a channel from the new North Branch from a point half a mile above Coutts Bridge to rejoin the main river bed at Stewarts Gully. The second scheme was to cut a channel from a point just below the junction of the North and South Branches across Irishmans Flat to the estuary opposite the present sea outlet. The Commission favoured the Irishmans Flat channel for it calculated that this would increase the flood slope thereby facilitating the drainage of flood waters. It was thought that this channel would prevent any back flooding of Kaiapoi and could also cause the scouring out of the congested South Branch thus restoring to that branch its natural function.

As well as these investigations, the Commission also examined the possibility of protecting Kaiapoi from flooding in the North Branch. Again it presented two solutions with a heavy recommendation in favour of the second solution. Firstly, it was thought that the town could be protected by the diversion of the Eyre from a point west of the Hars Road crossing to a new main drain into the North Branch. This scheme, although it would prevent ponding, was thought to create problems through the increased load of debris that the Eyre system would introduce into the

Waimakariri. The second solution, which the Commission favoured, considered that the present channel into the old North Branch was of sufficient dimensions to cope with the discharge of a fairly large flood. Judicious stopbanking at a good distance back from the riverbed along both sides of the lower reaches of the old North Branch would then prevent serious flooding in the town. Overall, the Commission was convinced that provided all the main rivers in the Waimakariri system were kept within their channels, that the flood control measures were kept in good repair and its recommendations followed, the system would pose no danger to property and life.

The Commission also recommended that a new local authority be created to have responsibility for the control of the whole river system. It was estimated that the works to bring the system under control would cost one hundred and twenty four thousand pounds. Therefore the rating area would need to be an extended. The Commission proposed that the rating area encompass the whole watershed of the Waimakariri and its tributaries up to the railway crossing on the lower gorge. It should also include the territory covered by the South Waimakariri River Board. It anticipated that empowering legislation would transfer the assets and liabilities of the South Waimakariri River Board to the new body which was to be known as the Waimakariri River Trust. The members of the Trust were to be made up of six elected members from the district with two government representatives appointed for three years by the Minister of Public Works. It was thought that one of these representatives should be either a Stipendiary Magistrate or a person conversant with local body administration and that the other appointee should be an engineer. The two appointees were to be known as River Commissioners.

The duties of the Waimakariri River Trust incorporated the provision of detailed surveys, plans, estimates and specifications for the works recommended by the Commission. When the plans were approved by the government, the government appointees were required to poll the ratepayers to seek their approval to raise a loan for the works. Once the recommended work had been carried out, the Trust was to maintain the system and extend it, as necessary, to give the district the fullest possible protection from floods. The Trust was also to maintain an observation of the river system to provide a data base from which to plan future control works. The Trust was to control all the channels, the banks, locks, tide gates, bridges, ferries and wharves on the river. It was to be the only body which either planted or cut down willows on the banks of the entire river system.

As expected, the South Waimakariri River Board was not enthusiastic for its replacement by a larger authority. At a meeting held in September 1921 the River Board stipulated that its legal authority was derived from the River Waimakariri Board of Conservators which had been established up in 1868. It was clear to the present members of the River Board that the all revenue raised in its area should be spent on works in the district and that none of the revenue from the south side should be spent on the north side. The Board did not accept the Commissioners' findings that it was responsible for the diversion of the waters from the South Branch to the North Branch. It was also sure that the proposed channel through Irishmans Flat would be an expensive mistake. As a compromise the River Board

suggested that the whole area be bought under one authority comprising of two wards, a south ward and a north ward. Revenue raised in each ward would be spent in the respective wards.

The residents on the north bank of the river were concerned by the report of the South Waimakariri River Board. They decided to call their own meeting. It was held on 20 September in the Kaiapoi Borough Council Chambers under the chairmanship of J.H.Blackwell. Present were representatives from the Eyre County Council, the Kaiapoi Borough Council, the Waimakariri Harbour Board and ratepayers from the north bank of the river. In his address to the meeting the local Member of Parliament, David Jones, said that the residents on the south side of the river needed to take a wider view of the problem and not quibble over the spending of money in their own district. The meeting unanimously endorsed the motion that the government proceed with establishing the River Trust. An executive committee was set up as a watchdog of the interests of the north bank ratepayers. J.H.Blackwell, A.J.Rich, R.O.Dixon, J.Wright, W.Doubleday and C.Beynon formed the committee with A.J.Rich being appointed convener and secretary.

The South Waimakariri River Board had an enormous task in convincing the government that the findings of the River Commission were invalid. The Board, appeared to most people outside its own district, to be merely protecting its own interests at the expense of the wider community. The same sort of accusation could have been levelled at the Executive Committee set up by the north bank representatives. It was clear to the impartial observer, however, that the north bank residents had been treated with scant regard in any consideration of flood protection over the years. There appeared to be a widely held view that it was time a plan for the whole river system was put into place.

The recommendations of the River Commission were accepted by the government and legislation was introduced into the House to set up the Waimakariri River Trust. The Act, The Waimakariri River Improvement Act 1922, set up the Trust and dissolved the South Waimakariri River Board.

The first meeting of the Trust was held on 23 May 1923 while the district was still recoiling from the disastrous flood of the previous week. The Trust was faced not only with the immediate public reaction to the latest flood but, in the case of the Kaiapoi Borough Council, a watchdog committee being set up to deal with future moves directed at the control of the Waimakariri River system.

The two Government appointees were J.Wood of the Public Works Department from Wellington who assumed the chairmanship and J.H.Blackwell. The elected representatives from the north bank were F.G.Horrell and R.O.Dixon. The elected members from the south bank were all previous members of the South Waimakariri River Board. They were J.Leslie, W.P.Spencer, C.H.Opie and A.Manhire. The chairman paid tribute to the work, largely unheralded, done by the old River Board. This sentiment was expanded on by Horrell and Blackwell who added that although there had been some ill feeling between the two districts it was fair to say that the situation on the north bank was too big for individuals to deal with. Some of the individuals who had spent a lot of energy in combating the problems presented by the river system were R.O.Dixon, James Wright and Albert

Rich. The Trust would take over the job of those men, as well as the tasks of the old River Board in order to carry out the four functions outlined in the Act.

The initial aim of the Trust was to put in place works to safeguard Christchurch from flooding. Secondly, it was to carry out works to protect both banks from erosion. Thirdly, it was to prevent or at least mitigate the ponding of flood waters at the lower end of Coutts Island. Lastly it was to prevent or mitigate flood damage from the Cust and Eyre Rivers. In attempting to carry out those functions the Trust was encounter much controversy in the first few years of its existence.

While the 1923 flood adversely affected many people in Kaiapoi the setting up of the Waimakariri River Trust was seen as a positive step for the future control of the river system. It was generally felt in Kaiapoi that, at last central government was taking the problem seriously, notwithstanding that the emphasis in both the River Commission's report and the eventual legislation was on the prevention of flooding in Christchurch.

Individual citizens, since the days of first Pakeha settlement in Kaiapoi, had made attempts to beautify the environment as had various councils over the years. The continuing round of improvements to Darnley Square was testament to the desire to make the landscape more amenable to the eye. However the frequent flooding, the difficult wind pattern and the fact that in the early days the lack of control of stock meant that beautifying efforts were often ruined. In 1922, however, it was felt that it was time that the town had a permanent and formal body to co-ordinate efforts to beautify the area. A public meeting was held in the Council



Mr Trousselot - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

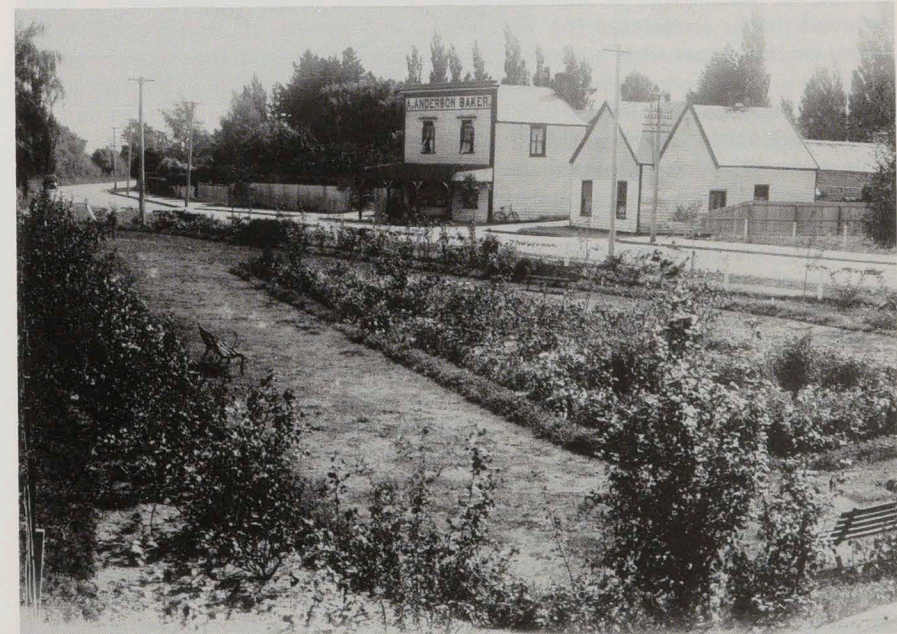
Chambers on 22 June and the Kaiapoi Beautifying and Burgesses' Association was formed. The Reverend W.B.Scott and Mr Trousselot were the instigators of the Association. Trousselot was particularly keen. In the three months after the formation of the Association he had enrolled four hundred members.

The first task the Association set itself was clearing of the river banks. It sought and received the permission of the Waimakariri Harbour Board to remove rubbish and to cut down the old willows on the banks. It began a willow replanting programme on the banks. By September, Scott, who was also a councillor, reported to the Council that the Beautifying Association had employed a gardener and was prepared to take responsibility for mowing of the grass around the War Memorial. One of Association's early sug-

gestions to the Council was for the planting of saplings in the gaps in the poplar avenue along Beach Road and for the establishing of a second row of trees behind the existing ones so that new trees could replace the original ones when they deteriorated. The Association had other plans for improving the river bank on the eastern side of the traffic bridge and for replacing the stiles in the Domain with picket gates.

These plans, and others that the Association proposed, cost more money than the Association had at its disposal from subscriptions. Accordingly the group applied to the Council in April 1923 for a grant of one hundred and fifty pounds. The need for money and the enthusiasm of the members encouraged the Association to hold a fund raising carnival in the Domain. The 1923 carnival was so successful that the Association held another the following year. Together the carnivals raised seven hundred and thirty-four pounds. In the meantime the Council had agreed to grant to the Association one hundred pounds on an annual basis. This meant that the Association had a comfortable amount of money with which to carry out its work.

The Association was also able to undertake more ambitious projects than it had first anticipated. The first of these was the planting of a rose garden on the northern river bank adjacent to Charles Street. The site of the rose garden was formerly a rubbish dump. An enormous amount of work was therefore undertaken by Association members with the help of their gardener to make the site ready for



Scott Rose Garden about 1931, Douglas Jones photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

planting. It was hoped that the rose garden would become a lasting memorial to the work of the Association. A water supply for the garden was laid on by the Council using part of the first one hundred pound grant to the Association. In February 1925 the Council recommended that the rose garden be known as the Scott Garden in recognition of the work that the Reverend Scott had done for the town in his ministry, in his work as a Councillor and as a founding member of the Beautifying Association. The garden has since become a memorial to Scott.

Not all events in the early part of the nineteen twenties were seen in the same positive light as was the Beautifying and Burgesses' Association. It was a period of change for the fire brigade however it was not achieved peacefully. From 1870 the town had been served by a volunteer brigade under the supervision of the Fire Prevention Committee of the Borough Council. It was not always an easy relationship but on the whole the association had been a comfortable one between the brigade and the Council.

In November 1921 there was a special meeting of the Council to consider a Fire Prevention Committee report on complaints the committee had received about undesirable behaviour at the fire brigade rooms. At the meeting Superintendent J.A.Mealings assured the Council that those members of the brigade responsible for such behaviour had been severely reprimanded. He added, however, that he wanted to make it clear that not all of the incidents had been reported to him by Fire Engineer Childs. The Council decided to consider the problem in committee. At the end of its deliberations the Council resolved that it considered the situation unsatisfactory due to a lack of supervision by the responsible authority of the brigade. The resolution required the resignation of Superintendent Mealings. Both Mealings and the secretary of the brigade protested. Mealings wrote to the Council stressing that he regarded the action particularly drastic considering his nineteen years service with the brigade. The secretary's letter informed the Council that nineteen members, out of the twenty present, at a meeting held the previous Monday had voted in favour of Mealings' reinstatement. The Council, however, was adamant in its refusal to reconsider the matter. Blackwell was reported as saying that the matter was painful and that all details were of such a nature that the discussion had to be held in committee. It was decided at a meeting of the Council in December to cancel Mealings' appointment.

The brigade members were naturally most upset by the stance adopted by the Council. They informed the Council by way of a letter tabled at the 10 January Council meeting they would not meet to draw up a new set of rules and regulations as they had been instructed to do by the Council until all the facts surrounding the cancellation of Superintendent Mealings appointment had been made known to them. The Council's reply was to affirm that it intended to appoint a new Superintendent at its next ordinary meeting although it was prepared to meet either a committee of the brigade or the whole brigade at the Council Chambers on 19 January. That meeting did not take place but a special meeting was called on 23 January to receive a deputation from the brigade. The deputation requested again the details on which the Council had arrived at its decision. Again the Council



J.A. Mealings - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

advised that it intended to appoint a new Superintendent without giving to the deputation the details requested.

At its first February meeting the Council decided to delay the appointment of a Superintendent for another fortnight. For his part, the secretary of the brigade demanded proof from the Council that seven men were drunk in the brigade rooms in early November. This seemed to be the last straw for the Council, which on the proposal of Councillor Leithead, seconded by Councillor McIntosh, disbanded the 25 member fire brigade immediately. Arrangements were made to form a new brigade with the assurance given that any members of the old brigade who rejoined would have their service regarded as continuous.

The Council was mistaken in its belief that the fire brigade problem would solve itself as a consequence of this action. At a special meeting held three days later, 10 February, the Mayor explained that it had come to his notice that members of the old fire brigade were intending to withdraw money held in the fire brigade's name. Blackwell did not think that the money was going to be spent in a right and proper way. The Council had to make its position clear. It was decided that a letter be sent to the secretary to warn the brigade that in the event of the money being withdrawn and placed in private hands the Council would hold both those paying out the money and those receiving it responsible for the safety of the funds.

It was decided at the next meeting to instruct the Fire Prevention Committee to obtain information on the formation of a Fire Board. The information had been obtained by the Council's meeting on 21 March 1922. The Fire Prevention Committee was then authorised to complete the arrangements for the formation of the Board. In the meantime the members of the old fire brigade continued to attend fires. The Council received a letter at its 2 May meeting from acting Superintendent F.Clark. He stated that a fire on his premises in Charles Street on 14 April was brought under control with the help of ex-members of the fire brigade.

A poll of ratepayers was held under the provisions of the Fire Brigades Act 1908 to determine whether the Borough should become a Fire District and therefore have a Board controlling the fire brigade and associated services. A small majority were in favour and the Council was able to proceed with seeking the necessary government consent. At the 19 September meeting of the Council, it was recorded



*King George V Coronation Library Reading Room and Fire Station, opened 5 September 1912
- courtesy Kaiapoi Museum*

that the names of the elected Borough Council members to the Kaiapoi Fire Board would be gazetted on 25 September. Those elected were H. McIntosh, T.R. Leithead and R.J. Dunn. The Governor-General's appointee and chairman was L.B. Evans and the members elected by the insurance companies were J. Buchan, J. Hutchins and H.C. Rogers.

The Council must have been relieved to be able to hand the responsibility of the fire brigade over to an independent board. But before it could do so it had to sort through the matter of property ownership with the Kaiapoi Fire Board. By the end of October the Council had decided to lease the fire brigade buildings to the Board and to sell all of the equipment to it.

The first public action of the new Fire Board was to make an inspection of the business area to ensure that no straw or inflammatory materials were stacked alongside business premises which could aggravate the situation if a fire broke out. This action, while probably not designed to give the public confidence in the new Fire Board, did just that. It was necessary to demonstrate that the new Board was

an entirely different body from the old Fire Prevention Committee and that the public could have confidence in the brigade again after the open hostility that had previously existed.

There was a period of about ten months in which nothing was heard from the Fire Board at Council level. A cryptic note in the Council minutes of October 1923 demonstrated that all was not peaceful. The minute recorded that certain councillors deplored the fact that the Council's representatives on the Fire Board had kept the Council in ignorance about extraordinary expenditure of forty eight pounds, ten shillings. It is not clear from the record whether this matter was satisfactorily resolved but it appears that the Council's viewpoint prevailed.

The next problem between the Board and the Council arose when the Board objected to the continual presence of a Council employee in the accommodation administered by the Board. The Council was unable to continue to dominate the Board. In March 1924 the Council discussed whether or not the Electrical Engineer, H.W. Childs, should be allowed to retain his position as Fire Brigade Engineer. This latter position enabled Childs to live in the accommodation provided by the Fire Board. Although it was certain that Childs could no longer undertake two jobs the Council seemed willing to let him stay in the Fire Board house. The Board disagreed and so Childs had to find somewhere else to live. This action plus the earlier one encouraged further tension between the two bodies. Animosity surfaced again from early April when the Board requested that the Council place on its estimates no less than five hundred pounds for the purchase of new fire plant. The brigade recommended that five new fire sumps be installed. The Council was reluctant to spend more money than it felt necessary and wanted to have increased control over the spending of the Board money. In June the Fire Board had decided to go ahead with the purchase of new plant and the Council somewhat reluctantly placed on the estimates two hundred and fifty pounds for its share of the purchase of the new sumps.

The Fire Board's next purchase was to be a new fire pump. The Council instructed the Fire Board to trial the pump before it decided on a purchase. The trial must have been satisfactory for the Board notified the Council that it was going ahead with the purchase of a 150/200 gallons per minute Dennis pump costing approximately five hundred pounds in September 1924. The Fire Board was at last firmly established in Kaiapoi and it now seemed as though the troubles that had brought about the demise of the old brigade had been forgotten.

The election of Hector McIntosh to the mayoralty in 1924 was at once a break with the immediate past and a link back to the pioneer times. His election was evidence of the former in that he was the first new mayor of Kaiapoi since the war. J.H. Blackwell had been elected to the position in 1916 and so McIntosh was seen as a new beginning. At the same time however his family were pioneers in the Beach Road area. Hector McIntosh was Kenneth McIntosh's son and in his early days must have had some share in the farming of Beach Road property. The early connection with that particular area seemed to give McIntosh an affinity for the beach settlements of The Pines and Kairaki.

In April 1921 the leaseholders at The Pines formed a group called the The Pines Welfare and Progress League under the chairmanship of J. McGarry. This move followed the very successful Christmas-New Year gala held in 1920. It was felt by the residents that they needed an Association to monitor the welfare and enhance the progress of the beach settlement. They realised after the gala that they could achieve a great deal with co-operation. The logical step was to form an association which would present the concerns of the area to the Kaiapoi Council and to the Rangiora County Council. The residents at Kairaki followed the lead of The Pines residents and formed their own association. It was never as strong as The Pines Association and eventually it amalgamated with that body.

Throughout Hector McIntosh's mayoralty there were deputations from both settlements seeking the Council's help to improve the living conditions for both permanent residents and visitors to the beach areas. The first deputation from Kairaki met with the Council in June 1924. The main concern expressed by the deputation was the number of repairs needed at Kairaki to make living there less hazardous. The river bank near the Hazlett home needed urgent repairs to stop tidal action from flooding the house. The deputation requested that the Saltwater Creek embankment be capped with clay and that willow stakes be driven to prevent traffic from driving along the top of the area. Another request was made for two outlets to be fitted with automatic flood gates through the embankment to allow the free drainage of water into the creek after a flood. The Council was sympathetic and granted the deputation twenty five pounds for the repairs and protection works to the river bank at Kairaki.

Of all the deputations from Kairaki and The Pines, the February 1926 deputation from The Pines highlighted the difficulty that the beach settlements had with local authorities. This deputation wanted improvements done to the roadway so that two charabancs could pass by each other in safety. It also wanted the Oval raised and a drainage system put in place, the plantation underscrubbed, the willows near the bridge removed, the brick fire place removed and re-erected further to the north and six waste paper bins installed. The last five items on the list were all the responsibility of the Kaiapoi Borough Council but the road improvements had to be referred to the Rangiora County Council. This splitting of responsibilities for the beach settlements came to be known by the residents as dual control and was thought by them to impede the settlements both as resort areas and as sites for permanent settlement. Dual control created a feeling of resentment that Hector McIntosh, with all his sympathy for the beach settlements, could do little to alleviate.

The residents decided to undertake their own improvements as a means of avoiding unnecessary delays. An example of self help was celebrated in February 1925. The road between the The Pines and Kairaki had been reformed and a number of people gathered to mark an official opening. A portion of the old road nearest Kairaki had been subject to flooding at high tide creating a considerable nuisance to the local residents as well as to visitors. Instead of waiting for the Rangiora County Council to reform the road the local residents under the leadership of Councillor R.F. Joyce provided the means by which they could get a new

road. Councillor Joyce collected subscriptions from the residents at Kairaki and from motorists who used the road. With this money the residents were able to employ a contractor, R.J.H. Miller, to reform the road. At the opening ceremony Hector McIntosh said that Joyce was to be congratulated on his efforts. No doubt all the residents of Kairaki endorsed that sentiment.

As well as the empathy McIntosh seemed to have for the beach settlements he and his brother, Robert, instituted a sporting contest which still bears their name. Robert McIntosh, who farmed at Loburn, was elected Mayor of Rangiora in 1925. Hector saw Robert's election as a golden opportunity to turn, the often destructive rivalry, between the two North Canterbury towns into something positive for both communities. At Hector's suggestion the brothers decided to present a shield to the communities to be competed for by each community in a variety of sports. At a meeting in Rangiora, Robert McIntosh expressed the hope that the shield competition would encourage a more friendly spirit between the two towns. The competition was to last a couple of months of each year and was to have a variety of sports represented. For the first year it was decided that the competition would last between the first of May and the thirtieth of April. The sports represented in the first year were, croquet, cricket, tennis, bowls, fire brigade events, rifle shooting, golf, football, hockey, basketball (netball), billiards and snooker and miniature rifle shooting. Rangiora won the toss for the first contest which was to be croquet played at the Rangiora rinks. The croquet match was played between two teams of six players. The balance of the competitions were to be held alternately between the two boroughs. The only rule concerning the players was one which required competitors in the billiard competition to live within a three mile radius of each borough. Points were allocated on the basis of one point for a win and half a point for a draw. The borough with the most points at the end of the competition would be awarded the shield to hang in it's Council Chamber for the ensuing year.

Over the years the McIntosh Shield certainly encouraged friendly rivalry between the boroughs and in a small way certainly broke down some of the barriers that existed in the complex relationship of the two towns. Kaiapoi, as the older Pakeha settlement, felt that its place in North Canterbury was paramount. However Rangiora as a market town with its more pronounced rural base seemed to be more typical of North Canterbury society. The industrial base to the economy of Kaiapoi, although firmly grounded in the rural sector, made a difference to the kind of people who were attracted to live in Kaiapoi and therefore to the atmosphere of the area.

Kaiapoi people were aware of and were proud of their heritage. An example of this pride was demonstrated in 1923 when the town celebrated the fiftieth jubilee of the Domain. The Domain, the first in North Canterbury, was gazetted in 1873 and from its inception the citizens had taken a great interest in turning the rather harsh environment of sand dunes into an attractive fifteen acre recreational area. To mark the jubilee it was decided to erect a set of gates at the main entrance to the Domain. The Beautifying Society, with a subsidy from the Borough Council, arranged for the double jarrah gates to be hung from concrete pillars at the entrance to the Domain. There was also a smaller gate put up for pedestrians. One of the

pillars was inscribed with the words "Jubilee Gates 1873-1923" and the other with "In Memoriam, G.H.Wearing."

In his speech at the opening of the gates the secretary of the Beautifying Society, Reverend Scott, explained that G.H.Wearing had been responsible for most of the early planting in the Domain at his own expense. He expressed the view that it was fitting that Wearing should be remembered on the jubilee gates. The gates were officially opened by J.Lowthian Wilson who had been a member of the of the first Domain Board. Wilson recalled that, encouraged by Wearing, the Board had been instrumental in turning the Domain into a pleasant park area.

The opening of the Domain Jubilee Gates presented an opportunity for the citizens to celebrate the independence and self help that had ensured the attainment of many of the facilities in the town. In some ways the celebration marked the end of Kaiapoi as an entity on its own. The ever increasing use of motor transport in the third decade of the twentieth century gradually broke down the locality barriers that had been in place in the days of horse and foot transport. The lifestyle changes that motor transport encouraged, induced a feeling of impermanence. The old feeling of belonging to an area for a lifetime was being eroded. It had been possible since the establishment of the railway to live in Kaiapoi and earn a living in Christchurch with the restrictions that a set timetable and destination imposed on work patterns. The motor vehicle, however, unshackled those restrictions and loosened the locality barriers. The changes brought about by the greater number of options which were available to the population also seemed to reinforce the feeling of identity. Kaiapoi people became more aware of the differences between their town and the rest of North Canterbury and apparently more determined to preserve that sense of difference.

The contradictions inherent in such a change were illustrated by two events in the life of the town. The first event began with the improvements made to the construction and maintenance of roads. It then developed into a battle over which authority was to have responsibility for roads of national importance and illustrated the way in which separate communities could no longer be entirely responsible for amenities of national significance. The second event was centered around control of the supply of electricity to Kaiapoi and it illustrated the determination of the citizens of Kaiapoi to maintain the special identity of the town.

The use of bitumen as a surface material for roads was first used in New Zealand on a small stretch of road in the New Plymouth district in 1913. The first maintenance work done to that road was carried out in 1922. The road required only a light top dressing which, at a cost of five pence per square yard, was considered extremely good value for money. The success of this venture encouraged the government in 1923, through the Public Works Department, to use bitumen on a portion of the main road between Wharerata and Wairoa. The Minister for Public Works, The Honourable J.G.Coates, said that the use of bitumen was all a question of economics. If bitumen helped protect the capital cost of developing the road, then it was a good investment, in his view.

This sentiment struck a chord with the Kaiapoi Borough Council. The Council could see the value of protecting the investment already expended on the

Main North Road by the use of bitumen as a surface material. Unfortunately the cost of the equipment needed for the application of bitumen was beyond the resources of the borough. The councillors decided in August 1924 that this problem could be surmounted if the Main Highways Board could be persuaded to proclaim, as a state highway, the portion of the Main North Road which passed through the borough. If the road achieved state highway status then the Main Highways Board would be responsible for its upkeep. The Council asked the Canterbury Progress League to support the request for the alteration in status of the road. Furthermore it called a conference of the surrounding local bodies to discuss methods of maintaining the roads with the aim of sharing the cost of purchasing the necessary equipment.

The conference was held in Kaiapoi in September 1924. Delegates represented the Rangiora, Eyre, and Waimairi County Councils, and the Kaiapoi and Rangiora Borough Councils. Councillor H.C.Revell from Kaiapoi gave the main address. He explained that he had recently inspected the bitumen-covered Hutt Road and had come to the conclusion that if the authorities pooled their resources a bitumen covered road could be formed between Christchurch and the Ashley River. As he had in the case of the Waimakariri Harbour improvements scheme Fred Horrell raised objections on behalf of the ratepayers of the Rangiora County. He considered the conference to be premature as the chairman of the Highways Board was currently on a trip to America and Britain and would no doubt return with new ideas on highway maintenance. Horrell felt that his constituents would rather wait and see what further developments might occur before a commitment was made to use bitumen on any of the county's roads. C.E.Baynon from Eyre County held the opposite view. He thought that in matters as important as this, it did not do to delay action, as that might mean that an opportunity was lost. It was obvious that no consensus was going to be reached and the meeting was adjourned until October.

In the meantime the Main Highways Board and the Public Works Department both declined to declare the road a main highway. This meant that the full cost of maintaining the road fell on the Council. The Council regarded this refusal as unfair as it was thought that the majority of the traffic on the road was from outside the Borough Council boundaries. In February 1925 the Mayor of Kaiapoi, H. McIntosh, and Councillors R.F.Joyce, F.Thorne, and J. Hirst; the Mayor of Rangiora, W.A.Rowse, and Councillor R.McIntosh; the chairman of the Eyre County Council, H.E.Evans and Councillor C.E.Baynon; the chairman of the Rangiora County Council, F.Horrell and W.T.Henry a lorry owner from Rangiora attended a meeting with J.D.Bruce and G.E.T.Murray of the Highways Board who explained the working of the Highways Board finances. H.McIntosh made it clear in his address that Kaiapoi thought that it was unfair that it had to assume the whole burden of maintenance for the Main North Road when the Sumner-Lyttelton road had been subsidised. In explaining why Kaiapoi's application had been turned down by the Board, Bruce advised, that the Sumner-Lyttelton road was an exceptional case and it would not be to the borough's advantage to cite it in its third application to the Board. It would be better to have a tally of the number of vehicles

using the road and a separate tally of the vehicles that diverted through Rangiora from Woodend as means of avoiding the badly maintained road between Woodend and Kaiapoi. The Board had considered that Kaiapoi could afford to maintain the portion of the high way that went through the town as it was a low rating area and the portion of the road concerned was relatively small. Bruce added that where a borough was plainly the centre of a farming locality the Highways Board had a duty to maintain the roads for the country people but Kaiapoi was clearly not in this category. W.T.Henry's problem highlighted the difficulties the local authorities were having at a more personal level. Henry had to pay heavy traffic licenses in two districts in order to run his business effectively. He thought that this was unfair but under the system as it existed it was the only way local authorities could raise extra revenue from the lorry owners who used the roads that the local authorities were responsible for maintaining. This meeting gave the participants a chance to air their grievances but it did little to reach a solution for those grievances.

The Council found that it was not alone in its fight to have the status of a road changed. There were other small boroughs and counties that had the same problem. In March 1925 the Riccarton Borough Council forwarded a resolution to the Kaiapoi Council that it had passed, protesting at the injustice of the Main Highways Board's policy not to help cities and boroughs which had main highways running through them. The resolution went on to request that an amendment be made to the Highways Act requiring the Highways Board to consider applications from cities and boroughs. The Kaiapoi Council adopted the resolution but this did little to resolve the problem.

The affair dragged on until January 1928 when the Mayor was able to report to the Council that it seemed certain that the Highways Board would declare the Main North Road a main highway. In March a resolution from the Main Highways Board was gazetted recording that all boroughs with populations of less than six thousand would be included in the various highway districts. It had been recognised, finally, that roads of national importance were a national responsibility. The Kaiapoi Borough was pleased that recognition had occurred, as the upkeep of the road had been an ever increasing burden on ratepayers. The increased use of motor transport had broken down the old notion of local responsibility for all local amenities, at least, in the case of main roads.

An increase in the pace of life brought about the widespread use of the new technology introduced in the early decades of the twentieth century did not detract from pride in the town. It was still evident in a number of instances. Kaiapoi people were very proud of the fact that they were able to run their own electricity department. The establishment of the department had not been without its problems. Soon after reticulation of the electrical supply had been handed over to the borough in 1918 complaints from customers about surges in the voltage and the poor service that the supervisor was giving, were received. The Borough Council sought to address these issues when, in May 1919, upon the appointment of H.W.Childs as the Fire Brigade Engineer and caretaker of the municipal buildings, it also selected him as supervisor of the electrical reticulation system. Childs previously had experience as an electrical contractor. As recompense for all those

duties Childs received a salary of fifty two pounds a year and a free house which caused the controversy in 1924 when he ceased to hold the Fire Brigade Engineer's job. At about the same time as Childs' appointment, the Council complained to the Department of Public Works about the problems that its customers were experiencing. In reply the Department advised the Council to employ a competent electrician or engineer. As the Council had already done this it sought permission for Childs to inspect the transformers. A temporary improvement was made in the reliability of the supply to some parts of the borough after Childs had recommended an extension of the high tension lines to the centre of the town and installation of a transformer at that site. It was clear that more money would have to be spent in order to maintain a reliable supply of power to all parts of the borough.

Any upgrading of the supply would inevitably impose a cost on the ratepayers because of the necessity of funding a loan. It is surprising in the context of the borough's decision to seek national funding for the upkeep of the main road that it did not seek a similar solution for the problems of the power supply. That type sort of solution was considered, but firmly rejected, by the Council.

The formation of a North Canterbury Power Board was first proposed in 1920. Fred Horrell arranged a meeting of delegates from the Kowai, Ashley, Oxford, Eyre, and Rangiora County Councils, Rangiora and Kaiapoi Borough Councils and the Amberley Town Board in June 1920 to discuss the formation of a power board. The Rangiora and Kaiapoi Councils along with the Amberley Town Board rejected the idea.

After the passing of the Electric Power Boards Act in 1925 pressure was again put on the Borough Council to reconsider joining a North Canterbury Power Board. At a meeting on 28 August 1925 delegates from the surrounding County Councils decided to form an electric power board. As the delegates from Rangiora and Kaiapoi Boroughs declined to take part in this venture the counties decided to circulate a petition in both areas in order to seek support of twenty five per cent of the residents for an inclusive power board. The Mayor of Kaiapoi, Hector McIntosh, was alarmed at this underhanded method of gaining support for a power board in the borough. He immediately issued a pamphlet warning residents not to sign the petition.

“ — Needless to say, the Petition will be circulated in direct opposition to the wishes of your Councillors; but such a Petition would, nevertheless, enable the Government to compel the Borough to amalgamate with the proposed Power Board, and by such an amalgamation the people of Kaiapoi and Rangiora would LOSE DIRECT CONTROL over their Electrical Supply, and so be made to part with their “Golden Goose” and to accept a “Rooster.”
—” (14)

The warning carries the two elements of the argument that made the electrical supply of the town different from the maintenance of the main highway. Firstly,

(14) *Borough of Kaiapoi. WARNING to the People of Kaiapoi by His Worship the Mayor. 29 August 1925.*

the people of Kaiapoi had paid all of the initial establishment costs of the system whereas the roading system had been financed by the Provincial Government. The supply of electrical power to the town had now become an asset in both the monetary sense and in the cultural sense. An electrical power supply, even with voltage problems, was a benefit to the community as a whole, as it made possible a different lifestyle for all sections of society. In particular housewives found many of the old burdensome household tasks were made easier through the use of electric power.

Secondly, it was feared that if the asset became part of a larger group then it would be used to meet the costs of establishing electric power in the more sparsely populated counties. The provision of power to such areas could only be met, it was felt, at the expense of existing consumers. Amalgamation would mean a loss of control over the asset and therefore a loss of direct benefit to the borough. This second element was the most potent. There was a strong sentiment within the borough that what had been acquired by the Council should remain the property of the Council and continue to be run by the Council. On these two intertwined arguments the Council sought support from the residents to resist any change to the independent supply and sale of electricity in the borough. The support was given and the town retained its independent power supply. Such determination and pride in local initiative as well as pride in local business skills would mean that for nearly seventy five years the supply and distribution of electrical power remained with the people of Kaiapoi.

The mid 1920's saw a two changes in education in Kaiapoi. One was the opening of a new school and the second was the relocation of the Borough School.

Dean Hyland commenced his pastoral life in the region at Rangiora in 1889. He was determined to establish a school in Kaiapoi for the Roman Catholic children. It seemed unjust to the Dean that Roman Catholic parents in Kaiapoi had the added expense of sending their children to either Rangiora or Papanui for their education. Although he pressed hard for a school throughout his life it was not until literally, his dying day, that he was able to see his dream fulfilled. The purchase of a block of land in Fuller Street for the school was finalised in 1922 on the day that Dean Hyland died.

The Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions were invited to establish the school but it took a further four years for the building to be completed along with the convent. The school was officially opened and blessed by the Bishop of Christchurch, the Right Reverend Doctor Brodie on 7 March 1926. The Roman Catholic population had waited a long time for this important event between the closing of the first Roman Catholic school in 1868 and the opening of St Patrick's School in 1926.

A wait, but of a much shorter duration, was also in store for the pupils of the Kaiapoi Borough School. By the mid 1920's it was clear that the school's buildings were near the end of their useful life. The classrooms which had been constructed in 1877 had undergone only minor changes in the following fifty years. An infants' block had been built at the instigation of E.Parnham and J.Loithian Wilson in 1880. When the 1901 Cheviot earthquake shook and damaged the rather handsome tower block it was not replaced. The rooms, because of their substantial size, were

extremely hard to heat and even with alterations to the school boiler system it was impossible to do so efficiently. The time had come to have a new school built. A number of sites were considered. The site finally chosen was a six acre block bounded by Hilton, Rich and Raven Streets. At the time, this site was in a central location for many of the children came from the area surrounding the Woollen Mill



Kaiapoi Borough School c 1920's - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

on the north side of the river as well as from the Raven, Hilton and Fuller Streets area on the south side. There was easy access to the school from the north side across the Mafeking and Swing Bridges.

A great deal of discussion took place on exactly what form the new school should take. A number of individuals and organisations were in favour of open air schools. It was thought that this style of building which basically meant that the rooms were open to the weather at all times created a more healthy environment for the children. Fendalton School and St Mark's School, Opawa, in Christchurch were two examples of open air schools in Canterbury. In July 1929 the Kaiapoi Branch of the Mothers' Union held a meeting to discuss the possibility of the new school adopting this design. The Canterbury Education Board however decided to build a conventional four-building school. Each block had two classrooms in it separated from each other by a corridor. The school was officially opened on 3 June 1930 by R.W.Hawke who was the Member of Parliament for Kaiapoi from 1925-35.



Kaiapoi Borough School c 1950's - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

In June 1931, a year after the pupils had shifted to their new school, the Council received a series of complaints about the disgraceful state of the old school buildings. Although the buildings were no longer suitable as class rooms it was thought that

they would be useful to the community as meeting rooms, for although dilapidated, the buildings were of a handsome construction. After much correspondence between the Council and the Canterbury Education Board, the Board agreed to hand over the buildings to the Council in December 1931. By March 1932 the Boy Scouts, the Girl Guides, the R.S.A., the St John's Ambulance, the Workers' Educational Association, and the Racing Pigeon Club had rented rooms on various nights in the old school now known as the Borough Hall.

Over the second half of the 1920's commerce in Kaiapoi operated in an increasingly unstable economic environment. In 1925 the Board of Directors of the Woollen Mill resolved to write down the share capital of the company to three shillings per share. This reduced the capital of the company from six hundred thousand pounds to five hundred and ten thousand pounds. The directors felt that this move would counteract a slump in demand in the textile industry combined with the fluctuating but generally high price of wool. The problems experienced in 1925 were revisited but intensified. In the following year the mill owners were required to cope with a continuing slump and a home market increasingly supplied by imported goods. The management resorted to an accepted practice in order to reduce costs, namely a reduction in the cost of labour. During the first half of 1926 the mill was put on short time - this only eighteen months after a night shift had been introduced to cope with the then, overwhelming, demand for the mill's products. It seemed to the directors they had done as much as they could to control the situation and that assistance from the government was now required. The solution to the New Zealand textile manufacturing industry's problems, according to the Board, was for the government was to give it protection in the form of increased duties on imported textiles.

In the 1927 annual report the directors argued that only with the growth of secondary industries could there be a better economic base and steady employment for the country. It was observed that the increased mechanization of farms meant a loss of jobs in the primary industries but that loss could be more than made up, if there was more government encouragement of secondary industries.

1925 was also a bad year for the North Canterbury Sheepfarmers' Co-operative Freezing Export and Agency Company Limited. It recorded a loss of approximately twenty thousand pounds. The company was able to absorb the loss to some degree by creating an appropriation account to which the loss was transferred. This action paralleled the action taken by the directors of the Woollen Mill. Unfortunately the Board did not have the same degree of success as the directors of the mill because of the British Coalminers' strike in 1926.

The Coalminers' strike began in June 1926 and lasted until November of that year. Unfortunately for the Freezing works those months coincided with the time that a large consignment of the company's stock was arriving in London. At the annual meeting in December 1926 the chairman, G.D.Greenwood, reported that the Company realised ten thousand pounds below cost on the portion of the company's stock arriving in Britain during those months. Overall circumstances such as these meant that the company had to post a loss for 1926, of approximately

one hundred and eighty pounds. The Board stressed the importance of the continuing loyalty of shareholders to the company to ensure an ongoing supply of stock.

1927 saw an improvement in the company's position to the extent that it was able to declare a six per cent dividend to its shareholders. Nevertheless the events of the previous years had made both the directors and the shareholders nervous over the future of the company. Loyalty was again urged upon the shareholders by the Board and this was reinforced by a resolution proposed by G.T.Jones and unanimously passed at the Annual General Meeting. The resolution urged that all shareholders become working agents for the company by soliciting support for the works from their friends and neighbours.

Blackwell's store experienced similar problems to those experienced by both the Woollen Mill and the Freezing Company during the years 1925-27. The store had to explore means its maintaining its profitability. H.H.Blackwell had assumed greater responsibility for running the business and it was largely through his efforts that the depressed counter sales were offset by the store actively seeking other customers. H.H.Blackwell established lists of country customers who were able to telephone their orders to the shop and have the goods delivered to them on a daily basis through either the mail, the train, or bus service. In addition the store employed a travelling drapery salesman who provided a weekly service to country customers. These two innovations helped maintain the turnover of the store and at times increased it. H.H.Blackwell continued to explore other methods of expanding the business of the store. He understood the value of advertising and made extensive use of marketing tools to increase the turnover. He also made personal contact with the farming clientele and through these links was able to establish a substantial indent business for horse and cow covers. The store had always had a bakery and under H.H.Blackwell's guidance it developed the wholesale side of its trade in cakes and small goods. Blackwells coped with the uncertain years by actively seeking out new customers and by expansion of existing areas of trade.

It would seem however that the techniques adopted by the Woollen Mills, the Freezing works and Blackwell's store although keeping those enterprises viable did little to curb the growing unemployment problem in Kaiapoi. In July 1925 the Borough Council recorded that there was a great deal of unemployment in the town. The Council had been urged by the secretary of the Trades Hall Unemployment Committee in Christchurch to put in hand any contemplated works so that the unemployed in the district would have some income to tide them over the winter months. There is no record that the Council did bring forward any of its contemplated works and it must be concluded that the unemployed in the district in 1925 were able to either obtain work or find some other means of supporting themselves.

The unemployment problem again became visible the following year and this time it seemed to be more acute. In July 1926 it was reported by the Council that there were about twenty men unemployed in the district and that it was probable that the Council would be asked to provide work for them. The difficulties with

unemployment were shared by Christchurch. The Mayor of that city wrote to the Kaiapoi Council towards the end of July explaining that the City Council had decided to subsidise the Christchurch Unemployment Committee up to two thousand two hundred pounds. In addition the Christchurch City Council thought that it would be prudent for a conference of local body representatives to be called to discuss the unemployment problem in the region. It is probable that the City Council wished to make sure that each local body had a plan to cope with its own unemployed.

By August the R.S.A. was sufficiently concerned about unemployment amongst its members to send a deputation to the Council's meeting. The deputation of Messrs J.S.Baker, J.Gordon and Doctor Ramsey suggested that their unemployed members be given the chance to cut firewood in the Council's reserves. The R.S.A. was prepared to buy the trees from the Council and put its twenty unemployed



Doctor Maxwell Ramsay - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

members, five married men and fifteen single men, on piece-work. The Council resolved to give the Association the trees with the expectation that any profit made from the sale of the firewood be put into a fund for the support of the unemployed both at the time and in the future. The Council formed a committee of Councillors Hurst, Gillet and Thorne to oversee the work and to determine the trees which the R.S.A. could cut down. It was further resolved to give unemployed men in the borough, other than returned soldiers, the chance to cut up trees in the Domain at ten shillings a cord.

Between August 1926 and June 1927 unemployment did not seem to be as urgent a problem as it had been. Seasonal jobs such as haymaking and harvesting work on farms and the killing season recommencing at the Freezing works probably soaked up the unemployed during those months.

By July, however, there were indications that the prob-

lem was again causing concern. At the Council meeting of 5 July the Mayor moved that the Works Committee consider finding work for the relief of unemployed married men. The Mayor also recommended that an unemployment fund be set up to help relieve distress among those in the borough without a job. Vickery went on to suggest that all local institutions be written to and asked to contribute to the fund. This last request was responded to immediately by the Canterbury Woollen Mills Employees Union which sent a donation of five pounds. Mr A.H.Lane, owner of the Grand Theatre, offered his building free of charge to the Council as a place where the unemployed could meet and from which aid could be co-ordinated. By August the Mayor's Relief Fund had received donations from C.Morgan Williams, the Presbyterian Church, the Kaiapoi Woollen Mills Union, the Kaiapoi Woollen Mills Company and Ivory's Nurseries. The list including individuals as well as large and small companies gives some indication of the depth of feeling in the community for the problems of the unemployed.

In the winter of 1928 the seasonal pattern of unemployment once again established itself. A special meeting was held by the Council on 9 July to discuss a number of projects that The Pines Association felt were necessary in the settlement. The Pines deputation of Messrs E.Monk, R.Monk, Brown, Hopkins, Clarke, McGarry, and W.H.Stack asked that the roads in the settlement be put in order, that the Oval be raised and drained, that the Beach be kept clean with a caretaker to be appointed to supervise the clean-up. The deputation proposed that some of the money needed for those tasks be taken out of the property rents that the Council received.

Representatives of the Beautifying Association and the R.S.A. also attended this meeting. At first glance it may have appeared that the Council was attempting to avoid the issues that The Pines Association had raised by having the other organisations represented. It soon became apparent that the Council wished to have a plan to cope with the unemployment problem and it saw in the needs of The Pines settlement and the organisational skills of the other two associations the solution to the perennial unemployment problem. After some discussion on both the needs of the community as a whole and the needs of the unemployed in particular it was decided to set up an Unemployment Relief Committee composed of representatives of The Pines Association, the Beautifying Association, the R.S.A. and the Council. Both the R.S.A. and The Pines Association donated funds to the Relief Committee. The Beautifying Association undertook to engage the labour that was available, for its projects. For its part the Council appeared to take a supervisory role. Each of the organisations had three of its members on the Unemployment Relief Committee with the Council having the Mayor as a fourth and ex-officio member.

The first task that the Unemployed Relief Committee undertook was to open a subscription list and ask that residents in Kaiapoi and the beach settlements make donations. By the middle of August the Council decided that it should assume responsibility for the financial management of the Unemployment Relief Committee in order to obtain the government subsidy for such funds more quickly. This

move may have been the first indication that the Council wished to weaken the power of the committee. By the end of August it was apparent that the Mayor, at least, was uncomfortable with the establishment of the Relief Committee as he referred to the members as being "self appointed". While this was true to a certain extent the Council had acquiesced in the composition of the committee at the special meeting on 9 July. It seemed that with the summer easing of the unemployment problem the Council's problem with the Relief Committee, imagined or real, also eased.

Another social problem that affected the community became apparent in the last years of the 1920's. Although Kaiapoi had been served by medical practitioners since the time of Samuel Beswick the town, unlike both Rangiora and Oxford, had never had a publicly funded hospital. In 1908 Doctors Crawshaw and Davies had built a nursing home in Smith Street. Over the years this small enterprise became the defacto public hospital for the town. It catered for maternity needs as well as a few general medical cases. By the late 1920's the establishment was in need of modernisation in order to comply with Department of Health regulations. The Council was alerted to the problem in April 1927 by Councillor Gillet who suggested that the Council should approach the North Canterbury Hospital Board with a request that it should supply the town with a maternity home. This suggestion was followed up at the Council meeting of 24 May when Doctor Ramsey asked the Council to do all in its power to convince the Hospital Board that the Nursing Home was in need of assistance.

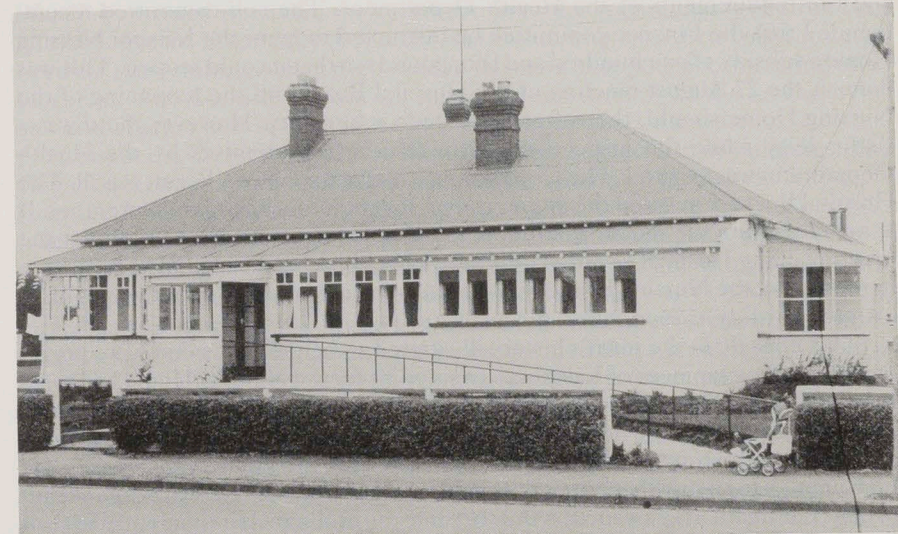
The district's doctors had written to the Hospital Board in April asking that the Board establish a maternity home in Kaiapoi. The Board had referred those letters to its Hospital Committee for consideration. At its meeting on 24 May, the Hospital Committee recommended that the establishment of a home in Kaiapoi should be considered during the discussion of the following year's estimates. This was a convenient way of postponing a decision on the matter.

In terms of timing it was unfortunate that both the Council and the Hospital Committee had met on the same day as it was not until the July meeting of the Council that it was notified of the Committee's recommendation. At the same time as the Hospital Board informed the Council of its decision the Board issued an invitation to the Council to send a deputation so that the matter could be more fully discussed. The deputation which consisted of the Mayor, H. McIntosh, Councillor Thorne and Doctor Ramsey met with the Board on 27 July. A more reasonable request was made of the Hospital Board by the deputation, at least in the view of the Board. Instead of asking for a new maternity home it requested assistance from the Board in order to keep the present Nursing Home open.

The deputation reported to the Council in the first week of August. At what it termed a "good meeting", the deputation reported that the Hospital Board had decided to refer the request to its finance committee. The finance committee did not meet until the end of August and it recommended that the Board grant a fifty pound subsidy to the Nursing Home to be reviewed after 31 March 1928. It also

decided that the subsidy would be granted on the understanding that any indigent patient was to be taken in as an off-set against the amount.⁽¹⁵⁾

The subsidy was to be only a stop-gap. In reality the Nursing Home required more funds in order to bring it up to the standards set by the Health Department. In June 1928 Doctors Gillett and Ramsey requested another meeting with the



Kaiapoi Red Cross Lodge, the former Nursing Home - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

Council to discuss the plight of the Nursing Home. The crisis point had been reached because the Health Department was refusing to renew the license until the improvements it had requested had been carried out. The doctors had estimated that the improvements would cost one hundred pounds, an amount beyond their own means. Doctor Ramsey suggested that the Council approach the Hospital Board to ask if it would take over the Nursing Home. He argued, further, that in an industrial town such as Kaiapoi, a Nursing Home was essential to the well being of the people. The Mayor agreed with Doctor Ramsey and called the request to the Hospital Board "reasonable". The Council undertook to approach the Hospital Committee of the Board. This was done and the committee undertook to enquire further into the matter.

The whole question however was too grave a concern for the community to allow it to rest with the Hospital Committee. At the 19 June meeting of the Council, Councillor Vickery moved that a conference be held with the heads of the Woollen Mills and the Freezing works as well as the lodges, other local authorities and the Business Association. At the conference it was decided to send a deputation representing the district to the Hospital Committee to appeal to the Board to take

(15) North Canterbury Hospital and Charitable Aid Minute Book, July 1927 - November 1927, p.55

over the Nursing Home. As a result of this plea the Hospital Committee decided to set up a sub-committee to investigate the matter. The sub-committee consisted of the chairman of the Board, Mr Otley, and two Board members, Messrs Evans and Holland. The sub-committee visited Kaiapoi and found exactly what it had been told by the deputation, that the Nursing Home had closed owing to a lack of funds and the requirements of the Health Department. The sub-committee recommended that the Finance committee be instructed to grant the Kaiapoi Nursing Home a subsidy of one hundred and fifty pounds so that it could reopen. This was done at the 22 August meeting of the Hospital Board and the reopening of the Nursing Home should, thereafter, have been a formality. However there was a slight delay while the inspection of the refurbished premises by the Health Department was awaited. The Department's inspector, Doctor Paget, was ill. The Hospital Board requested the appointment of another inspector in September. It is not clear from the record whether or not this request was agreed to but at the meeting of the Hospital Board in February 1929, the Finance committee was able to report that the Nursing Home was again a going concern and that it would hand over the subsidy as soon as was practical. (16)

This episode in the town's history illustrated some problems that were prevalent in the development of Kaiapoi. A crisis point for the Nursing Home had to be reached before there was some resolution. Firstly the private Nursing Home was seen as adequate for the needs of the town by both the citizens and the Hospital Board. From the time of its establishment until 1927 the Home's standards were high enough to ensure that no serious problems were encountered with infant and/or maternal death. Its past success thus became the problem. If its inadequacies had been apparent during 1921-24 when the Hospital Board was embarking on a programme of establishing country hospitals then Kaiapoi may have had a Board controlled establishment such as that which was built in Rangiora in 1924.

Secondly, and more importantly, there was an attitude problem which although not always documented undoubtedly existed. It can be seen in the slowness with which the Hospital Board acted when it was alerted to the problems of the Nursing Home. The first subsidy of fifty pounds was clearly inadequate and this would have been recognised if the Hospital Board had visited the Nursing Home at the time. It was not until the district deputation in 1928 put a strong case to the Board to take over the Home that the Board decided to send a committee to investigate the situation. It is not clear whether by that time the Board had lost the incentive to establish country hospitals or whether it was just reluctant to establish one in Kaiapoi. There was certainly an air of relief apparent in the Board minutes when it reported that the Nursing Home was a going concern again.

The success of the Kaiapoi community in providing resources for itself often prevented the development of those resources by outside agencies once the point was reached at which support by the community was no longer possible. The fact that the town, because of its industrial base, was seen as different by the rest of

(16) North Canterbury Hospital and Charitable Aid Minutes Books December 1928 - April 1929 p.33

Canterbury often made it hard for the town to convince outsiders that it needed help. This seemed to be true in the case of the Nursing Home.

The Kaiapoi Branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union had to try to overcome prejudice and the law in the same way that the town had to overcome the slow response of the Hospital Board to the Nursing Home problem. The W.C.T.U. wanted to ensure the continuation of the creche that it had run for a number of years. Essentially the creche was a room where mothers could attend to needs of their children when they were in the town shopping or conducting other business. The Council had always supported the running of the creche by an annual donation and so it seemed to the Temperance Union that as a natural progression the Council would be willing to house the creche in its buildings. The Council asked the Municipal Association for an opinion on the matter. The reply from the Association's solicitor was received by the Council at its October 1927 meeting. In essence the Council was advised that although under section 303 of the Municipal Corporation Act it could subsidise, or make grants to, or lease land to a creche, it could not under section 304 of the Act acquire any building to use as a creche. As a result of this advice the Council decided to refer the matter to the Finance Committee. The Committee recommended that a building be rented to the W.C.T.U. for its creche. The Union had to agree to have the word "creche" painted on the building and during certain hours to have an attendant on duty in the building. The provision of such a room seemed to be a simple request and yet because of the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act both the Council and the Temperance Union were put to some trouble to provide this amenity for the women and children of Kaiapoi.

The second half of the 1920's also saw the continuation of the fight to keep control of the electrical supply for the town. Although it seemed to Kaiapoi citizens that they had retained control of their electrical supply in 1925, the North Canterbury Electric Power Board did not give up easily. After the constitution of the Board in July 1927 it took over all the Public Works Department's reticulation north of the Waimakariri. This meant that the Public Works Department could no longer supply the borough with power. Instead the town was required to obtain electricity from the North Canterbury Electric Power Board. The Board endeavoured to use the advantage that supply of current gave it, to compel both Kaiapoi and Rangiora Boroughs to join the Board. The Board withdrew the favourable terms that the boroughs had enjoyed from the Public Works Department. The issue became very serious when the North Canterbury Electric Power Board gazetted a notice in July 1928 notifying that both boroughs were in the outer area of the Board's district. It was decided that a deputation of the Mayor of Kaiapoi, H.C.Revell and the Borough's electrical engineer, H.W.Childs, join with representatives from Rangiora and visit to Wellington to put the boroughs' case to the Prime Minister, J.G.Coates. In the period between July 1928 and September 1928 the relationship between both boroughs and the Power Board became exceptionally strained. In August the Board wrote to the Kaiapoi Borough Council stating that the it's offer was not open for further discussion or revision. The Council decided to do nothing until it had discussed the matter with Rangiora Council and

the Prime Minister. By September the Board had stated that it would require standard rates for the supply of electricity and a two hundred pound service charge. This ultimatum, as the Borough Council termed it, was sent to the Prime Minister who responded by sending Mr Kissell to arbitrate between the boroughs and the Power Board. As a result of Mr Kissell's negotiations, an agreement was reached on charges for the supply of current which was comparable to that which the borough had negotiated with the Public Works Department. In addition the boroughs had to agree not to supply any consumer in the Power Board's district with the Board agreeing not to supply any existing consumer in each borough. At last the Kaiapoi Borough Council had been able to establish control over the supply of electricity in the town. At its 25 September meeting the Council recorded its thanks to the Honourable D. Buddo, M.P., D. Jones, M.P. and J.H. Blackwell for assisting in the negotiations with the Power Board.

The late 1920's also saw an expansion of the Kaiapoi Borough Council's territory in the north west of the settlement. There had been, for some time, a problem with a road access for the Eyre County. It had been suggested that in return for giving part of the cemetery reserve to the Eyre County, the Kaiapoi Borough could receive what was known as the Willock Settlement. A conference was scheduled between the two local bodies to deal with the land matter. In a statement revealing the over-riding farming background of the Eyre County Councillors the Kaiapoi Council's minutes of February 1927 recorded that the conference would not take place until after the harvest had finished.

The harvest was well and truly over by 3 June when the conference was held. At the meeting the two local bodies came to an agreement over the land involved. The Kaiapoi Council accepted sixty pounds from the Eyre County for the land taken for road purposes on condition that if the Eyre County was able to acquire a portion of land from the Read's block it would sell it to the Council for sixty pounds. The Council also agreed to include in its territory the land known as the Willock or Kaikanui settlement as shown on a map prepared by Mr Newton. In accepting this portion of the Eyre County into the borough the Council had to make provision in its budget for the extension of its drainage and sanitary plans into the new land portion.

Not all the residents in the Willock Settlement were pleased to have their status changed. In July the Eyre County notified the Borough Council that it had received a petition from a number of residents stating that they wished to remain under the jurisdiction of the county council. The county informed the borough that it would be prepared to await developments. The Kaiapoi Council on the other hand decided to take a more active part in securing the settlement for the borough. It was decided that for reasons of public health it was essential that the settlement be included in the borough. By the end of 1927 the borough was able to report that a fresh petition had been presented to the Governor-General for the inclusion of the Willock Settlement in the borough. The worries of the Willock Settlement residents seemed to be alleviated after a number of people formed a deputation to the Council in January 1928. The main concern of the deputation was to influence the Council over the improvements to the settlement.

The whole issue was finally resolved in April 1928 when at a sitting of the Land Commission the Settlement was included in the territory of the Borough Council.

In many respects 1928 was an hiatus between the years of economic fluctuations and uncertainty and impending traumas of the Great Depression. For Kaiapoi it was a year of celebration. It was fifty years since the establishment of the Borough Council in May 1868. A Jubilee Committee was formed and planned in conjunction with the Beautifying Association a weekend celebration at the end of March. The Beautifying Association had already decided to have a procession and a ball on 24 March but when the Mayor, H.C. Revell, was consulted he informed the Committee that he would not be in Kaiapoi that weekend. It was then decided to have the celebrations on the weekend beginning Friday 16 March. On that day there was an official reception held at the Drill Hall at 2 pm followed by afternoon tea. In the evening a conversazione labelled as a great friendly gathering of Kaiapoi past and present was held followed by supper. On Saturday the Beautifying Association held a Jubilee Carnival. The afternoon started with a procession from the Drill Hall to the Domain. The theme of the procession was the progress of Kaiapoi through the ages to modern times and beyond. The Fire Brigade showed its ancient and modern equipment. J.D. Coup had his bullocks and waggon and H.G. Ell an old time coach and four horses in the parade. Once at the Domain the Beautifying Association conducted side shows and stalls. The stalls included novelty, sweets, children's, cake and produce stalls. There was a refreshment tent as well as a stall selling ice cream and fruit salad. As in previous celebrations the Tuahiwi Maori were invited to put down a hangi which was ready in the mid afternoon. The hangi food was served in flax baskets. Throughout the afternoon there were lolly scrambles for the children and musical interludes provided by the Kaiapoi Brass Band and a group described as The Dark Town Fire Brigade. The Kaiapoi branch of the R.S.A. ran a beauty contest with prizes supplied by the Woollen Mill. The day finished with a dance in the Drill Hall run by the R.S.A. The celebrations concluded on Sunday afternoon with a combined church service on the lawn around the War Memorial.

In addition to the activities arranged by the Beautifying Association and the R.S.A. there were tours arranged for those who wanted to see the town's industries. This was a significant part of the celebrations as the tours underlined the town's identity as an industrial centre. A permanent record of the Borough's history was compiled into a booklet produced by E.H. Andrews from the J. Lothian Wilson records lent to Andrews by L.L. Wilson.

Councillor Vickery had called for a new Coat of Arms for the town in October 1927 and a committee had been set up to make recommendations. A year later for the town's jubilee the new design for the Coat of Arms was approved. In his original design Mr Willis had the words "Te Rauparaka" enscribed on the crest. The Council decided not to accept the wording and preferred instead "Kaiapoihia". "Te Rauparaka" was interpreted as the Kai Tahu version of the words *te rauparanga* meaning an offering or sacrifice. The Council preferred to have the words substituted because it did not see Kaiapoi as needing to make an offering or sacrifice especially in its jubilee year.

Sacrifices abounded however when in the last year of the decade Kaiapoi was caught up in international problems which exacerbated existing social and economic difficulties. The great economic depression which had been slowly developing from the middle 1920's struck the world with devastating and sustained force following the collapse in October 1929 of the New York Stock Market. The collapse of such an influential market directly affected the two major industries in Kaiapoi, tied as they were to the international market place through the export of their products. The Freezing works was especially vulnerable as nearly all of its products were sent overseas, principally to Britain.

The 1928 annual report of the North Canterbury Sheepfarmers' Co-Operative Export and Agency Company Limited revealed a loss of just over six thousand pounds. The loss was generated by a fall in the prices that the works received for its products. The directors coped with the loss by writing six thousand pounds off the General Reserve Account and by declining to pay a dividend to shareholders. At the Shareholders Annual Meeting the company was urged to retain and promote the open door policy for stockholders' animals. This meant that farmers individually took the risk of selling the carcasses but the company took responsibility for the killing and transportation of the products to the market.

The 1929 year was a crisis year for the company in two respects. Firstly the prices for meat and wool fell sharply throughout the year and the company sustained a loss of just over twenty nine thousand pounds. It was obvious from the beginning of the trading year that prices were in a downward spiral and in attempting to cope with this the directors and especially the chairman, G.D.Greenwood, thought that an amalgamation with Canterbury Frozen Meat Company Limited would safeguard the interests of shareholders. An extraordinary general meeting of shareholders was held in April 1929 with an attendance of three hundred. The meeting was extraordinary for more than one reason. Greenwood, a known advocate of the plan, was absent in Australia and J.H.Blackwell, an opponent of the plan, was voted into the chair. In his opening address Blackwell stated that the Board was divided over the plan for amalgamation and that in his opinion the fairest way to conduct the meeting was to allow one director in favour of the plan speak, followed by a director opposed to the plan. It explained that the articles of association required the agreement of two thirds of the directors to be followed by confirmation at a shareholders meeting.

F.H.Courage spoke in favour of selling the works and said that the offer was the equivalent of seventy five thousand pounds. That in itself was a persuasive argument when the company was faced with a mounting loss for the year. However the majority of shareholders at the meeting were not persuaded. After listening to Blackwell and discussing his statement against selling, the shareholders voted overwhelmingly to retain the company. As a way of making the company more responsible to producers it was suggested at the end of meeting that active suppliers should buy out the shares of the "dry" shareholders. That suggestion was not taken further at that point.

As is often the case in matters such as this, the issue of amalgamation was raised again at a further extraordinary meeting held in June. The meeting with about two

hundred and fifty shareholders present considered two resolutions. The first was to sell the company to the Canterbury Frozen Meat Company. Within that resolution there were a number of means outlined by which the Canterbury Frozen Meat Company could acquire the works. The most pertinent clause within the resolution was one which sought an assurance that the Kaiapoi works would be kept open for at least two years after the proposed sale date in October.

The second resolution proposed the liquidation of the company. The resolutions were put to a vote at the end of an explanation of the company's situation by Greenwood. The vote was lost not reaching the required three fourths majority by a substantial nine hundred votes.

The clause that required the Canterbury Frozen Meat Company to keep the Kaiapoi Works open for at least two years frightened many shareholders as they believed that after the period the works would be closed and they would find themselves back in the situation they had been before the works had been constructed.

At the Annual General Meeting and as a result of losing the vote at the extraordinary meetings two of the directors, F.H.Courage and M.M.McRae, resigned. Greenwood's term on the Board was up and he did not seek re-election. The new Chairman was J.H.Blackwell, the man who had fought so hard to have the works sited at Kaiapoi and who had worked equally hard to prevent the sale.

In many ways it could not have been a worse time to assume control of a company that depended on exports. However Blackwell was a suitable chairman to guide the company through difficult times. His unerring faith in the company and his belief in its value to Kaiapoi made sure that eventually the company was viable.

In 1930 the Company made a loss of just under five and a half thousand pounds which, of course, was added to the loss from the previous year. In order to control the losses the company reduced the number of salaried staff and cut down on the fees paid to the directors. It also vigorously pursued the "Open Door" policy for its producer shareholders.

The following year this policy resulted in an increase in stock being offered to the company and in spite of the depressed world market the company was able to make a small profit. This was transferred to the Appropriation Account. The slow process of recovery from the depression for the Freezing works ended in 1936 when the company had a credit balance and was able to pay its shareholders a first dividend since 1927.

Unlike the Freezing works the years 1928-1930 were relatively steady ones for the Kaiapoi Woollen Mills. In 1928, the Jubilee year of the company, a dividend was able to be paid for the first time since 1922. Both of the company's mills at Kaiapoi and Radley worked at full capacity throughout the year. The company had nearly one thousand employees. In its promotional material the company adopted the idea that it was the patriotic duty of everyone to purchase Kaiapoi goods. The same optimistic outlook was reported in the annual reports of 1929 and 1930 although the latter contained a note of warning, in documenting the fall in wool price.

The Great Depression hit the woollen mill in 1931. Wool prices had slumped and the mill's exports were sold in extremely depressed markets. In addition, the mill experienced keener competition in its domestic markets from overseas competitors. In March 1931 the mill at Kaiapoi was reduced to a five day working week. The directors reported serious problems with the payment of accounts in that month. In the following month the government announced a wage cut. It was felt by the directors that the Kaiapoi company should not be the first one to move



Foremen and office staff Kaiapoi Woollen Mill 1933
Back row, Tom Drabble, Lionel Oram, Jack Richardson, Lee Oram, Tom Williamson, William Hart, Frank Richards, Sam Richards
Centre row Mark Greenwood, Abraham Blakeley, George Greenwood (Manager), Robert Gill, Arthur Brown
Front row Oliver Kirton, Harry Thornley, Theo Capstick, Edith Hart, Nancy Rice, Jimmy Leithead, Jack Brown, Jack Johnston - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

in this area. However, by 1 May the general manager had decided that salaries needed to be cut by ten percent. Furthermore, he was forced to consider a scheme of rationing work among the staff. At the end of May the company was also forced to make wage cuts because of ruling from the Arbitration Court. In the middle of June the Kaiapoi Mill was further reduced to a four day week and the salaried staff had another pay cut. By the end of the same month, however, the mill was back to a five day week.

Although the return to a five day week seemed to be an indication of improved times, 1932 was a tough year for the company. In a poetic turn of phrase the directors reported to the annual general meeting that adversity still gripped mankind and that price cutting was rife. Once again the management had to reduce both wages and working hours. The company sustained a loss in that year.

This period was one of great difficulty for the Woollen Company but, by the end of the year, the worst was over. In 1933 the directors were able to report a small profit. In the following year, 1934, additions were made to the machinery at Kaiapoi. In 1935 the company revisited its old complaint of a lack of skilled labour.

The directors predicted that unless there were programmes put in place to produce skilled labour there would always be an unemployment problem. 1936 was described as the best trading year for fifteen years. More machinery was installed in the mill at Kaiapoi and the company was still bemoaning the fact that it was having trouble obtaining skilled workers.

Although both the Freezing works and the Woollen Mill reported 1936 as being the year of full recovery the Great Depression imposed different patterns of loss and profit on each enterprise. Because of its stronger links with overseas markets the Freezing Company experienced a longer and more intense period of difficulty than did the Woollen Mill. Sadly for the workers in both industries the outcome was exactly the same. There were wage and time cuts as each industry struggled to maintain its profitability.

Blackwell's store presented a different business pattern in the Great Depression from that of the Woollen Mill and the Freezing works. As in the early 1920's the store management was disadvantaged because of one of the decisions it had made just prior to the slump. In 1928 the store management had decided to change its business structure. The company implemented a change of name to Blackwell's Limited and both J.H. and H.H. Blackwell became managing directors. The change was an acknowledgement by J.H. Blackwell that his son was an equal partner in the business and in its day to day running. In that same year, following the voluntary liquidation of the Kaiapoi Shipping and Trading Company, the store bought the shipping company's timber mills and yards at Rangiora and Kaiapoi. The rationale for the purchase, was that the timber business had been steady for years. The yards and mills were put under the management of Mr Meyer who was directly responsible to J.H. Blackwell.

The first signs of the effects of the depression on the Blackwell business became apparent in 1930 when it was decided to dispose of the grocery business. The grocery was sold to Eric Gray who carried on the business in the same location. The reason given at the time for the disposal of the grocery was that the store was having staffing problems. This may well have been true but when the store also disposed of its bakery business to Kennett and Son and the timber business to the Papanui Timber Company it was clear that to preserve the core activities it was necessary to shed what were probably the least profitable arms of the enterprise. In addition to these sales Blackwell's cleared the balance sheet of accumulated losses and wrote down the values of the business properties to government valuation. By such means the company effectively reduced its share capital by half offsetting substantial trading losses that the economic depression had imposed on the business. The recovery of Blackwell's Limited lagged approximately three years behind that of the Freezing works and the Woollen Mills.

It is remarkable to note that, during this period, J.H. Blackwell played a significant role in all three businesses. Although he had retired as chairman of the Woollen Mill in 1929 his management style was still very much in evidence. His approach to management was one of direct involvement. Fundamentally he believed absolutely in the qualities of the town. As has already been noted he worked hard and long to establish and retain the Freezing works in Kaiapoi and it

seems as if J.H. saw the three businesses as the corner stone of Kaiapoi's development. It may be that without Blackwell's iron will and business acumen one or perhaps two of the cornerstones of the town may not have developed successfully in Kaiapoi.

Undoubtedly, however, large numbers of people suffered great hardship in Kaiapoi during these years. The first year of difficulty for the Freezing works was 1928 and Blackwell's had still not made a full recovery from the depression by 1938. The citizens of Kaiapoi, therefore, suffered from poor economic times for at least ten years. This can be extended to sixteen years if the uncertain times beginning in 1922 are taken into account. Throughout the whole period the Borough Council and other organizations such as the R.S.A., the churches, the lodges, the Beautifying Association and the residents' associations from the beach settlements played a part in making life more bearable for those caught up in economic hardship.

The Council was the first port of call for organizations worried about the effect of unemployment on their members. It was this concern that involved the R.S.A. in programmes to help the unemployed. A further instance of an organization seeking Council assistance for its members was presented to the Council in August 1929. The secretary of the Canterbury Woollen Mills Employee's Industrial Union wrote to ascertain whether the council was prepared to do something for some of the union's unemployed members. In return the union was prepared to make an initial donation of ten pounds to the Unemployment Fund, subject to a subsidy. The Council was able to reassure the union that the government, through the Public Works Department, was paying a subsidy for approved works of a pound for a pound as long as the daily wage for each worker did not exceed fourteen shillings per day. On this basis the union was able to make a donation of fifty pounds to the Unemployment Fund and the Council was able to employ union workers on its approved works. This was the clearing of trees and the formation of a road between The Pines and Kairaki.

In June 1930 the Council proposed that the government subsidised unemployment relief could be used to improve Peraki and Hilton Streets, the McIntosh Drain and a tree planting programme in the Domain. Prior to these programmes being submitted to the District Engineer of the Public Works Department for his approval, the Kaiapoi Borough School informed the Council that it would pay an initial fifty pounds to the Relief Fund to have work done on the school grounds. This work was added to the list and forwarded for approval. An approval was received towards the end of July. As was usual there were conditions attached. The subsidy was set at the rate of two pounds per one pound on wages not exceeding fourteen shillings a day up to the limit of four hundred and three pounds. A further subsidy of a pound for a pound up to a limit of one hundred and twenty pounds on wages and materials for work financed from public subscriptions was also available. The R.S.A. was put in charge of fencing the McIntosh Drain and presumably the Borough School Committee was put in charge of the work to be done in the school grounds.

1930 was the first year in which unemployment became entrenched in the Borough. The seasonal pattern of winter unemployment and summer employment

did not occur that year in Kaiapoi. In December The Pines Association offered to grant the Relief Fund twenty pounds. The Council was pleased to accept it so that subsidised work could be started in the cemetery.

Those who were fortunate to obtain relief work may have thought that their luck was beginning to run out in April 1931. The Highways Board which had taken on relief workers had adjusted its rate of pay downwards. Twelve shillings and six pence per day to married workers and nine shillings per day to single workers was to be the base rate from that time. In August 1931 things became even worse for those seeking relief work from the Unemployment Board. The Board then decided not to employ those who had any savings and those who occupied a few acres of land. The Borough Council, in a resolution, decried this move stating that some men in that situation were as hard pressed as are others who were in receipt of relief. In an effort to ease the difficulties of the unemployed the Council gave permission to unemployed persons to cut firewood in the Main North Road reserve subject to the authority of the Town Clerk. In granting this privilege the Council was mindful of the distress of many of Kaiapoi's families.

This concern was demonstrated again at the end of 1931. On the initiative of Councillor J.D. Williams an appeal was sent to the Unemployment Board in Wellington for further funds to enable more full time work to be provided before Christmas. The Council was not acting from a high handed moral view point. It was well aware of the difficulties of the time. It had been forced to cut the salaries of its own staff in June of that year and it seemed certain that such a decision would have been made again. The December plea for more funds was followed in April 1932 by a protest to the Unemployment Board at its action in employing men for five days on subsistence pay. In the meantime the Council was doing all within its power to provide relief work. A new sewage undertaking was planned using unemployed labour. Unfortunately, at a meeting held in May 1932 to gain approval for raising a loan to carry out the plan, the ratepayers rejected the scheme.

In June 1932 the Council allocated a room in the Borough Hall buildings for the Relief Committee Depot. The Relief Committee was responsible for the aid distributed to needy people. All of its work was done on a voluntary basis and the allocation of a room made the job marginally easier. The Council tried to help in other ways. In July 1932 the Unemployed Workers Union approached the Council with several requests to make life more bearable for those on relief work. The Council acceded to all requests. From that time on, an allowance was to be paid at the discretion of the Finance Committee's chairman for the use of the workers' own tools. The workers were to receive payment for their work on the day of completion. A part payment was also to be paid to a worker who had completed only a portion of the time allowed for a job. This was to apply only in urgent cases and if abused the Council reserved the right to discontinue it.

The Council's determination to be benevolent in the interests of its citizens continued. For example, in August 1932 an offer was made by a group to cart firewood from the Beach Reserves to Kaiapoi for distribution to the poor and needy if a source could be found to pay the cost of petrol. The Council agreed to meet the cost and put the Relief Committee in charge of the distribution of the wood.

As the effects of the depression deepened in 1933 the Council became more involved in seeking ways to alleviate cases of need. The Kaiapoi branch of Unemployed Workers Union played a significant part in directing the Council's attention to areas where it felt that its members were not receiving a fair deal. This brought the Council into conflict with the Unemployment Board. The twin government policies of retrenchment and no pay for no work at this stage in the depression, were being overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of unemployed. The official New Zealand figure for unemployment which counted only Pakeha males over the age of twenty was recorded at 70,000 but it has been estimated that if women, Maori and males under twenty had been included the figure would have been closer to 100,000.

The local relief projects administered by local authorities were being phased out in favour of road construction schemes and the clearance of backblock land. These schemes meant that the men employed on them had to endure harsh living conditions for minimal pay, often at great distances from their families. For those two reasons the Unemployed Workers Union worked hard to keep local schemes going. The union, however, could not afford to be seen supporting work that was available to employed labour rather than unemployed labour. The delicate balancing needed in some situations brought the union into conflict with the local authority, the very body that the union wanted to support. An example of this conflict occurred in Kaiapoi in March 1933. The Council had employed some men under the Unemployment Board's No 5 Scheme to erect power poles and to clean ditches. The union protested that this was not a proper use of the Scheme because it comprised work usually undertaken by paid employees, generally described as "A-class" workers. It was assured by the Council the local certifying officer was looking into the matter. By the end of March the Council received a report from its electrical engineer recommending that the unemployed workers engaged to erect power poles should be paid an amount to make up the workers wages to the award rate less ten per cent. The report was handed on to the Unemployment Board along with a protest that the Board was not using A-Class workers even although work was available. The Council expressed the view that the time had come to abolish the No 5 Scheme as it was becoming less fair to those engaged on it.

This small victory for the local branch of the Unemployed Union was followed in May by a deputation to the Council led by D.W. Williams. The Council was asked by the deputation to consider a number of questions. Concern for work for those men placed in the A-Class was raised by the first question. The union was told that the Council was prepared to find work for that classification of workers. Secondly the union asked the Council to support its endeavours to secure an increased allocation from the Unemployment Board. The Council was willing to do this as it stated there was no outside work available. In its third question the union asked if a Council representative could be appointed to the local Branch. This was done by appointing the Mayor. Fourthly the Council was asked to lend its support to an application for leather for boot repairs. The Council decided not to support this request but it did undertake to write

to the Governor-General's Fund for a grant for the local branch and to ask for a supply of boots.

It was obvious from this from this episode and its other actions that the Council was sympathetic towards the work of the Unemployed Workers' Union. It maybe that in such a small centre as Kaiapoi the effects of unemployment were more evident than elsewhere and that in their daily activities the Councillors were in constant contact with the unemployed. An additional factor could be found in the strong Wesleyan history of the township which still played a part in determining attitudes towards those less fortunate in society.

Whatever the motivation, the Council and many citizens took a compassionate view of the plight of the unemployed and their families. In June 1932 the Unemployed Workers Union was given permission to use the old R.S.A. room in the Borough Hall for a boot repair scheme and at the end of the month the Kaiapoi Pollyanna Society was given permission to use another room in the Borough Hall. While it is not certain what the aims of the Pollyanna Society were, it is reasonable to assume that it was formed to do good works and generally cheer up those who found themselves in cheerless circumstances. As in the previous year the Council was willing to donate trees from its reserves for firewood for the needy. In 1933 the unemployed were given the task of felling and sawing the trees however the Relief Committee was once again given the task of distributing the resultant firewood.

If taken on their own these projects would seem insignificant in the face of such desperate times but together it must have seemed to those in need of help that the community was doing its best to cope. No doubt there were anomalies in the allocation of assistance but the efforts that were made were an indication that the community was taking significant responsibility for those in need.

That responsibility can be seen in other areas of society. In June 1933 the Mayor reported to the Council on a meeting of representatives of the employing bodies in the town. A resolution from the meeting asked the Borough Council to advise the Unemployment Board that there was sufficient important work in the district to keep the single men from being sent to work camps. The Unemployment Board's reply was that the members of the Board believed that the proposed work in the Borough was not of the same value as that being carried out on farmland. Accordingly it took the view that it could not grant the Council's request. This negative response did not deter the Council from looking for work for the single men in the area. To some degree it must have been successful as in November the Unemployed Workers Union wrote to congratulate the Council on its action in providing work for single men at the standard rate of pay.

In the matter of increased allocations from the Unemployment Board the Council was not successful. Once again the request for increased allocations came from the Unemployed Workers Union and the Council acting on that request sent a resolution to the Unemployment Commissioner in January 1934. In the resolution the Council deplored the cutting down of allocations as this action caused suffering to some men, particularly those in "B-Class". It was pointed out that although some men had found employment in the Freezing works which resulted in a reduction in the wages paid to the unemployed, most men could not obtain

work in the district. The resolution went on to express the hope that the allocations could be increased so that the men of the district would receive a full quota of work.

For Kai Tahu, the Great Depression meant a deterioration in the already meagre standard of living that they endured. Although they had a lifestyle that ensured, within the means available, all were cared for, their resources were stretched when the wage earners in the family groups lost their jobs. At that time Maori were not counted among the unemployed which made it impossible for them to obtain relief work. A desperate time for Kai Tahu families was made all the more difficult when they were denied access to their traditional fishing areas by the Acclimatisation Societies.

The issue of fines imposed by the Court for trespass on Kai Tahu members was one of the points raised with the Prime Minister, G.W. Forbes, when he visited Tuahiwi on 30 May 1931. The areas upon which trespass was allegedly committed were regarded by Kai Tahu as mahika kai reserved to them under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi. The primary reason for Forbes's visit was to listen to the tribe's concerns over the length of time being taken to settle its land claim. The tribe had been negotiating for a settlement for eighty years and it was felt that in the hard times of the depression some decisions should be made by the government to ensure the future security of Kai Tahu.

The official welcome was given by Messrs Tuiti Makitanara, M.P., Kereopa Harawira, and Hameura Rupene. Although each speaker stressed the importance of past friendships between the races, especially on the football field, they were direct in their criticism of the delays over the settlement of the Kai Tahu land claim. Forbes was reminded of past promises to settle the claim, especially Sir Joseph Ward's in 1908, which had never been honoured. The Royal Commission of Enquiry of 1920 had recommended that the Kai Tahu claim be settled with a payment of three hundred and fifty four thousand pounds which would be administered through a Trust Board but to date all that had been done was to set up the Trust Board. A Trust Board spokesman, Dr Hight, stressed that it would not only be in the interests of Kai Tahu but also of the Dominion to have the Royal Commission's recommendations accepted as a basis for settlement. Mr Makitanara on the other hand indicated that the people would be willing, at this desperate time, to accept legislation that granted full recognition of the claim.

Forbes, however, was unwilling to commit his government to even that point. Most of his speech concentrated on the hard times that the country faced in the economic crisis and the necessity for the government to keep the budget under control. If this was to be achieved then the Kai Tahu land settlement would have wait until a more propitious time. Ironically, after a speech that made no promises and gave no hope of a settlement Kai Tahu gave three hearty cheers for the Prime Minister.

Kai Tahu found nothing of comfort in Forbes's speech which added to their sense of frustration with the Pakeha system that had made sure, in their view, that they were marginalised in their own country. Even the method of voting in a general election was different for the Maori of this time. In a letter to the editor of



A group of Kai Tahu women waiting outside Mrs John's boarding house for the Maori Land Court c 1890's - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

The Press Te Aritaua Pitama of Tuahiwi explained that it was time that Maori were given the same conditions under which to vote as the Pakeha. He explained that the Maori elector on entering a polling booth was confronted by two men, one a Pakeha returning officer and the other a Kai-whaka Maori, or interpreter. The elector was then required to fill out a form with his name, tribe and clan. After this was done the returning officer then showed the elector a list of candidates and asked him which one he wanted to vote

for. The name selected was then written down by the officer on the same form that the elector had filled in previously. Thus not only did the returning officer know at the time of voting who the elector had chosen but there was also a permanent record of that choice on the elector's form. Pitama pointed out that this practice and the fact that there was no roll, left the elections open to corruption. Pitama was of the view that although the compilation of a roll before the election might be difficult because of the Maori custom of multiple nomenclature it was not beyond the capabilities of the officials of the Native Department. This would ensure that elections for the Maori seats were conducted in the same manner as elections for the Pakeha seats. (17) However it was not until the passing of the Maori Social and Economic Advancement Act in 1945 that Pitama's concerns were addressed.

A Pakeha writer of the time, R.G.C. McNab, in an article in *The Press* warned that the social harm in health, education, social progress and happiness caused by the voluntary isolation of the Maori could no longer be tolerated in New Zealand. In McNab's opinion the isolation was chosen by the Maori in order to preserve their culture from extinction but now that there appeared to be increasing contact between the races it was time that the Maori was accorded the same status in society as the Pakeha. Society could not accept victimisation of the Maori by shopkeepers, or the denial of suitable accommodation on racial grounds alone if it were to be just to all its members. (18) Both Pitama's letter and McNab's article called for social justice for Maori at a time when the country's economic future looked bleak. Therefore thoughts of social justice for any group within society were not high on the list of priorities.

The Tuahuriri hapu was involved in the latter part of 1931 in the planning for the centennial celebrations of the sacking of the great pa at Kaiapoi by Te

(17) Pitama letter, *The Press*, 20.2.1931. p.13

(18) McNab, R.G.C., "Fallacies. XV11.- That there is no Colour Problem in New Zealand." *The Press*, 20.12.1930. p.18

Rauparaha. Remembrance of this event for most Tuahuriri was a somber event and it can not have been easy for them to return to an episode in their history that was so tragic for their tribe. The centennial was made into an opportunity to explain the long history of Kai Tahu in the South Island. W.D. Barrett of Tuahiwi conducted a lecture on the broader issues of Kai Tahu history as well as the sacking at the pa site for members of the New Brighton Workers' Education Association (W.E.A.) in June 1931. In October in the week before the Labour Day celebrations T.A.T. Pitama gave an address to the pupils of Christ's College on the same subject. The celebration was seized as an opportunity to educate the wider Pakeha community on the significance of the pa site in South Island history and Kai Tahu history in particular. In this way the commemoration of this tragic event was turned into a celebration of the tribe's history.

The Labour Day weekend celebrations were foreshortened by the weather. North Canterbury suffered a heavy snow fall on Saturday, 24 October. Two and a half inches of snow fell at Tuahiwi and it caused damage to the large marquee which had been erected to accommodate the visitors. Events planned for Saturday at Tuahiwi were cancelled but the weather had cleared sufficiently by Monday to hold all the events planned at the pa site.

The official welcome to the Governor-General and Lady Bledisloe and Archbishop Julius was conducted at Tuahiwi on Monday 26 October. After the powhiri had concluded every one went to the pa site where the Archbishop conducted a service of commemoration and blessing. The Governor-General was presented with a gift of greenstone by the Centennial Committee. This gift had been presented to the committee during the welcome to the Northern tribes on the previous Friday by Mrs Noti Tirikatene.

The centennial celebration of the sacking of Kaiapoi provided entertainment and education for many Canterbury people during the Labour Day weekend of 1931. It was, however, an event which in retrospect has an air of unreality. The specific event was a difficult one for Kai Tahu to celebrate as a people. Many members of the tribe were unable, because of their deeply held feelings, to join in the events while others saw it as an opportunity to make their tribal history more widely known. The unresolved conflict between the two groups coupled with the depressed state of the country in general generated an ambivalent attitude in the proceedings that has cloaked the event in illusion.

The improvement in the 1934 balance sheets of both the Freezing Works and the Woollen Mill was however, no illusion. That small recovery was consolidated in 1935 and 1936. The installation of new machinery in the Woollen Mills in 1934 meant an increase in workers employed by the mill. The complaints from the Board of Directors about the lack of skilled workers usually indicated that they were unable to obtain enough workers for the requirements of the mill. This improvement in the economic outlook was paralleled by a deterioration in the relationship between the Council and the Unemployed Workers Union.

In February 1934 the Mayor resigned from the Unemployment Committee with the approval of the Council. With this channel of communication between the Council and the union gone, problems arose that may have been, in previous years,

avoided. The distribution of firewood and the non-payment of workers absent on union business assumed more serious connotations than they would have done if the union and the Council had continued their former relationship. The trivial nature of the animosity between the two organisations can be demonstrated in the Council's request that the secretary of the union quit the room he had been using in the Borough Hall as his office and his dwelling place. The Council was happy for him to use the premises as an office but no longer as accommodation despite the fact he had been living there for some time. The Council also adopted a sterner attitude towards the workers on its Relief schemes. It decided that pay day would be shifted to Friday in order to encourage greater discipline and cut down on the wastage of time.

There was a significant but subtle change in the attitude that the Kaiapoi branch of Unemployed Workers Union took in the years 1934-36. It became less of a partner in a shared crisis and more of an advocate for the rights of the workers under its jurisdiction. In June 1934 the union negotiated with the Council over the hire of a room and the purchase of a piano for its members to participate in a learners dancing class. In a more serious vein, in September of that year, the union argued for travelling time allowances for workers going to the beach settlements, for a declaration of wet days and for maintenance work such as filling in the shingle pit and the grubbing of broom and gorse on road sides. The Council was happy to allow a half hour in travelling time for those engaged in work at the beach. It was not so flexible on the declaration of wet days. It required the men to return to the borough depot if it was very wet and if not to continue with their work. The Council avoided the issue of maintenance work.

In early 1935 the union asked for the Council's support with its application to the Unemployment Board for a ten shilling increase in relief workers' pay. As another example of the union's advocacy role, it protested to the Council in February 1936 that the clearing of footpaths was not a proper use of the workers on the No 5 Scheme. The Kaiapoi branch of the union scaled down its activities after this date even though there were still numbers of men unemployed in the area. The work done by the union throughout the dark days of the depression had made sure that those in authority in Kaiapoi were aware of the plight of the unemployed and of their rights. At a time when it would have been easy for some to have been exploited the union did its job in a thorough manner.

Although the citizens in Kaiapoi experienced the problems of the urban unemployed and relief work in the town was concerned with those particular problems, the Council had to deal directly with the broader issues of the rural depression. As the New Zealand economy of the 1920's was almost entirely dependent on the sale of primary products to Great Britain the effect of the world wide slump in prices for meat, wool and dairy products was immediate. New Zealand farmers had no protection from its unstable markets. It has been estimated that by 1932 farmers' incomes had fallen by about forty-two percent from that which they had received in 1926. This huge drop in income was not matched by a similar drop in the costs of production. For the most part farmers had lost their profit margin.

Towards the end of 1930 the first signs of trouble were emerging with the Council's farmer tenants on the estate at Dromore. In 1927 the tenants, T.J.Lemon and W.Withell, had been paying four shillings and sixpence and five shillings respectively rent per acre for their properties. When it became apparent in 1930 that economic conditions were not going to recover quickly the tenants applied for a rent reduction of one shilling per acre on their properties. The Council agreed with the request. Lemon and Withell had instructed Dalgety and Company and the National Mortgage and Agency Limited respectively to deal with the Council on their behalf. Each company took a different approach and thus the tenants received different treatments from the Council. In November 1931 Dalgety and Company, on behalf of Lemon, asked for a rebate on the April rent. The Council's reply was that a rebate was not possible but that if the April rent was paid in full there would be a fifteen percent discount on the October rent if it was paid on time. The Council had also decided to allow the rent reduction of one shilling an acre to run a further twelve months. On the other hand National Mortgage on behalf of Withell was able to get the Council to accept the April rent provided that it did not press for the October rent until April 1932. The Council agreed on the condition that the amount due attracted a bank rate of interest.

These conditions for the tenants remained the basis from which negotiations were undertaken. Each tenant had seasonal and yearly variations made in the terms of payment of their rents throughout the depression years. The National Mortgage Company appeared to be more active on behalf of Withell than Dalgety and Company was on behalf of Lemon.

What is notable about the response of the Council towards its Dromore tenants is that in agreeing to a reduction in rents it was several years ahead of the national policy as espoused by the Coalition Government. It was not until the passing of the Mortgages' and Tenants' Relief Act in 1933 that it became possible for reductions in the rates of interest on mortgages and reductions in rents to take place. The Dromore tenants had been able to negotiate their rent reductions in 1930. Although this favourable action from the Council undoubtedly helped Lemon and Withell, adverse weather prevented them capitalizing on the opportunity offered and they were unable to increase production.

A drought in the Canterbury region in 1932 had repercussions through until the 1934-35 season. The drought had a serious effect on the numbers of stock that were able to be carried on the affected land and a devastating effect on arable farmers in pre-irrigation days. Most farmers had adjusted their farming methods to take account of the region's dry summer climate and its periodic droughts. What made this particular drought worse was the failure of the 1933 autumn rain required to build up the soil moisture levels for a satisfactory 1933-34 spring and summer growing period. The effect of the dry weather pattern in the previous two years had a serious consequence on the returns for the 1935 season. In May 1935 the National Mortgage Company notified the Borough Council on behalf of Withell that the present indicators pointed to a poor return for him. The company calculated that Withell would only have the ability to pay about one third of the rent due. The

Council agreed to carry Withell for another season and to take no action on the rent until a statement on the year's operations was available.

The weather was not the end of Withell's misfortune during the depression. As there had been a reduction in its returns the Council had not kept up with the maintenance on the buildings on the Dromore estate. It is not certain whether the shabby state of Withell's house contributed to its burning down in June 1936 but the condition of the dwelling did not help the situation. The Council decided that the cheapest option for rehousing the Withell family would be to shift an empty cottage from Lemon's land to Withell's place. When the Kaiapoi contractor, F.Pearce, inspected the cottage he found that it was in such a poor state of repair that it would be cheaper for the Council to build a new house. Pearce was therefore given the contract to draw up plans and specifications for a six roomed house for Withell.

A new era must have seemed to be on the horizon for the Dromore tenants by the end of 1936. Withell had his new house, the season seemed to be following a normal weather pattern and the prices of farming produce on the international markets were beginning to rise again. The leases were renegotiated, with Lemon having his assessed at four shillings an acre and Withell having his set at four shillings and sixpence an acre. It was to be some years before either tenant was in a profitable position and it is clear that their ability to survive economically depended on the generous and understanding position that both the Council and the stock companies took at the beginning of the Great Depression.

The revival in the outlook for farming which began to manifest itself at the end of 1934 and was gathering momentum in 1936 gave the impetus to other schemes in Kaiapoi that had been neglected during the worst years of the depression.

The Council's housing scheme which had culminated in the building of seven workers' cottages in 1923 had not solved the housing shortage in the town. In September 1934 the Housing Committee of the Council reported on a scheme that it thought would ease the shortage of housing. The Council was asked to consider purchasing approximately six acres of land from the Trustees of Christ's College to subdivide into quarter acre sections. The Housing Committee had calculated that the unemployment subsidy of twelve percent on building projects would cover the cost of the land. It recommended that the houses be built in concrete to various designs to meet the requirements of tenants. In addition a deep well was to be sunk to provide water for the houses and a sewage scheme to be installed. The tenancy was to be a weekly one and the occupiers were to be given the right of purchase. The Council decided to apply to the Loans Board for ten thousand pounds. This was modified at a meeting in November to six thousand pounds. Between the September and November meetings the Council had received thirty applicants for the houses but of these, only nine proceeded, when the applicants realised that one of the requirements was that they had to have a freehold section. Nevertheless the Council regarded this as a very satisfactory number.

In April 1935 the Council received notification that the Loans Board had sanctioned a loan of two and a half thousand pounds. The Council was not pleased

and sent off an immediate protest. This was answered by the Loans Board stating that as the population of the Borough had been static for the last nine years the immediate construction of nine houses did not seem warranted. The Loans Board added that it would consider further loans after the amount sanctioned had been spent. The Borough Council accepted the situation under protest and resolved to apply for a further three and a half thousand pounds immediately. In doing so the Council decided to point out that there had originally been thirty applicants for houses under the scheme and that the population of the area had not grown because there was a shortage of housing. The Council was able to obtain approval for the additional funds and the scheme went ahead as planned.

By 1938 the Borough Council planned, with the help of a subsidy, to revive the 1932 sewage scheme. Morgan Williams who had become the Member of Parliament for Kaiapoi in 1935 wrote to the Council to inform it that the Minister of Labour had granted a subsidy of four pounds per week per man for work done on the sewage scheme. The Council resolved in May 1938 to employ registered unemployed married men on the scheme and although the preliminary work appeared to have been started the project was never completed.

One project was completed and stands today as an architectural monument to the Art Deco style of design. This late 1920's style had become popular in New Zealand after the rebuilding of earthquake-shattered Napier in 1931. The project was the Rialto Picture Theatre built in 1935 for H.Owen.Hills. The clean lines and geometric designs on the outside of the building are typical of the Art Deco style. It was designed by Colin Lamb from the Christchurch firm, Williamson Construction. Lamb had only recently arrived in New Zealand from England and was an enthusiast for Art Deco design. Mr and Mrs Hills had already thought of a design for their theatre but were persuaded by Lamb to change their ideas and build the Rialto to an Art Deco design. Although the building caused quite a stir among Kaiapoi residents when it was completed the response was generally enthusiastic.

The Rialto itself replaced the Grand Theatre which in turn had taken over from Pathe Pictures. It is probable that the Pathe Pictures was also located in the Oddfellows Hall in Hilton Street. A news report in the *Kaiapoi Record* in April 1910 recorded that the electricity needed for the Pathe Pictures projection machinery was generated by Strachan and Moore's traction engine driving a dynamo outside the Oddfellows Lodge. The programme mentioned in the report included a scenic film of a picturesque ride around the Riviera and a coloured film showing the historic ruins of Brittany. Some time in the 1920's A.W.Lane opened his moving picture business in the Oddfellows Hall now re-named the Grand. He showed only silent films and on the advent of the "talkie pictures" in 1929 his business began to fall away. The purchase and installation of the sound equipment in those early days of the depression proved too much of a financial hurdle for Lane and in 1930-31 he sold the business to Mr McIntosh who installed a Western Electric sound plant.

The Grand however, was not without sound under Lane. In July and August 1930 the hall was used for the broadcast of the third and fourth rugby test matches



Rialto Theatre, February 1990, C. Feldwick, photographer - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

with silent movies in Rangiora in 1924. He had used his electric truck to power the projection equipment. At the same time Hills was running an Electrical and Radio business in Kaiapoi and naturally when sound movies were introduced to New Zealand his interest in the movie business was heightened. The managership of the Grand became Hills's golden opportunity. He built his own sound plant and at the cost of a shilling for adults and six pence for children the citizens of Kaiapoi could enjoy the "talkies" on Wednesday and Saturday evenings and at a Saturday afternoon matinee. The last film to be shown in the Grand was "*The Age Of Innocence*" starring Irene Dunne and John Boles.

The Rialto was officially opened by the Mayor, W.H.A.Vickery, on 17 December 1935. There was a special opening matinee for school children on the following Thursday, 19 December. The film shown was "*The Little Colonel*" featuring Shirley Temple. Regular film showings began in the Rialto on 21 December with Edna Best, Leslie Banks and Nova Pilbeam in a film called "*The Man Who Knew Too Much*." It was described as an action suspense film with intelligent players and plenty of comedy.

Life was not all doom and gloom during the depression years and in many ways it carried on as in the previous decade. There were the usual fairs, concerts and balls held to raise funds for one organization or another. In the 1920's dances became more popular and although a large number were used to raise funds an increasing number were run as businesses on a weekly basis. As with all venues where numbers of young people meet there were the usual complaints of noise and boisterous behaviour. Towards the end of the 1920's many of the complaints centred on the noise motor vehicles made leaving the area at the end of a function. It was thought that many of those with motor cars lived out of the district and that the noise they made might be modified if the police were informed. An amusing complaint was made to the Borough Council in September 1933 about the misuse of the shrubbery in Trousselot Park after dances. It is now a matter of speculation as to the type of misuse that the shrubbery was put to.

It is clear from the response to the noise after dances that there was a clear rift between what was thought acceptable by one generation as opposed to the succeeding one. A similar problem arose at the end of 1930. In November the secretary of Kaiapoi Tennis Club sought permission from the Council for the club to play games on Sunday. The Council's response was curt. It would not discuss the matter until a request had come from a duly constituted general meeting of the club and in the meantime there would be no Sunday tennis. The Tennis Club complied with the Council's request and presented a resolution from a general meeting seeking permission for Sunday play in December. Although Councillor Ramsey spoke strongly in favour of the Tennis Club's plans he was not able to sway the other Council members who were influenced by a petition from a number of residents protesting against Sunday play.

That response to the Kaiapoi Tennis Club however did not prevent the Council from allowing both miniature golf and tennis from being played at the beach settlements on Sundays. The apparent inconsistency of response may be understood if it is realised that the beach settlements were regarded as a holiday place and therefore a relaxation in the usual standard of behaviour was acceptable. Kaiapoi on the other hand was "home" and no relaxation of the standards of behaviour could be tolerated. The Wesleyan concept of Sunday as a day of rest and worship was still the view of the majority in Kaiapoi. It was understandable that such concepts were being challenged in those years of such considerable social dislocation.

That Sunday and regular church worship were regarded as an integral part of life in Kaiapoi in the 1930's is confirmed by the actions of the Methodists. Almost at the worst time of the Great Depression the minister of the Methodist church called a meeting to discuss the replacement of the old wooden church by a much larger building. At the meeting on 5 December 1933 a finance committee under the chairmanship of the Reverend O. Burnet was formed to raise money for a new church. Less than a year later in August 1934 the finance committee had enough money to begin the replacement. The last service in the old church was held on 22 April 1934, the preacher being the Reverend Clarence Eaton. On 25 August the foundation stone of the new church was laid by Miss S.E. Evans. The projected cost of the new reinforced concrete church was two thousand pounds. The plans were drawn up by R. Lovell Smith and the builder was W.C. Tourell. The weather vane from the old church was saved and set on the tower of the new church.

The deprivations that most of the population endured in the Great Depression led to political changes in the country. In 1928 the old Liberal Party under a new name, the United Party, with Sir Joseph Ward as leader came to power with the support of the Labour party. Ward had promised during the election campaign that the United Party would borrow in order to start a number of public works which would in turn soak up the unemployed. In the event he was unable to do this and although Ward went on, until his retirement from the Prime Ministership, issuing optimistic statements about the economy, things got worse. George Forbes, the Member for Hurunui, was selected as the next Prime Minister. He began a programme of retrenchment that did little for the economy and caused a great deal of misery for the people. Retrenchment and specifically the refusal of

Forbes to consider a dole payment for the unemployed caused the Labour Party to withdraw its support for the United Party. Forbes then had no choice but to form a coalition government in September 1931 with the Reform Party led by J.G. Coates. After the general election in December 1931 the coalition government was returned and Coates was able to persuade the Cabinet to try his three policies of cutting farming costs, increasing farm production and devaluing the currency. These policies may have had a better chance of working had they been implemented in the first year of the depression. It was too late by 1933 when devaluation was finally introduced to make much of a difference to the speed of the economic recovery.

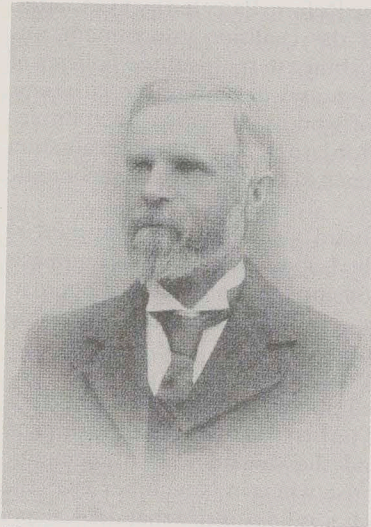
The coalition were perceived as the "Old Guard" as the electorate turned its thoughts towards the 1935 General Election. The Labour Party with its emphasis on unemployment relief and a solution for the housing shortage gained in popularity especially in the cities and small towns. The socialist policies of state ownership of key institutions such as banks and the introduction of free medical care particularly appealed to those who classed themselves as workers.

The two main policy planks with which the Labour Party went into the 1935 election were particularly apposite for Kaiapoi. The first was to insulate the primary producers from overseas price fluctuations and the second was to encourage secondary industries. It can have been no surprise when in November 1935 the Labour Party became the government. Equally it was no surprise that the Kaiapoi electorate returned a Labour member, C. Morgan Williams.

The change in government and rising prices for New Zealand's products in overseas markets promoted a less desperate atmosphere in the country. The new Labour government capitalised and expanded on the new mood of optimism by granting a 1935 Christmas bonus to the unemployed, pensioners and beneficiaries. Although this action cemented in place the faith that the electorate had put in the Labour Government it was clear that in some sections of Kaiapoi society there was uncertainty about the direction that the government was taking. At the twentieth Annual General Meeting of the shareholders of the Freezing works A.P. Bruce questioned the government's policy on the rate of exchange. In reply C. Morgan Williams assured the meeting that the Prime Minister, Michael Joseph Savage, had said that the government would do nothing until it was in a position to implement its policy of guaranteed prices. This was a scheme whereby the surpluses of good years were held by the government so that they could boost farmers' incomes in years when prices for commodities declined. The government had to make the first contributions to initiate the scheme but quite quickly over the years 1935-39 with rising prices for wool and meat a sustainable guaranteed price scheme evolved. Certainly those four years were good trading years for both the Freezing works and the Woollen Mill.

The Freezing works management team was relocated to Kaiapoi from Christchurch in 1935. It was thought that this move would benefit the business by having the managerial staff close to the manufacturing staff. The dividend of three percent paid to shareholders in 1936 was increased to five and a half in 1937 and sustained at this level through until 1939.

The Woollen Mills reported that it had ample work for both its mills and as noted earlier 1936 was its best trading year in the last fifteen years. There was a slight recession in the last half of 1938 and the first half of 1939. Imports from both Australia and the United Kingdom were cited as creating problems for the sale of the Company's goods on the local market and it was not until the military orders started to come in at the end of 1939 that the local market began to pick up.



*The Honourable David Buddo
- courtesy Kaiapoi Museum*

The death of the Honourable David Buddo in December 1937 marked the end of an association with the Kaiapoi area that stretched back to 1890 when he settled at Fernside. Born in Edinburgh in 1856, the son of a medical practitioner, David Buddo trained as an engineer and emigrated to New Zealand in 1877. He established an engineering business in Christchurch but was very quickly drawn to farming. Buddo's first farm was at Ellesmere and there he became involved in local body politics. He was appointed to the Springs Road Board in 1884, serving until 1887. In 1897 after his shift to Fernside Buddo became a member of the Mandeville-Rangiora Road Board and chaired that body in 1898 and 1899. In the same year, 1897, he became a member of the Lyttelton Harbour Board and the North Canterbury Education Board. Buddo's association with those two Boards lasted until 1907. He chaired the Education Board in 1900 and 1907.

Buddo's parliamentary career began in 1893 when he was elected as the member for Kaiapoi. He lost the seat in 1896 to Richard Moore, the man he had won it from in 1893. Buddo regained the seat again in 1899 remaining as the member for Kaiapoi for the next twenty years. He was successively Minister of Internal Affairs, Public Health, and Industries and Commerce as well as acting Minister of Lands in Sir Joseph Ward's Liberal Government from 1908 to 1912. In 1919 Buddo again lost the Kaiapoi seat only to regain it again in 1922. He held it for a further six years until his retirement from parliamentary politics in 1928. In 1930 Buddo was appointed to the Legislative Council and remained a member until early 1937 when he retired from that body.

During his long parliamentary career David Buddo was also a member of the Rangiora County Council from 1904 to 1908, chairing that body for the last two years of his term. He served on the Board of Governors of the Canterbury College of Agriculture at Lincoln from 1920 until his death. Buddo was also a director of the New Zealand Farmers' Co-operative Association of Canterbury and was a member of the Christchurch Domains Board. It was extraordinary that he was also able to pursue interests that he had in his place of birth, Scotland, in his adopted country.

Before his departure to New Zealand he was a member of the Kincardineshire Volunteers, Stonehurst. Buddo resumed this interest in the Volunteer movement when he joined the North Canterbury Mounted Rifles. He held the rank of captain in that organisation from 1901 to 1903. Somewhere, in between his public duties, Buddo managed, in 1886 marry Janet Rollo and to subsequently have a family of four children. His public career was distinguished by the length of service and his attention to matters in his Kaiapoi electorate. Michael Joseph Savage said at the time of Buddo's death that he was an earnest man, a good friend, and a fair opponent. Savage went on to add that Buddo's long life was marked with painstaking work for the people.

The improved economic climate in the late 1930s led the Kaiapoi Borough Council to launch a scheme on the initiative of the Mayor, W.H.A. Vickery, to attract new industries to the borough. The government had introduced an Industrial Efficiency Act in 1936. It was regarded by the government as a blueprint for the future direction of secondary industries in New Zealand. However very little came of it. The Borough Council's plan was a more typical response to the situation and in many ways more practical than a national policy on the development of secondary industries. The Council decided to form a committee to promote the town as a suitable area for the establishment of manufacturing businesses. Part of task of the committee in its promotion of the town was to keep in touch with the appropriate government ministries, the Manufacturers' Association and any other interested bodies. The other part of its brief was to collect data on the properties and buildings suitable for factories in the town. It was planned to hold a special industrial promotional week in Kaiapoi just before Christmas 1939 but with the outbreak of the Second World War all of the town's efforts were turned to coping with that crisis.

The situation in Europe and especially the buildup of German power under Hitler had for some time pointed to the possible outbreak of war. In Kaiapoi there seemed to be very little awareness of the deteriorating situation in Europe. The Borough Council received without comment a notice from the Spanish Refugees' Fund in July 1938 that an appeal for assistance of destitute children in Spain was being launched. It is probable that church based groups in Kaiapoi did respond to this appeal and others of like mind reacted similarly but on the whole it seemed as if most people felt that the trouble was too far away for them to be able to make any constructive help.

In some ways, in Kaiapoi, the immediate period prior to the outbreak of the Second World War had a Gilbert and Sullivan opera style and atmosphere about it. An example of the whimsical nature of the response in the area to the serious situation in Europe was provided by the Waimakariri Harbour Board. It indicated to the government at the beginning of 1939 that it considered the Kaiapoi Harbour would be an ideal base for motor torpedo boats. In his reply, the Minister of Defence, explained that the government had no plans to purchase motor torpedo boats but that if it did, it would consider the Board's offer. Almost as whimsical but with a much stronger philosophical base was the response of a number of Borough Councillors to a petition from the National Peace

Council in May 1939. The petition urged the government to hold a conference on questions effecting a world peace movement and in signing the petition the Councillors were giving expression to their hope that peace would prevail. In fact the slide into the Second World War was as inevitable as it was disastrous.

In the twenty one years since the end of the First World War Kaiapoi had been swept along with the national and international movements of the time but at no stage could it be said that the town had become part of the overall picture. It had retained its unique identity in North Canterbury. It was an industrial centre with international links that conducted its business in the way it had done in the early years of settlement. There was a sense of caring in the community that co-existed with the strong work ethic and self help philosophy of the early Wesleyans. At one stage it was pointed out by the government that the population of Kaiapoi was stagnant during the late twenties and thirties. This observation was made in the context of the provision of housing and was taken as a negative characteristic of the town. However, it could also be seen in a very positive light. Kaiapoi was the kind of place where one or two generations of the same family chose to stay. This continuity gave Kaiapoi a stable society in which all of the characteristics of a caring community were solidified and taken as the norm. This was most graphically illustrated when the Nursing Home was threatened with permanent closure and representatives of the community came together to present the case to the North Canterbury Hospital Board for support of the Home. One of the factors that persuaded the Hospital Board to give its support to the Nursing Home was the strong sense of community that emanated from the delegation.

The response of both the officials and individuals in Kaiapoi to the depression also illustrates the uniqueness of town. There was enormous sympathy for the unemployed and every effort was made both formally and informally to ensure that those affected did not suffer undue hardship. Unemployment in Kaiapoi was seen as a community problem rather than an individual problem. Consequently organisations and committees were put in place to deal with the effects of economic depression on a community basis. Although there were individual cases of extreme poverty in the community Kaiapoi people survived the experience by helping each other when it was needed. The national and international economic depression and the gathering storm in Europe served to recognise that Kaiapoi continued to retain special qualities of its own.

Chapter Nine:

WAR AND PEACE AGAIN.

The declaration of the Second World War was met with a resigned acceptance of the inevitability of conflict occurring in Europe. From 1 September, until the official declaration of war in Parliament by the Acting Prime Minister, the Honourable P. Fraser, on 5 September 1939 there was no doubt at all that New Zealand would be involved in the conflict. Fraser affirmed that every possible step had been taken to avoid conflict but in the end there came a point when,

“Force has been allowed too long to have its way in the world. It must be overcome and it will be overcome.” (1)

There was no specific means spelt out by Fraser as to how this objective would be achieved by New Zealand but everyone knew, that once again, a generation of young people, mostly men, would be involved in fighting for its country. It may have been, that the suppressed horrors of the First World War were still too fresh to allow much of an emotional reaction to the news. It became more a matter of getting on with the task in hand. Certainly very few people saw the Second World War as a “great adventure.” The headline in the *North Canterbury Gazette* announcing the outbreak of the war highlighted, the rather more prosaic, concerns of the people when it read

“The Empire at War with Germany. Rush for Petrol Permits in Rangiora.”

Without doubt the same rush was experienced in Kaiapoi.

Although the Kaiapoi Borough Council did not acknowledge the outbreak of the war in its meetings of September 1939 it did take a number of steps, in the weeks leading up to the declaration, that acknowledged the imminence of the war. After the war had been declared, the Council put in place additional precautions that acknowledged the community response to the emergency.

The Council held a special meeting on 4 September to consider a confidential circular from the Internal Affairs Department. The circular outlined the govern-

(1) *The Press*, 6.9.1939. p.3

ment's policy, in the event of the outbreak of war, for the protection of what was termed vital points. These points were the railways, the electricity grid and water works. The circular reminded local authorities that they were required to co-operate with the Internal Affairs Department in the protection of these vital points. The Council resolved to endorse the request of the government in this matter. Furthermore, at the special meeting, the Council resolved to call a public meeting in order to set up a community committee that would assist men who may be leaving the locality for active service overseas. At the 12 September meeting the Council received a deputation led by Mr Stark who was in charge of the No 2 Reserves. The deputation requested the use of two rooms in the Borough Hall for emergency work. This was granted but subject, to a slightly backhanded remark, that the rooms would have to be thoroughly cleaned.

In response to the declaration of war the Council appointed the Mayor, W.H.A. Vickery, as the Council's representative to the Canterbury Progress League's conference on the organization of manpower. Vickery was also appointed the Council's representative on the Patriotic Fund Collections committee. Furthermore Councillor Gordon was selected as the Council's representative on the War Services Committee which had been set up at the public meeting called by the Council earlier in September.

The Waimakariri Harbour Board received the same Internal Affairs circular concerning the protection of vital points in its district as had the Council. The Board did not hold a special meeting to discuss the circular but it, like the Council, resolved to co-operate with the government. The Secretary of the Harbours Association of New Zealand circularised its constituent members in early October to ascertain whether or not the Association's conference should be held. The Waimakariri Board agreed that as a concession to the declaration of war the conference should be postponed until a more appropriate time.

In early October 1939 the first men to leave for war service were farewelled. The Kaiapoi Working Men's Club held a function for its members who had joined the special military force. There was a large crowd at the gathering who heard, as well as the speeches of farewell, items from N.Karaitiana, M.Mealings, D.Karaitiana, W.Bayton, J.Brown and R.Conway accompanied by J.C.Simpson. The men, in whose honour the function was held, were Messrs A.Hall, J.Revell, R.Hall, G.Logan, A.James, H.Fowler, M.Mealings, A.McIntosh, P.Gillett, and F.Hyde.⁽²⁾

The Kaiapoi Patriotic Committee was formed at a public meeting early in 1940. It had a three-fold policy. The first was to ensure that every serviceman and servicewoman leaving from Kaiapoi had a public citizens' farewell.

Secondly, once Kaiapoi people were overseas, the Patriotic Committee was to maintain contact with them in the form of letters and extra supplies of clothing. In that context the Lady Galway Guild under the chairmanship of the Mayoresses of the period, Mrs Vickery, and Mrs Gray produced three thousand knitted goods from June 1941 until June 1944. Not all of those garments went to service

(2) The Press, 4.10.1939, p.6

personnel. Some of them were supplied to the various organisations dealing with refugees, notably the Red Cross.

The letters written by the Patriotic Committee to the service personal were regarded by the recipients as precious. In a letter written in reply to F.Brydon, George Lindsay stressed the importance of hearing from home. Lindsay, who had



Kaiapoi Patriotic Committee

Back row, W. McPartlin, R.J. Smith, R. Gill, H.J. McIntosh, G. Hirst, J. McGarry
Middle Row, Mesdames G. Wylie, M. Richards, H. Secker, F. Ellis, H. Watson, Miss M. Stark, Mesdames M. Greenwood, K. McIntosh, Miss P. Pearce, Mrs E. Fitzgerald
Front row, K. McIntosh, jr, Mesdames G. Aiken, R. Gill, E.G. Gray, P. Wright, (Secretary & Treasurer), Mr E.G. Gray (Chairman), Mesdames B. Pearce, J.S. Baker, J. McMullan, M.J. Hirst
- courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

been wounded in Egypt, described his journey to Palestine and the sights, sounds and smells that assaulted his senses in such places as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. He was astounded at the frequency with which wine was drunk and he was most impressed by what he termed as the communal living arrangements in the Jewish villages. Lindsay's letter encapsulates the exotic life that the soldiers, especially those who served in North Africa and the Middle East, were able to observe. For men and women brought up in the isolation of small town New Zealand it was both an exhilarating and foreign experience that made them appreciate their country's way of life.

The third policy of the Patriotic Committee was to give each service person a fitting welcome home and to present that person with five pounds as a token from a grateful public. The Patriotic Committee, itself, thought that this was a paltry amount to present but it stressed that the money was a token rather than a reward.

Money used to support the Patriotic Committee's projects was raised in various ways. In terms of the money raised the most important events were the concerts and carnivals. Kaiapoi people had lost none of their enthusiasm for taking part in and watching the events that their friends and neighbours put on to raise money. Over the war period nearly four and a half thousand pounds were raised in this way.

The staff at the Woollen Mills had a number of collections during the war. Those collections and the house to house appeals raised a substantial amount of the balance of the just over ten thousand pounds raised by the Kaiapoi Patriotic Committee. In considering the amount of money raised over the war period it must be recognized that most of it came from individual small donations typified by the first donation of a shilling that the committee received at its first meeting. It was a remarkable amount of money to be raised by a small community over a relatively short time-span.

Two hundred and nine people left from the Kaiapoi district to serve in the war. By far the biggest number, one hundred and fifty, served in the army; thirty joined the airforce; twenty two were in the navy and two in the merchant navy, and one man served in the Australian forces. Of the three women, from the Kaiapoi district who went overseas, two were nurses and the other one served in the women's army corps. Eighteen men from the district were killed during the conflict and many others were wounded. Four of those who went away were given awards for bravery. These numbers exclude those of Maori descent who served in the Maori Battalion.

A notable development in New Zealand's contribution to the war effort that was of vital interest to the Kai Tahu residents in Kaiapoi and the surrounding district was the formation of the Maori Battalion. The announcement, constituting a rifle battalion composed of Maori, was made in Wellington by the Minister of Defence, the Honourable F. Jones, on 4 October 1939. Recruiting was to begin on 9 October. It was envisaged that the first intake would begin training at a camp near Palmerston North in the middle of November. (3) By the end of October it was reported that there were a total of nine hundred and sixty three Maori recruits. However only nineteen of those came from the Southern region. It had been found during the recruiting drive that there were a substantial number of married men of the right age and level of fitness who were debarred from serving because of their married state. It was decided to allow married men between the ages of twenty one and thirty five with not more than two children to apply to join the Battalion. This relaxation of the restrictions allowed many more men to join up.

In February 1940 the Kaiapoi War Services Committee decided to compile a complete register of soldiers leaving the Kaiapoi district for overseas service. One of those who would not have been put on the register was I. Hamlin who left his job in the engineering section at the Woollen Mills to join mercantile marine service taking with him a Kaiapoi rug. His departure, however, served to remind the

(3) *The Press*, 5.10.1939, p.6

citizens of Kaiapoi that there were many ways in which they could help in the war effort.

One of the organizations that responded to the emergency of the war was the New Zealand Defence League. Its national service movement idea was gathering momentum in the early months of 1940. At its 13 February meeting the Kaiapoi Borough Council received a letter from the New Zealand Defence League suggesting that the Council express an opinion on universal compulsory national service. It was envisaged by the Defence League that all citizens be given tasks that they were best suited to and that would further the war effort. This scheme, it was maintained, would ensure an equality of sacrifice for all citizens. The Borough Council was unimpressed with the idea and suggested that it was a matter for central government rather than local bodies.

By August the central government had come up with a scheme that, although not as inclusive as the Defence League scheme, was to include an estimated three hundred thousand men. A conference of local body representatives was held in Christchurch on 21 August 1940 under the chairmanship of the Mayor of Christchurch, R.M. MacFarlane, M.P. The main speaker at the conference was the Honourable R. Semple, the Minister for National Service. He explained that under the Emergency Reserve Corps Regulations, which had been gazetted the previous weekend, three hundred thousand men would be enlisted in an organization that would place them all in an appropriate job in the defence of the country. This organization would be known as the Home Guard and although in the first instance it would have no uniform, it would be drilled in the ways of the army provided the members were fit enough. The Home Guard would also practise the handling of guns and ammunition at the parades although no members would be permitted to take the weapons home. Each Home Guard unit would be under the control of a local man who was experienced in army training. It was envisaged that these men would come from a list prepared by the local Returned Soldiers Associations. New Zealand would be divided into eighteen areas, each with an officer in control and responsible for the supervision of drilling and instruction. Under the scheme the local authorities were to use their administrative systems to make sure that all eligible men in their particular areas were enrolled in the Home Guard. It was suggested that local bodies set up a committee of four or five people whose overall task was to foster the growth of the Home Guard.

The most pressing question the delegates at the conference had was over the issue of petrol for farmers who had to travel long distances to attend parades. The Minister could give no assurance except to say that if the defence of the Dominion was at stake, then petrol would be used for that task. He went on to say that he hoped the Home Guard in New Zealand would show the rest of the Commonwealth that the country could organize itself.

The preliminary work of organization presumably got under way as soon as the delegates returned to their respective areas. In Kaiapoi there was no mention of the work of the committee until December. At a meeting in early December the executive of the Kaiapoi Home Guard Committee decided to nominate W.H. Stack

and O.Y. Davies for the positions of area officers. It was also decided to have the first parade on 11 December in the Borough Hall.

There seemed to be a low key response in the borough and this was in marked contrast to the response at Tuahiwi. The first parade of the Tuahiwi Home Guard was held on 19 December. It was organized after a meeting which had been held in the settlement the previous Sunday. The convener of the Sunday meeting was J.H. Kingi who has served in the First World War and had attained the rank of Sergeant-Major. The Tuahiwi Home Guard was the first Maori Home Guard with its own command in the South Island and possibly in New Zealand. Thirty men attended the first parade, among them an old man of seventy years. On the first night the recruits received instruction from a member of the National Military Reserve, Private J.W. Robinson, but thereafter it was reported that the parades were to be under the control of Sergeant-Major Kingi.

There was no doubt a great deal of pride in the Tuahiwi community at the level of support that community members gave to both serving in the Home Guard and, for those who were eligible, serving overseas. As with any war there were casualties. Among the casualties were two men whose losses were devastating for both the Tuahiwi and the wider North Canterbury community. The first one was Corporal Hikoata Ross Piki. His death was reported in *The Press*, 16 January 1943 and although the report does not say where he was killed it is safe to assume it was in the North African Desert campaign. Piki was the son of J. T. M. Piki of Tuahiwi and both father and son were notable footballers of their time. Piki senior had been in a New Zealand team that had toured Australia and his son was showing promise as a half-back with the North Canterbury Team. Hikoata Piki had been educated at Otaki College in the North Island and had returned to Tuahiwi to take an active interest in Te Roopu Pipiwharauroa Agriculture Society. He was reported to be interested in all branches of Maori learning. It would seem that from the account of his life he would have had a great deal to offer his community if he had survived the war.

The second notable loss occurred a couple of weeks later and was also in the North African Campaign, this time at the Battle of El Alamein. Sergeant Tahumataa Pitama received a Military Medal for an act of courage and leadership which cost him his life. Sergeant Pitama was in one of the leading companies of the Maori Battalion in the attack on Deir El Munassib when his platoon commander was wounded. Pitama took over command but did not survive the battle himself. The community certainly lost a potential leader when Tahumataa Pitama was killed.

The Kai Tahu community was not the only one to lose men of value in the Second World War. As with all wars, losses were experienced by the wider community, the most notable of which for Kaiapoi was its Town Clerk. Stanley Papprell had been appointed to the position in August 1941 on the resignation of R. J. Smith. Papprell was born in Kaiapoi in June 1906, the son of Ethel and Ernest Papprell. Ernest Papprell was a barrister and solicitor and the Borough's solicitor. Stanley Papprell began school at Kaiapoi Borough School. He attended Christchurch Boys' High School before joining his brothers as a boarder at Waitaki Boys' High School. On leaving school he began an accountancy degree at Canterbury Univer-

sity College. His studies were taken part time while he worked as an accounts clerk at the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill. He had still not completed his degree at the time he was appointed to the Town Clerk's position. It had been accepted at the time by the Council, that Papprell was likely to be called up for service. His call up came in September 1942. At the 22 September Council meeting Papprell advised the Council of his call-up adding that he did not wish to appeal it. Papprell was posted to "A" Company of the 23rd Battalion. This was the Company that many North Canterbury men served in. Papprell has been remembered by those who served with him as a well respected soldier who played a good game of bridge. He had only just re-joined the Battalion after recovering from burns he had sustained in an earlier incident when it was engaged in the battle for Monte Casino. According to his comrades Papprell was killed about three days into the battle and the Kaiapoi community lost a valuable member.

Another Kaiapoi man with a long family association with the area was also killed at the battle of Monte Casino. Jack Brocklebank was a descendent of Charles Brocklebank. Charles had arrived in Kaiapoi in 1874 with his wife and family. He and his wife had secured a job with Edward Parnham as a married couple. A few years later he had bought a few acres in the Hassall's Ford area although he continued to work for Parnham. Charles Brocklebank's descendants did not continue his association with the land but moved into Kaiapoi and sought other occupations.

A third man with a long family connection with Kaiapoi was killed in 1942 although his family was not informed of his death until July 1943. He was Pilot Officer H. G. Clothier. He was a descendent of the Clothier family who had taken up land in the Clarkville area in the early days of Pakeha settlement. Like the Brocklebank family, the descendants of the Clothier family had moved away from farming but had remained closely associated with Kaiapoi. Pilot Officer Clothier was killed off the Dutch coast when his aircraft was returning from the "thousand bomber" raid on Essen. His plane was forced down into the sea by enemy action and there was only one survivor, Sergeant Forbes, who became a prisoner of war. Forbes reportedly identified Clothier's body and confirmed that it had been buried in Rotterdam, a long way from Kaiapoi.

All three men, Papprell, Brocklebank and Clothier had retraced the journey from Europe that their ancestors had made in the previous century. All three were to remain there, in death, depriving their families and the Kaiapoi community of the contribution that they would have undoubtedly made.

The Council had planned in a minor way for such an eventuality as the loss, albeit temporarily, of its Town Clerk. In August 1942 the senior clerk in the Council offices, Miss J. R. Wallace, tendered her resignation as she had been offered another job. The Council resolved, that due to the extraordinary circumstances created by the likelihood of Papprell being called up in the near future, Miss Wallace should be asked to stay for the duration of the war. This she agreed to do. In less than a month Papprell received his call up papers and Miss Wallace became the Acting Town Clerk, the only woman to occupy that position in the history of the borough.

The Wallace family had lived in Kaiapoi since about 1917 when Bill Wallace acquired the land next to the river at the northern end of Raven Street. He ran a few dairy cows on it to begin with and then moved over to growing crops. There was never enough land to support the family and so Bill Wallace worked in the tallow department of the freezing works. He eventually sold the land to William Murphy who deeded it to the Council in 1953. The land became known as Murphy Park.

Although she had agreed to stay on the staff for the duration of the war Miss Wallace was Acting Town Clerk for only a year. She was a bright and forthright young woman who was more than capable of undertaking the Town Clerk's job. Unfortunately a clash of personalities between Wallace and the Mayor, E.Gray, lead to her seeking a job elsewhere in November 1942.

Wallace's resignation lead to a number of short term appointments as Acting Town Clerk. The first of these was G.Hollis who was engaged from the end of November until the beginning of January when the former Town Clerk, R.J.Smith returned to the position. Smith remained in the job until Papprell's death at the Battle of Monte Casino in May 1944. The Council then advertised for a full time Town Clerk, N.E.Clemens being the successful applicant

The quiet acceptance of the outbreak of the Second World War was demonstrated in other organizations in Kaiapoi. The annual meeting of the Kaiapoi sub-centre of St John Ambulance Association in November 1939 was told by its Chairman, W.H.A.Vickery, that at the news of the declaration of war, the sub-centre was able to arrange classes in first aid and home nursing. It was reported that these classes increased the membership of the brigade.

The organization of a third nursery school for North Canterbury went ahead. The Kaiapoi Nursery School like its counterparts in Rangiora and Oxford was to be open for one half-day a week. At that time the nursery had twelve to fourteen children in regular attendance. The children's mothers took it in turns to manage the school. The biggest difficulty for the mothers was the lack of outdoor playing material.

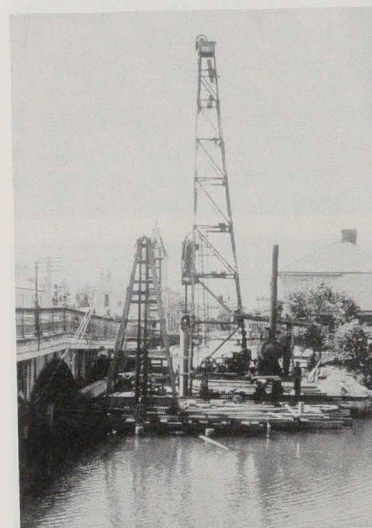
Unlike the experience of the First World War there seemed to be a determination to have business as usual despite the obvious problems of shortages of overseas products such as petrol and sugar. The Borough Council had two projects that it was determined should go ahead.

The first of the projects was a new sewage scheme. The Council had applied to the Local Government Loans Board in 1938 for a loan to modernize the Borough's sewage scheme. The Council had followed closely the guidelines suggested by the Loans Board and was therefore displeased when it was advised in October 1939 that the Department of Health thought that the provision of a safe water supply was of primary importance to the borough. The Council was of the opinion, however, that a sewage scheme was more urgent. It was sure that most residents in the borough already had a more than satisfactory water supply. As with the previous sewage scheme in 1932 this one also foundered. This time it was not the residents that made the decision but central government. It became clear that if the Borough Council did not accept the Department of Health's recommenda-

tions then there was no chance of it securing the loan. The Council was firmly of the opinion that there was no need to install a new water supply and so the sewage scheme was put on hold.

The Council had more success with the other major project, the replacement of the bridge on the Main North Road. The Council had been endeavouring since April 1929 to have the bridge replaced. In 1940 the Council had written to the Highways Board expressing disappointment that the bridge had not been replaced years ago. It regarded the expenditure on repairs of the bridge as largely a waste of money as the only sensible solution was to replace it. By September 1941 the Council's patience with the government's sluggishness over the replacement of the bridge had come to an end. In a strongly worded letter to the Minister of Public Works the Council wrote that the fifty five year old bridge,

"stood as a damning example of gross neglect, unjustified procrastination, and unfulfilled pledges."



Old bridge with pile driver beside it October 1944 (note tower on post office) Coulls Someville Wilkie photograph - courtesy Waimakariri District Council

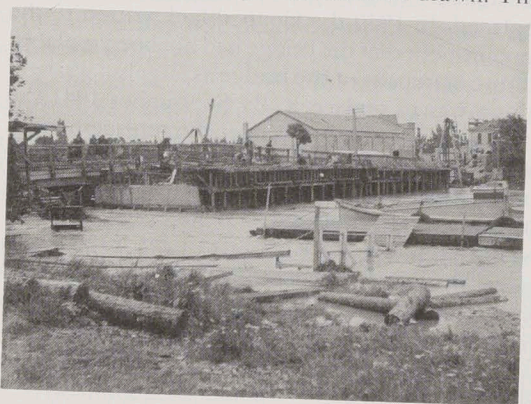
The letter went on to proclaim that the bridge was the worst of its kind in the South Island, that it was an eyesore to the community and because of its narrow carriage-way (eighteen feet), a danger to all who used it. The letter cited a recent accident on the bridge when a pedestrian had been killed by a motorist and backed up this argument with reference to the numerous minor and major injury accidents that had occurred on the bridge due to its narrowness. The headmaster of the Kaiapoi Borough School had instructed the school children not to use the bridge because of the real possibility of them being injured or killed. There had been a promise in 1931 of a government survey of the bridge. Plans were drawn but nothing had been done. It was time, the letter declared, for the government to act responsibly.⁽⁴⁾ As well as sending the letter to the Minister, the Council sent copies to *The Press* and *Star-Sun* newspapers, the Automobile Association, the local Member of Parliament, C.M.Williams and the Canter-

bury Progress League. The Canterbury Progress League vigorously supported the Council's complaints against the government.

In a little over three weeks the Minister of Public Works, the Honourable H.T.Armstrong, had replied to the representations made by the Canterbury Progress League over the state of the bridge. He dismissed the charges that the delay in replacing the bridge was unjustified. He pointed out that the Public

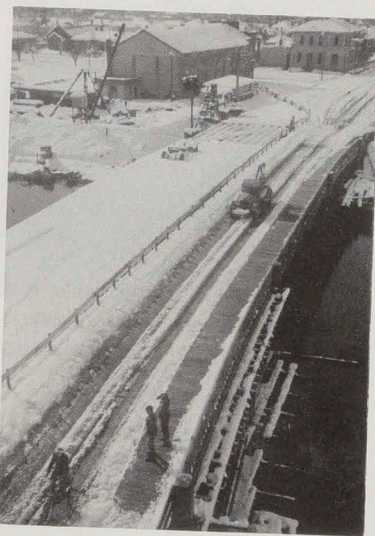
(4) *The Press*, 22.9.1941, p.8

Works Department had a considerable work load and that when the plans for the bridge were finally completed towards the end of 1940, there had been a shortage of steel in the country. That explained the delay since the beginning of the war and according to the Minister there was no delay before the war as the plans for the bridge had not been drawn. The Borough Council had mistaken



Work on bridge progressing during flood February 1945, Coulls Someville Wilkie photograph - courtesy Waimakariri District Council

site plans for the bridge plans. However now that the plans were completed and there was sufficient steel in the country the construction of the Kaiapoi bridge and the other three, urgently needed, bridges could begin. (5) The new bridge was opened 4 May 1946. The Minister of Works, the Honourable R. Semple, declared the bridge open and in doing so he could not resist reminding the large audience that Kaiapoi was lucky to have got the bridge so quickly, in view of the delays caused by the war. He added that there were eight hundred other bridges awaiting replacement in New Zealand. Many those listening, including Mayor Vickery, must have been considerably annoyed at those remarks. The local Member of Parliament, C. Morgan Williams declared in his speech that Kaiapoi had been famous throughout New Zealand for its hump-backed bridge and now it would be the envy of all with its modern four-laned bridge. (6) The bridge was fifty-six feet wide and could accommodate two lanes for motor vehicles and two lanes for bicycles as well as a footpath on either side. It was made of reinforced concrete with fifty foot spans at either end and a sixty foot span in the middle. It was certainly a structure which would avoid the bottle necks which had become a daily feature of life in Kaiapoi. Another feature of the bridge was the lighting. The original



Both bridges under snow 6 July 1945 (note post office without tower) Coulls Someville Wilkie photograph - courtesy Waimakariri District Council

(5) *The Press*, 14.10.1941. p.10.

(6) *The Press*, 6.5.1946. p.6.

design had called for one light on each bracket positioned in an upright manner. The Borough's electrical engineer A.J. Shore pointed out that this plan would disperse the light upwards and therefore away from the bridge. He devised a different lighting plan that had ten standards which each had two suspended lights. Shore's plan had twice as many lights throwing their beams downwards and outwards onto the bridge making it much safer at night. The brackets were made in Kaiapoi and as well as promoting safety, they enhanced the visual impact of the bridge at night.



The Honourable R. Semple opening bridge 4 May 1946 Coulls Someville Wilkie photograph - courtesy Waimakariri District Council

With the entry of Japan into the war on 7 December 1940, it was realised both by the government and the people, just how vulnerable New Zealand was to an attack by enemy forces. While the war was being conducted in Europe it seemed to most people that the country's remoteness gave it all the protection it needed. The bombing of Pearl Harbour and the subsequent expansion into the South Pacific by the Japanese shattered that complacency. There was now a real and urgent need to ensure the defence of the Dominion. At the 11 March meeting of the Kaiapoi Borough Council a resolution from the Stratford Borough Council was considered. It read,

“ That in view of the serious position now obtaining, the threatening aspect in the Pacific, and the urgent need of preparedness for local defence, this Council urges upon the Government that it exercises its powers of enforcing service under the Home Defence and Emergency Precautions Scheme by all those fit and able to render service therein and not at present being called up for overseas service or serving in the defence forces of this country.”

There was almost no need for the Kaiapoi Council to consider the resolution as the sentiments it expressed were widely held within the community. The Council sent its sympathetic support and prepared to do whatever was necessary to support the government in the war effort. This sentiment was a complete reversal to the one held by the Council during the First World War. At that time the Council had stood firmly behind the notion of voluntary service. At this stage in the Second World War it could no longer afford the luxury of a belief in voluntary service even though the historical background of the Kaiapoi community inclined it towards a non-compulsive armed force.

The necessities of the war impacted on both large industries in the area. The Woollen Mill won a contract for the supply of uniform material for the armed forces. The urgency of the war work meant that the Woollen Mill's civilian customers had to wait for their orders to be filled. This state of affairs caused the directors some anxieties, no doubt because they felt that the delays would cause bad memories for the civilian customers once the war contracts had been filled. There was the worry that perhaps the mill would find it difficult to retain them as customers. Although it was noted that the mill had introduced extra shifts and overtime during 1940 to cope with the demand there was inconvenience caused to the company's general clients by the short notice given by the army and the air-force for their requirements.

In 1942 the Board of Directors reported that the volume of the company's production for the armed forces had been equivalent to the turnover of company before the war. This was naturally a pleasing situation for the company as it was also supplying its general customers. The company had once again increased its shift work and overtime as well as installing new machinery. In addition the company had also installed a steam turbo generating plant in its Kaiapoi factory. The plant had sufficient capacity to generate electricity for the entire operation but the Board felt that there was a need for the installation of a further boiler to make the factory fully independent of outside supplies of power.

The staff had coped admirably with the increased work load despite having their numbers depleted by the departure of some for service overseas. The Board made its usual note about the difficulty in obtaining skilled workers but that it was pleased to report a spirit of co-operation with the government had smoothed over any problems that the mill had encountered. There had to be a high standard of co-operation with the staff also, because in addition to weaving the cloth, the clothing division of the company was engaged in making the uniforms for the army, navy and air-force.

The 1943 annual report of the company showed much the same situation with about eighty per cent of the company's production being directed towards the war effort. It was felt by the Board that this percentage would be reduced over the coming year, as there seemed to be, what it termed a slight improvement, in the situation of the war. 1943 however saw a breakdown in the company's relationship with its workers. Two workers, Henry Hartley and Joseph Taylor had appealed to the Industrial Manpower Committee against their dismissal from the Kaiapoi factory. In Hartley's case the reason that the company had given him for his dismissal was that his position was needed for a repatriated soldier. In fact, at the hearing, it was revealed that the machine Hartley operated on the night shift was no longer in use and therefore his job had disappeared. The company was reprimanded by the committee for misrepresenting to both it and Hartley the reason for his dismissal and was ordered to pay Hartley his wages up until the time of the committee's decision. In Taylor's case the company was ordered to reinstate him because although he was replaced by a repatriated soldier, Green, there was no need to place that man in Taylor's job as there were jobs in other parts of the factory which would have been suitable for Green. The company was reminded of

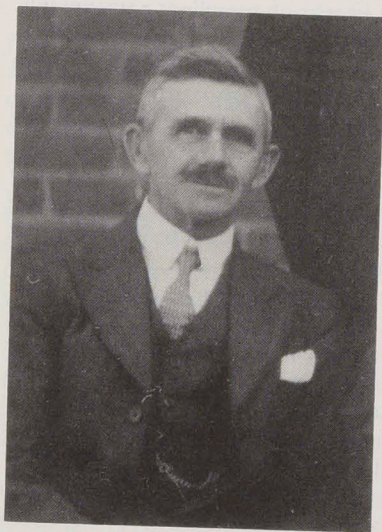
its duty towards its employees. The object of the manpower regulations was to prevent unnecessary movement of labour and as the right of workers to move from job to job had been removed it was incumbent on the company to provide employment for those available regardless of their skill level and age. The company had obliquely suggested that both Hartley and Taylor were too slow and perhaps too old for the jobs that they were doing. It also had made the claim that because Kaiapoi was off the beaten path it was not possible to obtain female labour and that the Manpower Committee should make special arrangements to ensure that the factory had the correct, skilled, male labour that it needed to fulfil its war time obligations. The situation was probably aggravated by the fact that by this time the country had been at war for four years and the stress of production in a business such as the Woollen Mill was enormous on both the management and the workers. It was obvious from the reports of the hearing before the Industrial Manpower Committee that the company's management had not been paying enough attention to the regulations governing it.

The same stresses were applied to the Freezing Company. It had to manage its business in the uncertain conditions of war. Many of its farmer clients and shareholders were affected by the shortage of labour for their farms with the exodus of young men to the war. In some cases this meant a delay for the farmer in getting his stock to the works. Although the freezing industry, like farming, was declared a vital industry and therefore protected from a loss of labour, the Freezing works did lose a number of its experienced men to the war. The shipping of its products to Britain became a dubious exercise in view of attacks on merchant navy vessels. The last three years of the war saw a drop in the profits of the company. There was no explanation for this offered by the company but the uncertainty of supply to Britain due to the war conditions undoubtedly contributed to it.

At the beginning of the war an agreement between the managements and the workers of Freezing works throughout the country had been reached by each party. Under the Freezing Industry Emergency Regulations 1940 each freezing company was to set up a works efficiency council at each of its plants. The council was to have on it, representatives of the workers and the management. The intention was that the council would deal quickly with any dispute that might arise at its plant. In addition to the works efficiency councils at each works a National Council was set up. Its function was to promote harmony and to deal expeditiously with any dispute which could not be solved at the local level. If the National Council could not solve the problem, then the parties could take the dispute to the Arbitration Court for a decision. It was hoped, however, that the Court was a last resort measure and that most disputes could be solved by the works efficiency councils. For most of the war this system, which was reminiscent of the Whitely Plan, worked well. However towards the end of the war industrial unrest at the Kaiapoi plant could not be avoided. One of the slaughtermen who had been drafted into the army and was in camp at Trentham had been directed by the Manpower Committee to return to the South Island and report to the Kaiapoi works for a job. The management of the plant claimed that he was not needed as the job he had held before he went to camp had been filled. The union, on the other hand, claimed that the job had gone to a

lesser experienced man and that their member was being discriminated against on the basis of his union activities at the plant before his departure. In addition, the union held that employing less experienced men at lower wages while in the company's interests, was not directed towards increased production. As a consequence the union decided to instruct the thirty seven slaughtermen to strike. This, they did, on 4 January 1944. The slaughtermen did not return to work until 10 January. By that date eighteen men had been served with prosecution notices for failing to comply with a directive to resume work. Their erstwhile colleague, in the meantime, had been arrested for being absent without leave from the army. After his failure to return to work at the Kaiapoi works he was obliged to return to Trentham. He had instead chosen to remain in Christchurch. As in the case of the Woollen Mill workers there was a petty breakdown in the system that appeared to have its origins in the stress of the job that both the management and the workers of the company were being asked assume.

As well as the external crisis caused by the war in the Pacific, the Kaiapoi Borough Council faced a small crisis of its own in 1941. H.Owen Hills's reorganization of the electrical department had started with a renewal of the equipment and by 1941 it was clear that there also needed to be a reorganization of the personnel in the department. H.W.Childs, who had been electrical engineer in the borough for seventeen years, was regarded by some as having outmoded ideas. In July 1941 the Council decided on the recommendation of the Electrical Committee to write to Childs to inform him that in order to institute a satisfactory state of efficiency in



H.W. Childs - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

the department a complete reorganization of the maintenance, service, and trading departments was needed. This could best be achieved under the direction of a new electrical engineer. The letter requested Childs' voluntary retirement and his attendance before a special meeting of the Council to be held in August.

When Childs declined to appear before the meeting the Council gave him a termination notice to become effective from 14 September. He was also given a grant equivalent to two months salary. At the following meeting the Council received the resignation of the linesman, L.Prettejohns. No comment was made on the reason for Prettejohns' resignation but it was clear that he was upset at the way Childs had been dismissed. Although there was no direct protest from Childs a number of citizens thought that he had been badly treated by the Council and so at the 26 August meeting a petition was presented by A.Gordon, R.H.Belcher, and H.C.Revell. The petition expressed complete dissatisfaction

with the electrical engineer's dismissal and asked that the matter be reopened. The Council was not of a mind to reopen the matter and so the petitioners were left unsatisfied. At that same meeting A.J.Shore was selected by ballot from three other candidates to fill the vacancy for the electrical engineer. The Electrical Committee was given the authority to appoint a new linesman. The affair ended with a small victory for Childs. The Town Clerk reported at the September meeting that Childs was three years in arrears for his holidays and was therefore entitled to seven weeks pay.

The affair ensured that Shore had a completely free hand to put in place a new infrastructure in the electrical department. One of his first tasks was to oversee the renewal of a considerable length of faulty lines. He then took on the task of designing and having built a repair shop, a large workshop, garages and outbuildings. (7)

The council faced a not dissimilar problem the following year. However it was not able to influence the outcome in the same way as it had in the cases of the electrical engineer. At that stage the town had only one doctor and it was felt by the Council that there was enough work for two doctors. It therefore made moves in June 1942 to attract a second doctor to the Borough. This activity led the resident doctor, Doctor C.P.S.Riddell, through his solicitor, A.L.Haslam, to write to the Council advising it of the undesirability of two doctors in Kaiapoi. The Council then decided to write to the Friendly Societies in Kaiapoi outlining the steps that the Council had already taken and to ask their advice on the current situation. Replies from the Oddfellows', Forrester's', and Druids' Lodges were received at the Council's July Meeting. The Lodges were supportive of any action that the Council might take to attract a second doctor to Kaiapoi. The action the Council determined on was to write to the Canterbury Branch of the British Medical Association to advise it of the situation and to ask for its help in finding a second practitioner for the town. The Council also made it clear that the Branch should replace Doctor Riddell on the Medical Board. In addition the Council informed the Minister of Health of the poor medical service in the town. Lastly the Council wrote to Doctor Riddell asking him to confine his activities to the Borough and to resign from the Medical Board. That appeared to be the end of the matter. It is clear that Kaiapoi was unable to attract another doctor to the district. In fact by 1946 there was no doctor at all in the town. In a letter to the editor of *The Press*, R.Francis Joyce complained that it took four days for a letter to arrive in Kaiapoi from Dunedin, four hours to get a telephone call through to Christchurch and "as for seeing a doctor, well you just cannot." (8)

An example of the ordinary life of the town being as important to the citizens as the war effort was provided in January 1940. A substantial number of people, including the Mayor, gathered at the railway station to say goodbye to Harry Johnston who was retiring after thirty-two years of service with the railways department. Vickery presented Johnston with a wallet of money collected from the

(7) Buckley, W. *Kaiapoi Electricity 70 Year Jubilee Booklet*, p.7

(8) *The Press*, 2.11.1946. p.6.

Kaiapoi railway staff, the business people and the farmers. The Mayor said that Johnson's long and valuable service, especially in the goods shed, would be missed by all with whom he had come into contact. In the midst of the farewells to the young men going to war, this farewell to an old man after a lifetime of service to the community is an appropriate indication of the interest that the Kaiapoi community took in its members.

Another link from Kaiapoi's past began a new era in May 1940. The trustees of the estate of the late R.J. Logan handed over a section in Raven street that had been the site of the *Kaiapoi Record* office to the Kaiapoi Borough Council. The *Kaiapoi Record*, although not the first newspaper, in Kaiapoi was first published on 28 July 1909 by Harry Arnold Cooper. The inside pages were printed in Christchurch but the two outside pages, the same number as inside, were set up by Cooper in the *Record's* office which was formerly the Mechanics' Institute building. In the first edition, Cooper informed his readers, that the paper had made its appearance under somewhat adverse circumstances and that the proprietors asked for the readers' indulgence in any short comings. The principle mission of the paper was to report on local news and to that end the citizens were asked to contribute news of their organisations to the newspaper.

In this aim it was reminiscent of its predecessor, *The North Canterbury Independent and Farmers' Chronicle* which under the motto of "Plough Deep" made its first appearance on 6 January 1876. Unfortunately this bi-weekly paper, under the editorship of Horatio Wood, only lasted until 11 May 1879. It was to be another thirty-three years before Kaiapoi had its own newspaper. The *Kaiapoi Record* in conjunction with a printing business grew steadily under the guidance of Cooper and his partner Jones. In 1921 they sold the business to R.J. Logan who began printing the paper twice a week. Logan's fearless reporting of local issues insured the paper of a loyal readership but it also made it a few enemies. It was thought that the burning down of the *Kaiapoi Record* office in 1929 may have been the work of unidentified enemies of the newspaper. Logan then decided to combine the *Kaiapoi Record* with *The Record* which he had been publishing in Rangiora since 1924 and so for the second time Kaiapoi lost its locally published newspaper. The Borough Council was grateful to receive the section but it had no immediate plans for its use.

The overwhelming impression of Kaiapoi during the Second World War years is of a slow erosion of the pride in the community that was evident in earlier times. It maybe, that this second excursion into armed conflict within a generation, sapped the energy of the people and made them unwilling to invest much vitality into their community. The end of the war was acknowledged rather than celebrated and again this was in marked contrast to the end of the First World War. The Tuahiwi community held a victory gymkhana on 20 October 1945 that incorporated side shows, baby competitions, merry-go-rounds, icecream, soft drinks, afternoon tea and bullock roasting as well as the more usual horse events of a gymkhana. The day's celebrations were rounded off by a dance in the evening. A large number of people went to the gymkhana but it did not compare in total with the number that attended the New Year Gala at The Pines. The new year obviously

signalled for many people a new beginning and a time to rejoice. It was reported that the bus service to the beach settlement was fully taxed all day and that in the evening the hall was overflowing with people trying to take part in the dance.

In a way, the lack of effective local protest over the demolition of the post office clock tower, was an acknowledgement of the erosion of local pride. The tower which had survived a number of earthquakes since its erection in 1904 was declared to be at risk in an earthquake and in common with a number of similar towers throughout the country was demolished in January 1945. The clock which had aroused so much local passion during the construction of the tower was put to one side and almost forgotten. The Council did apply to the government for a grant to build a new clock tower but this request was turned down.

At the first meeting of the Council in 1946 the Mayor, Vickery, outlined the important concerns for the Council in the ensuing year. Among the schemes for the year were included drainage in the Ohoka Road area, a new sewage and water supply for the borough, and the opening of the new bridge. There was a reference to the clock and a clock tower. From that point on any reference to a clock seemed to fade from public consciousness although in February C. Morgan Williams was asked to approach the Prime Minister with another request for funds to erect a new clock tower.

One of the areas where the Borough Council was not prepared to wait patiently for an outcome was in housing. From the 1920's there had been a shortage of housing in the borough. Although there was a housing scheme in operation during that period, the subsequent Great Depression and the Second World War meant that by the 1940's there was a desperate shortage of housing in the borough.

In 1947 the borough began a scheme it termed transit housing. It was designed to make available short term housing for those seeking better accommodation in the town. It was decided to build a block of flats which would accommodate fourteen families for up to five years. The block was built on the north end of the old school grounds in Hilton Street. The flats were divided into four blocks to form a square around the perimeter of the section. Two of the blocks contained four units and the other two contained three units. There was a further difference, in that the four unit blocks were designed as three bedroom flats and the three unit blocks were designed as two bedroom flats. All the flats were to have a combined kitchen/living room with a coal range and no living area was adjacent to the neighbouring flat's bedroom area. Each flat had its own hot water system and the lavatory for each flat was situated in a shed built at the back door. The washing lines were placed in the front of each flat and the whole area was described as being well sheltered and attractive because of the mature trees which surrounded it. Nevertheless the whole project was fairly utilitarian.

The materials for building the flats were obtained from the Delta military camp in Blenheim. Borough Council workman journeyed to Blenheim to dismantle the buildings and select the most suitable materials for the Kaiapoi project. These were then railed south for the building of the flats to begin at the end of January 1947. The total cost for the buildings was estimated at three thousand

pounds with the estimated income from a fully tenanted project being nine hundred and fifty five pounds ten shillings a year. The transit housing project was not budgeted to be a cost to existing ratepayers. The long term spin off for the borough was that preference would be given to those tenants who indicated that they intended to become Kaiapoi citizens and especially to those who had work in the town.

By February the Town Clerk was expressing the view that the transit block was a temptation to squatters and that it would be advisable to leave the interior finishing until the tenants were ready to move in. Already there had been twenty-nine applications for the fourteen flats so that the concern over squatters was a real one.

Other groups in the community were worried about the allocation of the transit flats. In March the R.S.A. wrote to the Council suggesting that the combined Housing Committee which had been established in 1946 should be reactivated and that it have a hand in the selection of tenants for the flats. The Council however saw the transit project as solely a Council initiative and as such it should have sole responsibility for it.

By the middle of July most of the builders' debris had been cleared from the site and at the end of that month the first families had shifted into their flats.

In that month it was calculated that for the current year between fifty and sixty houses including state houses and the transit flats would be built in Kaiapoi. In the three years before 1947 only twenty four houses had been built in the town. This expansion of housing stock caused one or two problems. The first difficulty was a lack of good quality building materials and hence the need for the recycling of materials as had happened with the construction of the transit houses. Secondly there was a shortage of skilled tradesmen. This was partially offset in Kaiapoi in 1947 with the arrival in the town of two British immigrants. They were both builders from Pudsey in Yorkshire and were friends of F. Isles who lived in Cridland Street. The immigrants, E. Johnson and F. Moss, intended to build themselves houses in Peraki Street. They made the point, however, that the building materials available in Kaiapoi was not of as high a quality as they had been accustomed to in Britain. This shortage of good quality building materials was to remain for a number of years. The New Zealand habit of making do with whatever was available was tested many times in the immediate post war years.

Post war Britain suffered a severe food shortage. In common with many other groups in the community the Kaiapoi R.S.A. became involved in the Food for Britain cause. The British economy had been so geared towards the winning of the war that the farming sector had been run down to the point where it was unable to supply even basic food stuffs. To a certain extent the British had relied on its old colonies to supply it with food in the years before the war so that the dislocation of both food supply and of farm labour that occurred in Britain and its Commonwealth allies during the war had a drastic effect on the provision of food in the immediate post war years. New Zealand had enforced a coupon system during the war to ration food for imported goods such as sugar and tea as well as home produced foods. The basic premise behind rationing in New Zealand

was to make the best possible use of the food produced so that the surplus could be sent to Britain. The rationing system in Britain was much more extensive and was used to ensure that there was an even distribution of food throughout the community. Of necessity, the system remained in place for several years after the end of the war.

At the beginning of 1947 the New Zealand Red Cross sent an appeal to all its branches and sub-centres to keep supporting the Food for Britain cause as it appeared that the demands for 1947 would be even greater than those of 1946. The appeal went on to comment that what the country was doing in the war against hunger was a grand job of work in the name of friendship, sympathy, and humanity. There were six ways that the people could help the cause. Firstly it was suggested that there be a voluntary further rationing by surrendering meat and butter coupons. Secondly households could collect waste fat by saving their dripping and farmers could save their raw fat. All people were urged to avoid waste of all food stuffs. This would ensure a surplus which could then be sent to Britain. In order to comply with the third suggestion the Red Cross urged better meal planning along with an increase in the knowledge of the use of substitute foods and nutrition. The fifth point encouraged the increased production of food from both home gardens and farms. Finally the Red Cross made an appeal for the sending of food gifts and/or money to be used by the organization to buy bulk food stuffs for Britain.

It was this last point that the Kaiapoi R.S.A. responded to with enthusiasm. Each branch of the R.S.A. in New Zealand was allocated an area in Britain to which they could send food. The Kaiapoi branch received notification in February 1947 that the area it was to support was Burslem, a town noted for its pottery. By June the branch had sent thirty six food parcels to Burslem and had received letters from grateful Burslem residents writing to express their delight in receiving the food. The scheme was still in full swing at the beginning of 1949 when the president of the R.S.A. received a letter from the secretary of the British Legion in Stoke-on-Trent, A. Heeks, which described the arrival of the parcels at Christmas 1948. Heeks wrote that Father Christmas was a reality to needy members of the Legion in Burslem who had received food parcels from the Kaiapoi R.S.A.

The Food for Britain scheme involved even the school children. Under the directive of the Education Board school children were encouraged to make a small weekly donation to its Food for Britain Fund. Children at the Kaiapoi Borough School were no exception. In a report in the *North Canterbury Gazette* in April 1947 delight was expressed over the weekly contributions of the school children.

The desperate plight of those in Britain was confirmed for Kaiapoi citizens when Johnson and Moss expressed shock at seeing butchers' shops full of goods, something they had not seen in Britain for a very long time.

The war against hunger after the Second World War can in some ways be likened to the short sharp battle against the influenza epidemic after the First World War. Both events involved the whole world and affected all kinds of conditions and citizens. Both needed an immediate response and although the

Food for Britain scheme was of a longer duration than the influenza epidemic it gave the people of Kaiapoi a cause which distracted them from the more destructive elements of the aftermath of the war. The scheme gave Kaiapoi a positive focus that in itself was part of the healing of the society, required after a war. The idea that New Zealand was the farm of Britain became more deeply entrenched in the country's psyche during this time.

Although some ideas became entrenched other smaller changes took place in Kaiapoi that altered the town's attitude to itself. The sale of the Kaiapoi Cycle Club rooms in 1919 had a sequel at the beginning of 1946. The Forresters Lodge had been approached by the Kaiapoi R.S.A. to buy the building as a headquarters. Fund raising for this project had been started in March 1945 and in just under a year the R.S.A. had accumulated enough money to be able to make an offer on the building. The Lodge was amenable to the idea but the Cycle Club had to agree also as it still retained an interest in the building. L.B. Evans on behalf of the club agreed to hand over the Club's interest to the R.S.A. as well as gifting to it the remaining cash reserves of the Cycle Club. The legal work was finished by the end of January and at a ceremony in early February Evans formally handed over the interest in the building and the cash reserves to the president of the R.S.A., W.H. Stack. The building that had housed the Cycle Club and then the Forresters Lodge became the R.S.A. building.

There was no longer any reason for the Cycling Club to continue its existence as the focus on speed had changed from pedal power to petrol power. Although no motor racing club was formed in Kaiapoi there were such clubs within easy reach in Christchurch and from time to time car and motor bike races were held on the old lagoon at The Pines.

Notwithstanding the change in technology and in sporting fashion, the loss of the Cycle Club was a signal of a deeper change in Kaiapoi. It appeared to many in and outside the town that Kaiapoi had reached a hiatus in its development. The population numbers had remained static for a number of years. Although a number of small businesses did establish themselves in the town it was dominated by the two big industries which had apparently reached a plateau in their respective developments.

One of the indicators of a town about to start a new phase in its development is surely a shortage of housing. In the case of Kaiapoi the shortage was more typical of a chicken and egg argument. It was not clear whether the shortage of housing caused the static population growth or whether the static population numbers restricted the attraction of the town and hence very few people wanted to take the risk of building there. The winding up of the Cycle Club meant the loss of a sporting and social organisation to the town that was not replaced by a similar club thereby restricting the choice of leisure activities in the town. This in turn created a sense of loss that added to the creeping erosion of pride in the town.

The sense of loss was confirmed for many in Kaiapoi when in 1946 the district lost its identity as a parliamentary seat. The Kaiapoi seat was divided between the rural seat of Hurunui and the urban seat of St Albans. Kaiapoi found itself as part

of the Hurunui electorate. It did not have much in common with the rest of the Hurunui electorate, essentially a rural area, and this factor in itself was enough to erode what little local pride was left.

In an effort to check this decline of identity, a Community Week Committee was formed. It was chaired by Vickery, and consisted of Mesdames M. Richards, P. Wright, and A.G. Wylie; Messrs H.L. Oram, C.T. Williams, P.M. Thom, E. Forrest, T.M. Ayers, E. Pengelly, T. Jowers, C. Brocklebank, T.C. Cross and F.L. Blackburn. The committee decided to hold a community week in March 1946. In a report after the week had been held the Community Week Committee declared, with a hint of sadness that all residents must realize that they were members of the community and as such can help in its advancement. Evidently the public response was not as great as the committee had hoped for.

The week was similar to the one planned by the Business Association in the months leading up to the outbreak of the war in its aim to promote a general awareness of Kaiapoi. However the Community week of March 1946 went a step further in that it actively planned to involve all sections of the population that made up the community. It opened with a sports meeting and dance on 9 March. This was followed by church services emphasizing pride in the community. In the working week that followed, there were special talks arranged for home-making women, musical concerts, Maori events, farmers' talks, a flower and photographic show, child health talks, and a W.E.A. programme. The week finished with a united church service.

It was an ambitious programme and maybe that fact alone made it less attractive to the general public. There was, however, a perceived need by those on the committee, for a week that drew the public's attention to the fact that Kaiapoi was a vital and viable community. That the programme did not attract as many of their fellow citizens as the committee had anticipated was a disappointment and perhaps pointed to a deeper apathy in the community than was apparent to the Community Week Committee.

If pride in the Kaiapoi community was not high in the collective conscience, then pride in the achievements of the "Boys" overseas was high. One of the most admired military leaders of the Second World War was Viscount Field Marshal Montgomery. After defeating Rommel's army in North Africa the Eighth Army under Montgomery successfully invaded Sicily and then went on the Italian mainland making its way north until Montgomery was called to lead an Allied invasion of France. Despite his personal differences with General Eisenhower, who had general command of the invading forces, Montgomery led his troops through France and Belgium to Northern Germany where he received the surrender of the German northern armies in May 1945.

In 1947 Montgomery made a tour of Australia and New Zealand. It was a chance for the people to thank him for his brilliance during the various campaigns he was involved in during the war. Monty passed through Kaiapoi in a motorcade on 23 July. It was planned that the school children and R.S.A. members assemble at the bridge where it was thought that the motorcade would slow down. On the day however, many more people turned up than was anticipated. Children from

Okuku, Loburn, Rangiora, Tuahiwi, Ohoka and other surrounding schools added to the Kaiapoi Borough School's number. The children lined the west side of the bridge. The R.S.A. members including some veterans of the Eighth Army assembled near the Raven Street end of the bridge. Besides, these people it was reported that nearly all the citizens of Kaiapoi were in the vicinity of the bridge. Flags decorated the buildings and many of the children had flags in their hands. It was a festive occasion and the one opportunity, however fleeting, that the Kaiapoi community had of expressing their gratitude to a great military leader. Some more thoughtful, or more fortunate people, described as mostly housewives by the *North Canterbury Gazette*, were able to take photographs of Monty near the borough boundary where the motorcade stopped to allow him to change from his sedan car to an open coupe in which he stood while being driven at walking pace through the borough to Cookson Street where he changed back to the sedan. The amazing turnout of people demonstrated the depth of feeling that ordinary citizens had for the man that they regarded as one of the heroes of the recent conflict. The loyalty that Monty was able to engender in the men under his command extended to those people who regarded his actions, especially in North Africa, as a turning point in the war. Turning out to glimpse and to cheer the great man was a necessity that all in the Kaiapoi community felt they had to fulfil.

It was not as easy, however, as the Community Week Committee found, to arouse enthusiasm for events that had played a prominent part in the pre-war era. Most notable among these events was the McIntosh Shield competition had been suspended during the war and so at the war's end it was decided by the Kaiapoi Community Council to try and revive interest in the Shield. So few people attended the meeting held on 30 April 1947 that there was no quorum. It was decided to hold another meeting at a later date. At this later meeting at the end of August there were no representatives from Rangiora sports clubs present and so once again nothing could be done to revive the competition. It seemed to those who did attend the meeting that the Shield was no longer a symbol of the McIntosh brothers' spirit and was therefore a poor memorial to them. A campaign taken up by the *North Canterbury Gazette* to revive the competition however, paid off and in September a new controlling body for the Shield was formed setting the scene for a new round of contests between the two towns.

The reinstatement of the McIntosh Shield competition may have indicated to many in the community that things were getting back to normal but in fact the country was struggling to adapt to a new environment. During the war many of the country's essential works had been suspended and in the first years after the war there were a number of shortages such as good quality building materials. The shortage that affected most households, however, was a shortage of electricity. This reached a crisis point in the winter of 1947. Several factors combined to create the widespread power shortage. During the war years it had been impossible to continue the programme for the construction of new hydro-electric stations because of a shortage of labour and machinery. At the end of the war although labour and machinery was once again available, it was not physically possible to build the number of stations required to keep up with the demand for electricity.

The post war government had pursued a policy of building all-electric state houses as well as encouraging the establishment of many small industries which relied on electric power. This activity led to a further depletion of the electricity resource. In addition to the man-made difficulties, nature threw in one as well. The rainfall for 1946-47 was down on previous years so that the hydro storage lakes were at a low level. All of these factors came together in June 1947 forcing the power boards to ration the supply of electricity. In Kaiapoi the Electric Power Board decided to impose power cuts in domestic use for an hour each morning and each afternoon. It was hoped that these cuts would achieve the saving of forty-one percent that was needed. This target appeared to have been met in the first two weeks of June with the Power Board congratulating the citizens on their co-operation. However the crisis had deepened by the second half of the month and the power cuts were extended by cutting street lighting. This further measure achieved the desired target and by the end of June the Town Clerk was able to announce that he hoped, with a voluntary saving of power, Kaiapoi could reach the general target of a twenty per cent saving without having to have any more compulsory cuts. With cuts such as these it was hard for the ordinary citizen to feel much pride in his community.

The elections of 1947 saw the end of an era as far as the elected representatives of the borough were concerned. Two men announced their decisions to retire from the council at the time of the election. The first of these was Councillor A.E. Brown who had served the Council for nineteen and a half years. The second was Mayor Vickery. In his eighty first year, William Henry Alfred Vickery had come to New Zealand in the early 1920's. He had been ordained into the ministry of the Baptist Church in England and on his arrival in Kaiapoi, Vickery had followed the Reverend H.Hiddlestone as minister in charge of the Kaiapoi Baptist Church. In his younger years in Somerset he had been the chairman of a rural council and later he served on a school board in Shipley, Bradford. When he came to New Zealand he had decided he had done enough in local government in England and that he would not involve himself in the same activities in New Zealand. Vickery was able to carry out his resolution until 1927 when J.W. Barnard, who had been mayor of Kaiapoi in 1915, asked him to stand in the council elections of that year. He was elected and the experience must have been to his liking, as Vickery stood for and was elected to the mayoralty in 1930. His first term was marked by a concern for the unemployed that was translated into the organisation of relief for those unfortunate enough to be unemployed. He remained mayor until 1941 when E.Gray was elected to the position. Gray served one term. Vickery was re-elected in 1945 and remained mayor until his retirement in 1947. In addition to his work on the Borough Council Vickery took a keen interest in both the Kaiapoi Brass Band and the St John's Ambulance Brigade. He served as president of both organisations and was still president of the Brass Band at the time of his death in December 1955. Vickery's resolution to address the concerns he was associated with is best illustrated by his determination to raise two thousand pounds for the purchase of instruments for the Brass Band in 1953. He achieved his target in eighteen months by writing to five hundred potential benefactors and asking for their support. Vickery was one of a number of Kaiapoi clergymen over the years who extended

their pastoral care to taking an active part in civic duties in the town. In so doing, Vickery continued the tradition of many practising church people in Kaiapoi of serving their fellow citizens by offering themselves for election to the Borough Council.

While not exactly promoting pride in Kaiapoi, the activities of the North Canterbury Catchment Board from the mid 1940's certainly united a majority of the town's citizens behind their local administration. The Board, which had been set up by Act of Parliament in 1944, first annoyed the citizens of Kaiapoi by proposing, two years later, an amalgamation with the Waimakariri Harbour Board. At a meeting held in the Council Chambers on 4 March between representatives of the Harbour Board and the Catchment Board the whole matter was thoroughly discussed. The main reason for such a step advanced by the Catchment Board was that it should have complete control over all the waterways in North Canterbury in order to carry out its obligations under the Act. The Harbour Board on the other hand under the chairmanship of H.Owen Hills thought that the assets of the Harbour Board properly belonged to the people of Kaiapoi and that it was the duty of the Harbour Board to keep the river open as a harbour for posterity. The chairman of the Catchment Board, William Machin, avoided answering the question whether the Catchment Board would continue to keep the river open as a port by stating that he thought road transport was the best way to move goods around. This answer sealed the fate of the proposed amalgamation in favour of the Harbour Board's view. This incident became a preliminary skirmish in a battle between the Catchment Board and the Kaiapoi Borough Council that was to last the best part of four years.

The Harbour Board itself, did not have long to survive as an independent body. After the March meeting the Board formed the opinion that it could no longer function as a stand-alone body. At its 8 April meeting and after considerable discussion, Harbour Board members reluctantly concluded that the activities of the Board should be absorbed by the Borough Council. The Harbour Board resolved to instruct its solicitor to draw up a Bill along the lines of the Waitara Harbour Dissolution Bill of 1940. The Board had a number of specific clauses that it wanted to have in the Bill. The first was that Trousslet Park and Memorial Plot should be handed over to the Borough Council for all time to be kept as an open reserve. Secondly that all the other reserves, lands, buildings and assets should be handed over to the Council. The Board further specified that the money earned from those assets should be accumulated to pay for harbour expenses and the re-building of the Hansen Building and/or any other Harbour Board building. The last clause that the Board wanted in the Bill was to ensure that not more than two hundred and fifty pounds a year was spent on maintenance and expenses connected with Harbour Board property. After an attempt by one of the Board members to retain the Board as a separate entity the chairman, H.Owen Hills, travelled to Wellington to attend the select committee hearing on the Bill. At the 30 September 1946 meeting of the Board, Hills was able to report the successful passing of the Bill. All that now remained was to put the Board's affairs in order for the handing over of its assets to the Borough Council.

The last meeting of the Waimakariri Harbour board took place on 24 March 1947. The ceremony to formally hand over to the Council took place a couple of days later with a number of past members of the Board, as well as all of the present members, at the meeting. Most of the speeches were concerned with the general sadness at the passing of an era. It was a reality that small ports such as Kaiapoi were no longer viable and that it was inevitable that the Board's assets would be taken over by the Borough Council. The only cheery note seemed to be the general relief that the Board's assets were not going to be absorbed by the North Canterbury Catchment Board. The chairman of the Catchment Board, Machin, caused some mirth during his speech when he said that he felt like the rejected suitor at a wedding.

In a way, the early history of the relationship of the North Canterbury Catchment Board to Kaiapoi paralleled the relationship of the Waimakariri River Trust and Kaiapoi. The overriding feeling in Kaiapoi at the establishment of the Trust was, that at last there was a body responsible for the control of the Waimakariri River and the town at last, would be free from the menace of flooding. However, the 1923 flood shook the faith of Kaiapoi people in the Trust and the subsequent internal squabbles on the best way to prevent flooding did not enhance the reputation of the Waimakariri River Trust.

The Catchment Board faced the same problem in its first year of operation. In August 1945, a flood measured at two feet lower than the 1923 flood, forced two hundred people from their homes in the Peraki, Otaki, Akaroa and Sneyd Streets area in north west Kaiapoi. During the flood the overflowing of the Cam river was aggravated to a certain extent by the high tide. The flood problem was one that Kaiapoi people wanted the Catchment Board to tackle but it had to be in a way that was acceptable in terms of protection and economy. The community could not afford to pay extravagant amounts of money in return for "a best guess" scheme of flood protection.

In its second annual report the North Canterbury Catchment Board outlined an ambitious drainage and flood control programme for the ninety five thousand acres between the Ashley and Waimakariri Rivers from the Waimakariri Gorge to the sea. The area was governed by three county councils and two borough councils and that fact alone made the scheme a difficult one to bring to fruition given the traditional suspicion between the counties and the boroughs. The Catchment Board proposed that the local bodies should provide thirty two thousand pounds rated on six classifications as set out in the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941. The classifications ranged downwards from a penny in the pound for class "A" to 1/6th of a penny in the pound for class "F". In addition to the revenue raised by the local bodies the Catchment Board intended to approach the government for a three pounds to one pound subsidy. It was reported that the Catchment Board had held preliminary meetings with the local bodies concerned and that there had been general agreement but that each local body was discussing the scheme.

It does not appear that the Kaiapoi Borough Council discussed the scheme in any depth. It reported that the North Canterbury Catchment Board had a plan to

divert the Eyre River into the Waimakariri and the Cust River into either the Waimakariri or the Ashley Rivers. It was decided at the May meeting of the Council to invite the Board's engineer, H.W.Harris, to attend the next meeting to discuss the Eyre-Cust drainage scheme.

The Catchment Board had hoped that there would be prompt agreement with the scheme by the local authorities. By July, when it was clear that there was not going to be a fast resolution of the matter, Machin began to blame the local authorities for holding up the scheme. He thought that the local authorities were afraid of a ratepayer backlash if they agreed to a scheme that would impose extra rates on their citizens. The tone of his speech indicates that Machin was a man impatient to get on with the job and that he had little of the political skills needed to persuade ratepayers that an increase in their rates would mean a direct benefit to them. Machin's rather blunt character was illustrated in a reply to a letter written by Princess Hira Pohio in which she complained about the piecemeal approach to river protection on the Cam River. Machin stated that although the native race have many admirable qualities, paying rates was not one of them. The clear inference was that until the rates were paid, no further work would be done. This reply was indicative of the high handed manner the Catchment Board took with local bodies. According to Machin, the Board would have two paths it could follow if the local bodies did not agree to the scheme. Firstly it could divert its attention and money to other matters. This was a clear threat to the local bodies. If the Board followed that course and the authorities eventually agreed there would be no funds left for the project. Secondly, under its Act, the Board could appeal directly to the ratepayers. The land could be classified and a rate levied without consultation with the local bodies. This again was a threat to the local authorities as they could not object to such a rating proposal. The decision would be that of each individual ratepayer.

By October the Kaiapoi Borough Council had decided, although it was in favour of the scheme, it was not prepared to adopt the financial burden. It was clear to the Council that as the borough had a greater capital value in comparison to the adjoining counties, Kaiapoi would have a greater financial commitment. The Council was also sure that the scheme would be of more direct benefit to the farmers of the counties than to the inhabitants of the borough.

It seems that the Catchment Board decided to adopt the direct approach as at the January meeting of the Borough Council there was considerable discussion over the classifications made by the Catchment Board for rating purposes. It was decided that a public meeting should be called to inform all ratepayers of their classifications and of their rights of appeal. At the meeting on 31 January, the first ratepayers meeting to be held for seventeen years, Vickery explained that the flood prevention plan Harris had drawn up for the Waimakariri Trust after the 1945 flood had been absorbed into the Eyre-Cust diversion scheme just as the River Trust had been absorbed into the Catchment Board. The whole project was now known as the Oxford-to-the-Sea scheme. All Catchment Boards were required to submit schemes to the Soil Conservation Council designed to prevent soil erosion and flooding. In Vickery's opinion, the Oxford-to-the-Sea scheme, was the North

Canterbury Catchment Board's attempt to comply with that requirement. The scheme proposed the draining of one hundred thousand acres. Of that area Kaiapoi covered only nine hundred and seventy seven acres or about one hundredth of the total area. Yet the Kaiapoi ratepayers were being asked to pay approximately an eighth of the cost. Each landowner was urged to appeal against his classification. The Town Clerk, N.E.Clemens, advised, that in his opinion, flood protection of Kaiapoi was incidental to the scheme and so the town should not be included in the high rating classifications. In endorsing Clemens' remarks on the matter, Councillor Hills observed that if the old Eyre diversion scheme had been well maintained then Kaiapoi would have all the flood protection that it needed. W.Wallace added that in the 1945 flood it was back flooding from the sea that caused the major problems in the township and no drainage scheme to the north would alleviate that problem. Councillor Cattermole reaffirmed that the primary aim of the scheme was soil conservation and that flood protection was of secondary importance whereas for Kaiapoi, the reverse was true. The meeting described Machin as a very clever man who was used to getting his own way. The meeting decided that every effort would be made to upset

"the man on Shag Rock". (9)

It was considered vital to impress upon people at the meeting that there was very little time for objections to be made to the rating classifications. This message must have been effective as by 4 February 1947 one hundred and eighty objections had been filed from residents in Kaiapoi.

It is useful to compare the response in Rangiora Borough to the Catchment Board's rating classification. A similar view to that expressed in Kaiapoi also predominated in Rangiora. The scheme would benefit those in the counties while the borough ratepayers would be asked to pay relatively more of the cost. There was even less credibility given to the theory that the scheme would ensure flood protection for Rangiora. The Rangiora Council called its public meeting earlier than the one called in Kaiapoi and as a result there were five hundred and five objections lodged by Rangiora Borough ratepayers against the rating classification.

In the counties there was very little response to the Catchment Board's classifications. There were only three objections lodged from the county areas. Machin regarded this as a tribute to the scheme. He felt that the objections from both Kaiapoi and Rangiora residents had been orchestrated by the respective councils and to a certain extent he was right in this assumption. Machin regarded the borough councils' views as shortsighted and foolish as, in his view, both areas were prone to flooding.

The large number of objections meant that there was some delay in deciding how best to deal with them. The Catchment Board had resolved by April 1947 to be more conciliatory towards the Kaiapoi Borough Council. At a special meeting held on 14 April Machin outlined a plan that he thought would be preferable to going to court. He said that the Board was willing to reassess the classifications

(9) *The North Canterbury Gazette*, 31.1.1947.

with a view to lowering them. On the following day, at its ordinary meeting, the Council decided to take no further action over the classifications until there was Cabinet approval of the scheme and the rate of subsidy was known. The Council decided to write to the Minister of Public Works and enquire of him the subsidy rate on the scheme. It was also decided to telephone Machin with the Council's decision.

Machin's reply to the Council's decision was couched in his usual forthright terms. He wrote that the Catchment Board had thought that the offer was so much of an advantage to Kaiapoi ratepayers that the Council would have been pleased to promote agreement between the objectors and the Catchment Board. Machin added that the Council's attitude was such that it was no longer useful to meet.⁽¹⁰⁾ It was obvious that the ensuing court action would delay the implementation of the scheme by about a year. This delay caused suspicion and anger between the county councils and the borough councils, with the counties wanting the scheme to commence immediately.

By the time of the release of the Catchment Board's fourth annual report in early December 1948 it seemed as if the project was close to being started. In an editorial in *The Press* the Board was lauded for its vision and energy in coping not only with the inherited plans of its constituent bodies, such as the Waimakariri River Trust, but also initiating plans of its own.⁽¹¹⁾

In the intervening time, the suspicions of the farmers in the Rangiora, Oxford and Eyre Counties had been aroused. A petition initiated by Hugh Henry Petrie and George Winter seeking the abandonment of the Oxford-to-the-Sea scheme had attracted three hundred and twenty five ratepayer signatures. The petitioners were concerned that there had not been enough consultation between themselves and the Catchment Board. They were keen to have the improvement in production from the land that the scheme promised but felt that the diversion of the Eyre River into the Waimakariri would dry up the underground streams that, so it appeared to them, depended on the natural flow of the Eyre. If these aquifers dried up then there would be no water available for irrigation and hence the promised production increases would not materialise. The borough councils' ratepayers were now receiving support, albeit for different reasons, from the group that they had considered the beneficiaries of the scheme. Although the Cabinet gave its approval for a three pounds to one pound subsidy for the scheme on 17 December 1948 opposition to the scheme had begun to consolidate. In March 1949 the North Canterbury Catchment Board met with groups of farmers in an attempt to allay their fears over the supply of ground water but neither Machin nor Harris could dispel the very real concerns that the farmers had about the scheme. What developed over the next few months was a struggle between the ratepayers of both the counties and the boroughs against the plans of the Catchment Board. Machin from time to time issued statements that the scheme would be started in the near future and this would result in another round of meetings between the Board and

(10) *The North Canterbury Gazette*, 18.4.1947.

(11) *The Press*, 4.12.1948, p.6

the ratepayer groups. It was an exasperating time for both groups and especially so for the Catchment Board. At a public meeting of about one hundred and fifty people on 23 November 1949 the Kaiapoi ratepayers passed a motion which thanked the Catchment Board for its explanation of the scheme but the ratepayers were of the view that the costs of the scheme would far outweigh the benefits. C.S.Ayers, the only Catchment Board member not to support the Oxford-to-the-Sea scheme, suggested that each local authority draw up their own plan for drainage within their own localities and if the plans were good enough he felt that they would attract the same subsidy that the Catchment Board's plan had been given. This suggestion naturally appealed to the parochial sentiments of the local authorities. The public meeting in Kaiapoi was followed by a special Council meeting which expressed its opposition to the plan in a unanimously passed motion. The Mayor, C.Morgan Williams, said that he could not see how the government would want to wish a scheme of such magnitude on the ratepayers and the nation in the face of such opposition.⁽¹²⁾

In the end the substantial opposition had the desired effect. At its 3 December 1949 meeting the North Canterbury Catchment Board decided to suspend the scheme. On a motion, proposed by Machin, the Board, while still of the opinion that the scheme was both economical and practical, was not prepared to fight on in the face of what it considered to be local propaganda. This combined with three years of very dry weather had frightened the people of the district into rejecting, in Machin's words, "an efficient and worthy scheme." In the following year the Catchment Board substituted a Waimakariri flood control plan for the ambitious Oxford-to-the-Sea drainage and flood control scheme. This was accepted without a murmur of dissent by the local authorities of the region.

From the Kaiapoi view point the Catchment Board had tried to implement an ambitious scheme that in most respects had no discernable benefits for the town. The diversion of both the Cust and Eyre Rivers did not necessarily prevent flooding in Kaiapoi. The substituted flood control scheme not only planned to control the flooding of the Waimakariri but was a great deal less expensive than the Oxford-to-the-Sea scheme.

The Catchment Board's engineer, H.W.Harris, devised a scheme that involved the strengthening of the stopbanks and groynes and the construction of a number of reservoirs in the Eyre County. These reservoirs were designed to take the overflow from a flood and hold it until it naturally drained away. There was a two fold reasoning behind this suggestion. Firstly the removal and holding of water from the Waimakariri at that position during a flood would help protect the more heavily populated down river areas including Christchurch and Kaiapoi. Secondly the silt residues left after the flood water had drained away would improve the fertility of the Eyreton region.

In the opinion of Harris for the scheme to be fully effective the river mouth had to be held at the point it had reached during the flood of May 1950. He proposed

(12) *The Press*, 30.11.1949, p.3.

to achieve this by dumping approximately two hundred and fifty concrete blocks at the mouth. In addition Harris recognised that the ballast dumped by the Railways Department around the piers of the railway bridge to protect it would have to be removed in order to improve the flow of the river at that point. It was acknowledged by the Catchment Board that the Railways Department was unlikely to agree to this until the new railway bridge had been built.

There was no comment from the Kaiapoi Borough Council on this scheme and presumably it felt that the scheme would protect the town in an adequate manner. It is understandable after the number of floods experienced in the town that there would always be a degree of scepticism from Kaiapoi authorities over any flood control scheme. It was for Kaiapoi, more a matter of waiting and seeing how effective this latest scheme to control the Waimakariri River would be.

The last years of the 1940's as well as being absorbed by the machinations of the North Canterbury Catchment Board also saw a number of new directions for Kaiapoi. In March 1947 a Drama Club was founded. There were twenty five members under the chairmanship of Mr Thorn who had originally hoped to tutor the group in stagecraft. Unfortunately illness prevented Thorn from carrying out this aim and the tutoring duties were taken up by Mr Worthington, a lecturer from Canterbury College. The club planned to give four concerts in its first year. Certainly its first concert given in the Anglican Hall in August was received with enthusiasm. It was reported that the hall was packed out.

Towards the end of 1947 a new direction was taken in the development of the Dromore Reserves. It had been apparent for some time that the production from the land at Dromore could be dramatically increased with the use of irrigation. However the Council would probably not have initiated an irrigation programme if it had not been prompted to do so by the Department of Lands and Survey. The Department asked, in a letter received by the Council in December what its attitude would be to the acquisition of land at Dromore by the Department for irrigation purposes. At the 22 December meeting of the Works and Reserves Committee the Mayor explained that there was no clause in the expired leases of the Dromore lessees, Lemon and Withell, which allowed the Council to give leases to them without conforming to the Public Leases Act 1908. The Mayor, C.M. Williams, disclosed that after consultation with the Akaroa Borough Council which found itself in a similar situation, it was decided to offer the Dromore tenants a two year lease from the 1 April 1948 at the present rental plus a rental of five percent on the capital expenditure on irrigation. The Works and Reserves Committee then went on to recommend that after a meeting with the tenants thirty acres of each farm be prepared for irrigation. The Committee further recommended that the Council pay the full cost of the work provided the tenants agreed to the increase in rent. There was also a recommendation that if the tenants agreed to the new lease, their expenditure on fencing the irrigated land would be adjusted according to the circumstances. At a meeting in January the tenants agreed to the terms of the new leases, in order to avoid having the land acquired by the Department of Lands and Survey.

This solution, however, did not find favour with the government and in April a deputation of representatives of the Akaroa, Lyttelton, and Kaiapoi Borough Councils, all of which had reserves on which irrigation works could be carried out, met with the Minister of Lands, the Honourable C.R. Skinner, to discuss the four options under which the works might be proceeded with. The options ranged from outright acquisition of the reserves by the government to the cost of development of the land by the government being charged to the local authorities.

The option most favoured by the delegates was a third which recommended that the local bodies lease the reserves to the government at a rent based on the unimproved value of the land. The improvements at present on the reserves would be sold immediately to the government which would then proceed with the irrigation work. At the expiry of the lease the local bodies would once again be able to lease the land in the normal manner to the tenants. In this way the local authorities retained control of their reserve land and were not liable for the cost of the development work. The tenants also had their interests protected and were not directly liable for part of, or the whole cost of, the irrigation works. After further negotiations this option was adopted and the land at Dromore was developed accordingly with consequent benefits to both the Council and the tenants.

Whether or not the government's experience with the Dromore estate in the late 1940's gave it the impetus to attempt to acquire the land in the early 1950's is not clear. Whatever the motivation, in July 1952 the Council received a letter from the Minister of Lands declaring the intention of the government to acquire the Endowment Reserves at Dromore for the rehabilitation of soldiers. The Council was required to lodge any objection to the acquisition by 16 July. In the short time available to the Council it was able to draw up a list of nine reasons why the land should remain with the Council.

The first objection was on the technical grounds that the notice served on the Council did not comply with the provisions of the Servicemen's Settlement Act 1950. The Council had been given about a week in which to respond to the notice whereas the Act had specified that objectors were to be given thirty days in which to lodge their objections.

The second objection put forward by the Council went to the heart of the association of Kaiapoi with the Dromore estate. The land had been vested in the Council by the Canterbury Provincial Government as a means of compensating the council for the loss of tolls over the bridge. The land had an historical and sentimental association for the borough that it was not willing to give up.

The third objection indicated that the land was being adequately farmed at the present time by the tenants and was providing a livelihood for fourteen people as well as supporting the families of the tenants. The fourth objection was associated with the third one in that it pointed out that the revenue from the two thousand acres at Dromore was of direct benefit to the two thousand five hundred inhabitants of Kaiapoi. This in turn led to the fifth objection, which was that the government had not paid sufficient attention to the rights of the citizens of Kaiapoi and the rights of the tenants and their employees. Acquisition of the land would mean that

a large number of people who benefited from the farms would be given scant consideration for the benefit of perhaps five or six people.

Objections six and seven pointed out that similar blocks of land were available in the Dromore district that would suit the purposes of the Government better and would not disadvantage so many people. The last two objections stated that it would be impossible for the Council to obtain a similar capital investment that would offer the same stability of value and prospect of future capital appreciation as the land at Dromore. The Council would find it impossible to obtain an asset which would produce equivalent revenue from the compensation money that would be payable.

The objections had the desired effect of encouraging the government to withdraw its notice of intention to acquire the land. In retrospect the whole episode had an air of unreality about it. There was no clear reason why the government decided that the Dromore estate was suitable for its needs, apart from the fact that it had developed, with the agreement of the Council and the tenants, the irrigation of part of the block. The government was unprepared for the strong attachment that Kaiapoi had for the estate and was not prepared to fight that attachment in order to acquire the land. However it did not give up the idea completely.

In August the Council decided to renew the leases of the tenants at a higher rental for a longer term. At the same time the Commissioner of Crown Lands requested that the council sell a portion of the land at Dromore. The Council agreed instead to lease four hundred acres to the Crown. This meant that the tenants had to agree to the Council taking approximately two hundred acres from each tenant by April 1954 in order to comply with the agreement reached with the Commissioner of Crown Lands. The twelve year leases with a right of renewal for a further twelve years were acceptable to the lessees, Lemon and Withell, as they agreed to the request and the new leases were signed in September 1952.

A project to benefit the citizens and commemorate the sacrifices of those who served in the Second World War was discussed extensively in the years immediately following the end of the war. It was assumed by many in the town that a suitable memorial would be erected within in a couple of years after the end of the war. However it was not until May 1946 that the Works Committee recommended to the Council that a public meeting be held to discuss what form a memorial should take. It is clear from the record that the public meeting was not held before the release, in July, to *The Press* newspaper of a composite photograph illustrating the design, site and layout of a suggested war memorial for Kaiapoi. The design incorporated a clock tower and a women's rest room and it bears a strong resemblance to the eventual memorial building. (13)

The next concrete step to be taken to achieve a war memorial was the formation, at the end of September 1946, of a special committee to discuss the proposed memorial for the town. The five member committee was presided over by the Mayor and had Messrs McIntosh and Bryden as the Council representatives and Messrs Stark and Hirst as the R.S.A. representatives. The Mayor, in his opening

(13) *The Press*, 19.7.1946, p.8

remarks, stated that the council had made no definite plans for a memorial but that he hoped that the committee would come up with proposals that could be placed before a public meeting. He welcomed the ideas of the R.S.A. delegates. Stark, in reply, made reference to a meeting held some years before to discuss the same project and suggested that copies of the minutes of that meeting be found. He then went on to outline the suggestions that the R.S.A. executive had come up with for a memorial. At the top of their list was a Town Hall followed by the establishment of a sports ground and thirdly the endowment of the hospital. The last suggestion was that the relatives of those killed could be invited to plant memorial oaks. It was then suggested that the public meeting be held on 4 November in the R.S.A. rooms. This meeting was actually held in the following week and it was decided to widen the composition of the committee to include three representatives each of the Community Centre and the Plunket Society as well as Councillor Hills and Mr W.Green. Green had earlier in the meeting raised the possibility of extending the Orange Hall to include a bigger dance floor and extra rooms. It was decided to hold a further meeting of the new committee to consider this suggestion and others in order to report back to a further public meeting. It was, however, decided to open public subscription lists with the Council being authorised to receive appropriate donations.

The next meeting of the War Memorial Committee was held on 18 November and after much discussion it was decided that competitive designs be sought from interested persons for three alternative suggestions. The first of these was the alteration of the Orange Hall, the second was the alteration of the Borough Hall and the third was for the erection of a new hall. The third suggestion was the one most favoured by the committee. It was at this stage of the meeting that the subject of the town clock was raised. At the 11 November meeting it had been stated that the R.S.A. had been in favour of erecting a clock tower. The R.S.A. representatives at the 18 November meeting had rejected this suggestion but the Town Clerk reported that many of the public were keen to have the town clock restored in a memorial project. It was then decided to gauge public opinion on the matter by sending each household a questionnaire.

The next public meeting to discuss the war memorial project was held on 9 December 1946. About fifty people attended. Suggestions that a memorial garden be developed, a sports ground be established and the restoration of the town clock in a tower and memorial were rejected by the meeting. It was then decided that an in depth investigation of the costs of the "three halls" suggestions made at the 18 November meeting be carried out. A representative of the Internal Affairs Department, which was overseeing the distribution of subsidies to community memorial projects, explained that the Department would support either the erection of a new hall or the alteration of the existing halls. He favoured the plan to alter the Orange Hall.

Nothing appeared to happen with the project until August 1947 when the R.S.A. wrote a letter of complaint to the Council about the amount of time that had elapsed without any decision being taken on the most suitable war memorial project. The Association also complained about the prolonged

absence of the town clock. In reply the Council said that the Internal Affairs subsidy was likely to be pound for pound and not the three for one subsidy that most people had thought it would be. Implicit in this answer was the Council's concern that not enough money had been raised by the community and that the responsibility for the project might fall on the Council and ultimately on the ratepayers.

The R.S.A. again called on the Council to initiate the memorial project in March 1948. According to the Association no more time should be lost in erecting a memorial. The R.S.A. did not have an opinion on the form a suitable memorial might take but it was not sympathetic towards the publicly-supported idea of memorial clock tower. It saw this as a separate issue for the town and not one that would do instead of a carefully thought out memorial which would be of more intrinsic value to successive generations. The Council decided to ask once again for suggestions from community organisations and to place on record that it favoured the memorial clock tower option. During May and June a series of meetings were held with community organisations and a number of suggestions were made. It was finally suggested, at a public meeting held on 26 July, that a plunket room and a clock tower be built as a memorial. A new War Memorial Committee was set up consisting of two representatives from the Community Centre, one representative each from the Plunket Society and the R.S.A. with two council representatives and the Mayor as chairman. At this point a new suggestion was made that a memorial avenue be formed across Darnley Square. This idea probably had its origins in the suggestion made in 1946 for the planting of memorial oaks. The R.S.A. pursued this idea with some vigour. At an Emergency Committee meeting in August the R.S.A. representatives pressed the Council to begin the planting of the trees otherwise it was feared that the project would be delayed for another twelve months. After some discussion it was agreed that flowering cherries, prunus or similar trees be planted along the stopbank inside Trousselot Park and that as soon as possible the War Memorial Committee make available money from public subscriptions for a memorial tablet.

Although the idea of the memorial trees seemed to be a hasty decision there did appear to be a more business-like approach emerging for the provision of a more permanent memorial. In November it was decided to appoint the Town Clerk and the Mayor as trustees for a War Memorial Fund. From that date money from such ventures as the Community Week were contributed to the fund. There was no decision on exactly what form the memorial would take although it was generally understood that a public building would be constructed.

September 1950 was a crucial date in the achievement of a permanent war memorial for Kaiapoi. In that month the Council accepted the responsibility for erecting a building which would house a women's rest-room, Plunket Rooms and a clock tower as a war memorial for the Kaiapoi postal district. The Council stipulated that the project was to cost no more than eight thousand pounds and that it would contribute one thousand pounds from the Borough's capital funds. There was also some additional money available that had been raised for the re-establishment of the clock tower. In May 1951 the War Memorial Committee recommended

that the area known as the old hotel site next to the Rialto Theatre in Charles Street be set aside for the war memorial building. This recommendation was accepted by the Council thus bringing the project a step closer to realisation. By August of that year the architect of the Rialto Theatre, Colin Lamb, had produced a design for the War Memorial which was approved by the Council.

The concept had been expanded since the acceptance of the clock tower, rest-rooms and Plunket rooms plan of September 1950. Lamb's design now included a kindergarten wing. The incorporation of the kindergarten in the War Memorial building was the solution to a long standing problem for the Kindergarten Committee.

The Community Centre had discussed the possibility of establishing a kindergarten at a meeting in April 1949. The guest speaker at that meeting was the principal of the Christchurch Free Kindergarten Association, Miss R. Wilkie. She had stressed the benefits that would accrue in the educational development of pre-school children if they had some form of structured play. It was decided to call a public meeting to ascertain the support a kindergarten would receive in Kaiapoi. Nothing was done until September 1949.

In September, at a public meeting, a committee of eleven people headed by Mrs I. Warrington was formed. Mrs Warrington had long held the view that a kindergarten affiliated with the Christchurch Free Kindergarten Association should be established in Kaiapoi. The most immediate problem for the committee was to find suitable premises. It first approached the Education Board with the idea of using the Technical Manual School buildings. The Education Board considered the proposal but came to the conclusion that the school would not be a suitable venue for a kindergarten. The committee then looked at a number of other halls in Kaiapoi, none of which came up to Department of Education standards for a kindergarten. The only solution left for the Committee was to build its own premises. It therefore began the hard work of raising funds for a building. The problem of a site for the kindergarten was solved during the first few months of H. Owen Hills' first mayoralty. Hills was also the chairman of the War Memorial Committee. At a meeting of that committee the suggestion to include a kindergarten in the complex was made. Council approval to grant long term leases of rooms in the memorial building to both the Kindergarten Committee and the Plunket Society was given in October 1951. The financing of the war memorial building then became a joint venture between the Internal Affairs Department and the Education Department. The two Departments contributed just over seven thousand pounds with the community raising the balance of six thousand pounds. Tenders for the construction of the building were called for in June 1952, the successful tenderer being G.W. Pearson and Sons. The foundation stone was not laid until October 1953 at which time construction was well under way.

Lamb's design for the building contrasts with his earlier design for the Rialto Theatre and yet they are complimentary with each other. The simplicity of the Art Deco style of the theatre is not compromised by the solid functional design of the war memorial building. The clock tower at the northern end of the war memorial

building is balanced by the height of the theatre at the southern end of the site. Although the kindergarten wing is part of the war memorial building, visually it forms a bridge between the tower and the theatre. The brick with white pointing, tile roof and functional style of the memorial building is in stark contrast to the rather whimsical style of the theatre. Nevertheless both buildings sit together well. The link between the two buildings in terms of style is obscure but it does exist. The clock tower, its solid square form notwithstanding, is a piece of whimsy that has found itself firmly attached to the kindergarten wing. It captures just enough caprice to link it with the style of the Rialto Theatre.

The war memorial building was opened on 26 September 1954. The local Member of Parliament for the Hurunui electorate, W.H. Gillespie, performed the ceremony. In his speech Gillespie reminded his audience that the building resulted from a government sponsored idea to erect living memorials



*The opening of the Kaiapoi War Memorial, September 1954. The new Mayor, N.E. Kirk's first official ceremony. W.H. Gillespie M.P. seated - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum
inset: The Kaiapoi War Memorial Building - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum*

to those who had sacrificed their lives in the service of their country. In the case of the Kaiapoi building, this was not strictly true, as the community had decided to incorporate the clock tower as a feature in the building. Although it is functional, the existence of the clock tower owes more to the resolve of the

community to restore a feature of Kaiapoi life that had existed since the beginning of settlement than to a practical desire to have its citizens informed of the time.

In his capacity as chairman of the War Memorial Committee, H.Owen Hills spoke of the effort many people had put into the establishment of the memorial. He was sure that the citizens of Kaiapoi would have a feeling of pride in their memorial and that it would serve generations to come. Although many similar speeches must have been given at the openings of the large number of public buildings that were constructed throughout New Zealand as living memorials not many of these buildings have fulfilled the speech makers' prophecies in quite the same way as the Kaiapoi memorial building has done. The inspired idea to incorporate a kindergarten into the building has given it a daily use through succeeding generations that has appropriately kept the building as a living memorial.

Kaiapoi is fortunate in that its three war memorials stand as reminders of the realities of war. The statue of the soldier is a reminder of the futility of war. The plain, unadorned memorial tablet to those killed in World War Two in Trousselot Park tells of the wasted potential of a generation and the memorial building is a testament to the hopes of that generation for the lives and well-being of the succeeding generations.

The establishment of the memorials gave the town a focus for its collective grief and went some way to restoring harmony between the factions in Kaiapoi who had sought different ways in which to commemorate the sacrifices of Kaiapoi citizens. However a more fundamental split in Kaiapoi society occurred in the late 1940's. The rise of Japan as a military power during the war had demonstrated New Zealand's vulnerability to invasion from a foe in the Pacific. It took away the country's feeling of safety created by its isolation. This nervousness about national security continued after the end of the war. Japan's defeat shifted the focus of fear back to Europe where the spread of communism in Eastern Europe appeared to undermine the delicate balance of power between the allies that had been achieved in the last days of the Second World War. The subjugation of peoples by the communist ideology was a more insidious threat to the democratic ideals for which the allies had been fighting than the military conquest of those same peoples by Nazi Germany. The idea that the collective consciousness could be directed by a one party state was disturbing in that the enemy was perceived to be covert rather than overt. The Berlin blockade of 1948 heightened the feeling of uncertainty in what was now called the free world. New Zealand citizens had been killed in the name of freedom for all and yet many of those same peoples for whom the New Zealanders had fought and died now appeared to be without freedom. There seemed to be little choice but to be prepared to fight again. This proposition could only be met by having a fully trained functional defence force and in order to achieve this goal there seemed to be little alternative to compulsory military training for men. It was held by many, to be irresponsible to be caught with very few trained personnel for a third time in the same century.

It fell to the Labour Government and in particular the Prime Minister, Peter Fraser, to introduce compulsory military training in peace time. It was a particularly hard decision for Labour Party stalwarts to accept as the party had always seen itself as the peace party. Peter Fraser had been sent to gaol in 1916 for making seditious remarks against conscription and although he had introduced conscription in 1940 that was regarded as a necessary evil in war time. Compulsory military training during a period of peace could not be countenanced by many in the Labour Party. In Kaiapoi the campaign against what was euphemistically called National Service was led by the Mayor, C.Morgan Williams. The referendum on military training was held towards the end of August 1949 and in the weeks leading up to it a number of meetings were held in the district by those opposing compulsory military service as well as those supporting the proposal. Many of the meetings held by those opposed to National Service broke up in noisy confusion because those supporting the notion went to the meetings to barrack the speakers, many of whom were identified as communists. This happened in Rangiora but it was not duplicated in Kaiapoi. At a meeting in the Borough Hall on 2 August, held by the Peace and Anti-Conscription Federation and the Canterbury Trades Council, Williams explained that although he did not have the courage to be a pacifist he could not support a policy that was counter to the peace and prosperity slogan adopted by the Labour Party. Williams shared the platform with Elsie Locke who was at that time identified by the *North Canterbury Gazette* as a communist. In her lengthy speech Locke outlined many of the arguments against compulsory military training in a lucid way and was given, according to the paper, a good hearing. Although there were only thirty people in the audience it is fair to assume that in the small Kaiapoi community this was a sizable number to ally itself with what was seen by, society at large, as an anti-democratic movement. For men like C.Morgan Williams however it was seen as a movement to preserve the essential nature of the Labour Party. For him a vote for National Service was a denial of the fundamental right of freedom of choice.

The pro-National Service group held a better attended meeting in the Rialto Theatre. This was addressed by the local Member of Parliament, Gillespie, who spoke at length on the need to be prepared to meet the threat of communism with a trained defence force. That Gillespie, a member of the National Party and therefore a political opponent of Fraser's, spoke in support of the move and Morgan Williams, the recent Labour Party parliamentary representative for Kaiapoi, chaired a meeting opposed to the notion indicated a fundamental split in Kaiapoi society that increased the ambivalence with which it viewed itself. Compulsory military training was introduced and was to become a way of life for young New Zealanders for over a decade.

The post war years witnessed a period of growth for both of the town's major industries. The Kaiapoi Woollen Mill however had both its growth and its modernisation curtailed a little by the general economic conditions of the country. The early 1950's saw the price of wool rise sharply in response to the demand for woollen fabric for the mainly American troops fighting in the Korean War. Any price rise for raw wool impacted on the profitability of woollen mills. In the case of

the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill this meant that the cost of production rose to an almost unsustainable level. This inevitably meant cutting back in areas such as modernisation of plant. This area of development was further restricted by the government-imposed restrictions on the importation of machinery. Thus even after the drop in wool prices in the mid 1950's and the consequent drop in production costs for the mill the Board could not obtain the machinery that would maintain the company's competitive edge in both the domestic and export markets. Despite these problems the mill continued to employ a large majority of the Kaiapoi labour force and it did record growth under the experienced managership of G.Greenwood. Part of that growth was a consolidation of the export markets that the company traded in before the war. A goodwill visit to the mill by the deputy Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable C.D.Howe, in the course of his seven day mission to New Zealand in April 1955 probably helped in that respect. Howe was accompanied by the permanent head of the Canadian Trade and Commerce Department, W.F.Bull. At the end of their tour of the mill the Canadians were given a lasting reminder of their visit in the form of Kaiapoi travelling rugs.

In January 1947 the Freezing works celebrated thirty years of operation in Kaiapoi. A report in the *North Canterbury Gazette* noted that although the appearance of the works from the outside had changed very little, the organisation of the work inside had changed a great deal. The old slaughterman system of killing stock had been replaced by the more efficient chain system. The animal was processed in the manner of an assembly line with each operator in the line or chain being responsible for only one step in the operation. Unlike the slaughterman system where the operator had to be skilled in all areas of butchering, the chain worker had skills in just one of the steps. (14)

The immediate post war years saw the Freezing Company continue to increase its annual profits. Dividends of around five per cent were paid to the shareholders who seemed particularly content with the progress of the company. The only year in which the company suffered a loss was in 1951 which, according to the Directorate, was caused by the shipping strike and a sudden drop in the price of wool.

The method by which the company's products were disposed of in the late forties and early fifties was controlled by the government. All of the meat produced by the Kaiapoi Freezing works and other works in New Zealand was sent to Britain. At the thirty seventh annual meeting of the shareholders in 1952 J.H.Blackwell made reference to the increased numbers of breeding ewes in the country and the fact that the whole of New Zealand had become Britain's principal supplier of meat. Blackwell observed that at that time there was still ample room for increases in production under the current method of disposal of the product. However by 1953 Blackwell was looking forward to what he termed the likelihood of a free market from the middle of 1954. This meant that the company had to adopt special measures to ensure that its products were of top quality and that they were presented well in the market place which with

(14) *The North Canterbury Gazette*, 17.1.1947.

the freeing of restrictions had become a world market. This step had brought the Kaiapoi works into direct competition not only with other New Zealand freezing works but with those companies located in rival meat producing nations.

At the 1955 Annual General Meeting of shareholders Blackwell was able to report that the company had fared well under a less regulated market. He added that since 1949 the increased use of aerial topdressing, the sowing of pasture and control of weeds and rabbits from the air meant that more pasture had been brought into production increasing the country's primary production. The 1955 meeting was the last one chaired by J.H.Blackwell who retired from the directorate of company at that meeting. Blackwell had been a member of the Board of directors since 1915 and chairman since 1929. In many ways the company which he had fought so hard to establish in Kaiapoi reflected Blackwell's determination. It was a company that had survived the Great Depression. It had kept up to date with modern developments in technology and work methods. In those first forty years it was a company closely identified both with J.H.Blackwell and Kaiapoi.

A change took place in the way in which shopping, and in particular grocery shopping, was undertaken in the late 1940's. In July 1949 Eric Gray and Company opened its refurbished grocery shop. It was described as the most modern grocery in North Canterbury designed on the latest self service lines. It was the first time a shop in North Canterbury was known as a supermarket. There were advantages to the shopper as well as to the shop proprietor. The shopper was able to select the goods for herself from the shelves therefore cutting out the waiting time at the counter for service. The self service method meant that there had to be a wider selection for the shopper to chose from giving both the shopper and her family a greater variety of goods. The shop proprietor hoped for and got an increase in his turnover through the phenomenon of unplanned or impulse buying. New goods were able to be displayed in such a way that they were more attractive to the shopper. She could inspect them more closely without having the feeling that she was wasting the time of either her fellow shoppers or the proprietor. In addition the wage structure of the business was able to be held at a minimum level as the employees became till operators rather than assistants. It was a new and exciting way of grocery shopping that gave the Kaiapoi shoppers the feeling that they were sharing in the latest world trend.

The same unfortunately could not be said about the post office. According to H.Owen Hills the post office in Kaiapoi was one of the worst in North Canterbury. The building had long before, become too small for the number of people using it and although the post office authorities had purchased a block of land in Charles Street it was going to be some time before the situation improved.

The early 1950's heralded a number changes in the electricity department. A.J.Shore, the Borough's electrical engineer from 1941, resigned from his position in 1948. In the three years since 1945 Shore had overseen the installation of new switchgear and transformers to cope with the Council's decision to move its high tension voltage from 3,300 V. to 6,600 V.. This change should have meant that Shore's successor C.H.Court had few problems of supply to deal with. However

this did not prove to be the case as the load growth began to outstrip earlier predictions. Low voltage patches became apparent especially in the northern area of the borough and so Court recommended that a further three substations be built allowing the load to be split up. Court further recommended that the high tension voltage be increased to 11,000 V. In Court's opinion the change would increase the efficiency of the service and allow the supply to be maintained at the regulation voltage. The Council approved of all the recommendations and Court began to implement the changes. It was an enormous task made more difficult by the fact that Court had only a small number of men on his staff and that he was obliged to maintain the electrical supply at all times. All of the planning and organisational work was done by Court personally and most of the work was carried out at night so as to minimize disruption to consumers. The work load took its toll on Court and in March 1951 he collapsed at work and died a few days later. The Council minutes for 19 March recorded the "good and faithful service" of Court.

Court's replacement was F.Woodward but his appointment turned out to be of a short duration. In November 1951 the Council was once again looking for an electrical engineer. The man appointed was R.G.Simpson who took up his duties in January 1952. Simpson, who completed his apprenticeship in 1917, had experience in working for private firms as well as being employed by the North Canterbury Electric Power Board to undertake wiring, the construction of substations and as an electrical inspector. His wide experience prepared him for the many changes that were to take place. The first of these was a purely housekeeping one that nevertheless impacted directly on the Kaiapoi consumers. In April 1952 the cost of bulk power was increased and that necessitated a change in the scale of charges.

Although the changes in electrical supply reflected the modern trend there was an aspect of the town's services that had remained unchanged since the first decades of the twentieth century. The method of sewage disposal was in desperate need of modernisation. In August 1946 the Council received a report from the District Medical Officer of Health, Dr Blakelock. The report, while not totally damning of the system, pointed out that in some localities of the borough, sewage disposal had resulted in an unsatisfactory sanitary conditions. Blakelock recommended that a modern system be installed as the chance of an epidemic breaking out was high.

Nothing was done about a new sewage scheme for the borough until the 1950's. During H.Owen Hills' first mayoral term the Council asked a consulting engineer, H.G.Royds, to draw up a plan for the borough. Royds' plan allowed for an increase in the population to four thousand three hundred within the 1950 boundaries of Kaiapoi. It also allowed for an improvement in the drainage in Camside and the Dudley Drain areas both of which were prone to flooding. The sewage was to receive only primary treatment, that is sedimentation, digestion and removal of sludge before it was to be discharged into the river. Royds considered it unreasonable to impose a higher standard of treatment before discharge because he said that the river was already contaminated with sewage effluent from Rangiora, septic tank and industrial wastes from the Woollen Mill and the Freezing works. He did

concede, however, that secondary treatment of the sewage might be considered in the future.

With the presentation of the plan to the Council it could be surmised that it would be a simple step to get ratepayer approval and then raise a loan. However in the complicated bureaucracy that was the 1950's the Council had a number of steps to take before it was able to obtain approval for a loan. Unfortunately for the Council it started in the wrong place and so the process was unduly delayed. It applied first to the Board of Health for a requisition under Section 22 of the Health Act 1920 to carry out the work. While this had been the practice, a change in the law in 1951, meant that the Council was required to apply to the Loans Board first. The Loans Board would then decide whether or not a ratepayers' poll was necessary before it gave approval. If, in the unlikely event of the ratepayers' poll rejecting the Council's proposal, then the Council could apply to the Board of Health for a requisition. The misunderstanding of the procedures meant that approval for the raising of the loan for the sewage scheme was not obtained until September 1952, six months after the plan had been presented to the Council by Royds.

From the time of receiving approval for the loan in September 1952 it was almost a year before the Council called for tenders for the sewage scheme. In October the Mayor reported to a special meeting that five quotations for the job had been received by the Council but all of them had exceeded the estimation of one hundred thousand pounds. It was decided to ask Royds to meet with the tenderers to discuss with them ways in which their tendered price could be lowered. During the Local Body elections at the end of October, Hills stated in an election speech that one of the tenderers had indicated his willingness to lower the price to just over the estimated price. This had not been finalised before the elections and so it was left to the new Council to put the scheme into place. One of the reasons for the slowness of the Hills' Council to get the scheme started was its perceived need to reduce its indebtedness. This it achieved at the cost of beginning the sewage scheme, a plan that Hills had been working on for ten years.

The installation of the sewage scheme in 1954 meant that new residents and industries were attracted to the town because of its modern facilities and its relatively cheap land. All of this activity pushed up the demand for power in the town so much so that the peak load grew faster in 1954 than at any other time. The Council had to plan for a new main substation. Simpson began working on this before his retirement but in the meantime the electrical staff had to cope with the increased work load.

1953 was the beginning of a substantial change in the perception of Kaiapoi both by its own citizens and by outsiders. At the end of year local body elections the electors voted in an almost entirely new Council. The new Council was led by a young energetic man who at thirty years old was the youngest ever mayor of Kaiapoi and at the time the youngest mayor in New Zealand.

Norman Kirk with his family had returned to the South Island in 1947 and attracted by the availability of cheap land in Kaiapoi the family purchased a section there. For the next eighteen months Kirk with the help of his father, made his own concrete blocks and constructed a house. During this time the family lived with

Kirk's parents in Christchurch. Kirk worked at the Firestone Tyre Company in Papanui and most nights he cycled to Kaiapoi to continue building his house. As soon as the house was habitable the family moved in but this did not mean the end of Kirk's long cycle rides as he continued to work at the Firestone factory.

The Kirk family had arrived in Otago from Scotland in 1869 and eventually settled in the Gore area. Kirk's father was a cabinet maker and had married the daughter of one of Kaiapoi's pioneer families, the Jurys. The Jury family belonged to the Salvation Army and it was through the Army that Kirk senior met his wife. Norman Kirk was born in Waimate, but grew up in Christchurch where his father had come in search of work during the Great Depression. It was during his childhood that Norman Kirk became familiar with Kaiapoi through his frequent visits to his Jury relatives. Kirk was twelve years old when he left school and his first job was with a painting firm. After a short time he left to take up an apprenticeship with the Railways Department. His first posting with the Department was to Frankton in the North Island. After a number of transfers around the North Island Kirk eventually earned his ticket as a Fireman. He left the Railways Department and was able to obtain a number of jobs with different companies in various North Island towns. One of these jobs was on the ferries that linked the North Shore in Auckland with the city. It was through his involvement with the ferries and his seagulling work on the wharves that his formal links with the Labour Party began. Kirk was elected the vice president of the Auckland Ferry Workers' Union and as such was a delegate to the Waitemata Labour Representation Committee (L.R.C.) This began his involvement with the Labour Party.

In the first couple of years after his return to the South Island Kirk was too busy to be an active member of the Party but after the house was habitable Kirk decided to reactivate his membership. The Labour Party had strong support in Kaiapoi. The electorate had returned Morgan Williams as a member of the first Labour Government and he had retained it until the Kaiapoi seat was absorbed into the newly created Hurunui electorate in 1946. Throughout New Zealand, from the end of the Second World War, the Labour Party had gone into decline as far as its membership was concerned. Kaiapoi was no exception. The members of the Kaiapoi Branch were not in regular touch with each other and from the 1949 defeat of the Labour Government, very much a dormant group.

The torpidity of the Kaiapoi Branch suited the energy and organisational skills of Kirk. He had an existing structure with which to work and he was able to enthuse enough of those in Kaiapoi with Labour Party sympathies to turn it into an active branch once more. Under Kirk's chairmanship the Kaiapoi Branch faced its first challenge during the 1951 general election. Although the Labour Party throughout the country lost support at the time of the 1951 election the members in Kaiapoi were pleased with the part they had played in getting members to vote. The motivation came from Kirk. After the election the Branch turned its attention to local issues. The Council and its objectives appeared to be removed from the day to day lives of the citizens. Under Kirk's guidance the Kaiapoi Branch of the Labour Party was determined to present an active programme for the development of Kaiapoi.

In February 1953 the Kaiapoi Branch of the Labour Party announced its intention to run a team of candidates at the local body elections due to be held in October. After the Branch's first choice candidate for the mayoralty, Austin Blakely had declined, it seemed obvious to the members that their young energetic chairman should be asked to stand as mayor. Kirk accepted the offer and began his first electoral campaign as a candidate. The Labour Party candidates for the elections were endorsed at a meeting of the Kaiapoi Branch of the Labour Party on 24 September. At that time Kirk was also the president of the Hurunui Labour Representation Committee. Even so it was a big step for him to take, as he had no previous experience in local body government and for many of the electors, it was thought, that his age would count against him. However Kirk was confident enough in his own organisational abilities to know that he could run a successful campaign for the mayoralty. There was some criticism from the electors about the fact that the Labour Party had decided to run a ticket in the election. Kirk countered this by stating that if the Labour Party men had not stood then there would not have been a full council as only seven independent candidates had been nominated for the nine seat council. It was certainly a different situation from the one pertaining at the previous election when all members of the Council were elected unopposed with the number of nominations falling short of the actual number needed for a full council. The entry of the Labour team meant that there was voter interest in the elections. This was demonstrated when three hundred electors attended an election meeting in the Rialto Theatre on 29 October to listen to the policies of both mayoral candidates and the candidates for the Council. From the electors' view point it was a relatively quiet meeting with each candidate able to speak without interruption.

Even although the policies of the candidates were similar there were some important differences in style which may have helped the Labour team to its victory. Firstly Kirk's speech had a dynamism about it. He agreed with Hills' statement that Kaiapoi had gone ahead but he felt that it would go ahead faster with a change in administration. Kirk used phrases like:-

"progress and flourish, a mecca for homebuilding, industry and commerce" and "Our policy, designed to meet immediate and future needs, will be vigorously implemented by a council strong in executive ability."

By contrast Hills' more moderate language must have sounded dull. Hills pointed to the record of his Council and promised the same steady policies. He was justifiably proud of the Council's programme of debt reduction and he was sure that this would provide a springboard for further progress.

The backgrounds of the Labour Party candidates may have also given them the edge with the ordinary voters in a town that was still strongly identified with the industrial movement. The suspicion and mistrust between employers and employees that had occurred in the country at the time of the 1951 waterfront strike/lockout was still in evidence at the time of the 1953 local body elections. It was not therefore surprising to find that the Kaiapoi ratepayers supported men like L.R.Peachey and T.C.Cross. The former was a bus driver and a member of the

executive of the Canterbury Drivers' Union; the latter the Borough Foreman for the past sixteen years. The highest polling candidate was H.L.Oram who stood as an Independent but had an air of the ordinary man about him. He had lived in Kaiapoi for thirty seven years and had spent his working life at the Woollen Mill employed as a clerk.

The Labour team was keen to complete the war memorial building and to begin the sewage scheme. It also pledged to find a new site for the hospital, create a new children's playing area, see that the storm water channels were effectively cleaned, to give practical assistance to sporting bodies, to stop stock trucks from parking in the main street and to erect bus shelters.

At the same time as the local body elections the Kaiapoi voters had to decide whether or not to change their rating system. In September the Council had been presented with a petition organised by the Kaiapoi Residents and Ratepayers Association asking for a poll to be conducted on the method of rating to be used in the Borough. The petition had two hundred and nine names and as this number was at least fifteen percent of the ratepayers the Council was bound to conduct a poll. The two main methods of rating to be considered by the ratepayers were Capital Value rating which was the present method and Unimproved Value rating which the Kaiapoi Residents and Ratepayers Association supported. In an article in the *North Canterbury Gazette*, C.M.H. set out the differences. In C.M.H.'s opinion Capital Value rating was more in line with the principal of "ability to pay". It was more accurately estimated and there was a greater relationship between the rates paid and the services received. Industries paid their fair share of the rates and hospital rates were more fairly distributed. Unimproved Value rating, in C.M.H.'s opinion, did not penalize the ratepayer for improvements done to his property. It encouraged good quality home building. Valuations and assessments were easier to calculate. It encouraged the release of land onto the market and encouraged local employment through the stimulation of the building trade.⁽¹⁵⁾ Hills supported the Capital Value rating system. In his opinion all that was needed to make it work was the presence of more ratepayers in the town. The Labour Party candidates pointed out that without the Unimproved Value system new ratepayers would not be attracted to the town. The result of the poll was a decisive vote for a change to the Unimproved Value rating system.

Three of the Independent candidates, H.L.Oram, G.Yellowlees, and R.D.Evans who had been on the previous council were returned along with R. Monk the fourth Independent candidate to be stand. The rest of the Council was made up of the five highest polling Labour candidates. Of these only C.T.Williams had been on the previous council. L.R.Peachey, T.C.Cross, A.E.Cattermole, L.V.McEwen along with Kirk were new to local body government.

Although *The Press* expressed some surprise at the outcome of the elections in Kaiapoi there seemed to be no surprise at the local level. The only written opposition to the Labour team was expressed in a piece of doggerel entitled "A

(15) *North Canterbury Gazette*, 29.9.1953.

Wagging Tale" published in the *North Canterbury Gazette*, the last two lines of which read,

"There's loyalty here and it follows
That hills may obscure the new kirk." (16)

However as the piece was over the by-line of "*Raving St*" it may well have been tongue in cheek.

The 1953 local body elections gave back to Kaiapoi some of the heritage and pride which had vanished when the town lost its parliamentary identity as a Labour town when it was absorbed into the National Party held Hurunui electorate. At least within the town boundaries Kaiapoi could rightfully point to the fact it was a Labour town.

At the installation meeting on 10 November 1953 Kirk thanked the public for their support and said that he hoped that the town would make further progress during the term of the new council. The grand old man of the Labour Party in Kaiapoi, Morgan Williams was present at the meeting and offered his congratulations to Kirk on attaining the mayoral position at such a young age. The other grand old man of local government, W.H.A.Vickery, was also present. In his speech Vickery offered some suggestions to the new mayor and council on how some of the duties could be alleviated. P.J.Ell, the president of the Residents and Ratepayers Association congratulated the mayor and the new councillors and added that he hoped the new rating system would not cause too many anomalies in the town. C.T.Williams was voted by the Council to be the Deputy Mayor.

At the first business meeting of the Council on 16 November it was resolved to have a phone installed in the Mayor's home, the rent and installation to be paid for by the Council. It seems incredible, in these days of instant communication for the majority of people in the country, that in 1953 an aspiring mayoral candidate could not afford to have a phone installed in his home and even after his election the phone had to be paid for by the Council. The impression gained from the minutes of the first year of this young and inexperienced Council was that it was content to plot "a steady as she goes" course until it became more experienced.

The only major undertaking was the start of the sewage scheme for which the Council was able to attract investors as well as having the one hundred thousand pound loan. The major investor in the sewage scheme was the Kai Tahu Trust Board. The Kirk Council also decided that the best way to have the citizens accept the disruption to their lives that such a major undertaking as the sewage scheme would cause was to involve them in the planning and implementation of the scheme. To that end, the Council decided to contract to do the work itself. It had to hire fifteen workmen and a foreman as well as buying about five thousand pounds worth of specialised equipment. The management of the scheme was overseen by Kirk.

Apart from the sewage scheme the Council began investigations into two other projects that were seen as vital to the growth and development of the town. The

(16) *North Canterbury Gazette*, 28.10.1953.

first was one of the planks in the Labour Party's campaign. It had pledged to find a site for a new hospital. In April 1954 the Mayor reported that it was the feeling of the town that a new hospital should be built rather than have the old one refurbished. The Mayor was to place these views before the Hospital Board. The second investigation began in December when the Council gave the Mayor authority to consult with the Minister of Education about the establishment of a high school in the town.

The matter of a high school was given more of an impetus with the burning down of the Manual Training school on 21 January 1955. The Member for Parliament for Hurunui, W.H.Gillespie, visited the site and assured the local leaders that he saw the importance of retaining the manual school in Kaiapoi. Kirk was authorised by the Council to approach the Minister of Education, R.M.Algie, to stress the need of the community for a secondary school. The tenor of his arguments were probably echoed by the North Canterbury Ward representative on the Canterbury Education Board, F.T.Ager, when he initiated a discussion about the establishment of a new high school in Kaiapoi at a combined meeting of the Canterbury Education Board and the Rangiora High School Board of Governors in April. Ager also agreed with the suggestion from R.R.Beauchamp that a high school should also be built at Culverden so that the general trend of country children being educated in the city was reversed.

Both the need for a secondary school and the retention of the manual training school would assume greater significance in the following decade. In the meantime the demographic phenomenon known as the baby boom was creating problems for the Kaiapoi Borough School. The baby boom was due to the return of the service men and the great desire of the population as a whole to return to a normal existence. In this context, it meant for many, starting a family as soon as practicable. The large numbers of babies born in the first few years after the war and the great shortage of both materials and skilled labour especially in the building trade meant that by 1949-50 many schools did not have the room to cope with the numbers of enrolments. In 1948 the Kaiapoi Borough School coped by using a classroom in the Manual Training School. However in 1949 this option was not available. The Canterbury Education Board had to erect a large marquee in the west end of the school grounds to house the large number of pupils enrolled at the school. The marquee had a wooden floor so that both the children and the furniture had a hard surface on which to work and stand on. This arrangement worked well for about the first month of the 1949 school year. Indeed it was thought that the conditions were very pleasant in the marquee in the hot dry February weather.

Unfortunately March heralded a change in the weather to lower temperatures and more rain. Whenever it rained the marquee leaked and although the wooden floor prevented the place from becoming a quagmire, conditions were so bad that the children in the marquee had to be absorbed into the already crowded permanent classrooms. The School Committee were reassured by the Minister of Education, T.H.McCombs, who said that schools, such as Kaiapoi Borough, which had to have marquees were first on the list for new buildings.

It was therefore with relief in May 1949 that the School Committee was able to report that steady progress was being made on the new block of classrooms at the Borough School.

The strain placed on the Kaiapoi electricity staff and in particular on the engineer Simpson came to a head in 1955. In March of that year the Timaru City Council electrical consultant, R.D.Veitch was employed by the Kaiapoi Borough to investigate problems that had arisen especially in the area of the switching gear. Veitch recommended that bare switches be used and that they were kept separate from the allied equipment in order to make inspection and repair work easier. The time switches on the water heating units were also a source of concern for Veitch. His investigations showed that if the time switches were faulty and control was lost then the Council could lose up to seven hundred pounds per quarter on its electricity purchases. It was recommended that the Council procure a temporary main switch with a higher rupturing capacity from Veitch. His last recommendation urged the use of pole substations which were calculated to be more efficient than enclosed ground substations. It was important to the council in view of the rapid increase in the use of electricity in the Borough to get the maximum use of the product and to ensure, as far as possible, that wastage was at a minimum.

Once Veitch's recommendations were adopted it became obvious that there were problems in management that were down grading the efficiency of the electricity department. In June 1955 the chairman of the Electricity Committee, L.R.Peachey, was asked by the Mayor to list the points of concern to him about the electricity department. Of most concern was the very small profit recorded in the trading area. According to Peachey this was a result of poor management. Simpson, it seemed, had not been carrying out Council instructions and his lax supervision of his staff meant that they were arriving late to work on a daily basis. In Peachey's opinion, much of the work that the staff was required to do was in unproductive areas. The Mayor was of the opinion that the number of wiring staff employed was too large for the size of the department and because of a lack of administration the number was being used inefficiently.

Simpson's answers to these charges illustrated the difficulties that small operations often face when their business becomes more complex. When Simpson was employed by the Council it was looking for a man of practical experience who could do the work needed to keep the supply of electricity constant. Simpson's background made him an ideal choice but within a few years of his employment the simple supply of electricity had turned into a complex business that needed a person who, in addition to understanding the practical part of the job, had to also be an able administrator. Simpson said that he preferred to be out working on the lines rather than doing the administrative work, including the supervision of the staff. The Council gave Simpson a list of his duties including the reassurance that he was able to sack employees who had refused to accept his lawful instructions. It was obvious to both the Council and Simpson that the job had outgrown his skills. The only way of improving the situation was for the Council to give the engineer a list of instructions and to

insist that he carry them out to the letter. Simpson for his part hoped that he would be relieved of his financial duties.

This episode in the history of the Borough's electrical department illustrates the growing complexity of business in the second half of the twentieth century. It was no longer sufficient to have a practical appreciation of how things work. It had become essential to have managerial and organisational skills that could cope with the increased demands that the customers made on the service. The change to supermarket selling in the grocery trade was analogous to the changes that were needed in the electricity department. However 1955 was not yet the right time for such changes to take place and so the solution arrived at by the Council owed more to the old way of running the electrical department than an adaptation to a new set of conditions in society.

Housing was still of vital concern to Kaiapoi in the second half of the 1950's although there was a different emphasis. There was no longer the need for cheap short term accommodation such as the transit housing scheme provided immediately after the war. By March 1957 when a suspicious fire destroyed three of the flats and did some damage to the Borough Hall the occupancy rate had fallen away to the extent that the Council did not consider it worth while to consider replacement. However there was a continuing need for a more permanent type of housing. Since the early 1950's the Council had pursued a vigorous policy of land sub-division for housing but a survey conducted in 1955 showed that there was a growing need for state houses, for group housing and for pensioners cottages.

A Methodist minister, the Reverend B. Riseley, took up the challenge to provide pensioner housing. His scheme earned him the sobriquet of "Kaiapoi's house building parson." Riseley wrote seeking the Council's approval for a reduction in the size of sections for his old people's settlement which was to be built at the end of Cressy Avenue. The plan was to build five single units of three hundred square feet, each unit to be separated by a low fence and the whole to be under the supervision of a trained nurse. The Council decided not to make a special departure from the minimum section size of twenty four perches so that Riseley's plans for an intimate settlement of pensioner cottages could not be achieved. This did not deter Riseley from proceeding with his plans in a modified form. In addition to this private initiative, the Council embarked on its own scheme of pensioner housing.

A pensioner cottage scheme had first been mooted by the Borough Council in 1944 but it was not until 1956 that the scheme got under way. In February of that year people were invited to make applications for inclusion in a Council pensioner housing scheme. The loan for this scheme was sanctioned by the government in 1957 and eight flats able to accommodate two people each were built on a site between Hilton and Raven Streets which had been known as Cam Street. Cam Street which had been closed for a number of years was repossessed by the Council in 1947 and until the pensioner housing scheme came into effect had been a waste area. The concrete block flats were designed by the architect of the Rialto Theatre and the war memorial building, Colin Lamb. These double units were supplemented by the building of eight single units. The first block of four were opened

in October 1958 and the second block in December 1960 on land purchased from H.O.Hayward. This scheme was completed in 1964 with the construction of a further four units. It would seem that by the early 1960's that Kaiapoi was well served in the pensioner housing area.

The dual control of the beach settlements by the Rangiora County Council and the Kaiapoi Borough Council had always been a cause of concern for the residents at the beach. It appeared to them that they did not get good value for the rates which they paid to the county and neither did they get good value from the rents which they paid to the borough. In the opinion of the residents it was essential that their Association continue to push the Borough Council for improvements to the facilities in the settlements. In March 1947 The Pines Beach Association assumed the task of representing the Kairaki residents as their association, The Kairaki Hut Owners Association, appeared to be defunct. In many ways this was desirable as in the past the two associations had often worked against each other. Each year the The Pines Beach Association submitted a report to the Council which contained the work that it considered critical for that year as well as a wish list for work that it would like to be done. By and large the routine maintenance work with the trees and the Oval at The Pines and at the camping ground at Kairaki were carried out. The relationship between the Borough and The Pines Beach Association only became strained when the Association asked for major work to be undertaken. This occurred in May 1948 when the Association pointed out that the water lying on Beach Road was creating a hazard. The Council's terse reply informed the Association that it could not solve the problem as the Main Highways subsidy for Beach Road had been severely pruned.

However the relationship between the beach settlements and the borough was even more strained from 1953 onwards with the adoption of the Unimproved Value rating system by the borough. The rents had always been tied to the value of the land and under the Capital Value system this meant that the rents were reasonably low. The concerns of the residents were spelt out by a deputation from the Association which met with the Reserves Committee at a special meeting on 1 November 1955. The secretary of the Association, W.Gellen, told the Council that the Association was seeking a reduction in the Unimproved Value rating system placed on their properties at the Pines. The Mayor replied that the Council, as landlord, was seeking an increase in rentals but that it should be based on the government valuation rather than the unimproved value. The obvious benefit from this move would be that neither the lessees nor the lessor would be involved in calculating the valuation on the land. This seemed to satisfy the deputation but the next action of the Council put a dent in the relationship of the two bodies. At the Reserves Committee meeting held on 9 November a motion proposed by the Mayor and seconded by Councillor McEwen instructed the Town Clerk to write to the lessees to inform them that their rentals would be based on the 1953 unimproved values. The Pines Beach Association appeared to accept the action as legitimate but was less inclined to trust the Council. The Mayor was reported to have said in

December 1956 that the tension between The Pines Beach Association and the Borough Council was not the fault of the Council but that it had started with the increase in rental charges which had come into effect the previous year. This lack of trust on both sides and a degree of duplicity, also on both sides, was to hinder the speedy resolution of the problems that dual control of the beach settlements imposed on the residents.

By the end of his first mayoral term Norman Kirk had grown in confidence and in the minds of the Kaiapoi ratepayers he had made a satisfactory impact. As an indication of Kirk's growing personal confidence it is interesting to note the striking change in his signature on the Council minutes. When he first became mayor at the end of 1953 the signature was very small and cramped but by the time of his resignation to pursue a parliamentary career at the end of 1957 Kirk was signing his name with such a flourish that it took up a couple of lines on the page. This of course is not the only indication that Kirk had grown in the job. Council meetings became more concerned with future planning for the Borough rather than just keeping things going as they had been at the start of his local body work. An example of this occurred in March 1957 when at an informal meeting with the Kaiapoi Businessmen's Association, a joint committee of Councillors and businessmen was formed to discuss possible northern road outlets from Christchurch. The route chosen for such a road would have more of an impact on Kaiapoi than the possible railway routes that had been discussed nearly a century earlier. It was vital that the town be alerted to the fact that the route of the northern road was under discussion and that the Kaiapoi community was prepared to make a case for the route which most favoured their businesses and lifestyle. Another example of Kirk's "hands on" approach to local government was seen in the increase of special meetings. These meetings were held to discuss and formulate policy on one topic. Although this method meant more meetings for the Councillors it ensured that important areas of administration of the Borough such as fire prevention were not lost in the general housekeeping of the regular fortnightly meetings of the Council.

Kirk was elected unopposed in the 1956 local body elections and the Council took on a more solidly Labour look with seven of the nine councillors being Labour Party men. However the highest polling candidate remained the Independent, H.L.Oram. The election were more remarkable for one of the failed candidates than for those who were successful. Mrs A.O.Williams decided to stand as an Independent candidate, the first woman to do so in the Borough's history. Mrs Williams was married to B.O.Williams who was a Councillor from 1950-53. She was well known in the Borough for her involvement in a number of women's groups. Mrs Williams polled around seventy votes behind the last elected member of the Council which in the context of the times was a fairly successful attempt and she certainly showed the way for other women to offer themselves for election.

Kaiapoi's status as a workingman's town was confirmed with the 1956 local body elections and along with this it became more of an aberration in the local political scene. It was a Labour enclave in the solidly National Party voting seat of Hurunui and although it did not adopt a siege mentality its approach was seen as different. A different type of person was attracted to the area who had more

in common with those who had settled in the northern suburb of Papanui in Christchurch and Belfast than with the people of neighbouring Rangiora. Perhaps an indication of the different outlook in the town can be seen in the founding of a Rugby League club in the town. The Reverend Childs in his history of the town reported that a Rugby League Club (the Northern Union game) had been formed with a great flourish in 1920 but that because the traditions of rugby were so ingrained it did not survive more than a couple of seasons.⁽¹⁷⁾ The traditions must have been weakened by the mid 1950's when a substantial number of schoolboys and men began playing for the Papanui Rugby League Club. It appears that during the 1956 season a couple of teams began playing in the town competition under the name of Kaiapoi but still under the administration of the Papanui Club. On 21 June 1957 at a meeting of between forty and fifty people the Kaiapoi Rugby League Club was revived. The Patron was N.E.Kirk and the president was D.C.Isherwood with the secretary being L.C.Neilson. A representative from the Papanui Club, Mr Griffiths, said that there were five Kaiapoi boys in his schoolboy team that the Kaiapoi Club could call on as soon as there was a prospect of a schoolboy team being formed. The fledgling club received a much needed boost to its funds for schoolboy teams on 7 July when a benefit game was played between Papanui, the leader in the senior competition, and Hornby. The game was played on the Oval and attracted a large crowd.

Rugby League with its connections to the industrial towns in the north of England and its stronghold, at that time in New Zealand, being among the mining towns of the West Coast was regarded as a working man's game. It is no surprise that the game began to find favour with Kaiapoi people in the 1950's. As a corollary, the 1950's for the Kaiapoi Rugby Club was a difficult decade in so far as numbers were concerned. 1955 in particular, saw club numbers decline to such an extent that the club was only able to enter two teams, an under five stone team and an open junior team, in that year's competitions. An interesting difference emerged between the two codes. In 1958 the Rugby Club requested that its open grade teams be permitted to play their games early in order to allow the team members to get home in time to milk the cows. No similar request has been recorded by the Rugby League Club suggesting that Rugby attracted men from the surrounding small farms whereas League's strength came from the townfolk who were able to arrange their work around their commitment to the game. The other fact to note about the two codes was that they were both involved in the Christchurch competitions. In other words neither code at that time saw itself as belonging to North Canterbury. In the case of League this has continued to the present day. However the Rugby Club began to sever its association with the Canterbury Rugby Football Union in 1965 when it applied for dispensation to enter its senior team and its under eighteen team in the North Canterbury Rugby Football Sub Union competition. The change was completed in 1977 when all of the Kaiapoi Rugby Club's teams were entered in the North Canterbury Sub Union's competition.

⁽¹⁷⁾ *North Canterbury Gazette*, 16.3.1934.

The Kaiapoi Rugby League Club began playing its home games at the Domain but the opening of Murphy Park on 22 March 1958 saw an association which has lasted until the present day. Although William Murphy had bequeathed the area to the borough it had been run as a farm by Mr Wade until July 1957 when the Rugby League Club and the Kaiapoi Athletics Club began the arduous job of levelling the site and getting it ready for use as a sports ground. Much of the levelling work was done by bulldozers driven by R.Bailey and C.Hammond. Members of the two clubs spent many hours preparing and sowing the area in suitable grass, felling tress and general work to prepare the area for sports activities. At the opening J.Hullen, who was the President of the Athletics club and Secretary of the League Club, paid tribute to those who had worked so hard. The opening was celebrated by a practice match for the schoolboys' teams and a game between the newly formed Kaiapoi Senior Rugby League team and the Linwood Rugby League Club side. The fact that the Linwood side won by only one point gave the Kaiapoi supporters hope that their team would do well in future competitions.

The only conditions of use that the Council imposed on the League Club were that the goal posts must be removed after each match, that cars were not allowed on the grounds and that there was to be no charge for admission to the ground. The Club was glad to abide by those conditions in order to have a purpose-built ground for its use.

The period from the beginning of the Second World War to the end of the 1950's saw a gradual change in the perception that Kaiapoi had of itself. At the beginning of the time under consideration the town was viewed by its citizens and outsiders as a country town with an industrial base. In spite of the steady growth of both the Woollen Mill and the Freezing works it seemed that the town was stagnating. Its lost generation from the First World War combined with the absent generation from the Second World War meant no growth in terms of the population. This posed enormous problems for the local administration because there was no increase in population and there was a decrease in available housing. It was difficult for the Borough Council to attract new people to the town and it was unable to obtain government help for housing because of its static population figures. The town took on an almost shameful air. Apathy seemed to be a by-word. The town saw itself as either a backwater or as an industrial town so different from its neighbours that it turned inwards on itself.

This attitude remained until the Kirk mayoralty. Kirk was able to capitalise on the careful management of previous Councils as well as being the inheritor of two schemes, the war memorial building and the sewage scheme, which gave the town pride in itself once more. There was also a more widespread optimism in the country as it seemed, as if at the most, peace or in the least, a non-combative war, was dominating world politics. The world economy had adapted itself to the demands of peacetime and as at the end of the First World War, New Zealand was well placed to take advantage of the demand for food and fibre. The surge in the birth rate at the end of the war had begun to create problems for both local and national governments as neither branch of government had planned for such a

phenomenon. The lack of space in schools was just one example of how the baby boom caused problems, as was the lack of adequate housing. One of the requests that the appointee to the position of Borough foreman in the mid 1950's made illustrated the need for appropriate housing. He asked that the Borough provide a three bedroom house to accommodate his nine children.

Norman Kirk, the young energetic mayor, personified in many ways the new view that the town began to adopt of itself. Kirk had come from the North Island and found Kaiapoi attractive because of the cheap land. He was a working man with a young family who fitted into the Kaiapoi community. The fact that his job in Christchurch meant that Kirk had to commute, in common with many others, pointed to a future Kaiapoi as a dormitory suburb of that city.

It is fair to assume that the Kirk mayoralty gave Kaiapoi that spark of difference that is often needed to turn the collective attitude around from apathy to zeal. As the town faced a new decade the future of the town seemed secure.

Chapter Ten:

STABILITY AND CHANGE

It was apparent, from 1954, that the Kaiapoi mayoralty was not the pinnacle of N.E.Kirk's political ambition. In the general election of that year he stood as the Labour Party candidate in the Hurunui electorate against the incumbent, William Gillespie, who represented the National Party. The campaign was tough for Kirk in the overwhelmingly National Party seat but unsurprisingly he made a good showing in Kaiapoi itself. Kirk managed to secure one thousand and six votes of the one thousand eight hundred and sixteen votes cast in the three polling booths in Kaiapoi. Gillespie's total was five hundred and thirty four, the balance of the votes being cast for the Social Credit candidate, W.L.Cate. Kirk was also able to secure a lead over Gillespie at the Brooklands, Eyrewell Forest, Kaianga and Southbrook polling booths. This good showing was a factor in his selection as the Labour Party's candidate at the next general election in the more marginal Lyttelton seat. In 1954 H.R.Lake had managed to retain Lyttelton for the National Party by twenty-four votes from the Labour candidate T. McGuigan. Lyttelton therefore was one of the seats most likely to change to the Labour Party in the 1957 general election. Kirk succeeded, managing to secure a majority of approximately six hundred votes over Harry Lake and thus taking his place in a Labour Party Government. In many ways it was fortunate for the young Kirk that his first taste of national government was as a member of the ruling party and it paralleled his experience in local government where he had also been part of a majority party on the Council.

Kirk's election to Parliament meant changes for Kaiapoi. He had indicated during the campaign that if he won the Lyttelton seat he would become resident in that electorate. Of course this meant leaving Kaiapoi and the mayoralty. Kirk chaired his last Council meeting on 16 December 1957 with his resignation to take effect a month later on 15 January 1958. It seemed that as a matter of course the deputy mayor, C.T.Williams, would become mayor with either an election or an appointment to fill the vacancy on the Council. However nothing is certain in politics, so the saying goes, and strong rumours began to circulate in Kaiapoi that

there would be an election for the mayoralty. The proprietor of the Mandeville Hotel R.H.Bates was mentioned by the *North Canterbury Gazette* as a possible candidate. The paper went on to report that Bates, a well known boxing trainer, would stand as an Independent and it was postulated that he would attract the votes of staunch Labour Party members. The paper also suggested that H.L.Oram and the Reverend Risely could also be candidates. (1) In the event none of the men mentioned in the report put his name forward and a poll was not required. It is intriguing however to speculate on what was behind the rumours. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that a small number of people, possibly Labour Party supporters, were opposed to Williams succeeding Kirk in the mayoralty and thus by circulating rumours, other candidates might be encouraged to stand against him.

C.T.Williams was installed as Mayor at a special meeting of the Council on 17 February 1958. In becoming Mayor Williams followed in the footsteps of his father, C.Morgan Williams. Charles Thomas Williams, usually known as Charlie, was the eldest of Morgan and Katie Williams's six children. He was born at Ohoka in 1908 and on leaving school carried on his father's interest in potato growing. He was first



Charles Thomas Williams - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

elected to the Council in 1939 and served until 1941. Williams next gained office in 1950 and remained a councillor until his elevation to Mayor in 1958. The Council had elected him as Kirk's Deputy Mayor in 1953, a position he retained until he succeeded Kirk five years later. Williams was also a member of the last Waimakariri Harbour Board from 1941 until its abolition in 1946. As a potato farmer he was elected a growers' representative for the northern half of the South Island onto the Potato Board from 1956 until 1959. Williams had a strong interest in the arts and was responsible for reviving the W.E.A. in Kaiapoi. He was chairman of the Kaiapoi W.E.A. at the time he became Mayor. In his spare time Charlie Williams enjoyed painting, sculpturing, pottery and stone polishing and it was through these interests

that he became a member of the Canterbury Society of Arts and later the chairman of the North Canterbury Community Arts Council. (2)

C.T. Williams was particularly interested in the reopening of the Kaiapoi Harbour. In partnership with his father, Williams ran the shipping agency of

(1) *North Canterbury Gazette*, 30.1.1958.

(2) Williams Peter, *The Savill Saga*, p113.

C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. It was a natural extension of his business interests that he should be in favour of the harbour re-opening. In November 1957 C.J.Ross of the Collingwood Shipping Company informed the Kaiapoi Borough Council that the company was interested in running cargo between Kaiapoi and Wellington. The company enquired of the Council how much cargo could be expected to come from Kaiapoi. The Council's response was to set up a committee consisting of the chairman of the Harbour Committee, the Town Clerk and Councillor Williams.

The committee's brief was to select a suitable person to make a survey of the potential inward and outward cargo. The committee was instructed to ensure that the survey proceeded as soon as possible. However nothing positive was put in place until the end of January 1958 when C.T.Williams again raised the matter of a survey of the potential trade to and from the port. Williams advised the Council that a Christchurch sawmill was interested in using the port at Kaiapoi to ship timber to Wellington. Williams pointed out that there were four sawmills in the vicinity of Kaiapoi which might be similarly inclined. On 3 February 1958 C.T.Williams, T.L.Williams and the Town Clerk, Corich, met with representatives of the shipping companies interested in using the port. The Councillors were able to inform the shipping representatives that an appointment was about to be made for a person to carry out a survey of local businesses. On the following day it was announced that a public relations officer, B.Wheatley, had been engaged by the Borough Council to interview one hundred and eighty businesses. It was estimated that the task would take Wheatley about two months to complete.

Wheatley presented a comprehensive report to the Council on 21 April. The survey revealed that there would be enough cargo both inwards and outwards to support a vessel capable of carrying between one hundred and two hundred tons of cargo. Wheatley listed paints, ranges, rubber goods, oil products and flax fibre as being the most likely inwards cargo. It was estimated that there would be at least two hundred tons of flax fibre coming into the port each month. The outwards cargo would consist of seasonal crops such as potatoes, onions and grains with a year round cargo of timber.

At the next Council meeting Councillor Oram expressed his concern over the scheme. He was prepared to agree that it go ahead on the understanding that only the minimum amount of money be spent on restoring the wharf. Oram argued that if the scheme failed, the Council should not lose too much money on it. A letter from the Secretary of the Marine Department was also formally noted as it contained a warning for the Council. In response to an earlier Council letter asking for the Department's advice on the re-opening of the port the Secretary made it clear that the project would not have any fiscal support from the government. Consequently the Council was urged to consider the cost of maintenance and the likelihood of the permanency of the shipping service as well as the immediate cost of the scheme.

However the concerns of Oram and the Secretary of the Marine Department when set alongside the Wheatley report did not appear to be significant. The Council was keen to proceed with the scheme as it seemed to offer Kaiapoi another

dimension to its commercial life. The Mayor reminded those present that a port had worked in Kaiapoi in years gone by and there seemed to be no reason to doubt that it would work again.

There was also concern among the public of Kaiapoi that the re-opening of the port would mean a reduction in services in the borough. These concerns were given voice in the *North Canterbury Gazette* on 3 April with the publication of a poem entitled "*Kaiapoi A Port Again. Why?*" over the pseudonym "C.B." In the poem "C.B." complained about the state of the roads in the borough reflecting the potential for damage to cars and a irresponsibility for broken bones. The last four lines sum up "C.B.'s" position:-

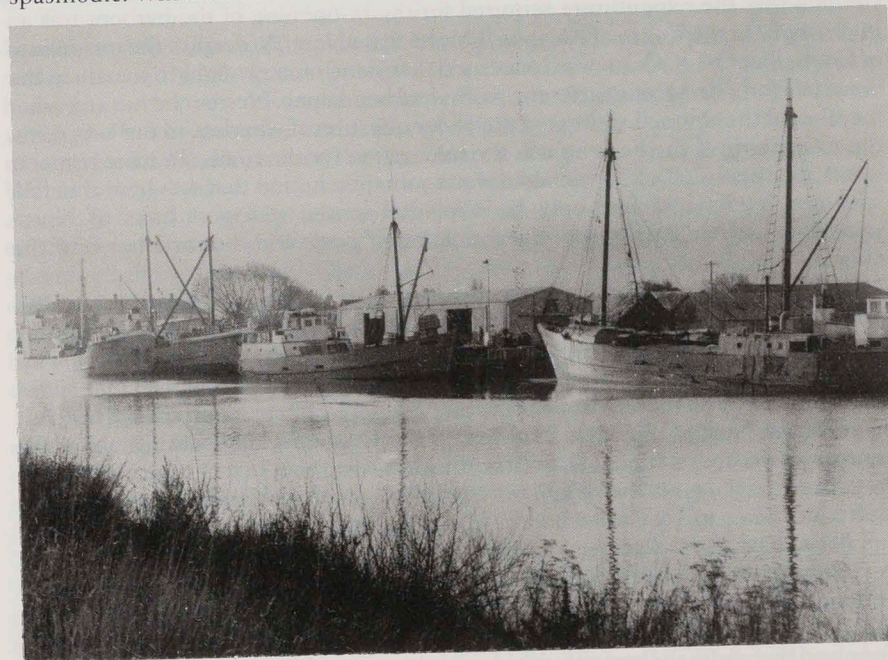
"Forget the Port - e'en take up sport
Upon Bill Murphy's Park,
And if you're not a shingle short
Don't go and buy a barque!"

In August 1958 the Council discussed the possibility of asking the Collingwood Shipping Company to make a trial trip to the port with cargo in order to satisfy both the Council and the public of Kaiapoi that it was feasible to re-open the port. The Council was prepared to met the expense of erecting a temporary beacon at the river mouth for the trial to be conducted safely.

A reply to this request was received at the Council meeting of 4 September. The company was not able to conduct a trial shipment as its agreement with the port authorities at Lyttelton required that it give one month's notice of a transfer of business from Lyttelton to Kaiapoi. However the Council was informed that the company had resolved to shift its business to Kaiapoi and it was not thought necessary to conduct a trial. C.J.Ross informed the Council that the shipping company had two vessels that were regarded as suitable for navigation along the river. The "*Paroto*", which had a draught of six feet six inches and the "*Ranginui*" which was slightly bigger, could both navigate the channel, in the opinion of Ross. All that was holding the company back was the fact that the wharf needed urgent repair and that the riverbed needed levelling in the vicinity of the wharf so that ships could sit evenly at low tide. Ross observed that it would also be helpful to have beacons placed at the junction of the North and South Branches and at the river mouth.

The shipping company reply, however, provoked a debate in the meeting about the merits of re-opening the port. Williams was staunchly in favour of the re-opening. He stated that most of the councillors had inspected the channel down the North Branch and had concluded that the river was navigable for the type of vessels that the Collingwood Company proposed to use. The design of vessels had changed since the 1930's when the "*Ngahau*" and the "*Foxton*" came up the river. Vessels in the 1950's, according to the Mayor, were now wider and deeper than previous ships and this meant that the trade could be viable as each vessel was able to carry a larger cargo. In admitting that the harbour dues would be negligible, the Mayor stressed that the Council would make money from the wharfages charged. Williams told the meeting that the charges in Lyttelton amounted to five shillings and six pence per ton and that the harbour at Kaiapoi could confidently expect to

charge around the same amount. It was considered that it would not be necessary to provide a permanent workforce of watersiders as the work would only be spasmodic. Williams also stated that the harbour would not need to employ labour



Warotahi, Ranganui, Paroto and Tuhoe in Kaiapoi harbour c.1962 - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

to move the cargo from the wharf to the storage shed as this would be the responsibility of the shipping company. Councillor Peachey raised the question of the Council being required to provide an access easement to the wharf, power and water supply to the shed and the wharf, and a boat to set and alter the channel lights. Councillor Booker said that in view of those requirements it was certain that the Council would have to spend money in order to have the port re-opened and that it would be prudent to employ a man to ensure that the harbour was in proper working order. Councillor Oram reported that just over one thousand six hundred pounds was in the General Harbour Account and that a further three hundred and fifty pounds could be available in the current financial year. Any other money that might be required would have to be raised from the ratepayers, a prospect that Councillor Oram was not keen to pursue. It was decided that, provided the work could be done for one thousand eight hundred pounds, it should proceed. The meeting decided that the Mayor should approach G.W.Pearson and Sons and Paramount Building Company for quotations on the essential work. It was also decided to inform the Marine Department of the Council's intention to open the harbour. The Town Clerk was directed to write to the Collingwood Shipping

Company to inform it of the Council's decision and that the Council was to keep the company informed of future progress.

This meeting was a crucial one for Mayor Williams. He had to convince his Council that the expenditure required for the re-opening of the harbour was an investment in the future of Kaiapoi. This he was able to do despite the misgivings of Councillor Oram. Oram was concerned that some money ought to remain in the General Harbour Account after the works had been done. Neither he nor any other member of the Council addressed the wider question of whether, in the long term, the re-opening of the harbour was a viable option for the town. In most respects it was a harkening back to the old days; a romantic notion that was bound to fail. The port at Kaiapoi had only been pivotal in the transport links of North Canterbury in the days before the formation of roads and the installation of the railway system.

A telling development, for the success or otherwise of re-opening the port, had been discussed by the Council at its 18 August meeting and yet none of the Councillors felt that it was important enough to have any bearing on the port. This was the proposed northern outlet highway. It was not foreseen by the Councillors that a highway into the city would have an enormous effect on the passage of goods to and from North Canterbury. In August the Council's only concern about the motorway was that it should be built in the Harewood area so that the existing road system converging on Russley Road would obviate the need for a highway to be built into the centre of Christchurch. That a highway could bypass Kaiapoi did not appear to have been discussed at that meeting.

Although it had been decided to approach G.W.Pearson and Son and Paramount Builders for estimates on how much the wharf restoration work would cost it appears that in the case of G.W.Pearson, at least, the approach was only in a verbal form and that, from the company's viewpoint, was not the way to conduct business. Whatever the circumstances the main tender to repair the wharf was let to a man called Butler who had estimated the cost of the work at nine hundred and eighty pounds.

In the days leading up to the re-opening of the port on 16 November disquiet was expressed about the amount of money spent on the repair work. Councillor T.L.Williams was adamant that no more work should be done as it appeared that the Council was going to over-run its one thousand eight hundred pounds budget. An account had been rendered by Butler for the work he had completed on the wharf. It totalled one thousand five hundred and ninety three pounds, a considerable increase over his original estimate. The increase was defended by the Mayor, C.T.Williams, who explained that the breastworks had needed to be extended an extra five feet and that, as the repair work proceeded, more rotten timber was discovered on the wharf. It was not practical to stop the work and so the Council had to tolerate the increased expenditure. C.T.Williams however assured the Council that the wharfages collected would more than cover the extra costs. The wharfage had been set at five shillings and six pence a ton which compared favourably with the five shillings and ten pence currently set at Lyttelton. In addition the Council would not be liable for the employment of men in the shed

as the Collingwood Shipping Company said that it would send a couple of its employees to man the shed. The company however reserved the right to withdraw its labourers when the work load increased.

The re-opening of the port after a twenty-two year break took place on 16 November 1958. The Collingwood Shipping Company's vessel the "*M.V.Paroto*", under the control of Captain Fitzsimmons, crossed the bar at 7.15a.m. and made her way up the river to Kaiapoi accompanied by a flotilla of small craft many of which she left in her wake at the first two bends on the river. The "*Paroto*" was moored by 8.15 at which time the Mayor went aboard. In his speech of welcome Williams stated that it was a happy day for Kaiapoi as the town had always been dependent on the river. As soon as the speeches were completed scenes reminiscent of the arrival of the "*Wootton*" in 1924 were experienced as hordes of children scrambled all over the ship. The reporter for the *North Canterbury Gazette* found it difficult to take photographs of the occasion because of the large number of children. However the Shipping Company's employees were efficient enough to have cleared everyone off the ship and to have the first truckload of cargo ready to depart for Christchurch by 8.45a.m.

The first trip made by the "*Ranginui*" happened four days later on 20 November under the captaincy of Colin Bell. The "*Ranginui*", although arriving at the more convenient time of 11.55a.m., attracted little public attention. She had left Lyttelton that morning with her cargo holds half full of a shipment of barley, flour, footwear, foodstuffs, and sidings. It was not reported what she loaded in Kaiapoi but she did leave for Wellington the next day. The port had been successfully re-opened.

At the Council meeting on 17 November in seconding the motion congratulating Williams on the successful re-opening of the port Councillor Oram admitted that he had grave doubts about the venture but that his mind had been changed when he had witnessed the ease with which the "*Paroto*" had berthed and the capacity cargo she had been carrying. In his reply Williams could only repeat that it was a good start to the trade especially with a ship like the "*Paroto*".

If the re-opening of the port was a feather in the cap of the Mayor the situation that developed in the Council offices during 1958 did not do either him or some of his Councillors much credit. The first hint of trouble came at the 21 July meeting of the Council when Councillor Peachey moved a resolution that the Town Clerk, I.J.Corich, should be suspended from his position because some important Council letters should have been sent out more expeditiously. This motion was left on the table to be confirmed at a later meeting. At an emergency meeting of the Council held on 30 July 1958 the question of the Town Clerk's competency was raised by Councillor L.V.McEwen. McEwen was concerned that some Council business which had been conducted "in committee" had been made known to outsiders. He regarded this as a most serious breach of trust. The resolution of 21 July was put to the meeting but it was lost. It was then decided that the Mayor and Councillors Peachey, Oram, and Sinclair form a committee to investigate the competency of the Town Clerk to carry out his duties. This investigation, although not in the category of a witch-hunt, appeared to place enormous strain on Corich and resulted in his resignation two months later, in September.

In his letter of resignation Corich recorded that he regretted that he had to resign when during the eight years of his service Kaiapoi had made progress towards being a modern town. Corich felt that his relationship with other Borough staff members had been happy and that he would treasure that aspect of his job in the future. However he was not so enthusiastic about his relationship with the Mayor and the Councillors. Corich hoped that his successor would receive more co-operation and fair-play from the Council than he had enjoyed.

More of the background to the breakdown in the relationship between Corich and the Council emerged after the appointment of C.W.D. Hodgson to the position. Hodgson had been appointed Acting Town Clerk in November 1958. The position was then advertised and by the closing date nine applications had been received, including one from Hodgson. At a special meeting of the Council held on 5 January 1959 Hodgson was appointed to the position of Town Clerk. It was felt that he would have the best grasp of the problems confronting the office staff which were to be discussed at a special meeting. It was at the special meeting held on 12 January that some of the problems that had confronted Corich were exposed.

In his verbal report, Hodgson said that the staff taken on to cope with the extra work that the sewage scheme had imposed on the office were now to be required for other duties. This had not been the current view of the Council which had taken the stance that those staff were surplus to requirements. Hodgson felt that with the new methods of office management that he was proposing to introduce and the natural expansion of the town all of the staff would be fully occupied. He saw that there was a need, however, to combine the position of Town Clerk with that of Treasurer and to appoint a person either partially or wholly qualified as an accountant to fill a position as Assistant Town Clerk and Accountant.

It would seem from this analysis by Hodgson that the Borough office had been undermanned during Corich's term. If this was the case then it is understandable why some of the tasks set by the Council were not carried out as quickly as may have been expected. The investigating committee set up by the Council must have been aware of these problems but it is apparent that it chose to ignore them in favour of trying to attach blame to the Town Clerk. There seems to be little doubt that at least on one occasion Corich did breach the trust of the Council. However this situation might have been handled in such a way that Corich did not feel obliged to resign. Whatever the true circumstances of the affair were, it is undeniable that at the time the Council was so proud of its achievement in reopening the port, its staff relations were at a low ebb.

The appointment of C.W.D. Hodgson to the Town Clerk's position was an opportunity to repair some of the damage. The Mayor thought it unwise to continue the system of dual control and so he was happy to recommend that the Council adopt the Hodgson plan and appoint an Assistant Town Clerk and Accountant. From the five applications for the position T.R. Gibson was selected to be Kaiapoi's first Assistant Town Clerk and Accountant. His appointment was confirmed at the 16 February 1959 Council meeting.

The change of government at the end of 1957 gave the Kaiapoi people the expectation that at last the town may get a high school. The Minister of Education, P.O.S. Skoglund, visited the area in April 1958 primarily to open a class room block at Rangiora High School. The opportunity was taken to have him visit Kaiapoi to inspect potential sites for a high school. The Council showed him one that it particularly favoured. The thirty two acre site was situated across Mafeking Bridge from Raven Street. For this to be a viable site for a school the Council thought that it would be necessary to build a road and bridge to connect Raven Street and Tuahiwi Road. The Council thought that the site was big enough and in a central position that would be ideal for a school. The Mayor reminded Skoglund that within a radius of six miles of Kaiapoi there were six primary schools that produced between them about one hundred and sixty pupils each year to go on to high school. Skoglund appeared to be impressed both with the figures and the site. He was rash enough to promise that Kaiapoi would have a high school within four to five years and that it would have between three hundred and four hundred pupils. As a first step towards that goal Skoglund was to instruct a purchasing officer from the Education Department to inspect the site.

The Department sent not only its purchasing officer but also a surveyor. A favourable report was presented to the Department and it seemed for a little while that the high school project on the Camside site would proceed. However during 1958 the northern motorway project was gathering momentum and it eventually put paid to the Camside site when it was realised that the motorway would need substantial land in that area thus reducing the amount of land available for a school. In August 1959 the Council received notice that although the Department of Education was satisfied with the site it had been informed by the Ministry of Works that the motorway plans would interfere with the high school plans. Thus the town was no nearer to obtaining a high school than it had been at the beginning of 1958.

In 1958 there was a broad realisation that the northern motorway project was potentially the most important public works scheme to affect Kaiapoi since the building of the railway in the 1870's. The less than enthusiastic discussion of the proposed new motorway in August 1958 was replaced by an urgency to present the Kaiapoi view on any such development. The Council was informed in December 1958 that as the National Roads Board had approved in principle the construction of the northern motorway there was very little prospect of the Board approving the widening of the carriageway of the Main North Road through Kaiapoi. This information rang alarm bells for the Council and it was decided to compile a report on the motorway from a Kaiapoi perspective.

The report prepared by the Mayor, the Chairman of the Works and Town Planning Committee and Councillors L.V. McEwen and E.J. Wyatt, was presented to a special meeting of a sub-committee, formed to consider the proposed motorway plans, on 17 March 1959. The main thesis of the report was that the planning authorities had made a basic mistake in assessing the pattern of traffic in the area. It was clear to those involved in compiling the Council report that there was a difference between weekday traffic and holiday traffic. Weekday traffic was

dominated by travellers going to and from Kaiapoi. It was estimated that the Kaiapoi bound traffic made up a third of all the traffic on the road and because of the increased development in the Kaiapoi area this proportion was bound to increase. On the other hand the holiday traffic was made up of those travelling to and from the northern beach areas from Kairaki to Leithfield.

The first stage of the proposed motorway was to include construction of a new bridge across the Waimakariri River and the section of the motorway from the bridge to a point just south of Woodend. It seemed to the authors of the Council report that this plan would not serve the hard core of the normal workday traffic. The access from Kaiapoi to the proposed new motorway was very poor thus, in the view of the report writers, compounding the traffic congestion problem. With the exception of Kairaki and The Pines, the northern beach areas would be very well served by the proposed new motorway. The report concluded that it was an inversion of values to design the main road for the convenience of holiday traffic rather than workday traffic.

The report also drew attention to the fact that the proposed siting of the motorway would have the effect of sealing Kaiapoi off from its hinterland to the west. It was considered that this would have a damaging affect on the future growth of Kaiapoi as well as posing a number of economic problems for the town. The report stated that it was certain that with the construction of the motorway the National Roads Board would relinquish control of the Main North Road and the cost of its upkeep would once again be the responsibility of the Kaiapoi ratepayers. The report also explored the probable result of the recent imposition of higher taxes on new motor vehicles. It was thought that this would reduce the number of cars on the roads therefore eliminating the need for expensive roading. This in turn bought the authors of the report back to the conclusion that the motorway, if built on the proposed route, would not serve the bulk of the traffic in the region.

The report suggested that there were two principal needs to be addressed for northern traffic. They were a more adequate bridge over the Waimakariri and, most urgently, a four-laned road between Chaney's and Kaiapoi with the upgrading of both Marshlands Road and the provision of a proper outlet to the north from Hills Road. In concluding, the report's authors suggested that the holiday traffic to the beach areas north of Woodend could be catered for, by way of a bypass road constructed to connect Middle Island Road, Tuahiwi Road and the Main North Road.

This report was to form the basis of Kaiapoi objections to the proposed motorway plan. Following discussions, the Kaiapoi Businessmen's Association assured the Town Planning Committee of its full support in any endeavour to alter the motorway plans. The Association told the committee that it considered that the new motorway would be a major factor in determining the future of the borough. According to the Association there were three points to be considered when working out the finer details of the motorway plan. These were to be firstly the positioning of the motorway; secondly that there was sufficient access to the motorway from Kaiapoi (at least two points of entry and exit) and lastly that there

was provision for either flyovers or underpasses for the established secondary roads that already lead into Kaiapoi.

The Businessmen's Association accepted that a motorway would be built and in its points was endeavouring to gain the best possible access from the motorway to Kaiapoi. The Council's report on the other hand was predicated on the opinion that the existing road system was capable of upgrading and should therefore be considered before the construction of what the report labelled as "expensive roading."

As with the port and the securing of a high school for the borough, the proposals for the motorway were to be continued into the next decade. There were however some smaller scale events at the end of the decade which characterised the 1950's in Kaiapoi better than these major events.

The first of these occasions was the 1959 Queen Carnival which was run from 7 February to 21 March. This carnival had its roots at the time of the Kirk mayoralty. When the old Kaiapoi Borough School buildings known as the Borough Hall had been destroyed by fire in 1957 many sports and other clubs affiliated to the Kaiapoi Community Centre lost their accommodation. The Community Centre had been functioning since July 1943. The first president of the organisation was the Mayor of that time, E.G. Gray. The Community Centre had taken all of the rooms in the old school buildings for the use of the affiliated clubs. The foundation clubs were the Kaiapoi Football Club, the Kaiapoi Cricket Club, the Hinemoa Hockey Club, the Men's and Ladies' Badminton Clubs, the Basketball Club, the Drama Club, the Kaiapoi branch of the W.E.A., the Women's Institute, the Borough School Committee and the Gardening Club. Two of the rooms had been converted for use as badminton courts and another was in use as an indoor basketball court. The rugby club players had regular sessions of indoor physical training combined with basketball at the Borough Hall under the auspices of the Community Centre. In addition to the use that the affiliated clubs made of the Borough Hall the St John's Ambulance also used the rooms. At its inception, therefore, the Community Centre was an umbrella group for a diverse number of organisations.

After the 1957 fire the town was desperately short of the type of accommodation for clubs that the Borough Hall had provided. The R.S.A. offered its building to the sports clubs at a reduced rental but there was still a need for a community building that would cater for the diversity of clubs that were without a home base. Kirk suggested that a scheme, to be called the Kaiapoi Community Development Scheme, be established to raise money for a community centre project. The Development Scheme had three aims. The first was to pay off the three thousand pound mortgage on the R.S.A. buildings; the second was to pay off the one thousand pound debt on the recently completed Cure Boating Club pavilion and the third aim was to raise money for a new community centre building. The old Borough Hall land was sold to the Kaiapoi Fire Board for its new station complex and the old fire station site was also sold. The money accumulated from these sales went into the Development Scheme.

The Development Scheme Committee, which was comprised of delegates from the R.S.A., the Cure Boating Club and the Community Centre, decided to

pursue a more active fund raising scheme. To that end towards the end of 1958 it was decided to employ a professional fund raiser from the North Island, A.D. Lynch. It became Lynch's responsibility to run a successful Queen Carnival.

The basic concept of a Queen Carnival as a fund-raising vehicle was quite simple. A number of groups were to get together to form an umbrella group which then selected a woman to represent it in all its fund raising endeavours. The umbrella group then competed with other similar umbrella groups in the community to raise money. The representative of the successful group then became the Queen of the Carnival. In the 1959 Queen Carnival there were three groups involved. The Community Centre was represented by Mrs Alice Tourell, the Canterbury Licensed Victuallers Association (L.V.A.) was represented by Miss Sherry Bates and the United Committee was represented by Miss Beverly Gason. Alice Tourell, who as Alice Hopkinson represented the South Island at hockey in 1956, was a well known sportswoman in Kaiapoi. She was a keen swimmer and after her marriage to Keith Tourell crewed on the yacht "Tara". Alice had taught at Kaiapoi Borough School, Belfast School and Selwyn House. The Community Centre Committee was chaired by Bruce Paterson. Sherry Bates was a school pupil and the daughter of R.H. Bates, the proprietor of the Mandeville Hotel. The chairman of the L.V.A. Queen Carnival Committee was I. Thompson. The United Committee chaired by W. Pitama was made up of the Kaiapoi R.S.A., the freezing works and Maori interests. Beverly Gason was a shorthand typist with Hutchinson Motors in Christchurch.

Lynch anticipated the Queen Carnival would raise was eight thousand pounds which would have covered the two debts and left a healthy balance in the community centre building fund. However the sum raised fell short of budget with five thousand pounds being the eventual return. The Development Committee had already determined that any amount raised would be split on the ratio of fifty per cent for the building fund, thirty per cent for the R.S.A. debt and twenty percent for the Cure Boating Club debt. The amount raised did not therefore completely pay off the debts although the whole venture was counted as a success. Beverly Gason was proclaimed Queen and all the events held by the three groups were judged to have drawn the Kaiapoi community closer together. The Queen Carnival exploited, in a positive manner, those feelings of rivalry which are always present in a community in that each group was working towards the provision of tangible benefits for the town. It was the kind of spirit that set up the Community Centre in 1943 and it certainly gave new life to the idea of a centre which, since the fire, had been flagging.

At the same time as the Kaiapoi Community Scheme was being judged a success a long running institution in the area was pronounced dead. The Pines had been running a new year gala since 1920 but in 1959 it was decided that it was no longer a worthwhile fund raising event. The main reason given for the decision to discontinue was that the Kaiapoi Borough Council had decided to charge the Gala Committee ten per cent on all net profits. The committee felt that the amount it would be left with was not worth the effort that was required to produce it. Over the period of forty years that the gala had been run thirty thousand pounds had been

raised and many projects to improve The Pines had been put in place from the proceeds. A boardwalk had been constructed, slides had been built on the Oval, trees had been planted, the water supply, roads and streets had been improved, street lighting installed, fences and a bus shelter built. The largest project undertaken over the years was the building of the hall. All the projects undertaken with the money raised by the galas were completed with voluntary labour and it was with regret that the 1958 committee made the decision to discontinue the gala after the 1959 celebration. The work of the gala committees in The Pines over that period of time was typical of the attitude which existed in the beach settlement. It was realised very early by many residents that, because of the dual control of the area by the Kaiapoi Borough Council and the Rangiora County Council, The Pines would almost certainly be expendable in the schemes of both local authorities. It was therefore necessary for the comfort of both the residents and the holiday makers to have a self-help programme. The galas provided the money for that programme. Over the years the galas had become for many people a tradition and there was a great deal of regret expressed at the 1958 Committee's decision to discontinue them.

Both the Kaiapoi Queen Carnival and the decision to discontinue the The Pines New Year Gala were examples of how the community in both areas had a strong sense of self-help. That sense had been present since the beginning of Pakeha settlement and although enthusiasm for such schemes waxed and waned, especially in the township, part of the identity of the area was expressed in the wish to help the community achieve projects by itself without the help of outside agencies. In fact in the case of the The Pines New Year gala it was the interference of an outside agency, the Kaiapoi Borough Council, which led to its cessation. The gala, nevertheless, provided a supreme example of community self-help which began to disappear in the following decade.

The decision of the New Zealand Geographic Board to re-name the North Branch of the Waimakariri River, the Kaiapoi River, in September 1959 reinforced the idea that the town had an identity of its own. References to the river being re-named had appeared in the *North Canterbury Gazette* in 1949. J.Nibs in his column of 6 May 1949 suggested that the North Branch of the Waimakariri was too clumsy and a non specific name for the river. He likened it to calling the Avon the North Branch of the Heathcote River. However most of the correspondence that the paper received on the subject was not sympathetic to a name change and even although Nibs remained convinced that a name change was necessary, the matter gradually slid from the public consciousness.

Over the years and especially since the North Branch had ceased to form a moat around the Island there had been much confusion over the name of the river. It began to be referred to as "the River" because many people were bewildered about its origin. In the years since the first Pakeha settlement the landscape of the area had been so severely changed that it would have been difficult for those early settlers to have found land marks that were familiar. It was no longer possible to recognise the origin of the waterway as one of the great braids of the lower Waimakariri River. In the late 1950's the North Branch was more likely to be

associated by people with the Cam River. In fact many people thought that the Cam was the origin of the North Branch and had begun to call the whole of the North Branch, the Cam River. With the re-opening of the Port in 1958 the name of the river assumed more importance as the port was referred to as Kaiapoi Port. It was realised that a less confusing name than the North Branch was needed. In February 1959 the Kaiapoi Borough Council indicated its full support for the North Canterbury Catchment Board's effort to have the river re-named. The Council stressed that the river south of Sidey Quay to the confluence of the North and South Branches should be the body of water re-named. In April the Eyre County also wrote to the National Geographic Board supporting the re-naming of the river. In the event the re-naming the river caused very little fuss. It was a logical outcome and it re-enforced the association of the river and the town. As in all things there was regret that in naming the river, Kaiapoi, all links with its origin were lost. Although it still plays an important part in the Waimakariri drainage system, its name sets it apart from the great river which in reality gave the Kaiapoi River its birth.

It has been considered by many commentators that the 1950's were a lucky decade for the country. In general the New Zealand economy was buoyant throughout most of the decade. The social welfare schemes put in place by the First Labour Government appeared to be making New Zealand society a caring and safe place for its citizens. There were plenty of job opportunities and thanks to the post World War Two baby boom there was an increase in the population. There appeared to be few clouds on the country's horizon. It was therefore a shock to the country when the 1957 Labour Government was compelled to bring down a harsh economic statement, the "*Black Budget*" of 1958. This budget sought to correct the sudden crisis in the country's overseas money reserves. New Zealand exports throughout the 1950's had been receiving good prices and as a result there had been an increase in spending in the country especially on imported goods. At the end of 1957 and the beginning of 1958 there was a sharp fall in the prices that exported goods, especially dairy products, received and this reduction came close to extinguishing the nation's overseas reserves. The government's response was to increase taxes on petrol, liquor, and tobacco and to cut back on imports supported by a programme of raising loans overseas to cover the deficit.

However none of this crisis was apparent in the annual reports of the North Canterbury Freezing Works for the last three years of the decade. There was a steady increase in profits for those years and although the chairman, A.P. Bruce, made reference in the annual report for 1958 to the declining overseas prices for most of the country's primary exports and the fact that there were indications that the post war boom was now at an end, the company did not seem to be unduly worried by the developments. The biggest problem for the company seemed to be coping with the pressure of an increase in the numbers of stock being put through the works. Much of the concern over falling prices for produce was not shouldered by the company as it was still operating what it termed its "open door" policy. Under this scheme the farmer clients could take advantage of the killing, freezing,

and shipping facilities offered by the company but would be responsible for selling of their own stock on the overseas markets. The loss due to a fall in price for the product therefore, was not felt by the company. The obvious solution for farmers was to increase the volume of stock they put through in order to maintain their incomes. This resulted in record kills for the works and thus a steady increase in company profits. This fact, combined with drought conditions in 1957-58, meant that the works was able to achieve a record kill in 1959. It was reported by the company in June 1959 that half a million carcasses had been put through one chain in a season. The figure had applied at the end of May. The management of the plant made two observations on this achievement. In the first instance an increased number of stock were being offered due to the record number of lambs being born in the 1958-59 season and the drought conditions compelled farmers to quit large numbers of stock. Secondly the management with the co-operation of the local branch of the Freezing Workers' Union had been able to open the works for extended hours from November 1958 through to April 1959. The works had been open an extra half hour each working day as well as being open on Saturday mornings.

There was an interesting development in the company's thinking about its markets in the last years of the decade. In the 1959 annual report to the shareholders the chairman, Charles Hilgendorf, commented on the decline in the New Zealand share of the market outside of the United Kingdom. He attributed this to the presence of the Australian meat industry competing in these markets. Hilgendorf went on to suggest that the Japanese market could absorb a larger quantity of meat and that avenue should be fully explored. It is clear that the chairman, at least, was aware that full reliance on the United Kingdom market for meat products was misplaced and that the North Canterbury Sheepfarmers, Co-Operative Freezing Export and Agency Company needed to explore alternative markets. Hilgendorf remained the chairman of the Board of Directors until the 1961 Annual meeting when he retired in order to take up an elected position on the New Zealand Meat Producers' Board. Under his chairmanship the works at Kaiapoi were expanded to cope with the large numbers of stock being killed each season. There was a particular need in the final years of the decade for the works to be able to respond quickly to the needs of those farmers on the lighter and more drought-prone lands of North Canterbury to have their lighter animals killed at the optimum time in order to avoid too big a weight loss through insufficient feed. By the end of 1961 a new slaughter house block had been built and commissioned. Although there had been a number of problems at the beginning, by the end of the season, work was proceeding smoothly in the new block.

As a contrast to freezing works the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill experienced the effects of the decline in prices of exported goods. The mill had found the post war boom difficult to cope with as the increase in raw wool prices had in turn forced up the price of its end product. When the price of wool eventually fell the mill was not able to improve its situation because the prices it could obtain for its product dropped correspondingly. Unlike the Freezing works the mill could not increase its production to maintain its income. It had been unable to up-date its facilities

through a lack of reserves and a decline in productivity. The economic woes the mill encountered throughout the 1950's were compounded in the 1960's by management problems. The long period of management under George Greenwood came to an end in February 1959. He was succeeded by Kingsley Harrison who was to be the last mill manager of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mills.

The 1960's proved to be a difficult period for the Kaiapoi Borough Council. Most of the difficulties revolved around problems with the port which were beginning to become evident in 1959. In August 1959 the Borough Council extended the agreement on the use of the harbour by the Collingwood Shipping Company for a further twelve months from November on the condition that the harbourmaster employed by the company carried out his duties to the satisfaction of the Council. However before the November renewal date the Council and the shipping company were faced with a new set of conditions. An emergency meeting of the Harbour Committee was called on 15 September 1959 to discuss with the manager of the shipping company, Mr Ross and another director, Mr Nelsen, a proposal from the Pearl Kasper Shipping Company to operate the "*Talisman*" from Kaiapoi. The representatives of the Collingwood Shipping Company were understandably anxious to preserve their company's sole use status of the port. In the discussion Ross said that at present the ships on the Lyttelton to Wellington run were only using half of their capacity and that if another company was to use Kaiapoi his company would be adversely affected. However the company was willing to put another ship on the Kaiapoi run if the position altered. This prospect was tempered by the company's insistence that it needed regular cargoes to off set its expenditure on a harbourmaster and a launch. In the company's view the formation of a Kaiapoi branch of the Watersiders' Union would exert further pressures on its budget as the company would be required to pay the minimum wage to the six workers employed at the port.

It was decided by those present at the meeting that the chairman of the Harbour Committee and the Mayor should meet with the Collingwood Shipping Company to draw up an agreement which would safeguard the interests of the borough and the shipping company and maintain the service which had been established by the shipping company over the previous year.

In a remarkably quick time, in fact on the same evening as the emergency meeting had been held, the full Council met with the representatives of the Collingwood Shipping Company and were able to agree on six conditions to reach a formal agreement between the two bodies. It was stated at the outset of the meeting that the Council was duty bound to consider the views of other shipping companies interested in using the port. However the six points of agreement went a long way to ensuring that no other company would be able use the port. It was agreed that the cargo wharf, the lights, the water, the shed and the office presently utilised and occupied by the Collingwood Company would be leased to it until November 1960 at a rent of one pound per week. This lease was subject to the Council having the right to collect the wharfages at five shillings and six pence per ton with the company to receive two shillings and six pence of this amount. The shipping company was bound to cope with the volume of cargo to and from

Wellington but it had to make available wharf space and the services of the harbourmaster to other vessels trading with other ports provided there were berths available. The Collingwood Company would in return for the services of the harbourmaster to other vessels receive the same percentage of wharfages that it received on its own vessels. Lastly the Collingwood Company would have the right to make a reasonable charge for the power, lights and storage space used by ships other than its own.

This agreement which was published in *The Press* on 23 September drew strong criticism from the directors of the Pearl Kasper Shipping Company. In a letter to the Harbour Committee the directors wrote that they were astounded to read of the agreement in the paper and outraged to find that the Collingwood Company had the sole right to trade between Kaiapoi and Wellington. The directors of Pearl Kasper had understood from a meeting held with the Mayor that the company would be welcome at Kaiapoi and had already made arrangements to sail from Wellington to Kaiapoi from 23 October.

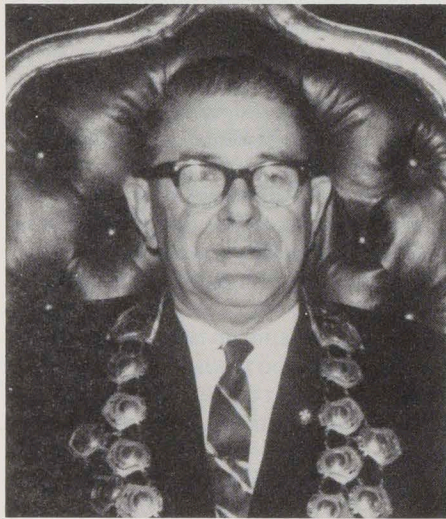
The Pearl Kasper Company was not the only organisation to be concerned over the agreement between the Council and the Collingwood Company. The Secretary of Marine wrote in a letter received by the Council at its 19 October meeting that he had misgivings about the agreement as he thought that it conflicted with some of the provisions of the Harbours Act.

After some discussion by the Council it was decided to inform the Secretary of Marine that the agreement was still in the discussion stage but, from the Council's point of view, the Collingwood Company was entitled to special consideration for its pioneering work in the re-opening of the port. In the opinion of the Council, the Company was providing an excellent service with two ships visiting the port on a weekly basis and that it would not be in the public interest to have this service disrupted in any way. The Council further decided to inform the Pearl Kasper Company that the agreement between it and the Collingwood Company was still in the discussion stage and that it would be informed of progress.

In the first year of operation of the re-opened port between thirteen and fourteen thousand tons of cargo had been handled and that one of the ships, the "*Ranginui*", had visited the port seventy six times. In the last days of the Williams' mayoralty the figures indicated that the re-opening of the port was a success. Williams indicated to the Council that he had been in contact with New Zealand Forest Products promoting Kaiapoi as a site for a paper mill. Not only was the port in workable order but there were adjacent forests and an abundance of water. The only problem was the relationship between the Council and the Collingwood Shipping Company and the Pearl Kasper Shipping Company.

The 1959 local body elections reflected the general discontent the community felt with the Labour Government. In Kaiapoi the Independent candidates topped the poll and two of the Labour sitting councillors were not re-elected. In the mayoral election, Owen Williams, an Independent, easily out-pollled Charlie Williams, the sitting Labour Party mayor. The turnout for voting was low, an indication that the usually staunch Labour voters of Kaiapoi preferred not to vote rather than to support an Independent candidate. In fact Owen Williams, who was

not related to Charlie Williams, was in many ways the kind of person that the Labour Party might have chosen for a candidate. His brother Trevor who was a Labour candidate had been elected to the Council for a second term. The brothers



Owen Williams - courtesy Williams family

were part of a large family from Westport. Owen had started his working life as a photographer for *The Press* but had given that up for the first love of his life, engines. He had opened a garage in Kaiapoi and shortly before his election to the mayoralty had moved his business to new premises. He had been a very keen motorsport enthusiast and had a particular affection for riding 250cc motorbikes. He competed many times at the Cust Grand Prix, the last year being 1947. He set two New Zealand speed records for 250cc bikes in 1939. The first was the beach speed record for which Williams was clocked at 76.92 miles an hour and the second was the flying half mile which he set at 80.36 miles per hour. At the time of his election he was a sitting Councillor having been voted on in March 1958 to fill the vacancy caused by Kirk's resignation and Charlie Williams' elevation to the mayoralty. Owen Williams retained his interest in photography by serving as president of the Kaiapoi Camera Club. He was also elected a life member of the Pioneer Motor Club, the Waimakariri Sailing and Power Boat Club and the Kaiapoi Working Men's Club. Williams' high profile did not remove his appeal to the ordinary voter. Indeed his independent stand in the political world gave him an advantage in the 1959 local body elections.

However the problems that had arisen over the operation of the port did not disappear with the election of Owen Williams. Throughout 1960 there were a number of structural and management problems which on their own would not have been of much concern but taken together posed a much bigger problem for the Borough Council. In March 1960 the Harbour Committee under the leadership of Councillor T.L. Williams met with three directors of the Collingwood Company, W.G.Curnow, C.J.Ross, and A.B.Evans, along with the Company's secretary, A.J.Evans, and the harbourmaster, C.Bell. They discussed a number of wharf matters. Despite undertaking repairs for the re-opening of the port only fifteen months previously, holes had appeared in the wharf. This meant that only one ship could be worked at a time in spite of the company being keen to have both its ships in the port at the same time. The shipping company representatives recommended that the Council not only repair the present wharf but also extend it further downstream to a point where the harbourmaster had estimated there was deeper and wider

water affording a better basin than the one currently being used. The company also recommended that a new shed be built adjacent to the proposed new wharf. These recommendations were likely to cost a substantial amount of money, probably more than the operations at the port would warrant. It is not surprising that both the Harbour Committee and the Council appeared reluctant to commit themselves to the suggested improvement. The company however did not give up. Through its harbourmaster's reports it was able to press its viewpoint. In his report of May 1960 Captain Bell recorded that all of the ships' masters had expressed concern at the lack of a dredged swinging basin. As the river was tidal it was imperative that the ships be turned around in the shortest possible time to avoid the possibility of being carried up past the wharf on a flood tide. In order to achieve this the masters were obliged to have their ships' engines on full during the turn thus causing more structural damage to the wharf as well as to the river itself. Captain Bell warned that given a choice between damage to their ships or damage to other property, ships' masters would always favour their vessels. In the report there is some mention of a repair to a pile which the "*Ranginui*" had carried away.

At this time there were three ships trading through Kaiapoi. The "*Picton*" like the "*Ranginui*" had a deep draught and was likely to cause the same sort of damage as the "*Ranginui*" had done. The numbers of ships coming through the port also posed problems for Captain Bell. According to his report the western end of the wharf had subsided to such a degree that he did not consider it safe to load or discharge cargo from it. This caused a lack of space at the port with a consequent delay for the shippers.

These structural deficiencies at the wharf and on the river bed itself needed major repair work and as such were likely to be deferred as long as possible by the Council. In addition to the major repairs Captain Bell in his report identified a rubbish problem at the port. He stated that at most ports the harbour authorities provided a refuse boat or vehicle to take the rubbish away. In the case of Kaiapoi it was not a major problem but he considered that it might become one if the Council did not give consideration to providing a service for the ships. He added however that there were more dead stock floating in the river than meal scraps from the ships.

The only response to the harbourmaster's report was from the Harbour Committee. In its May report the Committee noted that the No 2 Berth was unsafe and was not to be used in future.

The Kaiapoi Waterfront Workers Union added to the financial dilemma of the borough with a demand for better facilities at Kaiapoi for its members. In a deputation to the Harbour Committee meeting on 14 July led by Messrs Miles and Johnson the union asserted that by virtue of certain provisions in the Health Act, the Harbours Act and the Waterfront Industry Act 1953 an amenity block had to be provided. To comply with the requirements of the statutes, the block had to include a safe comfortable room in which the workers could rest during their breaks. It had also to have lighting and heating available for those workers on night shift. The Harbour Committee recommended that the Collingwood Shipping

Company be asked to give urgent consideration to the building of such an amenity block therefore extending the Company's already strong financial input into the facilities of the harbour.

Sometime between July 1960 and March 1961 the Collingwood Shipping Company changed its name to the Inter Island Shipping Company. However the personnel employed at Kaiapoi remained the same and it was assumed both by the company and the Council that the conditions under which the company traded at Kaiapoi would also remain the unaltered. This was not to be. As with the challenge of the Pearl Kasper Company at the end of 1959, the agreement between the company and the Council faced a challenge from a second shipping company. This time however the challenge was more persistent. It came from the local company of C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. The company had decided to enter the shipping trade by obtaining the agency of the "*M.V.Toa*". In March 1961 C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. wrote a letter to the Council containing the warning shot in the eventual dispute. The letter stated that the Council would be most unwise to extend its agreement with the Inter Island Company beyond the end of the month as other ships would be entering the port at that time. At the beginning of April the Council did extend its agreement with the Inter Island Company to November 1961. The company was to maintain the services (the launch, the harbourmaster and tally clerk) it had in operation at the port as well as accepting responsibility for the payment of the electricity and telephone accounts in return for a percentage of the wharfages and the Council's undertaking was to be responsible for the capital costs of further wharf extensions. At the same time the Council acknowledged that C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. had the agency for "*M.V.Picton*" and "*M.V.Toa*" and arranged with that company an authority to collect wharfages on behalf of the Council. A proportion of the wharfages were to be paid to the Inter Island Company as payment for the services it provided for the "*M.V.Picton*" and "*M.V.Toa*". This seemed to the Council to be a reasonable proposal as it took into account the contribution that the Inter Island Company had made to the re-opening and running of the port. At the same time concessions were made to the newest company operating through the port.

The concessions were not enough for C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. At a special meeting of the Council held on 20 April, a director of the company, C.T.Williams, explained that although the company was receiving full co-operation from the Inter Island Company and Captain Bell it thought that the percentage of wharfages that went to the Inter Island Company was, in effect, a subsidy. C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. was prepared to collect the wharfages on the understanding that the company receive a small commission to cover the clerical cost of doing the job.

The main item on the agenda for that meeting, however, was to give consideration to the extension of the wharf. Captain Bell suggested that it be extended downstream for up to two hundred feet. Certainly the Council gave more time to a consideration to this issue, which appeared relatively straight forward, than to the matters raised by C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. Whatever the priorities were, it was obvious by November 1961 that the local company was about to adopt more

aggressive tactics towards obtaining its view of a fair environment for its trading activities.

At its meeting on 13 November 1961 the Harbour Committee received a letter from the Secretary of Marine stating that the Department had been informed by C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd that the agreement the Council intended to enter into with the Inter Island Shipping Company contained provisions for the harbourmaster's salary to be paid from a two shilling and sixpence a ton levy from the wharfages. Over a year it was estimated that this would amount to just under five thousand pounds which C.Morgan Williams And Son Ltd. claimed was a subsidy for the Inter Island Company. The Secretary of Marine agreed with the conclusions of the company and reminded the Council of the letter the Department had written in October 1959 when the Pearl Kasper Company had made the same claim. The Council was told that any payment to an individual should be related to the value of the services rendered. It is clear by implication that the Department considered the four thousand nine hundred and twenty pounds too much for the services of a harbourmaster at the port of Kaiapoi. The Secretary of Marine then went on to observe that no harbour board or, in the case of Kaiapoi, a local authority acting as a harbour board, had the authority to give preferential treatment to one shipping company over other companies.

This letter provoked cries of outrage from the Council. It stated categorically that the extension of the agreement was not deliberately designed as a subsidy and that the Council considered that those words reflected on the integrity of its members. The Council sent a copy of its agreement with the Inter Island Company to the Secretary of Marine. No more was heard from the Department at this stage.

The dispute would eventually escalate out of all proportion. In December C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. informed the Council that it considered the Council's action in requesting that the Inter Island Company collect the wharfages from all ships using the port a threat. In the company's opinion the manifests and cargo lists of its ships were the property of the ships and should not be given to another shipping company. The company promised to take legal action against the Council and /or its individual members or any Council employees who disclosed the contents of its ships' manifests and cargo lists to a third party. In addition to writing this, somewhat bellicose, letter the Council was informed by the Town Clerk that C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. had deducted just over eight pounds from the wharfages as a collection commission. The Town Clerk was instructed to consult with the borough's solicitors on the legality of such an action.

Shortly after this development, in January 1962, the Council received confirmation from the District Supervisor of the Audit Department that the agreement between the Council and the Inter Island Shipping Company was in order. The District Supervisor, wrote that to date, the Inter Island Company had not made any significant profit out of the agreement but he warned that if the amount of cargo handled at the port continued to rise as it had done in 1961 then it would be prudent for the Council to review carefully the agreement when it came up for renewal in November 1962. The District Supervisor added that he had informed C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. of his findings.

The Audit Department report should have put to rest any possible concern that C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd might have had regarding the agreement between the Council and the Inter Island Shipping Company but it did not. The problem between the Kaiapoi Shipping Company, run by C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd, and the Council now centred on the retention of what the company termed commission for the task of collecting the wharfages.

In May 1962 the Council again demanded the payment of the deducted money adding that it was willing to open negotiations between the Inter Island Shipping Company and the Kaiapoi Shipping Company with the aim of settling what appeared to be a double payment of commission.

The negotiations were opened at a meeting held on 7 June between representatives of both companies and the Council. The Inter Island Company representative, Mr Nelsen, stated that his company was prepared to collect the wharfages from all ships using the port and that his company did not consider the information contained in the ships' manifest and cargo list to be confidential as there were other means by which that information could be obtained. He thought that the two and a half per cent commission that his company received on the wharfages was a book entry only and of no significance to the Inter Island Company. The Inter Island Company position was not accepted by the representative of the Kaiapoi Shipping Company, C.T.Williams, who stated that his company considered the two and half per cent commission it charged on the wharfages it collected to be fair as it would have been impossible for the Council to have made the collection by itself. Williams was of the opinion that the commission charged by the Inter Island Company on the total wharfages collected, on those it collected as well as on those collected by the Kaiapoi Shipping Company, was illegal. In the Council's view there were two possible solutions. The first was to hand the entire collection job over to the Inter Island Shipping Company and the second was to take over the task itself. The Kaiapoi Shipping Company could not agree with either solution and it refused to hand over the commissions it had already deducted. The meeting broke up with the parties further apart than they had been before the meeting.

The attitude of the Kaiapoi Shipping Company put the Council in an awkward position. It had complimented the enterprise of the company and it could see the benefits of having more than one company trading through its port. On the other hand the Council could not forget the assistance that the Inter Island Company had given it in the task of re-opening the port. It was clear by the end of the 7 June meeting that no compromise solution could be worked out. Inevitably the Council and the Kaiapoi Shipping Company would become involved in a legal battle over the retention of the commission payments. In July 1962 the Harbour Committee recommended that the Council proceed with legal action to recover the commissions deducted by the Kaiapoi Shipping Company from the wharfages it had collected.

At the same time as the dispute over the retention of the commissions was aggravating the relationship between the Council and the Kaiapoi Shipping Company, the company was embarking on a campaign that was bound to cause a

deterioration of the relationship between the two shipping companies. The Finance Committee received a letter from a director of the Kaiapoi Shipping Company, Captain C.M.Anderson, at its 23 July meeting, containing estimates for the provision of essential services at the port. Anderson submitted two estimates. The first one was based on the use of the existing launch and radio and the second was based on the contemplated purchase of larger second hand launch with a new radio telephone. These estimates appeared to be unsolicited as the Finance Committee decided to write to the other shipping company using the port asking it to submit an estimation of the running of the essential services. As well as making it clear to the Inter Island Company that the Council through its Finance Committee was considering changes at the port, the Harbour Committee was confirming that changes had to take place. It decided that the an element of unfairness could result if the present agreement between the Inter Island Company and the Council was renewed. The Harbour Committee decided to call a conference between all shipping companies using the port and the Marine Department to sort out any potential difficulties. However no such meeting took place. Instead the Finance Committee presented an agreement which it stated was fair to all the parties concerned. The agreement was to last for two years provided that the Inter Island Company continued to pay for the present costs of the harbour which were estimated to be three thousand pounds per year. The Inter Island Company would continue to receive its present percentage payment until the cost of the expenses were recovered and thereafter would receive ten per cent on the excess money. This agreement was sent to the Marine Department with a covering letter from the Council explaining that it thought that the new agreement included a fair and equitable price for the services which the company provided.

This was not the view of the Secretary of Marine. In a lengthy letter received by the Harbour Committee on 13 September 1962 the Secretary stated that it was apparent that the Council had not come up with an agreement that could provide the basis for running a port that was acceptable to both shipping companies. It was recommended that a further conference was held. A motion proposed by Councillor Sinclair to recommend to the incoming council that such a conference be held was lost as there was no seconder. Instead a motion proposed by Councillor Monk and seconded by Councillor Thompson adopted the proposal that a decision on the agreement be deferred until the new council had been elected. At this point in the meeting the expectations of the Inter Island Company on the future of the port were expressed. The company was concerned that the competition for freight from the new inter island rail ferry, "*Aramoana*", and Lyttelton on completion of the road tunnel connecting that port with Christchurch, would adversely affect the Kaiapoi operation. The company urged the Council to recommend to the incoming council that a conference be held.

Throughout Owen Williams's first term as Mayor the problem of the port had been festering. There seemed little likelihood that it would be resolved. The loyalty of the Council towards the Inter Island Company was severely tested by the persistence of the Kaiapoi Shipping Company and the changing conditions of trade at the port. At the last meeting of the old Council on 8 October 1962 the harbour-

master reported that the Kaiapoi Company had inaugurated a new service between Kaiapoi and Napier on 11 September using the "*M.V. Tuho*". This confirmed the view that the company was intent on seeking out new avenues for coastal trade so that it would be in a better position to push its case with the new Council.

Owen Williams was returned to the mayoralty for the second time but more significantly for the operation of the harbour H.Owen Hills was returned to local body government as a Councillor. His long experience on the old Harbour Board both as a member and as chairman resulted in his being appointed to chair the Harbour Committee. Hills held a special meeting of the Harbour Committee on 8 November to consider all the concerns that had been raised over the running of the port including the problem of commission on wharfages. It was decided to defer the commission problem to an ordinary meeting of the Harbour Committee. The special meeting then went on to discuss with representatives of both shipping companies thirteen questions that the committee considered pertinent to the smooth running of the harbour. The Kaiapoi Shipping Company represented by Messrs C.T.Williams and M.Tipping met with the committee first. The Kaiapoi Shipping Company was happy to suggest that physical improvement be made to the harbour but would not discuss the question of the port's economic future indicating that it was too wide a question to answer. The Kaiapoi representatives however wanted to make it clear to the committee that they were unhappy with the present rate of payment to the Inter Island Company for the provision of the essential services which in their view placed their company at a disadvantage. Tipping then went on to say that the problem was compounded by the unfair competition from the rail ferry. The shipping companies had been granted permission to raise their freight charges by five shillings per ton but had been prevented from doing so as the increase would have put them at a disadvantage in comparison with the subsidised rail freight charges. He suggested that wharfages especially on the "E" class goods of flour, bran, grain, potatoes and maize be reduced to maintain the shipping company's competitive margin.

The Inter Island Company's representatives, Messrs A.Greenslade and R.Nelsen and Captain C.Bell, chose to be specific in their view of the future economic running of the port. They suggested that a goods shed should be built on the wharf. This along with the provision of a fork-lift truck would, in the estimation of the Inter Island Company, reduce cartage rates and result in a quicker turn around as trucks could be run full both ways. Captain Bell was keen to see repairs done to the No 2 Berth as well as deepening the harbour basin. It was conceded by the company that the repairs should take precedence over the provision of a goods shed. However Greenslade stressed the importance of making Kaiapoi an attractive alternative for freighters before the Lyttelton road tunnel was completed. He agreed that a small reduction in wharfages would help make the company competitive with the rail freight system and suggested that the government should be approached over this matter provided there was no accompanying publicity.

At this point the representatives of the Kaiapoi Shipping Company were invited back into the room and Williams raised the matter of the harbour agreement. It was obvious that the committee was determined not to discuss the matter in the

presence of the Company as the Town Clerk very ably dismissed the concerns raised by Williams. After the representatives had left the room the meeting decided to write to the Inter Island Company to invite it to meet and negotiate on the terms of the harbour agreement.

This Special Meeting revealed that the Inter Island Company was willing to take a broader view of the operation of the port in order to secure its trade through the port. In contrast the Kaiapoi Shipping Company was more interested in achieving what it saw as parity with the other company. It was not concerned that facilities at the port, itself, may have prevented both companies from competing for freight with the rail ferry and Lyttelton. It was adamant that the problem between the companies should be resolved.

At the ordinary meeting of the Harbour Committee on 12 November both the proposal of the Inter Island Company and the counter proposal of the Council on the payment of commission on the wharfages were discussed. In the end it was decided to accept the company's proposal which was essentially the same as the agreement which had been drawn up before the local body elections. The new agreement was to run for two years from 1 December 1962.

There appeared to be no option left for the Kaiapoi Shipping Company but accept that the agreement between the Council and the Inter Island Company was a fact of life. The company would have to increase its share of the trade in order to counter the provisions of the agreement. However, as foreshadowed by the Inter Island Company, the general coastal trading environment became more and more competitive and it was natural that small companies like the Kaiapoi Shipping Company were bound to lose out to bigger operations such as the rail ferry. It was to be expected that with the quick and easy access to Lyttelton that the road tunnel afforded, shippers would prefer the larger and more modern facilities of that port to the primitive conditions at Kaiapoi.

However the Kaiapoi Shipping Company did not give up its determination to compete on an equal footing with the Inter Island Company. Although the Harbour Committee reported in April 1963 that the dispute over the commission payments had been settled amicably, the Kaiapoi Shipping Company bombarded the Marine Department with a series of complaints ranging from dissatisfaction with the state of the harbour launch to comparisons of shipping charges at other ports which ought, in the view of the Kaiapoi Shipping Company, to lead to a substantial reduction of the wharfages paid in Kaiapoi. The complaints were referred back to the Council by the Marine Department resulting in an increased work load for the Council staff and an increased sense of exasperation by the Council. This sense of exasperation was given voice in August 1964 when the Council in a reply to the Marine Department stated that it considered it a negation of democracy to suggest that the powers vested in the elected members of the Borough Council at the last election be subordinated to those of an unsuccessful candidate. The unsuccessful candidate was a director of the Kaiapoi Shipping Company, C.T.Williams.

In many ways it must have been a relief to the Councillors to learn in December 1963 that the Kaiapoi Shipping Company had gone into liquidation. That development signalled that an end to the problems with the company was in sight. There

was now a possible remedy offered in the court for the Council to recover the money owing to it by the company.

Although the problems over the running of the port had gained prominence during both of Owen Williams' terms as mayor the town did not become as absorbed in the difficulties as the main protagonists had done. The role of the Council was a great deal wider than that. As often occurs it can be in the small things of local government that the soul of the community is exposed. One such incident concerned the siting of the Grey Raven Scout Den. In January 1960 the Council was informed that the Scout Group had been given permission by the Minister of Lands to build a den on Darnley Square. The Council however decided to hold over assigning the lease of the land to the Grey Raven Group until it had inspected the building plans for the den. The assignment had still not been completed by March when a problem arose with the site in relation to St Paul's Presbyterian Church. The church had purchased a site on Sewell Street adjoining the proposed site of the scout den. A deputation from the St Paul's Presbyterian Church Planning Committee informed the Council that it intended to build a church worthy of the town and it was anxious that the proposed Scout Den would be in keeping with the design of its own building. On behalf of the Scout Group, Mr J. Archer, stated that the matter of the den site had been considered over a number of years and it was just unfortunate that it was next to the planned new church. He assured the Council that the den would not be open on Sundays but he could give no long term assurance about the upkeep of the den and its surrounding land.

It appears that the Council regarded the concerns of the church as rather querulous because it immediately approved of the siting of the scout den on the corner of Sewell and Davie Streets and granted the lease of the land to the Gray Raven Group at a peppercorn rental. The draft of the lease between the Scout Group and the Council was presented at the 19 April 1960 Council meeting. The rent was set at one pound per year for a term of twenty one years. The land was only to be used for scouting activities and that the Group was responsible for erecting and maintaining all boundary fences. As well as that, the grounds and the building had to be kept in a tidy condition.

The scout den site in Darnley Square was an ideal use of the land. Earlier it had been mooted that part of the square should be used for car parking and although the Council was not against the use of the land for that purpose a car park was not in keeping with the concept of Darnley Square. The Square had always been an enigma for the community and when it was decided to install the swimming baths and allow the tennis courts to be built it was hoped that the Square would become a general recreational area for the town. This had not happened although there had been attempts to make the area more attractive with the planting of trees and shrubs. The last attempt had been in the early 1950's when on the initiative of the Beautifying Society and the Kaiapoi Rotary Club a plan had been drafted by the Director of Reserves in Christchurch, Mr Barnett. The plan included the straightening of Davie Street and the planting of eighteen lime trees along that street to form an avenue as well as the planting of shrubs around playing areas in the Square.

The supply of the trees and shrubs was to be free provided the Council supplied a floral float for the Provincial Centennial Celebrations. The Council agreed to the proposal and in August 1950 it decided to place a plaque at each end of the lime tree avenue marking the centennial of the Province. If the trees had survived the axe of a council workman, who in the following winter cut them down in the belief they were dead, the avenue would have provided, by the time it was proposed to build the scout den, an attractive outlook for the den and the proposed new presbyterian church.

The Council could not have reversed the Minister of Lands decision to grant the Gray Raven Group permission to use the reserve land without a great deal of difficulty but it could have made the conditions of the lease more formidable for the group thus mollifying the concerns of the Presbyterians. It chose not to do so. It had concerns for the youth of the town and perhaps in a small way revealed its longer term vision for the community.

It seemed that in Owen Williams' first term there was little to be pleased about although some projects came nearer to realisation. The Council was still encouraging the Hospital Board to make a decision to build a new hospital for the town. At the first meeting of the Council in 1961 it was decided to write to the two local Hospital Board members, Hills and McMillan, with a request that they supply the Council with the current information on the acquisition of land for a new hospital. Although nothing appeared to be achieved during that year, progress was made. In March the North Canterbury Hospital Board told the Council that it had plans for rebuilding the Kaiapoi Hospital with a total of eight beds and a possible extension to ten beds. The Hospital Board informed the Council that it intended to use the present site of the hospital unless the Council could suggest an alternative site. The first hint that the North Canterbury Hospital Board was reconsidering its plans for the Kaiapoi Hospital came in May 1961. Councillor Sinclair told a Council meeting that the Secretary of the Hospital Board had reported that it would be difficult to justify expenditure on a rebuilding programme when there was very little local support for a hospital. The Council was urged to encourage its residents and those of the surrounding area to use the maternity facilities at the hospital so that the rebuilding could be justified. As the existing facilities were run down and old fashioned it was not easy to persuade mothers to have their babies at the Kaiapoi Hospital when there were more modern premises available in Christchurch and at Rangiora.

However a sufficient number of women did use the hospital in the months following May 1961 to persuade the Hospital Board that it should at least consider purchasing land in Kaiapoi as a site for a new hospital. In January 1962 the Council received confirmation that Lots 19/23 D.P. 786 in Coups Terrace had been sold to the North Canterbury Hospital Board as a site for the proposed new hospital. However apart from purchasing the block and getting the Works and Reserves Committee of the Council to arrange for the site be cleared of the buildings, dead branches and rubbish the Hospital Board did nothing further during 1962 to move the project along. In December the Council wrote again to the Board requesting that it expedite the construction of the new Kaiapoi Hospital as soon as possible in

1963. The reply from the Board in February 1963 must have been disappointing to say the least. The Board informed the Council that the new Kaiapoi hospital was not on its works' programme. The Board maintained that position throughout the 1960's and if it was thought that the facility was barely adequate at the beginning of the decade, it was worse by the end of the decade. By that time very few women chose to have their babies at the hospital.

Signs of change for the hospital appeared in 1971. In January the Borough Council committed itself to the purchase of the Hospital Board land in Coups Terrace, ending all thoughts of a new hospital for Kaiapoi. The hospital itself remained open until August 1971. The number of women using the facility was miniscule and with the departure in June 1970 of Doctor Noel Honey, there was an insufficient number of medical practitioners in Kaiapoi to run the hospital. The North Canterbury Hospital had no choice but to close it. Although the hospital was poorly patronised by the local people it was a blow to Kaiapoi to lose the facility. The local branch of the Plunket Society, while recognising the problems that the Hospital Board faced in connection with the running of the Kaiapoi Hospital, registered its disapproval.

There was a brief flurry of activity in September 1971 when it was thought that if the community was able to attract another doctor to the area the hospital could be reopened. A sub-committee was formed to petition the North Canterbury Hospital Board but its efforts came to nothing. The rate of use of the hospital before its closure did not, in the opinion of the Board, justify the expense of re-opening it. Truth for the hospital in the end, was the stark reality of its closure.

The building was sold to the Red Cross which over the next four years converted it into a lodge for the aged. The conversion of the hospital meant that the building kept its association with the care of people and was a good example of the community looking for a new use for a building. This is a process which has been repeated often in Kaiapoi.

The Red Cross Lodge faced a crisis of its own in 1984. From the beginning of its operations in 1975 the Lodge had run at a loss. One of the contributing factors in the loss was the fact that the money spent on the renovations could not be recovered in fees. Another factor was the change in status of the Lodge from an institution providing residential care to one providing immediate care with the consequence that the cost of staffing rose. This cost added to the deficit. The third factor was that similar accommodation had been opened in Kaiapoi and Rangiora thus reducing the number of potential residents for the Lodge. The Red Cross thought that the only solution was to sell the property and thus throughout 1984 there was some uncertainty over the continuation of the Lodge. By December the crisis was over. The Red Cross Lodge entered into an agreement in that month with Presbyterian Support Services which enabled the Lodge to continue to operate.

The same type of pattern also appeared to be developing with the establishment of a high school in the town. The problems of overcrowding at the Rangiora High School had not diminished. In February 1960 it was reported in the *North Canterbury Gazette* that the roll at Rangiora High School had exceeded seven hundred pupils of whom two hundred and seventy were new pupils. The report

added that the phenomenal growth in Kaiapoi resulting from the availability of cheap sections offered by the Reverend Riseley, the completion of the sewage scheme and the recent establishment of a number of light industries in the town, was only going to compound the problem of space at Rangiora High School. The population of Kaiapoi was estimated to be only two hundred less than Rangiora. According to the *North Canterbury Gazette* it made sense to build a high school in the town. If this was not to happen soon, the figures meant that, on the paper's analysis, the roll at Rangiora High School would reach one thousand very soon. There were not the facilities at the school to cope with that number of pupils. (3)

Despite the concern over the situation at Rangiora High School and the long term lobbying from Kaiapoi the Education Department did nothing throughout 1960 to consider alleviating the situation. In June 1960 the Council advised the Canterbury Education Board that it was perturbed at the lack of action over the purchase of a site for a high school.

At the beginning of the school year in 1961 concern was expressed again over the numbers of pupils coming to Rangiora from the Kaiapoi area. The roll had reached eight hundred and ten, three hundred and twenty eight of which were third form enrolments. The Superintendent of the Southern Regional Office of the Education Department did reply in March 1961 to the Kaiapoi Borough Council's query about the likelihood of a school being built. The Council was advised that the Department was investigating the possibility of purchasing a site in Ohoka Road. Another six months were to pass before the Superintendent of the Southern Regional office was able to announce that the purchase of the twenty and a half acre site in Ohoka Road had been approved by the Department. The Superintendent however reiterated the warning he had issued in March. The purchase of the land did not mean that the building of the high school was imminent. The site was being acquired by the Department at this time in order to have it available when the building of a new high school could be justified. The purchase of the land however, for those who had been urging this step for a long time, was a milestone. It was clear that the next step, that of building the school, was achievable. It would take a persistent campaign to persuade the government that it was a necessary step.

Notwithstanding the community view that the provision of a high school was a urgent need the Education Department moved at an extraordinarily slow pace. Indeed it is fair to observe that the Department appeared to hope that the problem of the provision of a high school in the town would just disappear. The Minister of Education, the Honourable B. Tennent, visited the town on 27 March 1962 to discuss the future of education in the town. Nothing concrete emerged from this meeting. In December the Council again decided to request the Education Department to give urgent consideration to its request for a secondary school in Kaiapoi. Again no positive steps were taken by the Education Department.

At the same time the Education Department was moving to increase the maximum number of pupils able to be enrolled at a co-educational school. The Rangiora High School Board of Governors received a report in August 1960 stating

(3) *North Canterbury Gazette*, 4.2.1960.

that the maximum allowable enrolment numbers had risen to one thousand. The Board was perturbed as it felt this was too high a number to cope with in one school. In 1961 this number was again raised to one thousand two hundred and fifty and again the Rangiora Board was unimpressed. Unless more capital works were undertaken at the school, it observed, it could not cope with anything like those numbers. In practical terms it meant that the building of a high school in Kaiapoi was able to be delayed until the Rangiora High School reached the maximum allowable capacity.

No more action was taken until April 1964. Again this was to be a Kaiapoi initiative. The local Member of Parliament, H.L.Pickering, was invited to attend a Council meeting on 20 April. It was intended that the various problems the town was experiencing would be discussed but in fact there was only one problem that the members of the Council were keen to pursue. It was the lack of a high school. Pickering was told that the establishment of a high school was the key to the future growth and prosperity of the town. The recent rapid growth in the population of Kaiapoi was likely to slow down if the school was not built. The Mayor had long been active in pressing the cause of the school and in this he had the support of the Rangiora Borough Council as well as the support of the Rangiora High School Board of Governors. However it was claimed that it would be a long time before a school could be built if the Education Department stuck to its formula regarding the potential number of third form pupils that would attend a high school in Kaiapoi. The Council showed that it was willing to consider all options by suggesting that the experimental form one to six school in Geraldine might be a model for the provision of secondary education in Kaiapoi. It could have backed up its argument for this type of education in the district by pointing out that the town did support a District High School in the early years of the century. The Council stated that it was aware of the problems that might arise with the establishment of a form one to six school in the town, that the existing primary schools would have to be decapitated and that parents, pupils and the general community might not be in favour of this type of school. On balance, however, the Council favoured such a school as it would mean the provision of secondary education in the town sooner than waiting until the pupil numbers matched the Education Department's formula. It was possible that in the meantime a high school would be built in a northern suburb of Christchurch and thus further delay the building of a high school in Kaiapoi. Pickering was urged to present the Council's views to the Minister of Education.

By June 1964 a number of organisations in Kaiapoi were urging that a public meeting be held to support the establishment of a secondary school in the town. The Kaiapoi Businessmen's Association, the Kaiapoi Country Women's Institute, the Kaiapoi North School's Parent Teacher Association, and the Kaiapoi Rotary Club had all written to the Council requesting that a public meeting be held to discuss the matter. The meeting was held on 3 August 1964.

As a result of the motions passed at the meeting the Council decided to appoint the Mayor and Councillor Hills as a deputation to the Minister of Education. Pickering was approached to arrange the meeting at which the deputation ex-

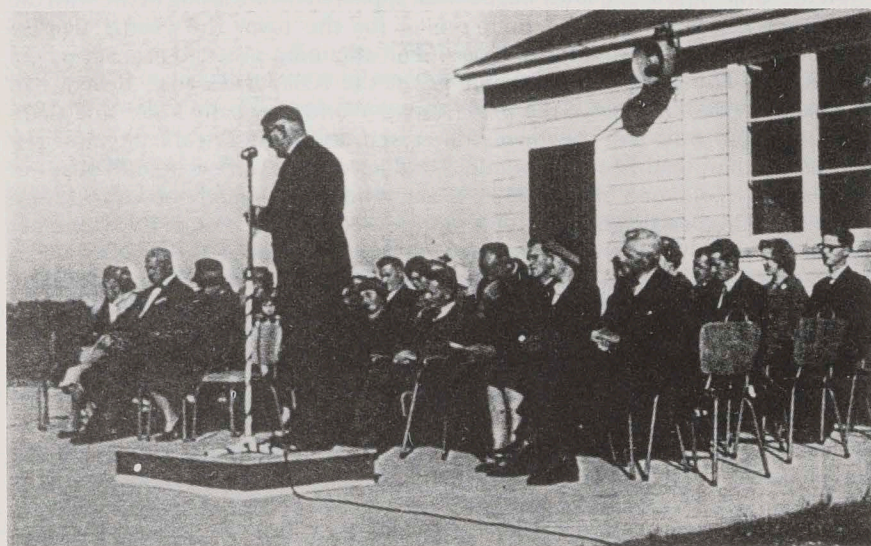
pressed to the Minister the public concern at the lack of a high school in Kaiapoi. The Mayor, O.M. Williams, reported that he thought the deputation had been given a fair hearing and that the Minister had promised that a "full high school" would be provided for the town. The Minister said that it was not a matter of "if" but a matter of "when" and thus the deputation returned from Wellington with the feeling that their journey had been worth the effort. In fact nothing was done.

At the same time as the town waged what appeared to be a losing battle with the Education Department for a high school for the town the North Canterbury Education Board was more successful in obtaining a second primary school for Kaiapoi. The numbers of enrolments at the Kaiapoi Borough School had been steadily climbing since the post Second World War baby boom and there was quite rapid growth of the town at the end of the 1950's. At the beginning of the decade there had been six hundred and seventy seven occupied houses in Kaiapoi and by the end of the 1950's the number of occupied houses had risen to eight hundred and eighty six. This represented a rise of almost thirty one per cent in the number of dwellings alone. A large number of those new houses were occupied by young families. The *North Canterbury Gazette* was intrigued by the large increase in Kaiapoi's population and conducted a number of interviews with the occupants of new houses in the town. Most of the new residents had come from larger centres where the price of land had put the building of a new house beyond their means. In Christchurch a house section could be bought for five hundred pounds compared with the one hundred and eighty pounds for a similar section in Kaiapoi. One occupant of a new house in Kaiapoi mentioned that he had shifted his family from Christchurch for the cheap land as well as escaping from the badly polluted air of the city. He thought Kaiapoi was a more healthy environment for his children although he continued to work in Christchurch. (4)

This large increase of young families in the town added to problems of accommodation at the Kaiapoi Borough School. At the beginning of 1961 the number of children at the school was five hundred and eighty. The school had enrolled thirty one new entrants in the first week of the school year and that compared with twenty one in the previous year. By June the roll had reached six hundred. It was obvious that a new school had to be built. The North Canterbury Education Board bought a site on the Main North Road close to the new subdivisions around Meadow Street. The new school was to cater for children living north of the river. Building the school was to begin almost immediately but was delayed for some time because of the site itself. The land was very low lying and thus prone to surface flooding. Consequently it was decided to remove about ten thousand yards of top soil from the site and replace it with sand from a nearby sandhill and then replace the top soil. It was estimated at the beginning of 1961 that the new school would be ready for occupation at the beginning of the third term. In fact it was not opened until February 1962. The new Kaiapoi North School opened with four classrooms, an administration block and a dental clinic. There

(4) *North Canterbury Gazette*, 29.3.1960.

were one hundred and fifty six children on the roll on opening day. The first headmaster was Morris O'Callaghan and the first chairman of the School Committee Robert Sincock. The official opening ceremony was performed by the Member of Parliament for Southern Maori, Sir Eruera Tirikatene. Sir Eruera spoke on the theme of aroha which for a primary school in Kaiapoi seemed to be particularly appropriate. Throughout the town's Pakeha history there had been a strong



Kaiapoi North School, opening day. O.M. Williams standing, Sir Eruera seated to the left - courtesy Kaiapoi North School

tendency for the townsfolk to look after their neighbours. The aroha that Sir Eruera spoke of on opening day recalled not only the Maori concept of caring but also the old Wesleyan tradition of care for others that had always been a feature of the town.

The one hundred and fifty six children on the roll of Kaiapoi North School in 1962 reduced the roll at the Borough School to a more manageable four hundred and thirty eight. The number of children attending St Patrick's School had hovered around the eighty mark for a number of years. This was not affected by the opening of Kaiapoi North School.

The Kaiapoi Roman Catholics had gained their independence from the Rangiora parish in 1954. The Reverend Father R.O'Gorman was the first resident priest. A new convent was opened on 13 December 1959 by Bishop E.M.Joyce. The Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions had been in Kaiapoi since 1922 and had always, according to the representative of the laity at the opening, E.Fitzgerald, worked under difficult circumstances. The new two storied brick convent, dedicated to Saint John Vianney, was designed and built by R.L.Kennedy of Christchurch and gave the sisters more comfortable living conditions. The improvement that the

convent made to the site was continued in 1962 when two new classrooms were added. These were officially opened in September and it was felt that the Roman Catholic education in Kaiapoi was ready to expand.

This was certainly true but what was not foreseen in 1962 was how different the face of Roman Catholic education would become in the following two decades. Roman Catholic schools had always been maintained on a shoe string budget made possible largely through the services of the teaching religious orders, St Patrick's in Kaiapoi was no exception. However by the mid 1970's many religious orders were facing a critical shortage in the numbers needed to fully staff each school under their control. Our Lady of the Missions order decided to employ its first lay teacher at Kaiapoi in 1976 and that decision set in motion a rapid change for the school which was more or less complete by 1981. The employment of a lay teacher meant that the small budget needed to run the school was now increased by the necessity to pay the non-religious teaching staff at the rates that could be expected in the state schools. It was not a feasible option for the Roman Catholic schools to raise their fees to cover the increase in their salary bills. That would result in fewer Roman Catholic families being able to afford to send their children to Roman Catholic schools. Nether was it feasible for the Roman Catholic Church to withdraw from education as the state system would be unable to cope with the numbers of children requiring places in state schools. A compromise solution was arrived at whereby all private schools could opt to become integrated into the state system of education. In essence integration meant that the state became liable for the payment of teachers' salaries and the provision of equipment once the school became integrated. In order to qualify for the programme each school had to meet the standards for buildings, playgrounds and equipment that were set for state schools. For many Roman Catholic schools this meant considerable expenditure. For St Patrick's School it meant that the original 1926 classroom block had to be replaced by a three classroom block, an office and waiting area. As well as these physical changes the school had to get used to a lay principal for the first time in its history. Terry Rush was appointed principal in 1981. His previous appointment had been as principal at the Star of the Sea Convent School in Sumner. At the time Rush took over as principal the roll stood at one hundred and twenty five compared with the eighty four children enrolled in 1976 when the first lay teacher was appointed. In 1981 the school had three lay teachers and just two religious teachers and by May of that year it had become a fully integrated school. In just five years the old convent based parish school had been completely transformed. It naturally retained its special nature as a Roman Catholic school but, apart from this added dimension, the education received at St Patrick's was indistinguishable from that which the children at Kaiapoi Borough and Kaiapoi North Schools received.

In the wider community similar and just as profound changes were occurring. However they began earlier and were slower in their application.

The Kaiapoi Woollen Mill was so inextricably part of Kaiapoi that it seemed as if each was part of the other. It was inconceivable that the town would ever be without the mill. It was, after all, the town which gave the mill its identity and vice

versa. Kaiapoi blankets had put the town and New Zealand on the world map and generations of Kaiapoi families had been employed in the mill. Changes however began to take place at the mill that would mean the end of the association. In December 1962 the Kaiapoi Woollen Company began merger talks with the Wellington Woollen Company. It was felt by both companies that their common export goals could be better achieved as one company than as rivals in an increasingly competitive market. The woollen goods market world wide was facing a serious challenge from the much improved synthetic fibres. Therefore it made commercial sense to combine forces wherever possible. The merger was completed by June 1963 and the first big change for the employees at the mill was the change of name. The mill now operated under the name of Kaiapoi Petone Group Textiles Ltd. The larger resources of the new company meant that the mill was able to install more modern equipment as well as expanding the factory itself. The installation of a shrink resistant plant meant that the company's products could keep pace with other woollen manufacturers as well as the synthetic fibre manufacturers. The shrink resistant plant was especially useful for the export of partly processed wool tops to Australia and some Middle Eastern countries. At the time of the merger the new company employed five hundred people; a large proportion of whom were employed at the mill in Kaiapoi.

Under the management of Kingsley Harrison the mill made steady progress throughout the 1960's. Knitting yarn produced under the Kaiapoi label was extremely popular with domestic buyers. The pattern and design department produced new patterns for home knitters each season which ensured a steady demand for the yarns produced by the mill. The six years between the merger with the Wellington Woollen Company and the end of the decade can now be seen as an hiatus period for the company. In January 1969 the mill manager, Harrison, collapsed and died. As there had been no hint that such a disaster could happen the management was ill prepared. It was decided to appoint Harry Oram as manager for a probationary period of three months. This term was completed satisfactorily but at the end of eighteen months in the job Oram resigned. In June 1970 the position of mill manager was offered to and taken up by Jack Townend.

Many at the mill at the time of Townend's appointment mark this as the beginning of an unstable era in the mill's history. It has been said that the general morale of the employees began to slip and there was soon very little left of the team work and sense of pride that had been such a feature of the work force for most of the years gone by.

In July 1972 the Board of Directors of the Kaiapoi Petone Group released a statement to the shareholders in the company recommending that they accept a take-over offer from the Otago company, Mosgiel Woollens Ltd. In the statement the chairman of the Board, T.J.Chamberlain, outlined the problems that the company had been experiencing. As was the case in the early 1960's the market for woollen fibre was being challenged by synthetic fibres however in the early 1970's this was even more of a threat because of the great improvement in the quantity, quality and variety of man-made fibres that were available. Probably allied with the fall off in demand for woollen fibre the company had a serious

over-productive capacity which in turn contributed to increasing costs for the company for both labour and the raw material. The policies of the government compounded these problems. An artificial delay caused by the price control schemes meant that the company could not achieve cost recoveries through an increase in the prices of its goods quickly enough, added to which, in the company's view, was the burden of the payroll taxation. Chamberlain reported that in the face of these difficulties the company had three options open to it. Firstly it could proceed with the plans that were already in place for recovery but that this would be a long and painful process with no guarantee of success. Secondly the company could liquidate its assets and thirdly it could accept the offer of Mosgiel Woollens Ltd. The Board was satisfied that the take-over offer was the best it could achieve for the company in the highly competitive woollen market. Most of the problems in the Kaiapoi Petone Group had been brought about by its inability to rid itself of its considerable fabric stock and this problem could only be addressed if the industry underwent rationalisation on a national basis. Chamberlain stressed that while the mill division was still profitable the Board could not be sure of its future if, as was anticipated, the woollen goods market contracted further.

The recommendation that the shareholders accept the Mosgiel offer rather than liquidate the companies assets was supported by a report done by a Christchurch chartered accountant, C.W.Evans. In his report Evans wrote that while a woollen company continues to trade it can continue to use its raw materials to make goods whereas if it stopped trading it would have to sell the raw materials for the best price available which at that time was a low one. It seemed that the way to profitability for the company was in specialisation and this could only be done in the context of a bigger conglomerate.

By August 1972 seventy five percent of the Kaiapoi Petone shareholders had agreed to accept the take-over bid. By September the ninety per cent threshold of acceptances which Mosgiel Woollens Ltd had set as a prerequisite to take-over had been reached and so it was able to complete its purchase of the Kaiapoi Petone Group.

This change had a far greater impact on the Kaiapoi mill than the change in 1963. Unlike that change, the 1972 event was to bring the dreaded word, "rationalisation" into the vocabulary of the townfolk of Kaiapoi. The take over of the Kaiapoi Petone Group by Mosgiel Woollens was not done in order to benefit mutually the two companies as had been the case when the Kaiapoi Woollen Company and the Wellington Woollen Company had merged. This time it was a matter of a stronger company acquiring the assets of a weaker company, using the parts of that company which would benefit it and discarding the rest. The rationalisation programme began as soon as the Mosgiel Company had completed its take-over. The general manager of the company, J.S.Lee, announced on 16 September that eighteen of the Kaiapoi Petone Groups salesmen had been given notice and this had reduced the company's sales staff by half. The three hundred staff at the mill in Kaiapoi were afraid that this move signalled a halving of workforce overall and Lee's statements about the mill did nothing to allay this fear.

He said that although some of the equipment at Kaiapoi was new most of it was old and that in the spinning department the more modern equipment at the Mosgiel factory could produce three times as much as the spinning division at Kaiapoi could with its outdated machinery. It was therefore no surprise when in December 1972 the woollen carding and spinning operations at the mill were closed down with the consequent loss of jobs at the mill. It was the first time since the Great Depression of the 1930's that such a large number of Kaiapoi people had lost their jobs. It was devastating for them and for the town. However the town took comfort from the Mosgiel Company's assurance that now that part of the operation had been closed the remaining sections of the mill would become stronger and more viable. However this prediction did not come true. Within a year the worsted carding and combing sections had been closed. It seemed as if once the rationalisation process had been introduced to the mill there was very little that could be done to stop it. To be fair to the Mosgiel Company the Kaiapoi mill buildings and most of its equipment were due for renewal. It was logical for the company to use its other more modern plants to do the work that was being done less efficiently and at greater cost in Kaiapoi. This however was not how the workers in Kaiapoi saw rationalisation. To them it was a bitter blow and to the town it was to have a lasting impact on its identity. If the mill was being reduced to a shadow of its former self then the town was no longer a mill town with stable long term employment opportunities.

A brief respite in the rationalisation programme began in December 1974 with the appointment of Ray Crombie as mill manager. The finishing department was expanded to cope with all the finishing work from the company's other factories. The balling department received a new balling machine and a second machine was ordered. The morale of the staff rose as it seemed that at last the company's assurances could be believed. It was now felt by the employees that the rationalisation programme made sense. It could be seen that each factory in the company would become a specialist in one phase of the processing cycle and this specialisation would ensure the factory's future. The town too took comfort and it seemed as if its identity as a mill town, albeit in a reduced form, would be preserved.

This state of affairs did not last for long. In March 1975 the company decided to phase out the old equipment in the weaving and wet finishing departments. Some of staff in those areas were offered jobs in the company's factory in Mosgiel but most lost their employment. Even so under Crombie's management morale at the mill remained high until he was transferred back to Dunedin. Crombie's place was taken by Alan Mottershead. Mottershead began his management of the mill on 1 August. It would be poetic justice to say that the natural disaster that occurred that same day was a mere zephyr compared with what was going to occur at the mill in the next three years.

1 August 1975 will always be remembered as the day of one of North Canterbury's worst north west wind storms. The wind that day was strong enough to uproot whole sections of forests, tear the roofs from a large number of houses and literally blow plants out of the ground. Part of the railway station, by then a quaint structure, was wrecked so that what remains of the building is a rather forlorn

shadow of its former glory. Schools in the area were closed because the conditions were dangerous. This was the day that the last mill manager began work at the one hundred and two year old factory.

Mottershead continued the wind down of the company's operation in Kaiapoi. Over the months between his appointment in August 1975 and his departure in 1977 a number of departments were closed with the loss of a great number of jobs. When Mottershead left what remained of the factory was left in charge of the personnel manager Hector McAllister.

The Mosgiel Company announced in June 1977 that the company intended to close the Kaiapoi mill down within the next eighteen months to two years. The announcement took the soul out of Kaiapoi. It was as if the entire town was to be closed down. One hundred and seventy people of the four hundred that were employed by the mill at the time of the 1972 take-over were still at the mill. The reason for the company's decision according to the general manager, J.S. Lee, was that escalating costs, inflation and technological developments prohibited any further development at the Kaiapoi mill.

Most of the workers affected by the closure belonged to the Canterbury Woollen Workers Union and it decided to enlist the help of the Canterbury Trades Council in an effort to persuade the Mosgiel Company to reconsider its decision.



The last staff at the Woollen Mill, Hector McAllister, personal manager front row, third from left, Ward Photography, Kaiapoi - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

The union also called for support from the Kaiapoi Borough Council and the local Member of Parliament, D.F. Quigley. Both the Borough Council and Quigley, although keen to avert a disaster in their respective electorates, recognised that there was very little that either of them could do to prevent the Mosgiel Company from closing the mill down. An editorial in *The Press* summed up the general feeling in the community about the closure. The editorial opened by stating that from all points of view except those of Kaiapoi and the mill workers the closing of the

factory made sense. The danger for Kaiapoi as *The Press* observed was that it would more than ever become a dormitory suburb of Christchurch. In the opinion of the editor the closure was not a vote of no confidence in Kaiapoi as a place for major industry. The length of time that the mill had been in Kaiapoi indicated that this was not so. It was, therefore, imperative that the town and others interested, make efforts to find a use for the mill buildings so that Kaiapoi would survive as an independent town.

Although the motorway was not recognised at the time as a life line for Kaiapoi in many respects it turned out to be just that. In February 1960 the Town Planning Committee of the Borough Council met with the Kaiapoi Businessmen's Association to discuss two reports that the Association had prepared on the proposed motorway. The first report prepared under the leadership of T.M.Ayers stated that the traffic congestion problems were caused by bottlenecks on the Waimakariri Bridge and at the turn off roads from the Main North Road both to the east and the west. The restricted speed zones through the built up areas also added to the congestion problems. The Ayers report agreed with the stated aim of the Ministry of Works to build a fast flowing motorway to the north that would be free of both the cross traffic and the speed restriction associated with built up areas. Of the three routes proposed by the Ministry the Ayers report favoured the most easterly one as it was the shortest, the least expensive and would cause the least interference for the existing housing in Kaiapoi.

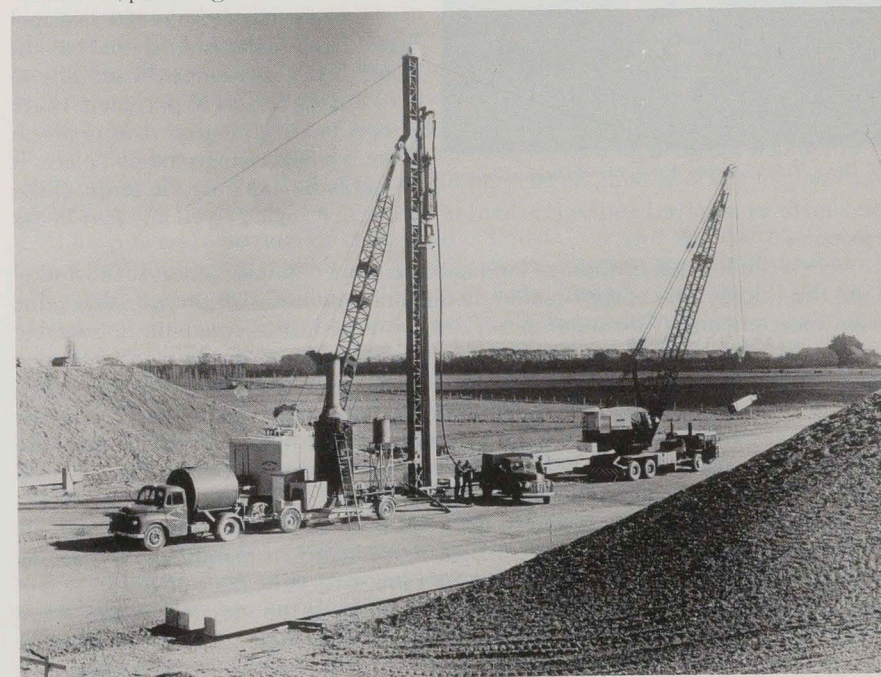
The second report prepared under the leadership of H.O.Hills emphasised the need for a relief from traffic congestion in Kaiapoi. The Hills report stated that overseas experience suggested that a motorway would boost Kaiapoi as a residential area close to Christchurch but along with the construction of a motorway there must be the building of a high school.

The report from the Businessmen's Association reflected the general opinion in Kaiapoi. It was not long before the Council was reflecting those views. In August 1960 the Council met with the Regional Planner, Miss Nancy Northcroft, the Commissioner of Works, Mr E.C.Smart, and two representatives from the Ministry of Works, Messrs Goodman and Boyd, to discuss the proposed routes. The Council had changed its view which had been that all that was needed was an upgrading of the present roading system. It now favoured the construction of the route closed to Kaiapoi. In echoing the Hills report the Council stressed that this route was the shortest and therefore the least expensive option. Miss Northcroft added that in her opinion Kaiapoi would expand to the south of its town boundaries if the motorway was built. However she felt that was not likely in the immediate future because Kaiapoi could double its population if it used all the existing land within the borough, at that time, unused. The main concern of the Borough Council from August 1960 on was to ensure that which ever option was finally settled on that the access points to and from Kaiapoi were convenient. An example of this arose in August 1962 when the Council wrote to the Ministry of Works stressing that it favoured the Green route over the newly proposed Yellow route. The new route would in the Council's opinion

have disastrous consequences for the prosperity of the town as the southern turn off point did not give direct access to Kaiapoi.

All access problems had been sorted out by November 1964 when the Borough Council received notification that the government had decided to increase the finance for the motorway to three hundred thousand pounds a year in order to allow the completion of a four-laned motorway from Belfast to Cam Road and a two-laned motorway from Cam Road to Pinehaven. It was anticipated that the whole system would be completed by 1970 with the first bridge being completed by the end of 1966 and the second being completed by 1968. It was planned to have an interchange at Chaney's with exit and entry points at Tram Road, Ohoka Road and Cam Road. This plan suited Kaiapoi admirably. The exit and entrance points gave quick and easy access to all parts of Kaiapoi so that there were no areas where there was likely to be congestion. The industrial sites of the Woollen Mill and the Freezing works were serviced by different access points so that there was no possibility of bottlenecks.

With such good road access to Kaiapoi it was not surprising that there was some concern expressed by Rangiora businessmen that Kaiapoi would grow at the expense of their town. A number of public meetings were held in Rangiora to try to organise objections to the chosen route. However, by the time the meetings were held, planning was too far advanced to have it changed. These meetings were



The Northern Motorway under construction - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

reminiscent of the meetings held by the Rangiora business interests to have the railway run through the town. In the case of the motorway the efforts were in vain. In a speech given in November 1966 at the fiftieth anniversary of the North Canterbury Freezing Works, the Mayor, H.Owen Hills, said that he thought that the northern motorway would give the town's prosperity an added stability from the expected increase in residential development. He asked his



H. Owen Hills - courtesy Waimakariri District Council

listeners to imagine how attractive sections in Kaiapoi would become on completion of the motorway. Purchasers of sections would only be eleven minutes from the centre of Christchurch. (5) The first stage of the motorway was opened in 1969 and on that occasion Hills pressed for the extension of the motorway into the heart of Christchurch commenting that the completion of the road to Belfast would be of little use to northern commuters if the next step was not taken.

In the last half of the 1960's Kaiapoi had a cathartic experience that has left some bitter memories. In seeking to explain such an experience there seems to be no logical reason why it should have arisen in the first place. It can only be explained in terms of the personalities involved and so it is hard to accept that logic played any part in the episode.

When the Kaiapoi Shipping Company was placed in liquidation at the end of 1963 the Council was of the opinion that it could then recover the wharfages due from the company. This assumption did not take into account the intractable personality of C.T.Williams. On his assumption that his business woes were due in part to the Borough Council's favouring of the Inter Island Shipping Company, Williams was determined to make things difficult for the Council. Even with the perspective of some years it is hard to be certain whether or not the Council did favour one company over the other. What is certain, is that successive Councils did appear to retain a loyalty to the Inter Island Shipping Company.

In February 1964 it was reported at a Harbour Committee meeting that the alterations to the river bank to enhance its protective capabilities were being hampered by C.T.Williams who would not allow work to be done on the section of land that he leased from the Harbour Committee. It was reported that Williams had said that he would be more co-operative if the Inter Island Company gave the

(5) *The Press*, 3.11.1966, p22

shipping agency to C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. The Harbour Committee was not interested in such a condition and it decided to acquire the right to the leased land under the provisions of the Public Works Act. This decision led to a number of intemperate outbursts from Williams against the chairman of the Harbour Committee, H.Owen Hills. At a special meeting held on 26 February it was decided that the only way to deal with Williams was through his solicitors. It was felt that this approach could achieve a positive outcome for the Council as well as sparing the Town Clerk any face to face meetings with Williams. The two men were not able to communicate with each other and it was felt that communicating through a third party would ease the situation. A further special meeting of the Harbour Committee was held on 1 March to review all the dealings that the committee and the Council had had with C.T.Williams. The committee came to the conclusion that it had been fair in all its dealings with Williams and in fact in respect of the "Toa" at the time the Kaiapoi Shipping Company had gone into liquidation it was felt that the Council and the committee had been more than fair. On the advice of the Borough's solicitors and the Auditor General the Council had issued a writ for one thousand four hundred and sixty four pounds and four shillings against the "Toa". However the writ was lifted shortly afterwards in order for the "Toa" to be used as a fishing vessel. In addition the Council issued a temporary special permit to allow the "Toa" to operate as a fishing vessel. The Council hoped that this would help the company to trade its way out of its difficulties. The Council was therefore at a loss to understand why C.T.Williams would not allow the river protection works to proceed. Williams was offered a reduction in his rent from twelve pounds ten shillings to six pounds five shillings a year as well as the waiving of 2/3rds of the rates for the 3/8ths of an acre that he leased. He declined to reply and so the Council was forced to record that the time taken up by the matter was affecting the normal functioning of the Council and council office.

This proved to be the last straw for the Town Clerk and to the dismay of the Council, Hodgson resigned. The Council recorded its appreciation of the Clerk's efficiency, knowledge and helpfulness and asked him to reconsider his decision. Hodgson was adamant that he would not change his mind but that he would stay on until a suitable replacement could be found. The following month it was decided that a new street in C.E.Wotton's subdivision off Akaroa Street should be named Hodgson Ave in recognition of the Town Clerk's work.

Like ripples on a pond the problems associated with the running of the harbour increased. At the April meeting of the Harbour Committee one of the directors of the Inter Island Shipping Company, A.K.Greenslade, informed it that the agreement between the company and the Council did not include the piloting of fishing vessels. The company had calculated that the four occasions on which the "Toa" was bought in and out of the harbour had cost it twelve pounds ten shillings and it was claiming that amount from the Council. In addition, the survey of the pilot launch that was now required by the Marine Department, meant that it was too expensive for the company to run. It therefore requested that the Council buy the launch and assume the pilot duties itself.

If the pilot problems seemed to be increasing then the problems with C.T. Williams appeared to be decreasing. Sadly this was not to be the case with the latter. Towards the end of April the Harbour Committee came to an agreement with Williams over the land. He would hand it back provided that there was a tie up berth available for refits and repairs on the fishing vessels; that there was no readjustment of the rent on the land retained by Williams and that the rates would be paid on the valuation of the land retained. It was also agreed that wharfage would be charged on each complete trip inwards and outwards of a fishing vessel and that pilotage would be set at six pounds. It was also agreed that the fee to sell fish on the wharf would be reduced to one pound and that Williams be advised that the cargo shed was available for all shippers at the direction of the harbourmaster. By May the protective work on the stopbank had begun and it was thought that while it was initially unsightly, the work on the stopbank and the removal of the small island just below the bridge, would improve the appearance of the river.

Although the agreement between Williams and the Council over the land appeared to be amicable, it was not. In September Williams resumed his campaign against the Harbour Committee by issuing an electioneering pamphlet entitled, "*A Shameful Record - Harbour Administration 1960-64*". The pamphlet claimed that the harbour was not being run efficiently. The Council was moved by the pamphlet to issue a counter statement. It acknowledged that C.T. Williams and the Council of the day were responsible for the re-opening of the harbour but that since Williams had an interest in shipping his statements about the harbour were influenced by his private concerns. This did not prevent Williams from obtaining a seat on the Council. He was sworn in at a special meeting on 6 October 1964. In the previous week the Council had received advice from its solicitors urging it to demand payment of the wharfages due to it from C. Morgan Williams and Sons Ltd. This advice was reinforced by a legal opinion from a leading barrister, P. T. Mahon, which also urged the Council to take proceedings against the company. Williams' next move was to write a letter to the Council in which he complained about the statement indicating that his actions with regard to public administration were influenced by his private business. The Council, not wishing to get caught up in a paper war with Williams, referred the letter to the secretary of the Kaiapoi Shipping Company, M. Tipping and the liquidator, N. R. Searell. These men declined to become involved in what they regarded as a quarrel between Williams and the Council. However the company was involved in the quarrel as it was dependent on the good will of the Council to help trade its way out of its problems. The good will of the Council was under severe strain. It noted that the two month free berthing granted to the "*Toa*" had expired with little or no repairs being done to the vessel and no application for an extension of the berthing. The harbourmaster also reported that the "*Tuhoe*" had been in the harbour for two months and he considered her to be a danger to shipping.

These and other matters were addressed in a review of the "*Harbour Works 1963-64*", issued by the chairman of the Harbour Committee, H. O. Hills, on 19 October 1964. The review stated that the cargo volumes had fallen away with the introduction of the "*Aramoana*" but had shown signs of picking up again in

August and September. The three ships of the Inter Island Company were the only ones using the harbour with the two ships belonging to the Kaiapoi Shipping Company out of commission. For the future there needed to be major repairs done on the No 2 wharf and extension built onto the No 3 wharf. The new cargo shed was speeding up the handling of cargo and the Inter Island Company's forklift was enabling it to compete with the drive on facilities at Lyttelton. The reconstruction work on the northern stopbanks had been completed and the Catchment Board was beginning work on the southern stopbank between the bridge and the Cure Boat Shed. The Secretary of the Marine Department and the Auditor General had expressed their approval of the running of the harbour and the Inter Island Company was satisfied with the harbour administration. A sour note was struck, however, when the review noted that there was only one man, a clear reference to C.T. Williams, with whom relations were not good. Williams gave a lengthy statement which claimed that the review was a criticism of his words. This appeared to be ignored by the other Councillors who went on to discuss a letter from Greenslade. According to the letter the Inter Island Company had received a communication from Williams which stated that his election to the Council would mean that he was the chief spokesman for harbour affairs. Greenslade informed the Council that if this was true, his company would have to consider whether or not to operate through the Kaiapoi Harbour.

From October 1964 to September 1965 C.T. Williams continued to harass the Council over the running of the harbour. From time to time he issued pamphlets criticising the administration of the harbour and he strenuously fought against the renewal of the agreement between the Council and the Inter Island Shipping Company which was completed in September 1965 just before the local body elections.

Williams lost his seat in the election and it was felt, rather than directly recorded, that the new Council would be able to concentrate on matters other than the harbour. The matter of the wharfages had still not been settled. However, the prospect for a settlement appeared to be attainable without the direct influence of Williams on the Council.

The immediate outlook for the harbour also appeared to be settled. The Inter Island Company traded throughout 1966 under the agreement it had reached with the Council in September 1965. There were problems for the company in 1966 and 1967 that necessitated a close inspection of its operations from Kaiapoi. It found that the handling charges required of it by the Wellington Harbour Board made its services uneconomic. The Kaiapoi Borough Council had attempted to come to a special arrangement with the Wellington Harbour Board over the charges but this failed.

On 6 November 1967 the Inter Island Company ceased its activity through the Kaiapoi Harbour. The managing director, A. K. Greenslade paid a tribute to the set up at Kaiapoi but added that the increased handling charges at Wellington and the increased running costs of the company's ships made it uneconomic to trade between Kaiapoi and Wellington. The Mayor of Kaiapoi, H. Owen Hills, said that

the port would not be officially closed but that it would be out of action. It was hoped that a fishing company from Akaroa might base some of its fleet at Kaiapoi and there was some interest in shipping Waimakariri River shingle through the port. However neither of these ventures came to fruition and the port ceased all commercial activities from that date onwards.

The last act in the life of the port as a commercial entity was played out far from the water when the Council took C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. to Court to recover the wharfages due. The case was heard before Mr Justice Wilson on 8 May 1967. He found for the Borough Council and ordered C.Morgan Williams and Son Ltd. to pay the overdue wharfages. This judgement brought to a close an episode in Kaiapoi's history that was both complicated and long lasting. It was made more complicated because of the personality clashes between the protagonists. There seemed to be no middle ground even though some of the parties involved found themselves precisely in that position. The Inter Island Company was used as a punching bag by Williams and as a shield by the Borough Council. The Town Clerk, C.W.D.Hodgson, was compelled to resign as he could no longer deal with C.T.Williams. In a subtle manner the Council used Hodgson's resignation to get back at Williams by stressing how it was losing a much valued officer. The longer the problem went on the more intransigent attitudes became. It was inevitable that



Florence J. Clemett, - courtesy Waimakariri District Council

a court be asked to make a judgement on the matter. It was a judgement that pleased the Council and angered Williams but that was also an inevitable outcome. It is not necessary to be judgemental about this sad affair. All that need be noted is that it happened and that it caused bitterness between many of the citizens of Kaiapoi that has not been forgotten.

The 1962 Council broke new ground. The first woman to be elected to the Kaiapoi Borough Council took her seat. Florence J. Clemett had been elected with four hundred and ten votes. Clemett had been born in Invercargill in 1906, the daughter of Charles Sneyd. The first six years of her life were spent in Tuatapere. In 1912 the family moved to Kaiapoi where Charles Sneyd owned and ran a grocery store. Clemett attended the Kaiapoi Borough School until she was ready for high school. The family then moved to Christchurch where Clemett attended Christchurch Girls' High School. On leaving school she trained as a School Dental Nurse. She remained in that job for five years until she left to train as a general nurse at Christchurch Hospital.

Clemett achieved the rank of sister and at that point left Christchurch to nurse in the King Country. There she met and married Jack Clemett and after the birth of their first child the Clemett family moved to Christchurch where they stayed for six years. Clemett's second child was born during this period. At the end of the six years the family moved to Kaiapoi where Clemett became involved in a number of community organisations. She was a member of the Red Cross, the Country Women's Institute, the Women's Division, the R.S.A. Women's Division and the Anglican church. Clemett taught at St Bartholomew's Sunday School and Bible Class. She held the positions of Vestryman, People's Warden, Vicar's Warden and Synodman as well as singing in the choir. In 1975 Clemett's admission as a Parochial Lay Reader made her one of the very few women to attain that position in the church at that time. In 1973 she was made a Justice of the Peace and in addition to those activities Clemett belonged to the Choir and the Debating Club.

On the Council Clemett held the chairmanship of the Library Committee, the Pension Rental Flats and Ownership Flats Committee, the Welfare Committee and the Council Buildings and Housing Committee. In all she served on the Borough Council for twelve years. During nine of those years Clemett was employed by the Council as the Pensioner Liaison and Welfare Officer. Clemett's career demonstrates very clearly her great energy and willingness to be involved in her community. Her membership of the various women's groups in Kaiapoi before and after her election gave her both the experience and the exposure to make her a successful candidate for local body work. Since her election, Clemett's voluntary work experience has become a well worn path for those women determined to make a mark in local politics. It was not so much a deliberate choice but a combination of circumstances that led Clemett, and many of those women who followed her, into local body politics. Her hard working approach to her responsibilities gained her a reputation with the electors which saw Clemett elected for four consecutive terms on the Council. In 1976 Clemett was awarded a Queen's Service Medal for her work in Kaiapoi local affairs.

1962 saw the beginning of a new organisation in Kaiapoi. This was a national movement which hoped to involve local communities in their own welfare during emergency situations. A public meeting was held in August 1962 to explain and to set up the local branch the Civil Defence organisation. Mr E.C.Withell the Group Controller of Group 10 was welcomed to the meeting by the Mayor. Withell explained that Group 10 consisted of five counties and two boroughs and it was the responsibility of those local authorities to contribute to a relief plan and to establish a welfare centre for the area. The Civil Defence movement according to Withell was well established in the United States of America, England and Russia. The aim of the organisation was to bring relief to an area which had suffered a natural disaster. The work would be entirely voluntary and the plans would only be activated if there was a great emergency. Withell's visit persuaded H.C.Oram to take on the job of Deputy Controller for the Kaiapoi area. G.Yellowlees became the first Rescue Officer and R.Watson, J.Sutherland, R.Spence the first Platoon Commanders. Prior to the meeting Councillor R.Monk had accepted the position of Deputy District Commander. The meeting was unable to appoint a Welfare

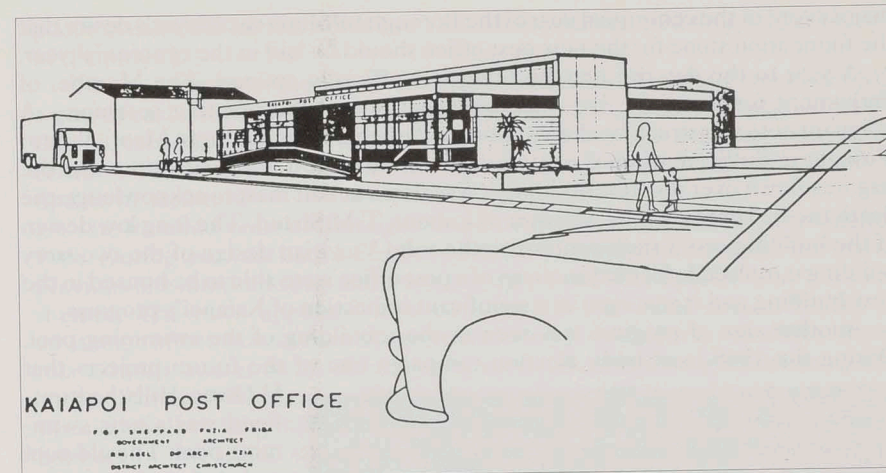
Officer. This still had not been achieved in November when the chairman of the Works and Reserves Committee Councillor, Wylie, spoke of the great difficulty that there had been in attracting volunteers to take part in the Civil Defence Organisation. Wylie warned that the Borough Council would be required to prepare a civil defence plan for once the Civil Defence Bill became law.

By February 1964 Monk requested that someone else be found for the position of Deputy District Commander. He also found it difficult to recruit keen and suitable officers for key positions in the organisation. The meeting decided to appoint Councillor R.Wylie as the Borough Controller and the Town Clerk, C.W.D.Hodgson as deputy controller thus doing away with the need for a Deputy District Controller. The R.S.A. had been approached over the appointment of a Welfare Officer and one of its members, Rice, had volunteered to do the job. It was recognised that it was hard to motivate volunteers to join an organisation like Civil Defence when there was no immediate danger. However in Kaiapoi there was the long term concern posed by flooding. Throughout the history of the town flooding in the area had often been severe, causing substantial damage to property. Yet in the establishing of the Civil Defence organisation in Kaiapoi it was extremely hard to find suitable volunteers. There are two possible reasons for the reluctance of the townspeople to commit themselves. Firstly the memories of the Second World War were still relatively fresh and it may have been that the command structure necessary for the success of Civil Defence was too reminiscent of the structure of the armed services. Secondly Kaiapoi was entering a stage in its development when a significant number of its citizens worked out of the area, mainly in Christchurch. Although these people chose to live in Kaiapoi the demands of travelling some distance to work meant that they were on the whole, unavailable, for Civil Defence tasks should they be required while they were at work.

At the beginning of the 1960's more and more people were observing that Kaiapoi was becoming a dormitory suburb for Christchurch. This new identity was reinforced at the end of the decade when the town ceased to be a port. The withdrawal of the Inter Island Shipping Company from the Kaiapoi to Wellington run was the end of town's identity as a port. An identity that had been present from the beginning of Pakeha settlement when Sewell had praised the area for its magnificent river and had foreseen it as a busy port.

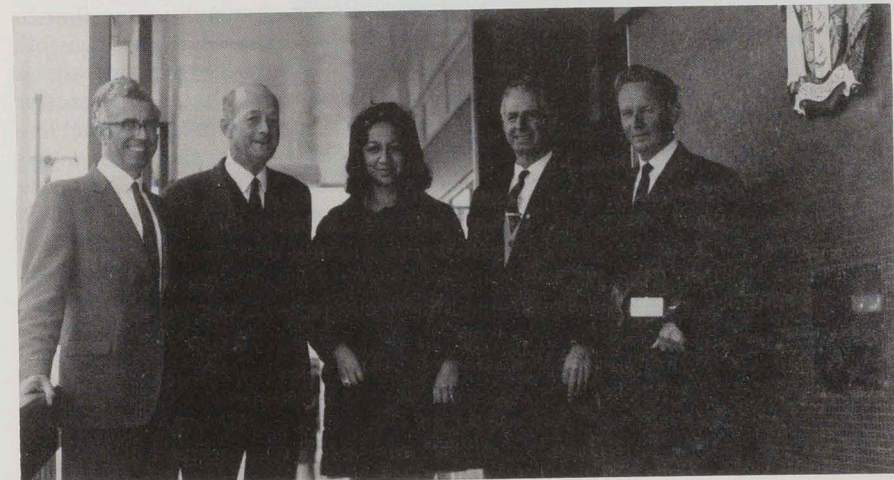
The town was undergoing changes which would force it to consider itself as part of the surrounding district rather than as a unique town with a distinctive and special identity. Some of those changes were sought by the community.

One of the changes was brought about by the post office. From the early 1960's the Council began making representations to the Postmaster-General for a new Post Office. The building was no longer adequate for the increased demands being made of it. In July 1967 the Mayor H.Owen Hills reported that it was disgraceful that on pension day and during the car registration period queues of people were forced to wait outside the post office in, often inclement weather, because there was not enough room inside the building. Councillor Clemett added that she thought it was unfair that there was no privacy for people, especially the elderly, during their business transactions at the post office because of the lack of



Architectural sketch of the new Kaiapoi post office - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

room. At that July meeting of the Council the Mayor expressed the opinion that now that the government restrictions on building had been lifted in the South Island it would be appropriate to have the foundations for the new building laid during 1968, the centennial year of the Borough. A site in Charles Street next to Hansen's Building, had been bought by the government in the early 1960's but until 1967 and the lifting of the building restrictions no planning had been done for the new post office. The foundation stone was laid on 12 December 1968 by the Postmaster-General, Mr Scott. The ceremony was the last

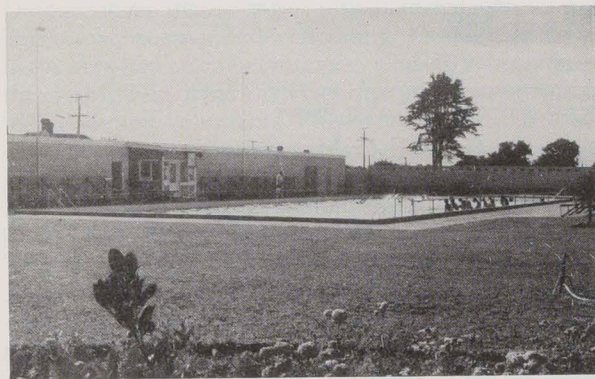


Opening day, December 1969, of the new post office —, —, Whetu TiriKatene-Sullivan, H. Owen Hills, —, Ward Kaiapoi photographers - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

major event in the centennial year of the Borough fulfilling the Mayor's desire that the foundation stone for the new post office should be laid in the centennial year.

A year to the day the new building was officially opened. The Member of Parliament for Rangiora, H.L.Pickering, performed the opening ceremony. A poignant note was struck by the Member of Parliament for Southern Maori, Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, when she reminded the audience that the first time that the flag was flown over the new building it was flown at half mast to acknowledge the death the day before of the Minister of Labour, T.M.Shand. The long low design of the building was a stark contrast to the solid Victorian design of the two story building it replaced. All the functions of a post office were able to be housed in the new building and it was seen as a significant indication of Kaiapoi's progress.

Another sign of progress was seen in the rebuilding of the swimming pool. During the 1968 local body election campaign one of the future projects that



The new swimming pool, Ward Photography, Kaiapoi - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

H.Owen Hills had outlined was a new swimming pool. The old pool had definitely come to the end of its useful life. It was too small and the facilities too old to attract people to use it. In July 1969 the members of the Kaiapoi Swimming Club decided that they would canvass every household in the Borough in an effort to persuade the townsfolk to participate in a planned giving campaign to raise money to build a new pool. It was suggested at the meeting that the canvassers ask each household to commit itself to giving five cents a week towards the rebuilding fund. As well as that, the fund raising committee planned to use the standard methods of fund raising: cake stalls, bottle drives and the weekly housie games. By the beginning of 1971 enough money had been raised to begin work on the project. The Swimming Club's Patron, Gifford Yellowlees, turned the first sod and by early October the pool complex was opened.

At the opening ceremony the Mayor, H.Owen Hills, paid a special tribute to the co-operative nature of the fund raising. The Council had given a dollar for dollar subsidy on all the money raised from the community and such was the enthusiasm of individuals, the Rotary Club, the Pegasus Surf Club, the Borough School, St Patrick's School and the Swimming Club that the fifty thousand dollars required to build the pool complex was raised in a very short time. The complex contained a learners pool as well as the main pool. A new filtration plant and heating for the pools was installed as well as the construction of new changing areas and an administration block. At the opening ceremony the learners

pool was named in honour of Gifford Yellowlees who had died shortly after the start of the project.

The completion of the new post office and the new swimming complex within a year of each other completed an historical symmetry as the establishments that they replaced had been completed close to each other in the early years of the century. These were indications that the town was flourishing and was able to update its facilities.

The hundred years of Borough Council existence was celebrated throughout 1968. During that year both a sense of pride in the achievements of the town in the previous one hundred years and a sense of optimism for the future were dominant themes. The town appeared to have a settled and stable future. It had the advantage of being an industrial centre with a rural atmosphere. The lifestyle was relaxed and pleasant. In the official publication commemorating the centennial the author, Patricia B.Ward, wrote that the Kaiapoi Borough Council had budgeted and planned well to keep abreast of population and industrial expansion within its boundaries. She added a note of caution that the future after the completion of the northern motorway would bring an urgent need for borough expansion and allied amenities. (6)

Some of those future needs were addressed with the opening of the post office and the swimming complex. Another was met in July 1969 when the Rialto Theatre began its new life as the Kaiapoi Community Centre. The community had been planning and fund raising for the Centre for twenty-six years and thus the opening was a special occasion. A formal celebration of the event incorporated a music festival which played to a packed house. In the first half of the programme the three Kaiapoi primary schools presented items as did the Clarkville Primary school. The Adair Botting School of Ballet, the Country Women's Institute Glee Club, and Kay Barnard completed the programme. The second half of the evening was devoted to a performance of the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, "Trial By Jury". It was presented by the Rangiora Musical Society with help from the South Brighton Choral Society. The conductor was a Kaiapoi man, C.Ward.

Two months previously, in May 1969, the Mayor had outlined eight goals for the future. The first two goals, the provision of the new swimming pool and the opening of the Community Centre, were achieved relatively quickly. The other goals, the extension of the sewage scheme, the provision of high pressure water, the completion and upgrading of roads and footpaths, the beautifying of parks and gardens and the replanting of forest areas, the provision of a new library, and the provision of new subdivisions were all expected to be completed within six years.

The extension of the sewage system and the provision of a high pressure water scheme became top priorities. For the previous three years the Council had been aware of the polluted state of the Kaiapoi River system. By late 1969 the situation had become urgent and so with the advice of the Pollution Advisory Council it was decided to replace the old Inhoff tank system. The first stage of redevelopment incorporated the construction of oxidation ponds. The Inhoff tank was to be

(6) Ward, Patricia B. *The First Century Kaiapoi Borough Council*, p79

converted into one of the pumping stations needed for the new system. In the second stage it was planned to have a bypass sewer from the western end of the town for that area to be developed in the future. In October 1969 the government announced that it was prepared to grant subsidies to local authorities to improve their water and sewage systems. The Kaiapoi Borough took advantage of the subsidies and the new sewage and water systems were commenced and completed in stages throughout the 1970's. As it had, when the first sewage system had been installed, the completion of these works gave Kaiapoi a modern system designed to meet the expected expansion of the town.

The upgrading of the roads and footpaths continued throughout the early part of the 1970's as did the continual programme of beautification of the parks and the river banks. There were however two areas which remained in a less than satisfactory state. The first was Darnley Square which even with the development of the swimming complex, the expansion of the tennis club and the building of the scout den remained a difficult area to enhance. The sandy soil in the Square area and its rolling contours presented particular difficulties for a beautifying programme that, by and large, still have not been addressed. The second area was Railway Department land around the station. In this case the use made of the land was not conducive to a beautifying programme. Its situation near the centre of the town gave the casual visitor to Kaiapoi an erroneous impression of the town. The Council did make some attempt to hide the land from the road by building a bank alongside it. This part of the town is still in need of the development that was expected when the station was opened.

The 1971 local body elections witnessed the end of H. Owen Hills' long career of public service in Kaiapoi. His grandparents were pioneer settlers in Rangiora with his grandfather starting the Rangiora brick kiln producing bricks using "H" as the trade mark. Hills interest in electrical engineering lead him to a career which combined his love of the movies with his passion for sound engineering. He settled in Kaiapoi in 1929 and was quickly involved firstly the managership and ownership of the movie theatres in Kaiapoi and surrounding districts. He was first elected on to the Borough Council in 1938. In 1950 he became Mayor, succeeding Morgan Williams on his retirement. He second term as Mayor began in 1965. He was awarded the M.B.E. in 1967 for his local body work as well as his work in the movie industry.

A major name change for a number of the differently named portions of the main thoroughfare through Kaiapoi began in November 1976. The Chief Fire Officer, A.Cattermole, drew the Council's attention to the difficulty the emergency services had locating an address on what appeared to be a single road which had four different names. On entering Kaiapoi from the Christchurch end of the town the road was known as the North Road. At the junction of Hilton Street, the road became High Street and over the river it became Cookson Street. At the junction of Cookson and Cass Streets it became the Main North Road. These names for one road reflected the development and expansion of Kaiapoi over the years since its foundation. The Council agreed that it would be sensible to rename the whole road. However it could not agree on a name. It was proposed by

Councillor L.A.Clark at the following meeting of the Council that the road should be known as Williams Street. Clark reminded the Council that it was policy to name streets in new sub-divisions after previous mayors and that she considered Kaiapoi to be unique in New Zealand in that it had four mayors with the surname of Williams. The mayors were two sets of fathers and sons, each set unrelated to the other. Clark's motion was accepted by the Council which then had the job of convincing the residents and more particularly the business people that the name change was sensible. In May 1977 the Council received an objection from the businessmen who had estimated that the overall cost to the business community for changing their addresses would amount to ten thousand dollars. Most of this would be absorbed by printing costs to change their letter heads. In the following month a petition was presented to the Council against the name change. There were two hundred and thirteen signatures on the petition and this represented



B.O. Williams - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

about eighty five per cent of the residents directly affected by the name change. The Mayor, B.O.Williams, was placed in an awkward situation on the presentation of the petition. Not only was he one of the Williams in whose honour the name had been proposed but also the other Williams son, C.T.Williams, was a sitting Councillor. The Mayor decided to let the petition lie on the table which upset the petitioners. It was decided at the August meeting of the Council that despite the objections from the public the renaming of the street should proceed. On 4 April 1978 the main road through the town officially became Williams Street.

Throughout the 1970's and the 1980's new subdivisions were opened up. None were on the scale of the Meadow Street subdivision of the 1960's until the development of the southern and western areas of the town in the late 1980's.

The building of the new library too was delayed until the mid 1980's. A plan of civic redevelopment was drawn up in August 1983 and given Borough Council approval in December. The plan included the new library, to be the first building constructed, as well as a community services building, new council offices, Council Chamber, electrical show room and other commercial buildings on Williams Street. Incorporated in the plan was the eventual demolition of the old library and fire station so that the Council offices, the commercial buildings and a small town square could be erected on that site. A number of businessmen on the north side of the river expressed disappointment that the new library was not going to be situated in the second storey of the recently completed Hansen's building. At the

time of the rebuilding of the Hansen's block in 1979, it had been understood that the Council would use the second storey as a library site. However the more ambitious and purpose-built library planned for the Raven Quay site appeared to appeal to most people in the town.

The spacious new library was opened on 11 May 1985. To mark the opening a number of well known Kaiapoi families made substantial gifts to the facility. The Cattermole family presented the library with a wall clock. C.W.D.Hodgson donated money for the main lighting fixture in the building and the Blackwell family donated money for the purchase of new books. In addition the Ranui Club fundraised for the purchase of books as did the Kaiapoi High School students for the purchase of toys for the children's area of the library. These gifts reflected the general approval of and the pride in the new building.

The old library and fire station were demolished in November to make way for the second stage of the civic redevelopment. Tenders were called for this stage in October 1986 with the building being opened on 18 June 1987 by the Member of Parliament for Rangiora, R.J.Gerard.



The Kaiapoi Service Centre, 1993, formerly the Kaiapoi Borough Council buildings - courtesy P.J. Wood

The completion of this part of the civic redevelopment gave Kaiapoi a attractively designed modern building that from the outside compliments its surroundings. The one-storey library next to the two-storied Council buildings reflect the shape of the hills to the north-west of the town. The flowing nature of the design also reflects the immediate surroundings of the river and its stopbanks. In his

discussions with the Council the architect, John Vial, was keen to mirror the domestic architecture of the town and for that reason he selected the hipped line of the roof and the verandas. Vial wanted to create a set of buildings that had a friendly and welcoming appearance that the citizens could feel comfortable with. Of all the public buildings in Kaiapoi, the library and the Council offices, seem the best suited to the environment. Perhaps it is a reflection of the growing understanding of the nature of the area by its Pakeha inhabitants.

The residents of The Pines and Kairaki beach settlements, from the time of Kirk's mayoralty, became increasingly disillusioned over their associations with both the Rangiora County Council and the Kaiapoi Borough Council. It was the Borough Council which came in for the most criticism from the residents. In order to finance a sewage scheme for the settlements the Kirk Council levied the residents. Although there was an obvious benefit for The Pines and Kairaki from the sewage scheme, the residents and bach owners were annoyed at the increase which worked out at a two pound rise in the rental of the beach properties. It appeared to the leaseholders that the subsequent rise in rents was a device for the borough to reap the benefits of an increase in income to the detriment of the beach residents. The residents knew that they still had to raise money for the amenities that they required.

After the brief cessation of the annual New Year's gala in 1959/60 the event was revived. The money raised was to be used by the residents to provide amenities which in other communities were provided by the local authority. Visitors to the galas could expect to find the usual entertainment of stalls, chocolate wheels, raffles, and beauty contests. The galas appealed to large numbers of visitors from Christchurch who viewed the day as a relatively cheap day out. The venue, of course, added to the attraction, as visitors were able to combine a day at the beach with the fun found at the gala. Special buses and trains ran from Christchurch to cater for the numbers wanting to go to the galas. Over the years the money raised enabled the residents to build a concrete paddling pool, a netball court, and to improve the tennis court. For The Pines, probably the most important use for the gala money, was in the upkeep of the Oval. The Oval was central to the identity of the settlement. It gave The Pines its special essence. However the nature of the land meant that in order for the Oval to remain as it had been created, constant care and attention were needed.

With a history of self sufficiency at the beach settlements stretching back to the 1920's it was understandable that the residents felt compelled after the Kirk Council's imposition of the levy to seek to freehold their properties. This could not be achieved without first resolving the dilemma of dual control.

By the late 1960's and early 1970's dual control of the beach settlements by the Rangiora County Council and the Kaiapoi Borough Council produced quite farcical situations. This was especially so in the areas of rubbish collection and the mowing of reserve land. The County Council collected the household rubbish and the Borough Council was responsible for the collection rubbish from the Oval. Responsibility for mowing the Oval and Featherstone Park was given to the borough while the county mowed McGarry Park and the park

in the McIntosh subdivision. As happened earlier over the maintenance of Beach Road, neither local authority co-ordinated their maintenance programmes. There were instances, primarily over the mowing, when a co-ordinated approach would have resulted in a tidier appearance for the settlements. These problems, while minor in scale, were visually irritating to residents and were a continual reminder of their vulnerability at the hands of competing interests.

Over the decades, from 1960, the residents made numerous appeals for resolution of the dual control issue so that they might be able to gain freehold title to the land that they had occupied, in some cases, for a couple of generations. It was not until 1987 that this became possible. In February the final obstacle to the sale of the leasehold land was cleared when the Department of Internal Affairs resolved that the Borough Council was entitled to sell the land. The Pines and Kairaki Beaches Association had approached the Council requesting help with finance for those wishing to freehold their land. The Council did not see financial aid as part of its work and suggested the residents seek help from financial institutions. The Association appointed a lawyer, A.I. McNish, to ensure that all the problems that might be encountered in the freeholding of properties were dealt with in an orderly manner. To date approximately half the residents at the settlements have freeholded their properties.

One of the surprises in the sports history of Kaiapoi is that it appears that netball, formerly called basketball, did not have a fully developed club structure until the early 1970's. The girls at the Kaiapoi Borough School and Kaiapoi North Schools had been encouraged to play basketball with the provision of hard surfaced courts at those schools. The history of the game at St Patrick's School followed much the same pattern and netball became a regular part of school life for the girls during the winter term.

Enthusiasm for the game was such that the St Patrick's Netball Club was formed in. However by 1971 it was felt that a change of name would encourage more women and girls to play the sport and thus the Kaiapoi Netball Club was formed. The first meeting of the newly named club took place in March 1971. Marjorie Wright was elected president, the secretary was Sue Bastings and the club captain was Joan Smith. At the top of the agenda was a discussion aimed at changing the uniform. The St Patrick's Club uniform had been a green gym tunic with long black stockings. It was proposed that the new uniform be brown pleated skirts with gold shirts. The connection with the St Patrick's Club was not entirely severed. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Christchurch was invited to continue as patron of the new club and Betty Marsh who had been the organiser of the St Patrick's Club was made a first Life Member of the Kaiapoi Club. The club continued to send teams to participate in the annual Roman Catholic Tournaments which were held in different centres throughout the South Island. Up until 1979 practices were held on the St Patrick's School court. In that year the St Patrick's parish decided to build a hall which meant that the court was no longer available. The club then shifted to practice at the Kaiapoi High School courts thus cutting its physical link with St Patrick's, although it still retained its link with the Roman Catholic community by

continuing to send teams to participate in Roman Catholic Tournaments. By 1989 the club had taken over the responsibility for the Kaiapoi High School teams. It had sixteen teams in the grade competitions as well as a "golden oldie" team for more mature players. At the other end of the scale, the club organised Kiwi netball for primary school children.

Another sporting activity which had enjoyed sporadic success in Kaiapoi from the beginning of the century was soccer. In the early years it was a game mostly played by the newly arrived English mill workers. However it faded from the sports scene during the First World War and although there was a brief revival in the 1940's it was not until 1974 that soccer became a club-based sport in Kaiapoi. It was largely due to the enthusiasm of Ray Kettle. The club settled at The Oval in The Pines until 1980 when the land reclaimed from the straightening of the Cam River at the time of constructing the Cam Road access to the motorway was opened as Wylie Park.

There were two episodes in the final two decades of the existence of the Kaiapoi Borough Council that may be seen as the inevitable consequence of small local government. In many ways a local authority which is responsible for the administration of a small town such as Kaiapoi is in a better position to understand the needs of all of its citizens than a local authority responsible for a larger urban area. The smallness of the community gives it an intimacy that is hard to achieve in a more substantial centre. Many of electors have known, personally the councillors for a considerable period. As well being familiar with the family backgrounds, the work and hobby interests of their councillors, electors in places like Kaiapoi have ready access to their representatives almost on a daily basis in the streets and over the back fences. It is a familiarity which can often assist the process of local government making it a satisfactory experience for both the electors and the councillors. However there is a negative side to this picture. Such intimacy can often lead to the entrenchment of ideas and growing out of that entrenchment a "them and us" mentality. This can result in the Council adopting a "close to the chest" method of conducting the affairs of the town principally through the frequent use of the device of taking matters "in committee". Public affairs could be discussed and decisions made without the necessity of public reporting.

Intimate knowledge of the personalities of people in power on the scale that is possible in a small community, can also have a negative effect. It is possible that one elector's adverse experience with either a councillor or a council official can become common knowledge and thus affect the relationships that the councillor or official might have with a wide range of people within the town. Kaiapoi was to have such experiences.

In 1977 a Kaiapoi Ratepayers and Residents Association was formed with Jim Wilson as its chairman. Wilson had been a businessman in the town since 1974 and his aim was to have an association which would have the voice of the citizens of Kaiapoi heard at the Council table. He wished to avoid what he termed an "old boy network" in operation. Wilson had enough of such experiences in England to know that those without connections to people in power had little opportunity of having their concerns listened to and acted upon. Wilson hoped that the Kaiapoi Ratepay-

ers and Residents Association would redress the balance and a considerable number of the townsfolk thought likewise. By the end of its first year the Association had attracted one hundred and forty-five members and it had achieved a number of successes in its attempts to have the ordinary citizens' voices heard. The Association's profile had been enhanced when it persuaded the Council to provide free rubbish bags and have the proposed, pumping station for Darnley Square resited to a position beside the Square rather than on it. The Association had worked with the Council to obtain more policemen and traffic officers for Kaiapoi as well as building up a library of Council minutes to which the members had easy access. In spite of these successes the Association was only able to attract twenty-three of its members to its Annual General Meeting in February 1979. It was decided to postpone the meeting to another night when the new executive and committee were elected. However the seeds of its own destruction were sown at that second meeting when the last member of the committee was co-opted onto the committee rather than elected. It then transpired that this member, A. Bemelman, was in dispute with the Council over a town planning matter and so Wilson, in his capacity as chairman, returned Bemelman's subscription to him. Unfortunately this was done after the list of the new executive and committee had been published and therefore the dispute between the members which should have remained the business of the Association became public knowledge. In effect the dispute put the Association in a weaker position when dealing with the Council.

At about the same time as the Kaiapoi Ratepayers and Residents Association had postponed its Annual General Meeting, Association members had met with the Council to discuss what was felt to be the three most pressing issues in Kaiapoi. The first was a request to the Council to institute a plan to install an effective drainage system in the Beach Road, Feldwick Drain area. The Association considered that the lack of drainage in the area particularly affected the Golden Grove sub-division and that it would ultimately deter people from buying sections in that sub-division. The Council replied that it was aware of the problem but the new drainage scheme for Kaiapoi did not cover the Golden Grove area.

The second issue was the Association's perception that a number of residential properties, particularly on the north side of the river, were being used as light industrial properties. According to the Association the various owners were acting outside the Council's policy on such matters. The Council's reply was again unsatisfactory to the Association. The Council maintained that it was unable to act because all such operations had been in existence before the district scheme came into effect.

C.W.D. Hodgson raised the third issue. This was the Association's concern that part of Darnley Square was being used as a commercial car park. According to Hodgson the Council did not have the authority to permit such a use of the Square as it had been given to Kaiapoi as a recreational reserve. In fact that section of the Square which was used as a car park was part of a later purchase by the Council and therefore not part of the original recreational ground. This was the approach

adopted by the Council. It could be argued that the Council was splitting legal hairs in that the purchased portion of Darnley Square was now part of the whole area. However the Council declined to address the Association's questions about the car park.

The Council's negative response to all three of the Association's issues was disappointing but not necessarily the end of the Association's effectiveness as the voice of the ordinary citizens. However the Council's attitude combined with Association's own, by now, public quarrel with one of its members served to weaken it as the advocate for the ratepayers and residents. In turn the position that the Association found itself in, tended to make it more truculent in its dealings with the Council. At the meeting of the Council in March 1979 the Association once again pressed for answers on the issue it had raised over Darnley Square and the use of residential properties for industrial purposes. Again the Council declined to respond. The Association consequently began a campaign against the Council ultimately resulting in a meeting which called for the resignation of the whole Council. Although the Association was vociferous, because of its earlier internal problems, it did not have the confidence of the whole community. The Council was able therefore to ignore the call for its resignation. However, there were sufficient numbers of angry Kaiapoi residents to warrant the Council proposing what amounted to peace talks between itself and the Association in November 1979. At the suggestion of Councillor H. Cumberland it was decided that the Council and the Association should hold informal conferences every quarter on matters of mutual interest. Although there appeared to be a truce, a number of the Association's members blamed the Town Clerk, R.N. McCabe, for the breakdown of communication between the Association and the Council.

The rift which existed between the Kaiapoi Ratepayers and Residents Association and the Borough Council prompted the Association with the help of the W.E.A. to run a seminar on the practicalities of local government. The object of the seminar was to provide a team of people prepared to stand in the 1980 local body elections. It was hoped that by having such a team no further breakdowns in communication between the citizens and the Council and its officers would occur. The course attracted twenty one enrolments. The Association expected that a course covering such areas as how to chair a meeting, knowledge of standing orders, the preparation of reports and general council procedures would result in the involvement of citizens in their own affairs and a greater efficiency in all round municipal management.

The 1980 local body elections saw a number of those involved in the Association's course being elected. The new Mayor, Howard Cumberland, was one of the sitting Councillors who was sympathetic to the aims of the Association. It was generally thought by the Association's members that the new Council would pay more attention to its concerns.

Cumberland's first term as Mayor was relatively free of the friction that had dogged his predecessor. His second term was to be turbulent and was to demonstrate all of the negative elements of local government in a small community.

The difficulties really began some years before. The Town Clerk, R.N. McCabe, who had been appointed in 1974, was described by a former Councillor, Trevor Williams, as capable and knowledgeable but not good at public relations and unable to delegate responsibility. McCabe concurred in this view of himself saying that he did not find it easy to perform what some people perceived as public relations. From the time of his appointment most Councillors and citizens grew to understand that at certain times McCabe could be hard to work with but generally this negative side of his personality was ignored. However in two instances McCabe's difficulties in this area resulted in crises that could have been avoided if those involved had exercised more diplomacy.

The festering problem of the Darnley Square car park along with the desire of the Council to lease part of Darnley Square to the Scout Association arose again towards the end of 1982. The passing of the Local Legislation Act 1982 permitted the Council to authorise the lease of land held in trust. Hodgson did not agree that this course should be adopted over the land which had been the subject of the earlier concerns of the Ratepayers' Association. He was incensed when it was proposed and at the December 1982 Council meeting he and McCabe clashed over the details of both the land which was held in trust and the fact that the Council wished to exercise its authority to lease part of the land in trust. However there was nothing that either Hodgson or the Association could do about the portion of Darnley Square which was leased to the Scout Association. Hodgson kept up a public campaign over the parking issue and it became common knowledge that he found McCabe difficult to communicate with. This prompted many people to think that McCabe was responsible for the way in which decisions were made by the Council.

Unfortunately the long running Darnley Square parking problem was closely followed by the Kaiapoi Motor Spares Ltd episode. The company operated a garage in Williams Street and the proprietor of the garage, John Liddell, with the support of Shell Oil New Zealand Ltd applied to the Council for permission to install Liquid Petroleum Gas (L.P.G.) as an alternative fuel. In giving permission the Council attached an additional safety requirement to the proposal. Liddell was expected to install a sprinkler cage as an auxiliary fire prevention measure. As he did not agree that this was necessary, his company appealed to the Planning Tribunal against the requirement. After seeking advice from his solicitor, Liddell approached McCabe to ask if the Council would consider a compromise. Apparently from the discussion McCabe gained the impression that the company would withdraw the appeal and proceed to fulfil the Council's requirement and at a Town Planning Committee meeting on 3 September 1984 he stated this as the company's position. In fact it was not the company's intention to withdraw its appeal at all. In an effort to explain the situation a representative of Shell Oil New Zealand Ltd, Peter Playle, attempted to meet with McCabe on 8 October. Playle was unable to see the Town Clerk but was told by another council official that the matter would be raised at that night's Council meeting. The matter was not raised and so Kaiapoi Motor Spares Ltd had to wait until early 1985 for the appeal to be heard.

The cavalier way he was treated over the appeal re-opened old wounds for Liddell. The previous year when Liddell wished to rent an adjacent property his offer was conditional on his gaining permission to run a fast food outlet from the complex. A number of close neighbours objected to the plan on the grounds of noise. Liddell conducted his own survey and found that many of the neighbours had no objection to the fast food outlet. In the mean time the Council had tried to secure a second option on the property which would have closed Liddell's business down. Eight months elapsed between the presentation of Liddell's survey in April 1983 and the offer in December by McCabe to meet and resolve the problem. A further three months passed without a meeting when finally McCabe informed Liddell's solicitor that a meeting was not necessary as the problem had resolved itself. The delay in arriving at that point left Liddell perplexed and so when it seemed as if his appeal over the installation of safety equipment around the L.P.G. tank at his garage was following a similar path he blamed the Council and indirectly McCabe for his frustration.

Liddell vented his frustration by allowing the *Northern Outlook* newspaper to print his story in the edition of 18 October 1984. The publication of the story resulted in the Council at its subsequent October meeting requesting McCabe to prepare a detailed report on the allegations contained in the story. The motion was proposed by Councillor Philip Redmond. Redmond said that it appeared from the article that some of the Council's officers had been misleading the Council and it was a matter that needed urgent attention. In the meantime Liddell's problem had been partially resolved by Rockgas, the supplier of L.P.G., agreeing to fulfil the Council's additional safety requirement although Liddell was not pleased as he had to pay extra money for this as well as paying Shell Oil's legal fees.

Although it appeared as if the matters surrounding Kaiapoi Motor Spares Ltd had been resolved it became clear in early 1985 that this was not so. It became obvious that a number of Councillors felt that the Town Clerk's actions had placed them and the Council in an embarrassing position. Therefore on the initiative of Councillors A.J. Empson and A.H. Blackie a telephone poll was conducted among some of the Council members to ascertain whether or not McCabe should remain in his post. In a way this poll echoed an earlier attempt by Hodgson to have the Town Clerk and the Deputy Clerk swap their jobs. Hodgson had first raised that matter at a Finance Committee meeting in November 1982 and asked that it be discussed at the December meeting of the Council. It was discussed but dismissed at the time as a preposterous idea by Councillor Blackie. The comment should have returned to haunt Councillor Blackie.

It was reported in the *Northern Outlook* that when Empson and Blackie had obtained sufficient support for the idea that McCabe should be asked for his resignation, McCabe was contacted and asked to table his letter of resignation on 28 January 1985. This he did and after a special meeting taken in committee by the Council on 4 February McCabe's resignation was accepted. The *Northern Outlook*, however, went on to report that the acceptance of the resignation was not unanimous and the paper named Councillors M.O. Waipara and P.I. Redmond as

voting against it. It was also reported that the Mayor, H.W.Cumberland, and Councillor M.O.Cleland abstained from voting.⁽⁷⁾

The report in the *Northern Outlook* was followed by similar reports in both Christchurch papers, *The Star* and *The Press*. It is clear that information from the meeting, although in committee, was passed onto the *Northern Outlook* and reached a wider readership through the publication of the story in the Christchurch newspapers. The publication of the events surrounding McCabe's resignation led to the resignation of Councillor M.O.(Buff) Waipara on 18 February. In his letter of resignation addressed to the Council and the people of Kaiapoi which he read aloud to the meeting, Waipara wrote that the bitterness around the Council table had unfortunately found its way into the newspapers. He was alarmed that decisions appeared to be made outside the Council and committee structure. Waipara felt it was wrong that committee chairmen alone made decisions that were then expected to be ratified by the committee concerned. He was also concerned that according to the report in the *Northern Outlook* he was not consulted during the so-called telephone poll because his input to Council business was minimal. Waipara called this a public slur. The Mayor tried to persuade Waipara to remain on the Council but was unsuccessful. At the same meeting two other Councillors, Cleland and Redmond, revealed that they had also considered resigning for much the same reasons as Waipara. Cleland was reported as saying that she thought that the leak to the press had done the Town Clerk a grave injustice as well as being a grave disservice to the town and the Council.

Unfortunately that was not the end of the matter. A week later Councillor Redmond took up Waipara's criticisms that the allocation of chairmanships of the various committees were unfairly distributed. He prepared a motion that membership of all standing committees be reviewed with the object of attaining a more balanced distribution. He hoped that the motion would be discussed at the March meeting of the Council. At the March meeting it was agreed that committee membership and responsibilities should be reviewed. At the 22 April meeting Redmond presented his ideas for the restructuring of the committees but found that although there was some support for his proposals from the Deputy Mayor, H.G.McAllister, the majority of Councillors did not approve of them. At the conclusion of the public business section of the meeting Councillor Redmond resigned. Although this last event did not appear to be predetermined by Redmond, it was, nevertheless, an inevitable outcome of the failure of his efforts to have the committee structures altered.

Redmond's resignation was a further sign of a high level of frustration within the Council. Frustration however was not confined to Council members. At the time of Waipara's resignation the Council had decided not to conduct a by-election to fill the vacancy. A large number of citizens felt that this was an undemocratic decision. A petition of two hundred and seventy-eight signatures requesting a by-election under the name of Bruce Hullen was presented to the Council at the April meeting. Under a provisions of the Local Elections

(7) *Northern Outlook*, 14.2.1985 p1, p3.

and Polls Act an election was to be held if a poll of five per cent of the residents and ratepayers made a formal request for it. According to Hullen, who was the chairman of the local Labour Party branch, five per cent of the eligible people would amount to one hundred and fifty nine signatures. His petition exceeded that total by one hundred and nineteen. In the event the petition was not considered because Redmond's resignation meant that the Council was obliged to hold a by-election.

On 23 April, the day following Redmond's resignation, the Mayor, Howard Cumberland, announced the resignation of a second council officer, Works Supervisor Graham Holmes. Holmes' resignation was a blow to the Council which was already reeling from the three previous resignations. As a means of maintaining some stability the Mayor asked McCabe to stay for another month in order to oversee the preparations for the by-election, to organise the details of a Vice-Regal visit to Kaiapoi, to finalise the financial estimates of the Council and to find a replacement Works' Supervisor.

The events involving the Borough Council from 1983 to 1985 snowballed to such an extent that the Council seemed out of control. Many people in the town were unhappy with the way the Council was conducting its affairs but felt powerless. The only positive move from the citizens was the Bruce Hullen petition but by that stage the problems had gained a momentum that overtook the need for the petition. More than anything else the problems that Kaiapoi experienced during the 1983-85 period pointed to the need for strong and united leadership. The Mayor, H.W.Cumberland, seemed unable to provide what was required despite the fact that during the local body election campaign of 1980 he had assured the electors he was "going to straighten the town out".

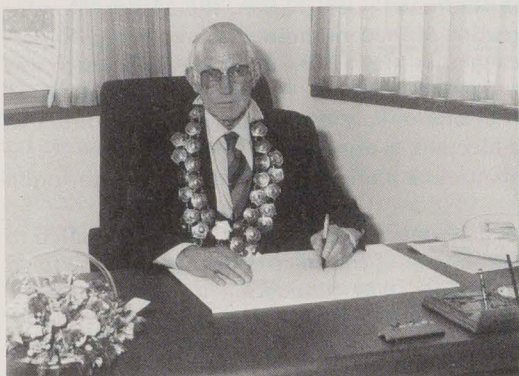
In early May 1985 the deputy County Clerk of the Waimea County, Gary Saunders, was appointed to the Kaiapoi Town Clerk's position. He took up his job in the last week of June. Saunders had a comprehensive background in administrative positions. He had worked for the Department of Maori Affairs from 1965 until 1977 when he accepted an appointment with the Paparua County Council as an Administration Officer. He remained in that position until 1982 when he became the deputy County Clerk for the Waimea County. Saunders' experience in both Paparua and Waimea Counties gave him the experience he needed to attend to the problems and lead the Kaiapoi Borough office.

At the same time as Saunders' appointment was announced the Council also declared that a by-election would be held on 21 June to fill the vacancies caused by the resignations of Councillors Waipara and Redmond.

The by-election brought to a close a very sad and complicated episode in town's history. The intimacy of the situation undoubtedly hardened the antagonism between the individuals caught up in the situation. At the time of the April 1985 Council meeting a point had been reached where no compromise for the sake of the good government of the town could be reached. It seemed inevitable from the time of the printing of the story of the McCabe's resignation that there would be further resignations. The manner in which the telephone poll was firstly conducted and then made public knowledge ensured that outcome.

It was no surprise to find that at the 1986 local body elections the Deputy Mayor, H.G. McAllister, who had been steadily increasing his votes over the previous two elections, was elected Mayor. Kaiapoi was desperate for a change that would end the acrimonious period of the Cumberland mayoralty. What was not foreseen, notwithstanding the numerous signs of the previous twenty years, was that the McAllister mayoralty was to be the last for the Kaiapoi Borough.

Hector McAllister was born in Kaiapoi and was educated at the Kaiapoi Borough



Hector McAllister - courtesy McAllister family

School and West Christchurch High School (now Hagley High School). His first job was as a pig grader for the Pig Marketing Association. He then became a lamb grader at the Canterbury Frozen Meat Company. McAllister's service during World War Two took him to the Pacific Islands where he contracted malaria. On his return from the war he was advised to take an outside job and so he became a gardener for the Kaiapoi Borough Council. It was arduous work, especially during the mowing season when the public parks had to be mowed by hand. In 1958 McAllister was asked by Gifford Yellowlees to work for him at the coal yard. He remained there for five years until he took a forman's job at the Woollen Mill. McAllister remained at the mill until its closure. Since then he has continued his interest in woollen manufacturing by being a founder of Rahnex Wools, one of the first companies to use space in the former Woollen Mill buildings. As well as being a Councillor, Deputy Mayor and the last Mayor of the Kaiapoi Borough Council, McAllister was a member of the Fire Brigade for thirty three years.

In the years between 1957 and 1986 enormous changes took place in Kaiapoi. More than at any other time in the town's history it had to search for its identity. With the closure of the port and the woollen mills Kaiapoi could no longer claim to be either a river port or a mill town. At both of those times there were some in the town that clung to the hope that both enterprises could be revived. In fact they needed only to look to the north-western boundary of the town to see the future. The motorway brought a new dimension to the town. It was now only a short journey to Christchurch but the price of land in Kaiapoi remained low enough to attract both young families and new businesses to the area. The late 1960's and the decade of the 1970's saw tremendous growth in the town despite the setbacks of losing the port and the mill. Kaiapoi was moving towards being a multi-faceted town with both a focus on itself and on Christchurch for which it was rapidly becoming a dormitory town.

Chapter Eleven:

THE MODERN BOROUGH.

Between the cessation of trading through the port and the closure of the Woollen Mill, Kaiapoi sought to present an image of an industrial town within a rural setting. In essence it had achieved the type of community that the proponents of the Gladstone settlement had contemplated. It was hoped that Gladstone would be a small, tightly knit community that nevertheless was diverse in its social makeup and, above all, self sufficient. The Gladstone planners had relied on the notion that the settlement would gain self sufficiency from its activities as a market town. In fact the location and natural resources of the region led Kaiapoi to become an industrial town. However, it had at its core the compact but diverse community that the Gladstone disciples had so fervently believed in.

At the end of the 1960's Kaiapoi's citizens were facing a similar situation to that in which the pioneer settlers had found themselves when they were urging the Canterbury Provincial Government to extend the postal and law and order services to their community. The difference for the citizens of the 1960's was that they had to convince a government in Wellington that their needs for secondary education were just as acute as the needs of the pioneers for a post office and a policeman.

In 1964, after land in Ohoka Road had been purchased by the Education Board, the town received assurances from the both the National Government and the Labour Opposition that there was a need for a high school to be built. At a public meeting held on 3 August 1964, the Mayor, O.M. Williams, read a letter from the Labour Member for Hutt, the Honourable W. Nash, which stated that he thought there was no doubt that a post primary school should be established in Kaiapoi. Nash went on to write that the numbers of children going to Rangiora and Papanui were enough to justify the establishment of a school in the borough. Williams also had a Ministry of Works survey which estimated that the population of Kaiapoi would have increased by eighty three per cent by 1980. If that prediction was proved then, in Williams' view, it was imperative for the community to have a

secondary school. It seemed that it would be only a matter of time before the dream became a reality.⁽¹⁾

In fact another four years was to elapse before any further progress was made and once again that progress was initiated by Kaiapoi itself. In March 1968 the Kaiapoi North School Committee under the chairmanship of Neil Price called a meeting to ascertain what progress had been made towards obtaining a high school for the town. Price indicted that the primary school committees in the area were concerned about the lack of continuity for their pupils once they had left their schools. The necessity of travel for high school pupils to either Christchurch or Rangiora broke a pattern of natural development for the town. Present at the meeting were the Member of Parliament for Rangiora, H.L. Pickering, the Member of Parliament for Southern Maori, Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan, the Mayor, H.O. Hills, the chairman of the Town Planning and By-laws Committee, Councillor R. Wylie, the district member for the Canterbury Education Board, S.M. Millar, and representatives of the three local primary school committees as well as representatives of the parent-teacher and home and school associations. Pickering stated the obvious when he said that it was important that Kaiapoi had a high school, not only in terms of education, but economically as another boost to the area's rapid development. He went on to say that a high school would be a focal point and would give the town status and identity as a community. These sentiments were exactly those that the citizens of Kaiapoi had been presenting to the various governments since the days when the Kaiapoi Borough Council had pointed out that there was a block of land in the Camside area that would be an ideal site for a high school. It was past the time for words. Hills, in his presentation of the steps that had been taken since 1964, implied that the town had now developed to the stage where it was no longer possible to mollify its concerns by presenting a "sometime in the future" scenario. In surveys conducted by both the Council and the Canterbury Education Board it was found that the most suitable time to establish a high school in Kaiapoi would be when the pupil roll at Rangiora could be guaranteed not to fall below eight hundred and fifty pupils. In addition, there had to be the assurance that within four years of its establishment the high school at Kaiapoi would be catering for between three hundred and fifty and four hundred pupils. It was estimated by both authorities that the optimum time would be reached in 1970. 1968, therefore, was the year in which to begin planning for the school. One of the fears expressed by the meeting was that the government might be persuaded, in the face of growing pupil numbers at Papanui High School from the Belfast area, to build a school in that district. Pickering repeated an assurance from the Minister of Education, the Honourable A.E. Kinsella, that the government would not establish a high school at Belfast. The later Kaiapoi surveys however did not incorporate any pupil numbers from the Belfast area as it was thought that to include them would only result in further delays. It was stated by Hills that the most practical solution for the Belfast pupils, who had similar social backgrounds to those who lived in Kaiapoi, was to bus them

(1) *The Press*, 4.8.1964, p.16

north. Whetu Tirikatene-Sullivan articulated the feeling of the meeting when she stated that the time had been reached when action should be started. The meeting adopted two motions. The first was sent to the Kaiapoi Borough Council thanking it for the work it had done and offering support in its future efforts to persuade the government to build a high school. The second motion was addressed to the government and was quite plain in its request.

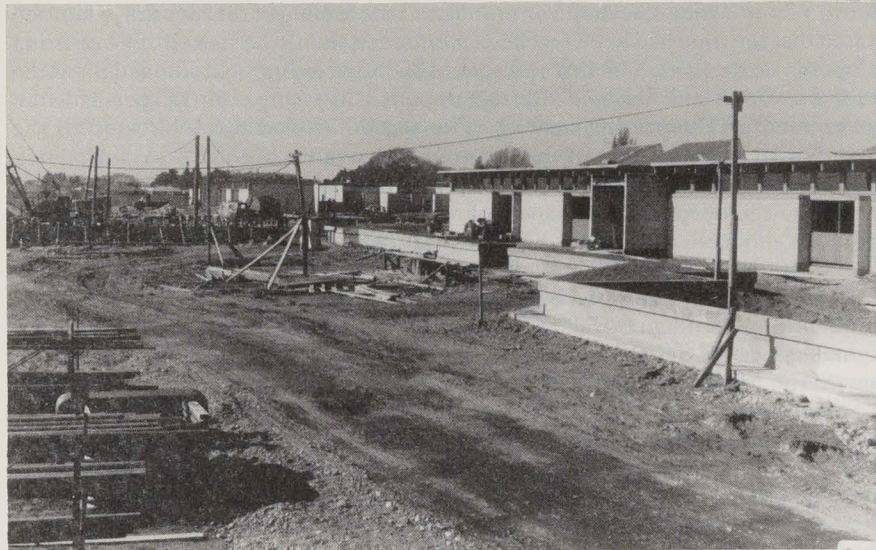
"As the population of the appropriate age group within Kaiapoi Borough and environs is as required by the Department of Education, the Minister of Education be respectfully requested to authorise the building of a secondary school in Kaiapoi to be proceeded with forthwith."⁽²⁾

A further meeting was held at the end of May 1968 at which the latest survey figures appeared to support the urgent need for a high school to be built in the town. The Mayor, H.O. Hills, the chairman of the Canterbury Education Board, A.S. Murray, and the Regional Superintendent of Education, S.S.P. Hamilton, issued a joint statement in which they confirmed the earlier estimates of pupil numbers. They added that if numbers from the Belfast area were taken into account then the initial roll of a high school in Kaiapoi would be one hundred and fifty rising to six hundred in the first four years after establishment if the school opened in 1972. The effect of such an opening on Rangiora High School was also taken into consideration. The earlier survey figure of the school having eight hundred and fifty pupils if Kaiapoi High School opened in 1972 was complimented by an estimate of nine hundred pupils if the opening of a school in Kaiapoi was delayed until 1973. It seemed that all that remained was for the government to make a firm commitment to the programme of construction.

In the following year, on 28 August 1968, Pickering released a press statement to the *North Canterbury News* which read in part that the Cabinet Works Committee had approved the preparation of plans. The plans incorporated a firm estimate of the costs of a multi course, co-educational school of twenty units together with ancillary equipment. In Kaiapoi the news was greeted with the quiet hope that this meant the school would become an actuality. It was just as well the town took a conservative, even pessimistic view of the announcement, as in September 1970 Pickering by now Minister of Education was warning the town that in fact the government had not accepted that 1972 would be the opening year for the school. However events took on a breakneck speed from this point with the call for tenders for the construction of the school. The tenders closed on 20 October and site preparation began shortly thereafter. The town had achieved its long held dream. The rapid decision-making could have had a direct relationship with the approaching election in 1972.

The foundation staff members were not prepared for the "shambles" that greeted them when they first saw their new school in December 1971. There was still rubble on the site, the playing fields were described as a gigantic mess and

(2) *The Press*, 5.3.1968, p.18.



Kaiapoi High School under construction 1971 - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

although most of the class rooms were completed, the craft block was still being constructed. However by opening day, 1 February 1972, most of the "shambles" had been cleared away. The foundation principal was T.E.French and foundation deputy principal was V.J.Tie. French was described as an energetic man. His previous job, which he had held from 1966, had been deputy principal of Papanui High School. During that time he had spent two years on secondment through the Colombo Plan, at a teachers' training college in the Sarawak town of Kinching. This secondment drew on French's experience as a teachers' training college lecturer in Christchurch. He had also been a secondary school inspector with the Department of Education before going to Papanui High School as the head of the Social Studies Department in 1964. Tie, before his appointment to Kaiapoi High School, had been a mathematics teacher so that there was a balance at the head of the school between the humanities and the sciences.

It was reported that the first pupil to arrive at the school was Nicola Eder and that when she arrived at 6.45a.m. there were only a handful of workmen on the site. The first bus load of pupils from the Kaianga-Brooklands area arrived at 8.40a.m. The first year was characterised by both the staff and the pupils making do with what they had and working through the noise of the continuing construction of the school. The administration block was not finished until about half way through the year and until that time the staff used a room which had been designated as the art room.

The uniform had been designed to appeal to the pupils as well as being practical. The colours were blue and gold. The girls' summer uniform was a deep

blue frock with a gold and white overcheck. The winter uniform was a deep blue houndstooth check kilt worn with a pale blue blouse which had a peter pan collar. The girls' uniform also consisted of a royal blue cardigan, a navy blue blazer and a royal blue raincoat. The boys' uniform was standard for the times, grey trousers, grey shirt, grey jersey with light and dark blue bands around the v shaped neck and grey socks with similar bands. Kaiapoi High School was the first school to be opened in the Christchurch area since the opening of Mairehau and Hillmorton High Schools in 1961. Since then only one other state secondary school, Hornby High School, has been opened. The S68 design which was adopted for the school has allowed it progressively to expand its classroom and specialist facilities as the need has arisen.

Within fifteen years the school had an established feel about it. The foundation deputy principal said on his retirement that although it took a relatively short time for the physical surroundings of the school to become acceptable it was not until the school's first school certificate results, which showed the pupils to be well above the national average, that the school gained the complete confidence of the community. Since that time the school has continued its good academic record as well as expanding its courses to include all sorts of interests and abilities among its pupils. It has also established a well supported community education programme with adult students attending both day and evening classes.

It was an amenity worth the twenty years of work to have it built. The high school gave Kaiapoi the identity of a complete town. There was no need for its citizens to move if they had children of high school age. The employees at the school also added an extra dimension to the working population of the town. Some went on to make contributions to the town in other ways. V.J.Tie served on the Borough Council, and other staff members, in pursuing their sport and cultural interests, enhanced the life of the town.

There seemed little need to worry about the future of the town in the years immediately following the opening of the Kaiapoi High School. Although the port had ceased operations the proximity of the northern motorway more than compensated for the loss. There were a few warning signs that not all was well with the woollen industry but to many it was inconceivable that the mill would close. Therefore when the closure was announced by the Mosgiel Woollen Company the town had its security shattered.

In an editorial, *The Press* warned of the serious consequences for the town if some way was not found to fill the gap left in Kaiapoi by the mill closure. The editor wrote that although the government must not interfere in the efforts being made to rationalise the woollen industry it must, however, take responsibility for encouraging another industry to take the place of the mill. The editorial ended with the sombre warning that if the government made no serious attempts to assist Kaiapoi to remain a thriving independent community then the social costs would be enormous. (3)

(3) *The Press*, 17.6.1977. p.12.

There had been, in the days prior to this editorial, speculation that a car assembly company was contemplating the use of the mill buildings. Although this was denied by the management of the Mosgiel company many people in Kaiapoi hoped that some major industry would take the place of the Woollen Mill. In such times of crisis many attempts are made to make the reality of the situation palatable. In the case of the mill, the local Member of Parliament, D.F. Quigley, made strenuous attempts to ensure that the work force in Kaiapoi had some future in the town. He met with the Minister of Trade and Industry, the Kaiapoi Borough Council, the managing director of the Mosgiel Woollen Company, and the secretary of the Woollen Workers Association. There were no immediate solutions to the problem and the mill closed its doors in August 1978.

It was left to the town to find its own solution, in its own way, and in its own time. One of the first suggestions had been to convert the boiler equipment at the mill so that the incineration of rubbish could be carried out. The promoters of the plan felt that one of the spin-offs for Kaiapoi from an incineration plant would be the production of cheap hot water. Although engineers inspected the equipment and were convinced that the plan had merit, the promoters were unable to convince anyone else and the equipment was sold.

The next solution to be promoted, excited more people than the rubbish disposal plan. A trust, called the Kaiapoi Development Trust, and headed by D.S. McKenzie was set up during the first few months of 1979. It planned to produce ten tonnes of hand knitting woollen yarn each week using the latest imported machinery. *The Press's* industrial reporter was sceptical about the success of the venture. The production of hand knitting yarn had been static since 1972 and the reporter postulated that the Trust would need more than luck, skilled craftsmanship, and community goodwill to succeed in a market dominated by the four established companies, Mosgiel, Alliance, Feltex and Holeproof. However McKenzie had spent fourteen months researching the project and he was certain that the Trust could become a niche marketer. The advantages, as he saw it, were that there was already a skilled and stable work force in Kaiapoi, that the imported equipment would give the Trust a technological edge and because the Trust proposed to involve its employees in profit sharing, through their ownership of shares, the plant would be able to work twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. The local Member of Parliament, D.F. Quigley, was reported as being guardedly optimistic about the Trust's plans which were contingent on the Trust gaining public support.

In addition to attracting public support the Trust was dependent on the mill buildings being sold to a buyer amenable to the idea of a hand knitting yarn industry being located there. The most likely buyer at that time was the Kaiapoi Borough Council which, in fact, had an option to buy. The problem for the Council was obtaining ratepayer approval for such a venture. In the face of recent events many of the ratepayers were wary of the purchase plan. At a Finance Committee meeting in early September 1979 the Mayor, B.O. Williams, announced that he was prepared to call a public meeting to discuss the purchase of the mill as he had found that many people did not fully understand the purchase proposal. Some ratepayers had suggested that they be allowed to make cash contributions to the Council

rather than being levied a special rate. It was hoped that such a scheme would attract those who could afford such payments rather than imposing a rate on everyone regardless of their personal circumstances. However the Mayor had received a letter from the Department of Internal Affairs stating that the cash contributions scheme would not meet the legal requirements of the Local Authorities Loans Act. In addition to explaining the Council's views on the purchase of the mill it was necessary to inform the ratepayers of this development. From the report of the Finance Committee meeting it appeared that the Mayor would have difficulty persuading ratepayers of the efficacy of the purchase plan. The committee itself seemed to be more interested in providing social services for the town than in purchasing the mill. (4)

This lack of interest from the Finance Committee was not reflected at the public meeting. While not giving the Council enthusiastic support for the plan the meeting did pass a motion that asked the council to investigate the possibility of raising a two hundred and fifty thousand dollar loan for the purchase of the complex (5)

By September 1979 the Mosgiel Woollen Mills had agreed to sell the mill buildings to the Kaiapoi Borough Council for a price between five hundred and seven hundred thousand dollars. Williams, however, stated that although the council had ratepayer approval to raise a loan it would not proceed until it was sure that it could lease out at least eighteen hundred square metres of floor space at the mill.

In the meantime it appeared as if the Kaiapoi Development Trust's plans were not as attractive to the public as the trustees had first thought. The Trust was still hopeful that once the Council had purchased the buildings, its own plans could proceed but the longer that the Council took to decide to buy the mill the less likely it appeared that the Trust's knitting yarn scheme would succeed.

Council procrastination over the purchase of the mill in the end became too much for the Mosgiel company. In November 1979 it announced that unless the Council made a definite offer then the mill would be auctioned on 6 December. The Town Clerk, R.N. McCabe, in replying on behalf of the Council stated that although the council had been able to attract some prospective tenants it did not have a sufficient number to be enable it to purchase the building. It therefore suspended its investigations into the purchase of the building and did not send a representative to the auction which was attended by about twenty people. The bidding did not reach the company's reserve price and the property was passed in. This development gave the Council a second chance to buy the mill but, once again, it was unable to complete arrangements that would have allowed such a purchase. It explored a number of options including the possibility of purchase in partnership with the Government Life Insurance Office. By the end of July 1980 the Council's option to buy the mill had run out and this allowed the Shivas Family Trust to purchase the buildings in November 1980. Almost immediately three

(4) *The Press*, 12.9.1979. p.14

(5) *The Press*, 14.9.1979. p.4.

small businesses moved into the complex. They were a plastics distributor, a sign writer and a car panel-beater. As well as attracting those industries the Shivas Family Trust was able to lease out more than half of the floor space to the Wool Board as a storage area for its wool. Ivan Monk was appointed manager of the complex and for him this was a pleasant continuity in his working life as he had begun working at the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill in 1944. By 1985 around thirty businesses were located in the complex and although the Kaiapoi Borough Council had not been able to purchase the mill, councillors must have been pleased at the eventual outcome. The Shivas Family Trust had stated at the outset of its involvement in the building that it wanted to alleviate unemployment in Kaiapoi. It had succeeded. It also, unwittingly, carried on the self help tradition of Kaiapoi and was reminiscent of the way in which the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill Company was established in the first place. Then a group of people, rather than an individual family, believed enough in the future of Kaiapoi to take the risk to establish an industry in the town. The Shivas Family Trust had the same belief in 1980.

The re-establishment of the mill buildings as part of the commercial life of Kaiapoi gave the community a new sense of purpose that it almost entirely had lost during the period between the closure of the mill in 1978 and the rebirth of the site in 1980.

Changes also occurred in the ownership of the Freezing Works. In 1937 under a scheme of reconstruction the company had come under the control of Arthur Sims. This arrangement lasted until 1964 when the Canterbury Frozen Meat Company and the New Zealand Refrigerating Company Limited purchased Arthur Sims' shares. The name of the works however, had never reflected these changes in ownership as it had remained as the North Canterbury Sheepfarmers Co-Operative Freezing Company Limited. In 1970 it was decided to change the name to N.C.F. Kaiapoi Limited to reflect the ownership of the company. There was a brief period from 1980 to 1985 when there was farmer control of the works again. This came about as a result of the Canterbury Frozen Meat Company and the Waitaki Freezing Company selling their shares in the works to a holding company, Freesia Meats. The holding company was set up to facilitate the purchase and resale of shares to farmers using the Meat Industry's Reserve Account Funds. Farmer control was lost again in 1985 when the company was taken over by the Stevens Group.

Throughout these ownership changes the Freezing works remained central to the Kaiapoi community. The works, in tandem with the Woollen Mill, gave Kaiapoi its distinctive identity and so when the mill closed in 1978 the works became unique in the life of the town. It was with pride that record kills for seasons were recorded. On 15 June 1983 the works reached the one million mark for the first time. In all, that season, 1,022,718 sheep and lambs were processed. The record was broken again in the 1985 season when 1,202,742 sheep and lambs were killed.

However, like the mill a decade previously, there were warning signals that the relationship between the town and the works could be broken. Although there had been improvements to the plant over the years and especially from the time that

the European Economic Community imposed stringent hygiene requirements for meat it purchased from New Zealand, the overall complex was beginning to show



Mauna Tau working on the lamb which was the first million kill, 15.6.1983 - The Press photograph, - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

its age. Not only were overseas purchasers of meat products requiring different methods the community itself was beginning to understand that its own environment needed protection. This understanding of environmental protection encompassed not only the disposal of liquid and solid wastes but also the unpleasant smell that was associated with the works. The site which in 1916 had been so attractive because of its proximity to the river and the town was less so in the late 1980's for exactly the same reasons. The relationship between Kaiapoi and the Freezing works, for so long essential to the town, was most tenuous by the end of the decade.

By 1986 the town in many ways had redefined itself. New leisure activities were available for the citizens in the form of a Squash Club, a Judo Club and the Riverside Theatre which had replaced the Kaiapoi Drama Club in the cultural life of the town. The river had once again become an important feature of the identity of the town, but like the mill, it had assumed a quite different focus. It was now incorporated into the tourist attractions of the area. The "Tuho" had been refitted as a cruise boat for the river. On her inaugural cruise in early November 1983 the boat, which was licensed to carry eighty-five passengers had seventy-five passengers and their response to the trip down the river to Kairaki and back was most

enthusiastic. It was planned to cruise the river each weekend but this has not always been possible. Nevertheless since 1983 the "Tuhoē" has become part of Kaiapoi's identity.

There had been changes in church life in Kaiapoi from the 1960's. The Salvation Army's last resident officer was Lieutenant Richard Solomon who was appointed to the Corps in 1964. Two years later he was given charge of the Rangiora Corps and moved to that town. Kaiapoi was served from Rangiora until April 1977 when the Corps was closed because of the small number of adherents left in the town. The Methodist and Presbyterian churches faced the same problem with their congregations in the late 1978's. The solution for them was to become a co-operating parish. The first minister of the new co-operating church was a Methodist minister, the Reverend Tony Bell. It took some of the parishioners, particularly the older members of the component churches, a while to come to terms with the new ways. However a co-operating parish was the only solution to the threat of losing the individual parishes.

If the older denominations of the Christian church were having problems retaining their support, the newer denominations, especially the Baptist Church, were going from strength to strength. The Baptist church, opened its new complex in Fuller Street in 1977. It has continued to develop.



Three mayors, C. Morgan Williams, H. Owen Hills, J.H. Blackwell, reminiscing c.1969, Nancy Hills photographer, Kaiapoi - courtesy Kaiapoi Museum

There has been one Kaiapoi institution, that although it has made changes, has remained part of the identity of the town. David Blackwell, the fourth generation of the family to become involved in the running of Blackwells store, began work in the shop in 1947. He had previously spent two and a half years at Beaths Department store in Christchurch learning as much as he could about the business. While David Blackwell was at Beaths he came under the guidance of Arthur Gibbs who had been one of the country run salesmen at Blackwells until that service ceased just prior to the Second World War. By the mid 1958's Blackwell had succeeded his father, Harry, as managing director. He maintained the reputation that the store had built up for quality goods and service. In the early 1980's David Blackwell was joined by his son, Andrew. Later David's second son, Michael, joined the firm completing the fifth generation of the family to work in the store. The store, under the managership of the Blackwell brothers, had made changes in its marketing and sales strategies, that reflect their experience. However at its core, Blackwells remains a family run operation that is part of the history and identity of Kaiapoi.

The period between the late 1960's and the mid 1980's was a period of rapid change in Kaiapoi, as in the rest of the community. In addition to the direct effects brought about by the establishment of the high school and the closure of the mill there were broad social changes precipitated by the altered perception of the role of women. These enabled more married women to pursue careers along with their responsibilities as wives and mothers. In turn, this brought about a change in the running of many voluntary clubs and committees. It was no longer possible to rely on the voluntary work of young married women and more and more voluntary committees have been run by older women and retired men. The decrease in voluntary service by young women has meant that the town has had to increase its social services.

In 1978 largely through the efforts of Councillor M.O. Cleland, assisted by Councillor P. Wade, the Kaiapoi Community Services Centre was established. The initial aim of the Centre was to provide a single base from which various government departments could provide their services to Kaiapoi. The Social Welfare Department, the Maori Affairs Department, the Probation Service as well as the Sunnyside Hospital social worker and the district nurse were housed in the Centre's rooms in Raven Street. From 1978 until 1988 the Community Services Centre underwent a number of changes in the services it provided and in its management and funding. At the outset it was managed by a voluntary local committee which worked with the representatives of the departments that used the centre. The day to day management was in the hands of a co-ordinator. That position was funded by various government departments which meant that the co-ordinator's position was usually short term. By 1986 it was realised by the volunteers that this system was not providing the continuity of approach that was needed in the social services area. The Reverend Tony Bell began a campaign, in that year, to have a full time worker appointed to manage the Centre. It was a difficult task persuading both the government and the Borough Council that such a worker was needed. The Reverend Bell conducted a number of surveys of

community needs, the results of which, in the end, convinced both the Council and the government to appoint a full time community worker to run the Centre. Ro Leitch, a graduate social worker from Massey University, was appointed. It became necessary to set up a trust to run the Centre. A public meeting was held in mid 1988 to form the Kaiapoi and Districts Community Development Trust. This formation ensured that the social needs of the community were met in the most appropriate way.

By 1986 many of Kaiapoi's problems appeared to be behind it. It was assuming the identity of a multi-faceted modern community relying on a number of diverse light industries as well as the freezing works for its economic base.



Norman Kirk, as Prime Minister, returned to Kaiapoi to celebrate the centenary of the Kaiapoi Borough School. He is writing a message for the children of Mrs Craighead's room. The headmaster, Lloyd Cleland and Mrs Kirk are watching - courtesy Waimakariri District Council.

Chapter Twelve:

THE END OF THE BOROUGH.

From the end of the 1960's there was a drive by successive national governments to restructure local government. It was apparent, especially in the rural areas of the South Island, that many of the smaller local authorities were perpetuating an unnecessary duplication of resources. With the improvement in communication networks throughout the country it was no longer essential to have territorially small units of local government. In some cases, centres of rural local government had lost so many of their people to urban areas, that the only reason for their continuing existence was that they were the seat of local government. Efficiency and service delivery were themes that began to be heard more frequently in an effort to promote a rational view of the situation. In the practical world that view is not often the one that prevails. It is extraordinarily hard for communities to give up their identities in order to create larger, more economical units of local government.

In 1967 legislation was enacted which established the Local Government Commission. The task of the Commission was to prepare an area scheme for every part of New Zealand. It was intended through the provisions of the Act to reorganise local government so that by the end of 1972 the schemes drawn up by the Commission would either be prepared or in force throughout the country. The Commission's study of North Canterbury led it to recommend that the North Canterbury area should include all of the districts from the northern boundaries of the Amuri and Cheviot Counties to the southern boundaries of the Malvern and Ellesmere Counties. The Kaiapoi Borough Council considered this to be too big and diverse an area to be successfully amalgamated under one local authority. The Mayor, H.Owen Hills, suggested at a Council meeting in June 1969 that the proposal would be more effective within a sub-region with identical interests. He proposed that the area between the Waimakariri River and the northern boundaries of the Amuri and Cheviot Counties would be such an area. He maintained that the rural nature of that part of North Canterbury would serve as the uniting force but if the urban area of Christchurch was included

in the scheme then there would be a clash of interests between rural and urban districts.

It is interesting to note that Hills appeared to have no objection in theory to the possibility of the establishment of larger regional government. His concern was to preserve within the larger unit areas of identical interest. However it was probably realised by Hills that the Local Government Commission's proposed North Canterbury area was such a diverse area that there would be a numerous objections to its implementation including a vigorous one from the Kaiapoi Borough Council. The proposed North Canterbury area was described by some members of the Council as far too large and unwieldy.

By September 1969 the Local Government Commission pursuant to the Counties Amendment Act 1968 had come up with another suggestion for the reorganisation of local government in the region. The proposal was not so large nor unwieldy in terms of its territorial size as previously suggested. The Commission now proposed to establish what it termed a county borough. It intended to create a layer of local government which united at least in name the counties and boroughs within a geographical area. In the case of Kaiapoi that meant an amalgamation with the surrounding counties and the Rangiora Borough. This suggestion brought to the fore all of the old suspicions and jealousies which existed between the two North Canterbury boroughs. Under the Act a county borough was to include all of the powers and duties of a county council although the new administrative structure was not permitted to borrow money, set rates or pass by-laws. It was further prohibited from instituting any actions in the courts, from entering into some types of contracts and was not permitted to acquire, hold or dispose of property. It appeared that under this scheme the boroughs would lose vital administrative powers to the county councils. In Kaiapoi it was feared that this would mean that the county council could, with its over-riding powers, suppress development in one urban area to the detriment of another urban area. Clearly the Council was making reference to the situation which it feared might arise between itself and the Rangiora Borough. A further apprehension was that the members of the county borough council would have no real power as all their decisions had the potential to be over-turned by the members of the county council.

In a report presented to the Kaiapoi Borough Council on the county borough proposal a number of other concerns were listed. The report referred to the sections of the Act setting out the rules covering the formation of ridings, elections and voting powers and concluded that the legislation was never intended to form a working and feasible basis for a union of established counties and boroughs. The report postulated the theory that the county borough was a device to meet the circumstances of the growth of an urban community within a predominately rural area. It was thought that the county borough would more fairly represent the concerns of the citizens in that situation without disrupting the pattern of county government. The report did not perceive either Kaiapoi or Rangiora in that situation. In fact the Council issued a statement to the effect that any suggestion involving a county borough in the area would be a retrograde step as the Kaiapoi Borough Council, in the preparation of its town plan scheme, had

already spent considerable time formulating a policy for the future development of the town.

Part of the planning for the future incorporated an estimation of the population figures for the whole region over a twenty five year period. The forecasts of population growth by the Christchurch Regional Planning Authority combined with local knowledge predicted that Kaiapoi would have a population of twenty thousand by 1995. In the region as a whole it was anticipated that the population figures would reach four hundred thousand by 1988. Three hundred and fifty thousand people could be accommodated in Christchurch. Fourteen thousand eight hundred people could be catered for in Kaiapoi and other minor areas. It was suggested that the remaining fifty thousand people could be located in a new town to be established in the Rolleston-West Melton region. This last suggestion was rebutted by the Kaiapoi Borough Council report. The report emphasised that at least fifty thousand people could be housed in the Kaiapoi-Rangiora area, where all that would be required was an expansion of the existing boundaries and services. The report stressed that unlike the empty Rolleston-West Melton area a community of interest already existed north of the Waimakariri River and that expansion in that area would take advantage of the recently completed northern motorway. It also pointed out, with some pride, that Kaiapoi and Rangiora were situated in a very pleasant district between the sea and the Southern Alps which, it was postulated, would be more attractive to new home builders than the Rolleston-West Melton area. It was decided by the Council to submit a two stage plan for the future of Kaiapoi to the Local Government Commission with the strong recommendation that the town remain an independent borough.

The existence of the Local Government Commission was in itself a threat and the Kaiapoi Borough Council was rightfully concerned at the projected outcomes of its deliberations. On 30 September 1969 the Waimakariri-Ashley Water Supply Board issued a statement which supported the misgivings that the Borough had about the powers of the Commission. The Water Supply Board recorded that it was concerned by the apparent absolute power of the Commission. It was thought by the Board that the Commission had the right to hear only the evidence that it selected and that there was a general lack of a right of appeal against the Commission's decisions. The Board wanted the Commission to be bound to give conclusive proof that there would be benefits from any scheme that the Commission might propose. The ratepayers of the region, according to the Board, should be the final arbiters of any scheme prepared by the Commission. The Board shared the opinion of the Kaiapoi Borough Council that larger units of local government could lead to a loss of efficiency rather than to a gain. However, and somewhat interestingly in view of later developments, the Water Supply Board expressed the view that, provided the ratepayers gave their approval, then it would support an amalgamation of the Oxford, Eyre and Rangiora Counties.

The Local Government Commission's outline of a possible solution to the perceived local government problem provoked a great deal of speculation and

discussion in 1969. Many people thought that the plans were too grandiose to be practical and that the threat of losing the identity of Kaiapoi as a borough was preposterous.

It was not seen this way by the Commission. In early 1972 it published the Local Government Area Provisional Scheme under which it was proposed to abolish the Kaiapoi Borough Council and establish a county borough council within the suggested No 2 "Ashley" County.

After a public meeting, which was held on 9 March, the Borough Council prepared a submission on the Local Government Area Provisional Scheme which contained three major objections to the plan. The first objection contained six specific parts. The Council submitted that the proposed county borough would not be able to safeguard the best interests of Kaiapoi as it had no powers to strike rates or charges in lieu of rates; it was unable to borrow money; it could not acquire, hold or dispose of land, and it could not appoint or remove its officers or servants. The county borough was further restricted by being unable to exercise any powers under the Public Works Act 1928, the Housing Improvement Act 1945 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1953. It was also not permitted to pass by-laws. All of these functions were to be operated by the county council. The main objection to the plan for the Borough Council was that under the proposed scheme it did not, through the county borough, receive an adequate representation on the county council. The Borough Council feared that the assets which Kaiapoi would contribute to a merger would be disproportionate to its representation on the county council. It had been calculated that Kaiapoi's assets would be roughly equal to the combined assets of the Oxford, Eyre and Rangiora Counties and yet Kaiapoi would only have a quarter of the representatives on the county council. In this way the Borough Council concluded that it would lose its assets. With the subsequent deterioration in power the Kaiapoi Borough predicted a deterioration in the community's spirit. It was forecast that even although there would be a larger catchment of ratepayers which should mean a decrease or at the least a stabilisation in rates, there would be both a rise in rates and a decrease in efficiency. The last clause in the first objection dealt with the administration of the harbour. When the Waimakariri Harbour Board was abolished in 1946 the Waimakariri Harbour Act came into force. The Act set out the method under which the harbour was to be administered. Clause six maintained that under the Act the Kaiapoi Borough Council was the only local authority which could administer the harbour and that the Commission had no power to set aside the Waimakariri Harbour Act or to nullify it.

The second objection dealt with this last matter more fully. It ended with the statement that there was no reason to believe that the harbour was redundant.

The third objection began with the supposition that the area included within the proposed boundaries of the No 2 "Ashley" County would be more appropriately included in an extended Kaiapoi Borough Council. It went on to state that it was the belief of the Council that the abolition of the Fire Board and its recomposition within a new urban fire authority would not achieve any increased efficiency for fire protection in Kaiapoi.

Although the submission did not mention community of interest, the objections highlighted the fact that if the Borough was abolished then damage would be done to the community. The most telling clause in the third objection was the fifth which set out the fears that many people had about the new type of local government proposed by the Commission. There was an apprehension in the community that if Kaiapoi lost its autonomy then its sense of community would also disappear. Throughout its history the town had always been proud of its achievements and so to have its identity as a borough taken from it was to remove its life force.

In April the Mayor, B.O. Williams, made a further submission. This submission covered nine points commencing with the assertion that the Council could not accept the conclusions of the Commission as they were not based on local knowledge. Williams stressed the point that it was believed that the motorway would promote development in the Kaiapoi area which would be not unlike the pattern of settlement in the Hutt Valley. He backed this belief by stating that there had been a 2.4% growth in population each year from 1968 to 1971 and that the population had doubled in the previous twenty-five years. Although he gave no figures to support his contention that there was more industry in Kaiapoi than any other town of its size he was probably correct. At that time the Woollen Mill was still fully operational and a number of smaller industries like the twist drill manufacturer, Patience and Nicholson, and the electrical component manufacturer, Richardson and McCabe, had established themselves in the town. Richardson and McCabe in particular, employed large numbers of women whose dexterity with their hands made them ideal employees for the precision work necessary in the manufacture of electrical components. Williams closed his submission by asserting that Kaiapoi must remain autonomous.

The submissions must have been received by the Local Government Commission and deliberated upon but with the change of government in 1975 the urgency for the reconstitution of local government was lost.

On 7 September 1979, at a meeting of Kaiapoi ratepayers and residents, B.O. Williams reported that the Council had been considering a merger with the Rangiora District Council (formerly the Rangiora County Council). The Borough Council had already applied to the Local Government Commission to extend its boundaries to the area south of the Kaikanui Creek. This had been done with the approval of the Eyre County Council which at the time administered that area. The extension of the borough's boundary made a merger with the District Council more logical. The chairman of the Rangiora District Council, T.M. Inch, confirmed that talks of the merger had been undertaken, on an informal basis, during the previous year. It was recognised, by the District council, that if the merger went ahead then Kaiapoi would become the urban centre of what would be known as the Waimakariri District Council. Although it was comforting for the residents of Kaiapoi to be informed that the Rangiora Borough Council had not been involved in the talks many of them were incensed at the idea of a merger. Through the Ratepayers and Residents Association there was a call for the resignation of the Council.

By March 1980 the Borough Council and the District Council had agreed to allow the Local Government Commission to prepare a scheme of amalgamation. In a majority vote at the Council meeting held on 17 March it had been agreed that, provided the Rangiora District Council agreed, then the new district scheme would be prepared in time for the electors to vote for their new representatives in the 1983 local body elections. It was proposed that the new district would take over the administration of the port. This had been one of the problem areas during the discussions over the creation of the county borough in the early 1970's. Representation for the new district was going to be achieved by the creation of three wards, Kaiapoi, Rangiora and Cust. The Kaiapoi Ward would have seven councillors, the Rangiora Ward would have six councillors and the Cust Ward would be allocated one councillor. Three of the Kaiapoi councillors voted against the proposal. Two of the three stated their objections to the proposal. Councillor T. Williams thought that Kaiapoi would lose its identity in the merger. Councillor R.L. Wylie was concerned that a new administration block would be needed for the new district and this would mean, in his view, the spending of five hundred thousand dollars. The following week, in an unanimous decision, the Rangiora District Council consented to the proposed merger taking place.

However the Kaiapoi Ratepayers and Residents Association was against such a move and almost as soon as the Kaiapoi Borough Council had made the decision to merge with the Rangiora District Council it mounted a campaign against it. The third dissenting Councillor, when the vote was taken in March, was Howard Cumberland and with the backing of the Ratepayers and Residents Association he stood as a mayoral candidate in the local body elections at the end of the year. He and a number of candidates for the council, also backed by the Association, were successful and thus the proposed merger, including the proposed boundary changes to the south of the town, was reassessed and rejected.

In early 1985 the Labour Government passed the Local Government Amendment Act No 2. This legislation gave the Local Government Commission the power to force the amalgamation of local authorities into what the Commission regarded as viable units. By the middle of March the Mayor of the Rangiora Borough Council, Mrs Dorothy Harris, and the chairman of the Rangiora District Council, T.M. Inch, issued a joint statement that the two authorities were conducting formal negotiations towards possible amalgamation. The statement expressed the desire to conclude the negotiations before the next local body elections which were due to be held in October 1986. In its 28 March edition the *Northern Outlook* carried a two page article on the benefits that would be derived from the amalgamation of the two authorities. It made sense according to the Mayor of the Rangiora Borough for the authorities to amalgamate. They already shared many of the services in the area such as health, drainage and Civil Defence and their headquarters were situated in the same town. The chairman of the Rangiora District Council reported that the Council had tried in the past to initiate amalgamation talks between itself and the Kaiapoi Borough Council as well as the Eyre County Council but for various reasons the talks had broken down. Inch now thought that the time was appropriate for the Rangiora Borough and the Rangiora District

Council to amalgamate. It was easier, in his opinion, for two local authorities to agree on points of amalgamation than it was for four or five bodies to do the same exercise. Although Inch expressed that view, it was the Rangiora Borough Council under the leadership of Dorothy Harris which rejected the request of the Eyre County Council to join in the amalgamation talks.

By early April the draft scheme for the amalgamation of the two authorities had been approved and was sent to the Local Government Commission for its consideration. The speed by which this stage was reached was remarkable given the problems which had occurred in the past when amalgamation between local authorities had been proposed. It may be that the amicability between the two authorities, to some degree, alarmed the other local bodies in the region as to the true intentions of the proposed merger.

In a somewhat rash statement, given the recent history of decision making in Kaiapoi, the Mayor, H. Cumberland, said that he was not in favour of amalgamation because he thought that when a larger authority was formed party politics was bound to play a part. He added that this would mean the party caucus would make the important decisions and not the Council, thus denying democratic decision making. Cumberland was also afraid of the power that the new legislation appeared to confer on the more populous authorities who might seek to promote amalgamation. The legislation required that only fifteen per cent of the population of an area was needed to request a poll for amalgamation but that fifty per cent of the population of that merging area had to vote against the proposal in order to defeat it. This would mean that a new Rangiora District Council could force an amalgamation between itself and the counties of Eyre and Oxford as well as the Kaiapoi Borough, as it contained more than the combined population of those areas. Cumberland and many people in Kaiapoi were afraid that an amalgamation achieved in this way would destroy Kaiapoi's identity altogether.

The *Northern Outlook's* editorial of 9 May 1985 put the case for amalgamation of all the local bodies between the Ashley and Waimakariri Rivers. On the theme of lost identity, the editorial pointed to the example of the northern townships of Hawarden, Waikari, Waipara and Greta Valley in the Hurunui County which retained their distinctive identities even although Amberley had become the administrative centre for the county. The editorial acknowledged that, in what it termed the Waimakariri District Council, Rangiora was likely to become the administrative centre and undoubtedly Kaiapoi would resent such a move. However in soothing tones, the editor went on to declare that this outcome would not see the demise of the attractiveness and importance of the first major town north of Christchurch.

One of the points that the editorial made was a pertinent reply to Cumberland's theory that a larger local authority would be less democratic. The editor wrote that many of the present leaders in the respective communities may be reluctant to admit that they enjoyed the status of being a Councillor and that it might be a fear of not being elected to a larger body rather than a fear for the demise of democratic government that motivated their statements on the foolishness of

amalgamation. (1) In that same edition of the paper, in the letters to the editor column, a correspondent from Kaiapoi, R.J. Barry, urged the Kaiapoi Borough Council to consider pressing the Local Government Commission to extend the boundaries of the Borough to include the Riseley Block which was part of the Eyre County and The Pines and Kairaki beach settlements which were part of the Rangiora District. Barry was afraid that the borough would be swallowed up by the creation of a large local authority north of the Waimakariri River because, as he wrote, the present leadership in Kaiapoi had failed to look after the affairs of the town.

At the end of July 1985, the Under Secretary for Local Government, Philip Woollaston, visited the region. In an interview he said that he considered that there were too many local authorities in North Canterbury and that the present boundaries did not reflect community of interest. Woollaston thought that there were two different approaches to the problem of reorganisation of local government being pursued simultaneously in North Canterbury. Firstly there was the overall examination of local government structure in the region and secondly there was the specific amalgamation between the Rangiora Borough Council and the adjoining Rangiora District Council. It was important, according to Woollaston, that both of these issues were considered together by the Local Government Commission. On this point Woollaston may have been sending a signal to the local authorities who were not party to the amalgamation talks. It appeared that, apart from the Eyre County, the other authorities were of the opinion that the outcome of the talks would have little affect on their own autonomy. Woollaston indicated the opposite view. He implied that the amalgamation of the Rangiora Borough and Rangiora County Council was only one step in the reorganisation of local government in the region and that all the authorities should be considering their positions in the knowledge that the Local Government Commission was bound to consider the region as a whole.

The editorial in the 1 August edition of the *Northern Outlook* took up Woollaston's theme. It seemed inevitable to the editor that when the Local Government Commission considered the North Canterbury area it would view the region between the Ashley and Waimakariri Rivers as sharing a community of interest and therefore it would be a logical unit of local government. The editorial suggested that the regional community of interest centred on Rangiora and that already many people in the region displayed that interest through their sporting, business and other organisational contacts.

The Eyre County took a slightly different stance when pushing its case for inclusion in the proposed Rangiora District Council. It felt that the predominately rural nature of the region would be preserved if the new district council had the Eyre and possibly Oxford Counties within its boundaries. The Eyre County had made submissions to the Local Government Commission in this vein. It was obviously concerned that a new district council with the old Rangiora Borough as its administrative centre with its more urban out-

(1) *Northern Outlook*, 9 May 1985.

look would begin to dominate the region to the detriment of the rural hinterland. The Eyre County proposal did not mention either the Kaiapoi Borough or the old Rangiora Borough and so it must be presumed that it regarded both as a threat to its own rural nature. It was also apparent by this time that the proposed merger of the Rangiora Borough and Rangiora District Council had given an impetus to the consideration of the amalgamation of all the local authorities in the region. The Kaiapoi Borough Council seemed quite oblivious to this development and it may be that the correspondent to the *Northern Outlook*, R.J. Barry, had been correct in his assessment of the leadership of the borough.

In submissions made to the Local Government Commission in October 1985 both the Eyre County and the Rangiora District Council presented strong arguments in favour of uniting the five authorities which currently administered the area between the Ashley and Waimakariri Rivers. The Eyre County considered its inclusion in the merger talks between the Rangiora Borough and the Rangiora District Council to be the first step in achieving a united authority for the region. The County urged the Commission to give its submission priority and have the enlarged unit of local government in place before the 1986 local government elections. The Rangiora District Council supported the view of the Eyre County in its submission to the Commission stating that it would be foolish not to capitalise on the willingness of the three bodies to create one unit of government. The District Council thought that such a merger would encourage the Oxford County Council also to seek amalgamation. It was thought that the Oxford County would achieve the best of both worlds by retaining its identity and representation under the provisions of the Act which allowed the setting up of a District Community Council within the larger administrative area.

It was thought that even the most staunchly opposed local authority to the idea of one administrative area for the region, the Kaiapoi Borough Council, had agreed that in the future, one authority in the region would be the best solution to any boundary wrangles that might arise.

This suggestion from the Rangiora District Council was not endorsed by the Kaiapoi Borough Council's submission to the Local Government Commission. In fact the idea of one authority appealed in theory rather than in practice, much as the earlier idea of one North Canterbury authority responsible for the area between the Cheviot and Amuri Counties and the Waimakariri River, had appealed to H. Owen Hills. As with the plan in 1968-69 for Kaiapoi, it was a theoretical choice only and not one to be contemplated by Kaiapoi in the near future.

The Kaiapoi submission concentrated on the extension of its own boundaries to include all of the Kaiapoi telephone free-dialling area. This took in parts of the Eyre County to the south and west of the town as well as parts of the Rangiora District Council to the north and east of its boundaries. The submission was quite clear in its assertions that Kaiapoi saw its community of interest as including the residents of the Riseley Block and the beach settlements. There can be no doubt that these areas did focus on Kaiapoi as their service centre and that there was no compelling need for the residents of either area to have access to their present administrative centres. The submission relied on the traditional view that Kaiapoi

had of itself. Throughout its history Kaiapoi had regarded itself as separate in nature and outlook from the rest of the region between the Ashley and Waimakariri Rivers. In many respects that attitude had been fostered by the potential link to the outside world offered to the town by the river. Kaiapoi had, and could in the future, turn its back to the hinterland without affecting its own identity. By asking the town to consider being part of one administrative region centred at Rangiora was in effect asking Kaiapoi to re-orientate its focus from itself and its inherent links with the outside world to a position of a satellite town in the area between the two rivers.

From 1 April 1986 the Rangiora Borough Council and the Rangiora District Council staffs began working as one administrative unit. The elected representatives of the two authorities did not begin to work as one body until the first week in October, just twenty three days before the local body elections. The Mayor of the Borough, Dorothy Harris, became Mayor of the enlarged Rangiora District Council with the former chairman of the old District Council, Trevor Inch, as her deputy. All the other elected representatives remained on the new Council until the elections, when representation was cut from nineteen to twelve members.

In the months between April and October 1985 the Local Government Commission appeared to want the amalgamation of the Eyre and Oxford Counties with the Rangiora District Council and the Borough Council to take place as quickly as possible. The Councillors and staff of the old Rangiora Borough, in particular, were not keen on this second stage happening until the new Council was elected in October. It was thought that any merger would have to be agreed upon by those who had to implement it. The Eyre County Council too appeared to have lost its initial enthusiasm for an amalgamation with Rangiora and the Oxford County indicated that it was pursuing the idea of a merger with the Malvern County situated across the Waimakariri River to the west. It was clear from the response from the Eyre and Oxford Counties that there was no local zest left for amalgamation talks. There was no mention, as by now was the custom, from the Local Government Commission, on the future of Kaiapoi, in its envisaged larger local authority.

After the local body elections the new Mayor of the Rangiora District Council, Trevor Inch, made a prediction that the merger of the two Rangiora local authorities was not the end of amalgamation in North Canterbury. He said that if community of interest was paramount in deciding which areas should be amalgamated then it was reasonable to assume that the present Rangiora District Council would be expanded. Inch's prediction was not long in becoming reality. In November 1986 a draft scheme for the merger of Eyre County and the Rangiora District was released. The new body would retain the name Rangiora District Council but would now include the West Eyreton, Eyreton and Riseley Ridings of the Eyre County as well as the Cust Riding of the Rangiora District.

The Eyre County Council and the Rangiora District Council agreed to share their administrative staff from 1 April 1987. It was stressed by the Mayor of the Rangiora District that the move was based on practical administration and efficiency and that the next step towards the full merger of both authorities would

depend upon the deliberations of the Local Government Commission. The four staff members of the Eyre County moved to the offices of the District Council in Rangiora and some of the surplus plant and trucks were sold. This administrative merger brought the whole question of amalgamation into sharper focus for the Kaiapoi Borough Council as it was now, for all practical purposes, surrounded by one local authority. Both the areas on which it had focused attention, the beach settlements and the Riseley block, were administered from Rangiora. The time to protest against a larger unit of local government being created in the region had almost elapsed.

The Local Government Commission gave notice of the proposed amalgamation of the Eyre County and the Rangiora District in early August. The closing date for a request for a poll to be taken to ascertain public feeling in the area was set at 25 September. By 12 September the Riseley Residents' Association had collected on a petition the signatures of about two thirds of the residents in the Riseley Riding. According to the Residents' Association chairman, Jack Murray, it made no sense for the Riseley Block to be included in an amalgamated Eyre-Rangiora District. The Riseley settlement was already tied to Kaiapoi through the water and sewage schemes, the free-dialing telephone service, membership of the Kaiapoi library, the services of the Kaiapoi milkman and the postal delivery. The block was, in every way, except for its administration, part of Kaiapoi.

The poll had to reach the fifty per cent threshold set by the Act in order for the matter to become a submission for a boundary change to the Commission. In addition to the matter raised by the prospect of the Riseley Block being included in the combined Eyre-Rangiora District, the Kaiapoi Borough Council, in common with all local authorities in the country, was required by the Local Government Commission to prepare final submissions on its future to be ready for presentation by 1 January 1988. The Commission then intended to announce a restructuring proposal for every council that had not been affected by an approved proposal by February. This short time frame made it imperative that the Kaiapoi Borough Council consider its position quickly. By October 1987 the Council had decided to expand its initial submission to the Commission which requested that the borough retain its autonomy and have its boundaries extended, to include an objection to the poll provisions in section 29 of the Local Government Act 1976. The Council saw these provisions as undemocratic and urged that the law be amended. It also decided that through its membership of Communities Against Forced Amalgamation it would lobby Members of Parliament to have the poll provisions modified.

The results of the poll held to determine public opinion on the proposed merger of the Eyre County and the Rangiora District Council were released in December 1987. Twenty four and a half per cent of the voters in the combined area were against the proposal and thus it would seem that a substantial majority wanted the amalgamation to go ahead. However if just the figures from the Eyre County are considered a different picture emerges. Nearly forty seven per cent of the Eyre voters were opposed to the move and it is likely that most of them resided in the Riseley Block. Although a substantial minority of the Eyre voters were opposed to the merger the overall figure was well below the fifty per cent threshold set by the

Act and it was logical for the Rangiora District Mayor to expect that the next stage in the amalgamation would be relatively smooth. That stage was marked with the publication by the Commission of the provisional scheme and the calling for objections. The Kaiapoi Borough Council saw this as an opportunity to present its claims once again for autonomy and the extension of its boundaries.

In its submission the Council maintained that if the boundaries of the Borough were extended south to the north bank of the Waimakariri, north west along the motorway to Island Road, along that road to its junction with the Kaiapoi River, back to the motorway and north again to Lees Road and finally east from Lees Road to the coast, a viable social and economic unit of local government would be formed. The extended boundaries included not only the Riseley Block and The Pines-Kairaki beach settlements but also the Stevens N.C.F. Freezing works to the south, the Kaiapoi cemetery to the west, the Kaiapoi Golf Club and the Kaiapoi rubbish dump to the north of the town. The Stevens N.C.F. Freezing Works, although located in the Eyre County, received all its services from Kaiapoi. Access to the works could only be reached through the town where most of the workforce lived and so the Borough's submission asserted that there was a clear community of interest between the town and the works. The cemetery, the Golf Club and the rubbish dump were used almost exclusively by Kaiapoi citizens. From the Council's view point it made no sense for these facilities to be located in the proposed amalgamated area.

The Kaiapoi Borough Council's submission to the Local Government Commission in many ways complicated the proposed move to amalgamate the Eyre County and the Rangiora District. It was clear that if a merger of the two authorities went ahead on the present boundaries of both bodies then a substantial number of anomalies would be created, all of which could claim a community of interest with Kaiapoi. The Commission needed to re-examine the whole region.

Although the Local Government Commission had requested that all submissions to it were to be presented by January 1988, complicating proposals such as the Eyre-Rangiora merger saw that deadline being extended to 1 September 1988.

The resolve of the Kaiapoi Borough Council to retain its autonomy did not weaken over the intervening months between January and September while it waited for a clear indication from the Commission as to its intentions for the region. The Commission itself had to wait for the government to delineate its requirements.

This was done with the passing of the Local Government Amendment (No 3) Act 1988. The first schedule to that Act specified that a system of local government should be seen as part of the total system of government. Local government was to be, according to the schedule, efficient, effective and understandable. It was to serve and service communities of interest at the regional and territorial levels. In other words a pyramid system of government was to be established for the whole country. The pyramid would be headed by the national government and the two wings would be made up of the regional councils and the territorial councils. Both of these bodies were designed to interact with each other as well as being able to interact with central government both singularly or in a combined way. The regional councils were to focus on resource planning, regulation and co-ordination

on a regional basis and the territorial councils were to focus on the delivery of services in their territories.

In its last submission to the Local Government Commission the Kaiapoi Borough Council reiterated its strong desire to extend its boundaries and to remain autonomous. The Council had conducted an informal survey, in mid-August 1988, of the residents within the borough as well as those in the Riseley block. Primarily the survey was an attempt to find out if the townsfolk supported the idea of an autonomous borough. Secondly, if this turned out not to be an option favoured by the Commission, the survey asked whether the citizens would prefer to be included in a territorial council centred on Rangiora or whether they would prefer to be included in the one city concept promoted by the Christchurch City Council. The Council sent out two thousand survey forms and received seven hundred and ninety-two replies, a return of only thirty nine per cent. Even given the short response time of five days the issue itself should have elicited a more substantial response. The results were predictable. Eighty-nine per cent of the returns were in favour of Kaiapoi retaining its autonomy. In the submission the Council recorded that many of the returns contained indignation at the thought that the status quo should be under threat. On the second section of the survey the results were also predictable. Fifty-seven per cent of the returns favoured the Christchurch City Council proposal while only thirty-nine per cent favoured being part of a Rangiora administered territory.

The one city proposal by the Christchurch City Council was an interesting one from Kaiapoi's point of view. In the years between the first settlement in 1850's and the establishment of firstly, the Kaiapoi Road Board in 1864 and secondly, the Municipal Council in 1865, Kaiapoi had in effect, been administered from Christchurch. A return to that distant link was not as feared as having to be part of a territorial council centred on Rangiora. All the longheld antagonism between the two boroughs, once again, flooded to the surface.

In its submission, the Borough Council put the case for Kaiapoi to be a ward within Christchurch city. The Council had discussed the idea of a one city concept with the former mayor of Christchurch, Sir Hamish Hay and the city manager John Gray. Both indicated that it was a solution to Kaiapoi's dilemma. The suggested boundary of the Kaiapoi ward contained the area north of the Waimakariri that had already been suggested as an autonomous body as well as the area south of the river to Belfast and the south east settlements of Spencerville, Brooklands, Kainga, and Stewarts Gully. The Council stated that it had, through a shared history, more in common with these settlements than it had with the settlements to the north. The submission cited Belfast in particular. This township with its close ties to Christchurch and its Freezing works was similar in settlement pattern and outlook to Kaiapoi. There was an understanding between the two towns that was based on their common history, social life and economic development. There was, too, a common historical bond for the settlements on the southern bank of the Waimakariri River. Kainga and Stewarts Gully shared the historical problem of flooding with Kaiapoi. Although there was some ill feeling between the settlements at the time of the formation of the Waimakariri River

Trust, it was nowhere near the level of suspicion that existed between Kaiapoi and Rangiora.

The uniqueness with which Kaiapoi viewed itself was revealed in the call for an amendment to the legislation to allow District Community Councils and Ward Committees to retain the title of Mayor. The Council contended that in the one hundred and twenty years of the borough, the position of mayor had an in-built respect from the citizens that the position of chairman of a District Community Council or a Ward Committee had not. That section of the submission was, in effect, stressing the long history and tradition of the borough.

The conclusion of the submission emphasised again the borough's strong desire to remain autonomous although with extended boundaries. However it was prepared to accept that if this was not possible, then Kaiapoi's community of interest lay to the south. The conclusion ended with a cogent paragraph which stated that although the Rangiora District Council's submission had included Kaiapoi this was not what Kaiapoi people had indicated they wanted.

"Kaiapoi must surely dictate its own future as much as possible, not Rangiora." (2)

Having made strong and consistent submissions over the years to remain autonomous it was a body blow to Kaiapoi to find out that the Local Government Commission thought otherwise. In its Indicative Proposals for the Canterbury Region and the Districts within the Region, released on 28 September 1988, the Commission announced that the Waimakariri District Council would consist of the Rangiora District, the Eyre County (excluding the area south of the Waimakariri River), the Oxford County, the Kaiapoi Borough and the Mount Thomas Riding, generally westward of the Okuku River, of the Hurunui County. There were to be four wards in the District. The Rangiora and Kaiapoi Wards were to have four members each. The Rangiora Rural Ward and Oxford Ward were to have two members each. In addition as an acknowledgement of the expansion of the Woodend community the Commission granted it a Community Council. The functions and duties of the Waimakariri District Council were to include the functions and duties of the Kaiapoi Municipal Electricity Department and the Waimakariri Harbour Board.

The Commission also set out the membership of the Transition Committee. The combined Rangiora District Council and Eyre County were to have four members and the Oxford County and the Kaiapoi Borough were to have two members each. Each uniting authority was also able to nominate one of its officers as a non-voting member of the Committee. Although the membership of the committee appeared to be scrupulously fair, in effect the Kaiapoi Borough members were likely to be the minority members of the Transition Committee because of the stronger historical links between the Rangiora District, the old Eyre County and the Oxford County.

The establishment of the Transition Committee was seen by the Commission as a vital preparatory step in the foundation of the new territorial authority. It was

(2) *Submission to the Local Government Commission, Kaiapoi Borough Council, August 1988 p.12*

the first stage in learning to work together for the uniting authorities and in the Commission's view it was crucial for the overall success of the new local government system, that this stage, be handled prudently. To that end the Commission



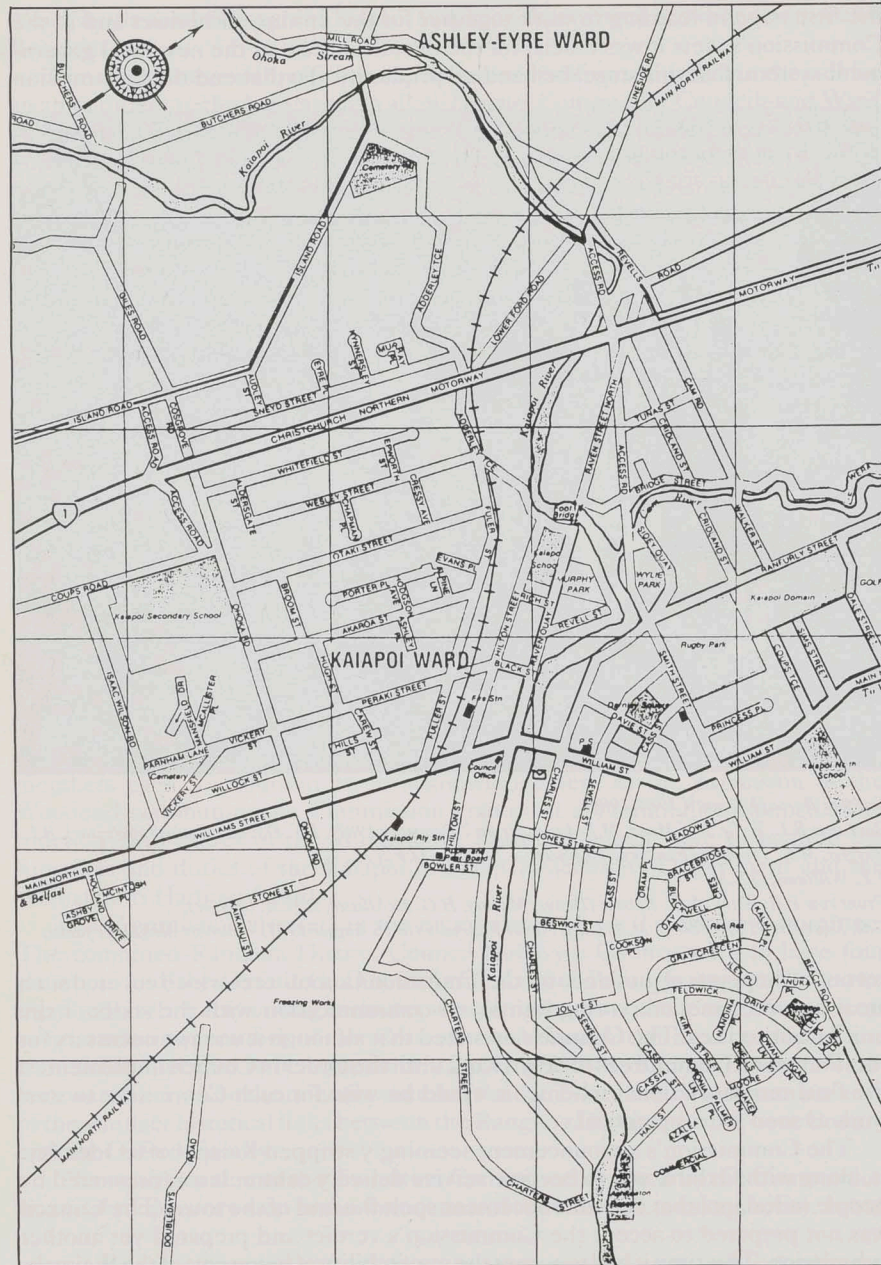
Kaiapoi Borough Council 1986-1989

Back row R.L. Wylie, I.A. Monk, M.A. Lucas (from 7 December 1987), I.F. Davies (Works Supervisor), B.L. Burgess, M.A. Trumper (Electrical Engineer), L.N. Price, Q.F.S.M., T.L. Williams, Q.S.M.

Front row P.B. Ward, A.H. Blackie (Deputy Mayor), H.G. McAllister, B.E.M. (Mayor), G.R. Saunders (Town Clerk), M.A. Leask. inset J. Bryden (to 15 August 1987) - courtesy McAllister family

set out eight points of guidance for the Transition Committees which covered such areas as size, function, voting rights and communication with the staffs of the uniting authorities. The Commission stated that although it was not necessary for the Transition Committees to begin work until the Order in Council implemented the final reorganisational scheme, it would be wise for each Committee to start work as soon as was practical.

The Commission's announcement seemingly stripped Kaiapoi of its identity. It, along with Oxford, was to become service delivery centre. It was presumed by people in Kaiapoi that the announcement spelt the end of the town. The Council was not prepared to accept the Commission's verdict and prepared yet another submission. This time it had to accept the inevitability of being part of the Waimak-



ari District Council. The submission concentrated on gaining a measure of independence for Kaiapoi. It had been suggested that a way of ensuring that Kaiapoi did not lose its independent identity was for the Waimakariri District to adopt a twin town approach to administration. Under such a scheme the administrative duties would be split equally between Rangiora and Kaiapoi. It appeared, to the Kaiapoi Borough Council, to be the only way in which parity could be maintained between the two centres. There appeared to be some sympathy for the idea from some of the members of the Local Government Commission. The Council, however, knew that from previous experience it was judicious to have a fall back position. With this in mind the Council urged the Commission to establish a Community Board for Kaiapoi. The establishment of a Community Board would it was thought, give some measure of independence for Kaiapoi from the Waimakariri District Council. Logically it would seem that the recommendations made by the elected members of the Community Board to the District Council would carry weight and therefore ensure that the particular concerns of the Kaiapoi community were heard and acted upon.

When the final shape of the Waimakariri District Council was determined, the Kaiapoi Borough Council was saddened to find that the twin town concept had been ignored in favour of a Community Board. The town had no option but to accept its inclusion in the Waimakariri District Council. The administrative marriage arranged for Kaiapoi by the Local Government Commission has only had reluctant acceptance in the town as it, once again, struggles to find an identity.

APPENDIX ONE:

Chairman of the Kaiapoi Road Board:

Reverend William Wellington Willock January 1864 - January 1865

Chairmen of the Kaiapoi Municipal Council:

Doctor Charles Dudley December 1864 - December 1866

J.C.Porter December 1866 - April 1868

Matthew Hall April 1868 - May 1868

Chairman Kaiapoi Town Council:

Matthew Hall May 1868 - June 1868

MAYORS OF KAIAPOI:

Matthew Hall	1868	J.H.Blackwell	1907-11
J.C.Porter	1869	R.Wylie	1912-14
T.Newnham	1870 (part)	J.W.Barnard	1915
Dr C.Dudley	1870 (part) - 1871	J.H.Blackwell	1916-23
E.G.Kerr	1872-76	H.McIntosh	1924-27
J.W.Ellen	1877-88	H.C.Revell	1928-29
G.H.Blackwell	1879-81	W.H.A.Vickery	1930-41
C.Smith	1882	E.Gray	1942-44
E.Parnham	1883	W.H.A.Vickery	1945-47
R.Moore	1884-87	C.M.Williams	1948-50
C.Hansen	1888-90	H.O.Hills	1951-53
R.Blakeley	1891	N.E.Kirk	1954-57(part)
W.Doubleday	1892-93	C.T.Williams	1957(part)-59
E.Feldwick	1894-96	O.M.Williams	1960-65(part)
W.Doubleday	1897	H.O.Hills	1965(part)-71
J.L.Wilson	1898	B.O.Williams	1971-80
E.Feldwick	1899-1901	H.Cumberland	1980-86
J.Daly	1902-04	H.G.McAllister	1986-89
A. Pearce	1905-06		

APPENDIX TWO:

Clerk to Kaiapoi Municipal Council and Kaiapoi Town Council:

C.E.Dudley December 1864 - June 1868

TOWN CLERKS OF KAIAPOI:

C.E.Dudley
T.Sutherland
G.Clarke
T.Wilson
G.J.Webster
R.Chapman
J.H.Morely
S.R.Wright
C.H.Wright
J.Bosomworth
R.J.Smith

S.E.Papprill
R.Wallace (Acting Town Clerk)
G.Hollis (Acting Town Clerk)
R.J. Smith (Acting Town Clerk)
N.E.Clemens
R.J.S. Botting
I.J. Corich
C.W.D.Hodgson
R.N.McCabe
G.R.Saunders

GLOSSARY

The Maori spellings in this book are a reflection of the Kai Tahu dialect which uses the "k" sound rather than the more usual "ng" sound.

te hapu	tribe
te hau kaitakata	north-west wind (in Canterbury)
te heke	migration
te hui	meeting
te kai huaka	"eat relatives" feud
te kaika	home, village
te whare	house
te kai whaka Maori	Maori language interpreter
te korakoraka	albino
te mahika kai	food (gathering,cultivation,hunting) area
te mana	authority, prestige
te pa	fortress
te Pakeha	European, non-Maori
te rauparaka	sacrifice
te raupo	flax
te takata whenua	people of the land
te upoko runaka	chairman
te whakapapa	geneology
te whanau	family

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 - (b) Collection of cuttings by J. Lowthian Wilson, *The Press*, Kaiapoi Museum
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Kaiapoi : a search for identity /
Pauline Wood



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Pauline Wood was born in Lawrence and received her secondary education in Dunedin. She graduated from the University of Canterbury with a M.A. (hons) in history. In her frustration at not being able to teach history she turned to writing. *From Slates to Computers. The history of the Mt Grey Downs and Ashley Schools 1864-1989* was completed in 1989. *Women of the Waimakariri*, a suffrage centennial project written in conjunction with Kath Adams, Marilyn Ayers and Judith Hoult, was finished in 1993. Pauline is married and has four sons.

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ISBN 0-473-02331-8