

TOWN AND COLONY: WANGANUI AND NEW ZEALAND, 1870-1890

Address given by Rollo Arnold, 23 August, 1990

The 'Wanganui Chronicle' of 22 January 1870 reported the departure the previous day of the last of the Imperial troops from the Wanganui barracks. They marched through the streets to board the little Government steamer 'St Kilda' which was to take them to the troop ship lying in Wellington Harbour. The Chronicle described the scene: "The men were escorted from the Rutland Stockade to the wharf by the town fife and drum band which played the customary adieux. A large number of people were also present to bid farewell to the soldiers, the finale of the Imperial exodus which has been taking place since 1865. A hearty cheer was the last communication between the people of Wanganui and the 18th as the vessel steamed away."

Our story begins as Wanganui sets out to face its future after losing the social and financial advantages of being a garrison town. In 1870 it was a place of a little over 2,000 people - somewhat smaller than present day Foxton, Taihape or Featherston. It was a town built of wood and fenced with wood. Each of its dwellings burnt a little mountain of wood each year for cooking, heating, washing and water heating. Its goods were shifted around by wooden drays and waggons, packed in wooden barrel, boxes and crates. Its exchange of goods with the outside world was done almost entirely by sea - and here wood was well on the way to being replaced with the more modern iron and steel powered by coal-fired steam engines. But old-fashioned wooden sailing ships still played their part, while on land the main motive power was that of the horse, fueled with chaff, hay, oats and pasture. If we are really to understand Wanganui of 1870, we will have to make an imaginative leap that leaves electricity, petrol, cement, plastics, electronics, bitumen, and a great deal else, right out of the picture. Of course we all know this, but it is easier to 'know' it than to really grasp it with our imaginations. I hope to demonstrate how important it is to realise that this was a very wooden world if we are to understand how Wanganui related to the rest of New Zealand, 1870-90.

It will help if I now give you an overview of my lecture. I believe that Wanganui's relationship with the rest of New Zealand went through a major transformation in the 1870s and another in the 1880s. So we will compare Wanganui of the early 70s with Wanganui of the early 80s and Wanganui around 1890, to see what was going on. (Plate 1)

In 1870 Wanganui was one of a scattering of little towns around the coast of central New Zealand. Their main links with each other were by sea, by means of an intricate shuttling of little coasters. Movement between them by land was almost entirely on foot or hoof. Wheeled transport was still of little more than local significance. The colonists entered the 1870s determined to change all this. In June 1869, in response to a deep crisis, a new cabinet had come to power, made up mainly of men from the southern North Island, under the premiership of William Fox of Rangitikei. The crisis arose from the heavy blows struck by the Maori warriors led by Titokowaru and Te Kooti at the settlers on

both coasts of the southern North Island, together with the Imperial Government's determination to withdraw from all involvement in New Zealand hostilities. The strategy decided on by the new cabinet was to greatly strengthen the threatened North Island settlements, and link them by a great east-west military trunk road, stretching from New Plymouth down to Wanganui, and across the island by way of the Manawatu Gorge to Napier. As soon as possible a railway was to follow along this trunk route. These plans are well illustrated by an official map accompanying the Government's Immigration Officer's report dated 18 July 1872 (AJHR 1872, D-16, p.6) (See Plate 2)

The government's plan met with remarkable success. Against the odds, a massive flow of immigrants and money from the Old World moved into the threatened districts and by 1880 Wanganui was linked to neighbouring settlements, old and new, by a network of well made roads and a major segment of the emerging colonial railway system. Wanganui was now an important node on what we might call the East-West Main Trunk. (See Plate 3 and 4)

Wanganui's place in the colony had certainly been transformed, but the carriage of heavy goods to and from neighbouring major centres, such as Wellington, New Plymouth and Napier, still depended on the sea. This was no longer the case by 1890. (See Plate 4)

Heavy goods could now be railed direct to Wellington and New Plymouth, and by 1891 to Napier also. Wanganui was now much less dependent on coastal shipping. More important than its east-west links was its position on the new North-South Main Trunk. For the Wellington-New Plymouth railway connected with a robust steamer service between Auckland and New Plymouth. We will explore in some detail what these changes in the colonial communication network meant for Wanganui.

But before we move back for a closer look at Wanganui in New Zealand in the early 1870s, I must establish one other point important to my approach. I do not believe we can properly appreciate what was going on if we do not give a proper importance to colonial life itself. New Zealanders have been too prone to think that a Kiwi joint of meat has no historical significance unless it has been frozen and shipped to Britain, and that when Britons keep themselves warm with New Zealand wool, that is important, but that when New Zealanders cut firewood to warm their bodies that is a matter of no consequence. My bias is to put the way New Zealanders provided for their own needs from local resources in the centre of the picture. As we shall shortly see, this bias has a way of demanding some pretty hard digging from the New Zealand historian.

What cargoes were the little ships carrying between Wanganui and the outside world in 1870? If you turn to the 'Statistics of New Zealand' for this period you will find full details of the composition of the cargoes moving between each port of entry and the outside world, but nothing about the coastal trade. If we want those, there is only one place to go - the ragtag lists of exports and imports printed in the 'Shipping Intelligence' columns of the local press. A glance at an example or two will show that it is no simple task to extract a sensible story from this material.

Thus the cargo which the 'Beautiful Star' brought into Wanganui from Lyttleton on 6 March 1870 is a hodge-podge of bags, casks, rolls, kegs, cases, parcels, bundles, crates, hogsheads and pieces of sugar, whiskey, lead, coke, nails, corks, cheese, wheat, serge, piping and whatnot. I am quite happy to leave the sorting out and aggregating of most of this material to someone else. A glance at the cargo of the little steamer Wanganui sailing for Wellington on 9 March 1870 suggests that exports will be easier to handle. There is not much we can do with Chalklin's tent and 5 poles, the Rev Cummins's 7 boxes of effects, and Penn's parcel, but having screened out all this pretty 'housekeeping' material we should be able to make something of the quantities of local produce in the list. Even so it is not simple. How do you add boxes and bales of wool together? What do you get when you add 4 casks of tallow to a hogshead of tallow?

Figure 3 shows that even if we can't make a perfect job of aggregating these export cargoes, we can at least get a reasonable overview of what was being shipped out and of where it was going. Wool was obviously the mainstay of the rural economy of Wanganui's hinterland. Most of it went to Wellington to be loaded onto the ships for Home. But these farming districts also had a yeoman class whose mainstay was not wool. Their most important export market was the West Coast. When a West Coast gold miner sat down to a meal, his meat, potato and butter may well have come from Wanganui. So too may his horse, and the chaff and hay with which he fed it. A significant proportion of these yeoman exports also went to the Auckland market, and a little to several other places. This yeoman cropping, grazing and dairying will also have dominated the local Wanganui market. Like the West Coast gold, the wool which left Wanganui for Britain could not have been produced and transported had not the muscles of men and beasts been nourished by colonial food and fodder crops.

By being selective, I believe that we can extract some useful information even from the heterogeneous jumble of the import cargoes. Wanganui of 1870 was very much a town of wood.

The figures show that in 1870 Wanganui was importing its timber by sea rather than drawing on its own hinterland. In this first quarter of 1870 a shipload of timber was coming in about once a fortnight from Havelock in the Marlborough Sounds. It was cheaper to bring timber over some 200 kilometres of sea than to transport it by land from the fine forests in nearby Rangitikei and Manawatu. Wanganui was not able to tap these forests until she was linked to them by rail in 1878. Until the 1870s New Zealand's timber industry was predominantly water-based, and Wanganui, together with its neighbours Foxton and Patea, had been built largely of timber shipped in from the Marlborough Sounds and North Auckland. From the details of wood products shipped in it is clear that Wanganui of 1870 had very little in the way of a woodworking industry. The five small shipments of coal were almost certainly for the use of coastal shipping. Where was the firewood to fuel Wanganui's homes coming from? Perhaps mainly from up the Wanganui River? Wherever it was being cut, it would have been an important little local industry. Many a nineteenth century colonist got his start in life cutting firewood for

the local market. The other little item in the table shows that the settlers who had just reoccupied the Patea district were getting their produce out by shipping it down to Wanganui.

Let us turn from the sea trade of Wanganui to the occupations of its inhabitants. Here again the official statistics are of little help - they don't provide a breakdown of occupations at the small town level. But with a little time and application we can get the main lie of the land by analysing the occupations of householders as listed in Wise's 'Directories'. The first usable list was published in 1872.

Figure 5 illustrates the predominant importance of the sea in Wanganui's transport arrangements of the early 1870s. Apart from the coach proprietor, the land transport workers will have been mainly concerned with providing a service within the town. The carters will have been engaged in moving goods around the town and to and from the wharves. The stable keepers will have been looking after horses ridden into town by country folk and hiring out horses to townsfolk and travellers. The country folk of this period will in the main have brought themselves and their goods into town on their own horses, drays and waggons. But the sea transport workers will have been mainly engaged in maintaining Wanganui's links with the outside world. Their numbers are the more striking when one considers that almost all the ships that served Wanganui were managed and manned from elsewhere - from places such as Wellington, Nelson and Auckland.

The government's obsession with its strategic east-west highway and railway through Wanganui gave that town a rapid boost which was denied to Nelson. A breakdown of Wanganui's construction workers of 1872 shows that the kind of work going on in the area was mainly basic pioneer stuff.

With only one architect and plumber, it is clear that there was not much in the way of elaborate or luxurious building going on in and around Wanganui in 1872. A good proportion of these workers were probably busy putting up rather basic wooden cottages roofed with shingles, to house the rising flow of new immigrants. Following the departure of the imperial troops Wanganui was probably rather over supplied with shops and recreation facilities for a year or two. Certainly, there seems to have been rather a surfeit of hotels.

Before we move on to probe Wanganui of around 1880 we must briefly note one important role which Wanganui played in the 1870s. It was a staging post in the distribution of immigrants flooding in under the Vogel scheme. From the immigrant ships arriving in Wellington Harbour parties were transferred to little coastal steamers and brought to Wanganui, and from the barracks here they set out on the last stage of their great journey to their new homes in Wanganui's hinterland. The Wanganui 'Weekly Herald' of 19 September 1874 gives us a little glimpse of one such party. A colonist had written to the paper to criticise Wanganui's immigration officer for his treatment of the party, complaining that all their baggage and bedding had been conveyed from Wanganui to the barracks at Bulls in uncovered waggons on a rainy day, and that the immigrants themselves were sent off so late that they did not reach Bulls till after dark. The officer replied, defending himself.

He had had to go ahead to Bulls to get the barracks ready. The late start was caused by the 'dilatatory conduct' of the immigrants themselves and the ill-timed kindness of Wanganui folk who persisted in plying them with drinks when they should have been on the road. The conveyances used for the baggage had been the best available. The incident gives us a picture of Wanganui of 1874 as a rather primitive but friendly little place.

But Wanganui was growing up. In the 1870s it almost doubled its population, with the main surge of growth beginning around 1874.

By 1880 the coming of the railway had transformed the life of the place. It linked Wanganui firmly to Rangitikei and Manawatu, and to the coastal districts to the north. Wanganui's port was booming as it provided the main link between this little railway system and the outside world. Fortunately for the local historian, the Railway Department published quite detailed statistics.

In 1880 the goods inward by rail was timber 5500 tons, firewood 3000, grain 1800, wool 1000, livestock was 3402 sheep, 3146 pigs and 182 cattle. While the first breakdown by railway stations is not available until the year April 1884-March 1885, it is clear from the general statistics for the line that the pattern must have been very much the same for the first half of the 1880s. The most striking feature of the table is that wood (in the form of timber and firewood) made up two thirds of the tonnage brought into the town. This further illustrates my point that Wanganui, like the rest of Victorian New Zealand, was a world largely built, serviced and fuelled by wood. Like much of the early railway building in New Zealand, the main initial purpose of this line was to tap the inland forests. By doing so it had turned Wanganui from a timber importing centre to a timber exporting one. The livestock figures indicate that most of the cattle and sheep coming into Wanganui did so on the hoof and not by rail.

In Jan-Feb 1880 wool is still the main overseas export, going to Wellington for transshipping. Food crops, dairy products and fodder do not appear as exports, probably because the much increased local population, with its many hardworking timber workers, is taking all that comes onto the market. But livestock is still being shipped out for the meat markets of the West Coast, Auckland and Wellington. The export of timber is an important new development. Figure 14 is not a very satisfactory one, because the cargoes of only half the sailings were available. The colony was also in depression, which accounts for the limited timber exports.

Statistics with other information show that the main products flowing into or through Wanganui from its hinterland were wool, grain, timber and firewood, and livestock. Little needs saying about the wool, which was being transhipped for export, or the grain, most of which was probably used in Wanganui's flourmills and breweries. The wood products and livestock, however, require our closer attention. In the winter of 1882 it was made very apparent how much Wanganui was a town of wood, serviced and fuelled mainly by wood. In June a flood swept away the Rangitikei railway bridge, cutting Wanganui off from the Rangitikei-Manawatu forests. The 'Yeoman' (16 June 1882) saw the disaster as a

serious affair for the Manawatu which is so largely dependent on the timber trade - a trade undergoing a rapid development with the Australian colonies, as well as with centres of population in the South Island. Rebuilding the bridge was expected to take several months, but fortunately it was hoped that a temporary structure would enable single trucks to be passed over one at a time within a month. Just as this temporary bridge was about to open the river struck again, almost completely sweeping it away. This time the 'Yeoman's' concern was for the citizens of Wanganui. Its issue of 4 August 1882 reported that: "The tradesmen of Wanganui have seldom presented a more noticeable appearance of seriousness than they did on learning of a second disaster to the Rangitikei bridge. not only must tradesmen and the business community suffer, but private citizens are affected in a direct degree. For some time timber and fuel have been very scarce, and what could be obtained was offered only at a very high cost. Coal rose in price in consequence Builders have been slowly dragging on their operations in anticipation of an abundant supply of timber and full work for their employees by the beginning of the present week."

As it was, Wanganui had to wait almost two further months for relief. When at last, at the end of August, two special trains laden with timber and firewood were run over the rebuilt bridge, the Wanganui Railway Station was a very busy place. Almost every dray in the town was pressed into service by the wood merchants as they scrambled to alleviate the firewood famine. We have only time for this one brief glimpse at this pioneer forest industry which for a generation had a major impact on the development of Wanganui. I have told the story more fully in my article 'The Virgin Forest Harvest and the Development of Colonial New Zealand' (N.Z. Geographer, 32 1976), in which I use the Rangitikei-Manawatu district as a case study.

The importance of livestock in Wanganui's economy in the 1880s is well illustrated by the account of a visitor to the town in the following winter. Auckland Frank Lawry made a tour down the North Island's West Coast to report on its settlement and farming progress for the Auckland Weekly News. He came into Wanganui on the day of Freeman Jackson's weekly livestock sale, and he began his extensive description of the town and district with a brief account of this event: the town was full of farmers and country settlers, many of whom came from north and south by the trains, whilst buggies, containing the same class, and a very large number of horsemen came in from every quarter. Added to this, no fewer than seven coasting steamers were discharging and reloading at the wharf, so that altogether the town presented a busy appearance The yards at which the sale alluded to was held are situated in the very centre of the town. Cattle, sheep, horses, poultry, potatoes, and sundry other articles make up the commodities submitted to the "hammer." The cattle sold really well, especially aged fat cows, which realised five pounds 15s, or 25s more than they would make in Auckland at the present time, whilst old "crocks" of cows, which the Pakuranga hounds would get in our district at a cost of 15s, sold freely at double the price in the Wanganui sale, and in less than one-half the time which would be occupied in disposing of similar lots in any of the

Auckland markets.

From the prices Lawry quotes, Wanganui must have been supplying more lucrative livestock markets than Auckland could offer in this winter of 1883. Probably Freeman Jackson's sales were benefitting from a strong demand from the local market, from the West Coast, and from the beginnings of the freezing industry in Wellington. That the latter was beginning to have an effect is shown by a report in the 'Yeoman' of 26 October 1883 that the previous Wednesday over 1100 sheep had been despatched by steamer from Wanganui, the greater number to Wellington 'for meat preserving purposes.'

The livestock market provides us with a good introduction to Wanganui's position at the close of our chosen period.

Wanganui now faces strong rivalry from Canterbury for the West Coast livestock market, but gets the lion's share when winter snows close the stock routes across the Southern Alps. But Wellington with its freezing industry is now by far the most important meat market. And the completion of the Wellington and Manawatu line in November 1886 is enabling the markets and port of Wellington to bypass Wanganui and its port and gain easy, direct access to Wanganui's hinterland. Wanganui's new position on the North Island Main Trunk has not proved an unmixed blessing. The port of Wanganui has suffered a decline, while its little rival, Foxton, has been improving its position.

There are important changes, too, in the goods arriving at the Wanganui Railway Station. In four years the forest harvest has declined markedly.

The great virgin forests are being cut out, and the mills are beginning to move elsewhere. Even the inflow of firewood has shown a decline. With the decline in the firewood supply, coal is now becoming a significant domestic fuel.

So the steamers that took the stock to supply the West Coast with its winter roasts brought back coal to cook the roasts in Wanganui. As the 'Yeoman' of 7 September 1889 reported, some sharp Wanganui children had found some 'cheap' ways of filling the coal sacks for their home fires. For a while they overran the wharves for cheap pickings, but the railway authorities and the police put a stop to that. They then became expert in providing themselves with pickings in the streets by jolting the wheels of passing coal carts with stones and other obstacles.

As the forest harvest declined, the agricultural harvest grew. There was a big increase in the amount of grain arriving at Wanganui station. It would appear that local farmers were expanding their output to meet the needs of the district's growing population. The population of both Wanganui and its hinterland has been surging upwards ever since the mid 1870s.

A study of the occupations listed in Wise's directories shows that over these two decades Wanganui has become more sophisticated in serving the professional, commercial, information and communication needs of this growing and developing hinterland.

Over the years Wanganui faced strong competition from the neighbouring centres for the provision of services to the country lying between them. Plate 6 endeavours to summarise some of the main features

of that competition over our two decades.

Wanganui was able to establish a strong social and administrative grip on South Taranaki as its countryside was settled in the 1870s and 1880s. The movement of people and stock into this new area came far more from the south, through Wanganui, then from the north through New Plymouth. Many of the settlers came from Wanganui and its hinterland, and others came from South Island areas that already had strong links with Wanganui and its people. Wanganui newspapers dominated South Taranaki until it developed its own press. In 1877 Wanganui succeeded in capturing the whole of South Taranaki for its Education District under the new national Education Act. The administration of the Foxton-New Plymouth railway was centred in Wanganui. It took New Plymouth decades to win back the south of the province from Wanganui - perhaps the process is not complete even yet?

Wanganui did not have the same measure of success in a tussle with Napier for control of the southern Volcanic Plateau. In January 1870 a route to link Wanganui with the Plateau was included in the strategic thinking of the Fox cabinet. This route by way of Upokongaro and the Mangawhero Valley was discovered by the surveyor Henry Field. It was not till 1880 that serious work began on what became known as 'Field's Track,' with resources provided by both the Wanganui County Council and the colonial government. Field was put in charge of what proved to be a difficult project. Despite his best efforts, for years the Hawke's Bay County Council more than matched him with its steadily improving cart road through easier country with a less demanding climate. Year by year Wanganui interests watched with annoyance as the wool from the Upper Rangitikei rolled eastward to Napier. Not until 1888 did the first wool come down Field's Track to Wanganui - a Maori clip from Kariori. The building of the Main Trunk across this disputed countryside eventually put an end to the Wanganui-Napier rivalry.

While Foxton and Wanganui were rival ports for the Rangitikei-Manawatu hinterland, Foxton does not seem to have made it a matter of active competition. Indeed, an editorial in the 'Feilding Star' of 23 June 1883 took up some comments of the 'Manawatu Times' about the 'wretched apathy' of those responsible for the Foxton Port. Despite the longer distances involved the Wanganui commercial community had captured the business of Feilding and Palmerston North by providing a cheaper and quicker service. Once the Wellington-Manawatu railway line was in place Wanganui's real competition to the south came from Wellington.

There seems to have been some feeling in this Wanganui-Wellington rivalry. When in 1887 Wellington's merchants showed antagonism to a Wanganui Harbour Loan Bill, the Yeoman suggested that the Wanganui people should show their disapproval in a forthright manner. Since Wanganui had a good coastal service to Auckland, all Wanganui orders could be sent there, and Auckland merchants encouraged to open branches in Wanganui. This, of course, was but a passing flurry, but as the 1880s drew to a close Wanganui commercial interests were wrestling with the real threat that Wellington would use its new railway link to siphon off both their wool and their livestock and meat exports. Meat canning works set up in Wanganui in 1884 were under pressure from the rising

Wellington freezing industry, which would force them to close in 1891. Many woolgrowers were beginning to rail their clip directly to overseas vessels in Wellington, rather than to Wanganui for the double handling involved in transshipping. The Wanganui merchants moved to counter the Wellington threat on two fronts. In the newly formed Tyser Shipping Company the woolgrowers were beginning to rail their clip directly to overseas vessels in Wellington, rather than to Wanganui for the double handling involved in transshipping. The Wanganui merchants moved to counter the Wellington threat on two fronts. In the newly formed Tyser Shipping Company they found a line free of any cartel agreements, and were able to negotiate with it for direct shipments from Wanganui to London. In 1890 the Wanganui folk pledged themselves to ship all their wool and other export produce by the Tyser line, which in turn agreed to keep its freight rates the same as those ruling in Wellington and to bear the cost of lightering the cargoes to its steamers, anchored outside the Wanganui bar. With this agreement in place, the Wanganui folk were able to move quickly to set up their own freezing works.

As we enter the early 1890s Wanganui is riding high. Her own John Ballance has taken over as the country's Prime Minister. She is on the North Island's main railway route, along which the cultural, social and commercial life of the colony pulsates. Her port continues to thrive through successful moves in checkmating the threat from Wellington. Let us take a brief glimpse or two at what this all meant in terms of lived experience.

It is not particularly easy to find simple straightforward descriptions of our 19th century towns as seen by their own inhabitants. However for Wanganui in 1890 we have a simple little description penned by 13-year-old J. Hamilton, competing in the recently established 'Children's Column' of the Yeoman for the prize for the best letter of the week. From his home in Bell Street, Hamilton writes about his home town. Here are a few brief extracts from his letter: "The streets are all laid out well, the longest one being over a mile in length. Some of the streets are planted with plane trees near the pavement. In all the principal business places the pavements are composed of concrete and tar There are two bridges crossing the river - one for the train and one for vehicles and people Gas is laid on to nearly every private residence, and the streets are lighted up with gas every night the moon is not up Telephone wires are to be seen in every street, and a great many private residences are connected with them considering the time they have been put up"

Clearly young Hamilton feels that he lives in a fine town that is keeping up well with modern life. Reading between the lines, of course, we can see that there must have been plenty of rough unformed pavements outside the main business district, and that the streets must have been pretty dark places on cloudy nights when there was no gas lighting because there was a bit of a moon. But the town does have a gasworks, an innovation appearing in the late 1880s. This is one of many developments nibbling away at the old World of Wood. And it has plane trees for elegance and telephones to further enhance its modernity.

We will conclude with two more brief glimpses of the 'Wanganui of

this period to show how the outside world moved in from time to time to liven up this solid, modern little town. One thing that had not changed since the early 1880s was the droving of livestock through the main streets. Thus the Yeoman of 7 January 1893 fulminated against the practice and described how the previous day "a beast broke away from a mob and careered madly down the Avenue with a horseman after it, raining blows on its hide from a stockwhip, whilst a pack of yelping curs gave their aid to still further infuriate the unfortunate animal. As the Avenue at the time was crowded with women and children the stampede was great, many timid women almost fainting as they reached the friendly shelter of an open shop door ... When will this dangerous practice be put a stop to? Must we wait until an infuriated Bullock ... gores His Worship the Mayor or some of the City Fathers to death?"

Our final glimpse is concerned not with the incursion of brute vitality from the nearby hinterland but with one of the less desirable elements in the flow of life surging through Wanganui as a consequence of its position on the North Island main trunk. In preparation for a race meeting the following week the Yeoman of 20 May 1893 printed a warning to the public of Wanganui under the heading 'The Spieler Gang'. It reminded them that at Wanganui's last race meeting in March "the town was inundated by a gang of those pests to every community commonly known by the name of 'spielers', a comprehensive term applied to the lowest dregs of society. These thieves and blacklegs did not confine their efforts to more quietly plundering the more gullible of the public by their various gambling devices, but the more reckless of them actually had the audacity to rob some people of money in Victoria Avenue one evening, by picking their pockets Next week there is to be a race meeting here, and in view of that, a number of those rogues are constantly arriving in town. They put on a great amount of 'Swagger', strut about in fine raiment, patronise the best accommodation - that is, of course, where they are not known to the publicans - and are ever on the alert to trap the unwary and add to their ill-gotten gains."

Let me conclude by saying that it has been a pleasure to come among you in Wanganui, not as one of these unwelcome and disruptive intrusions from the outside world, but as your invited guest to share with you in your quest for a growing understanding of your past.

WANGANUI COLLEGIATE SCHOOL

The historic Sanatorium which was formerly the Headmaster's residence when the school was situated in the Avenue has been demolished despite pleas it be saved. However, the wooden arches have been placed in storage and will be used in future buildings at the school.

Goodwin House, the new boarding house for girls, has been erected on the site.

In the meantime Big School has been remodelled and strengthened against earthquakes thus preserving the brick buildings which are a feature of Collegiate School.

All other brick schools in Wanganui have been demolished thus destroying an important feature of Wanganui.

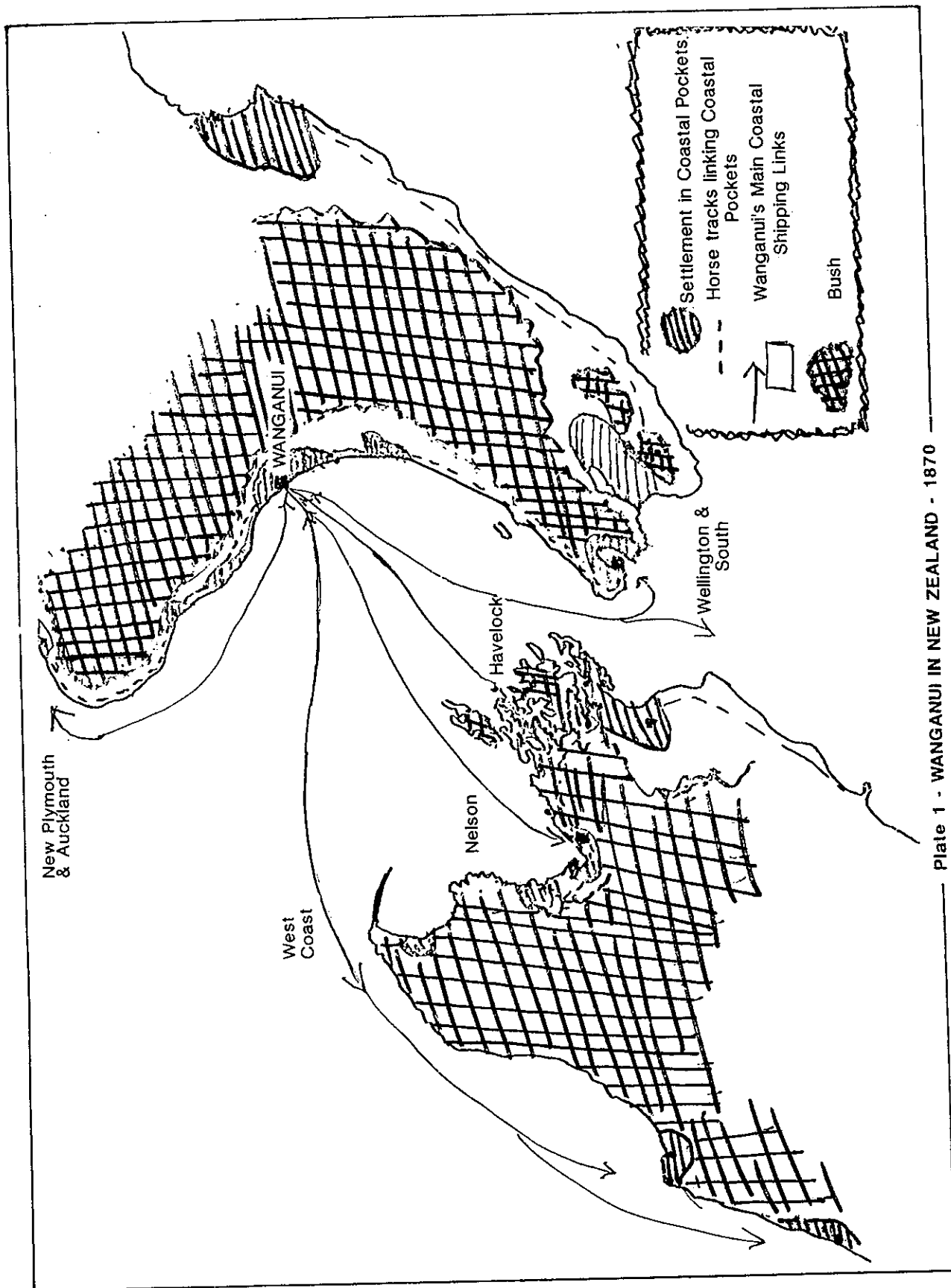
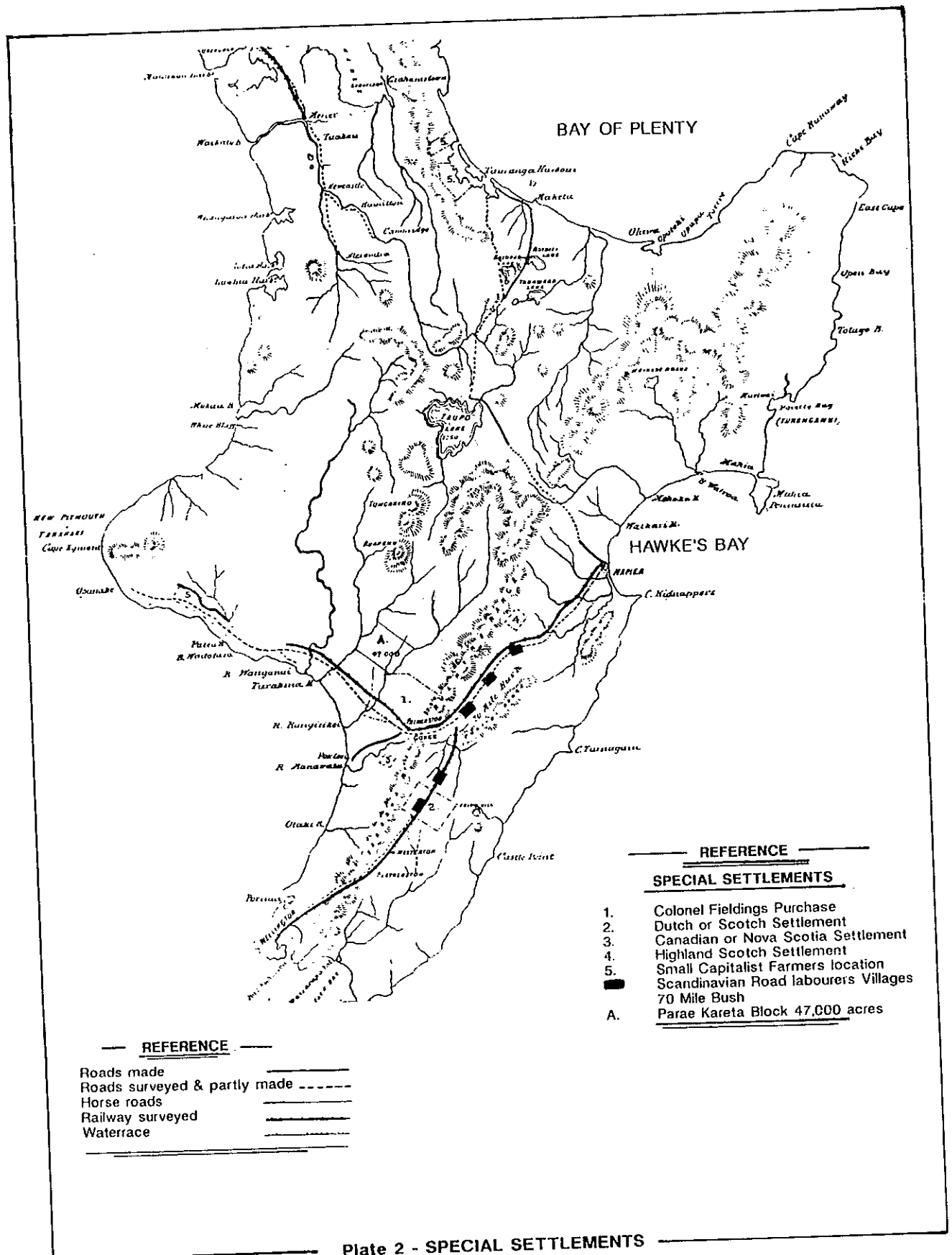
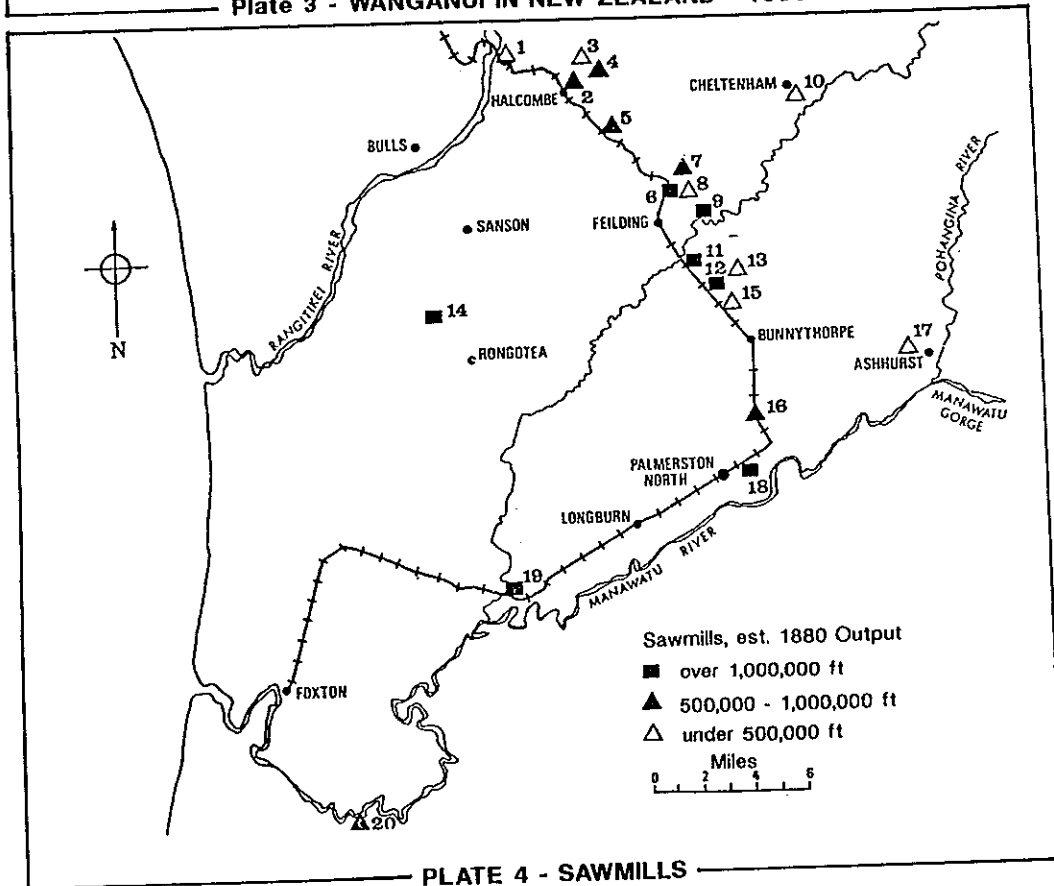
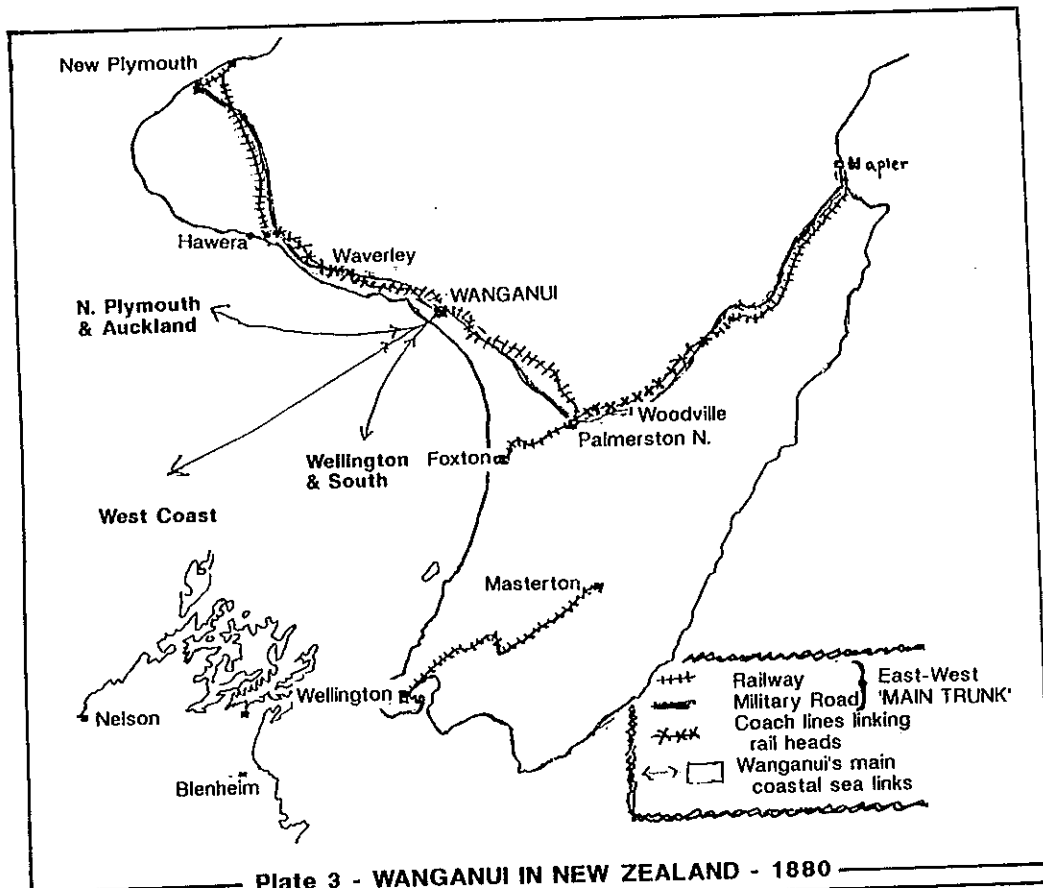


Plate 1 - WANGANUI IN NEW ZEALAND - 1870





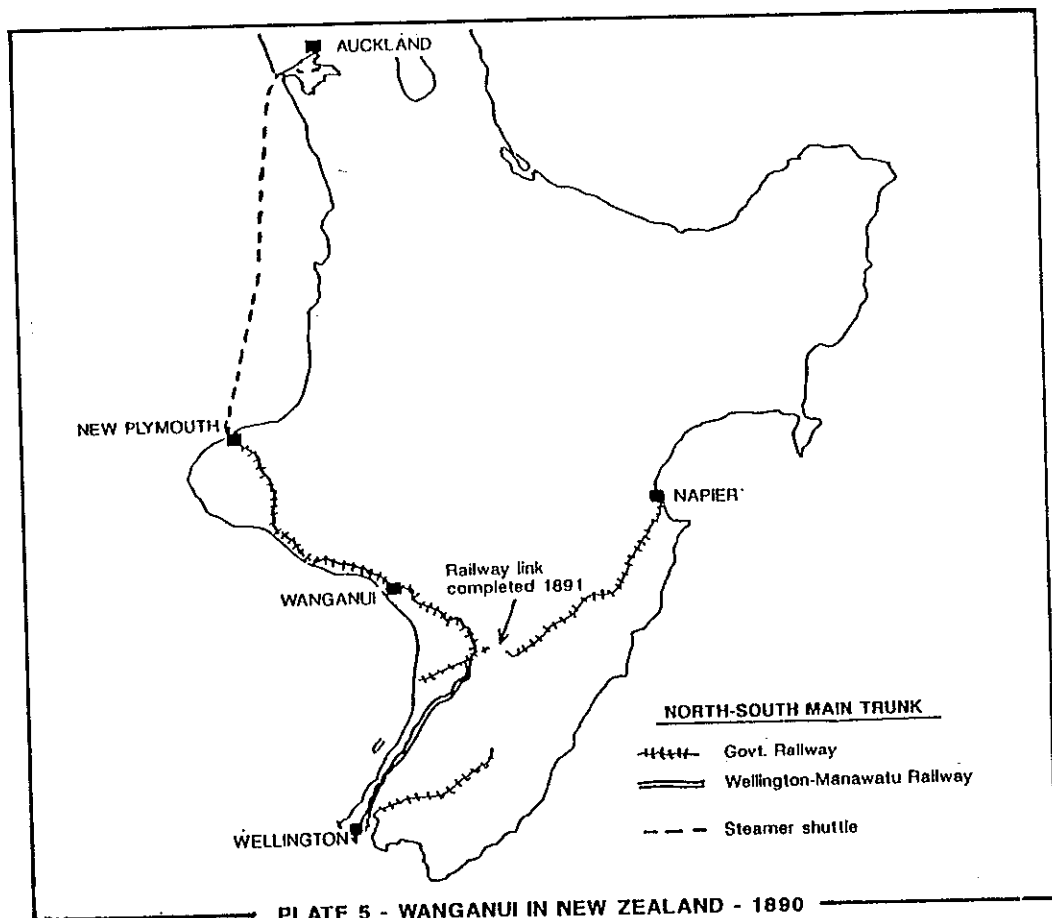


PLATE 5 - WANGANUI IN NEW ZEALAND - 1890

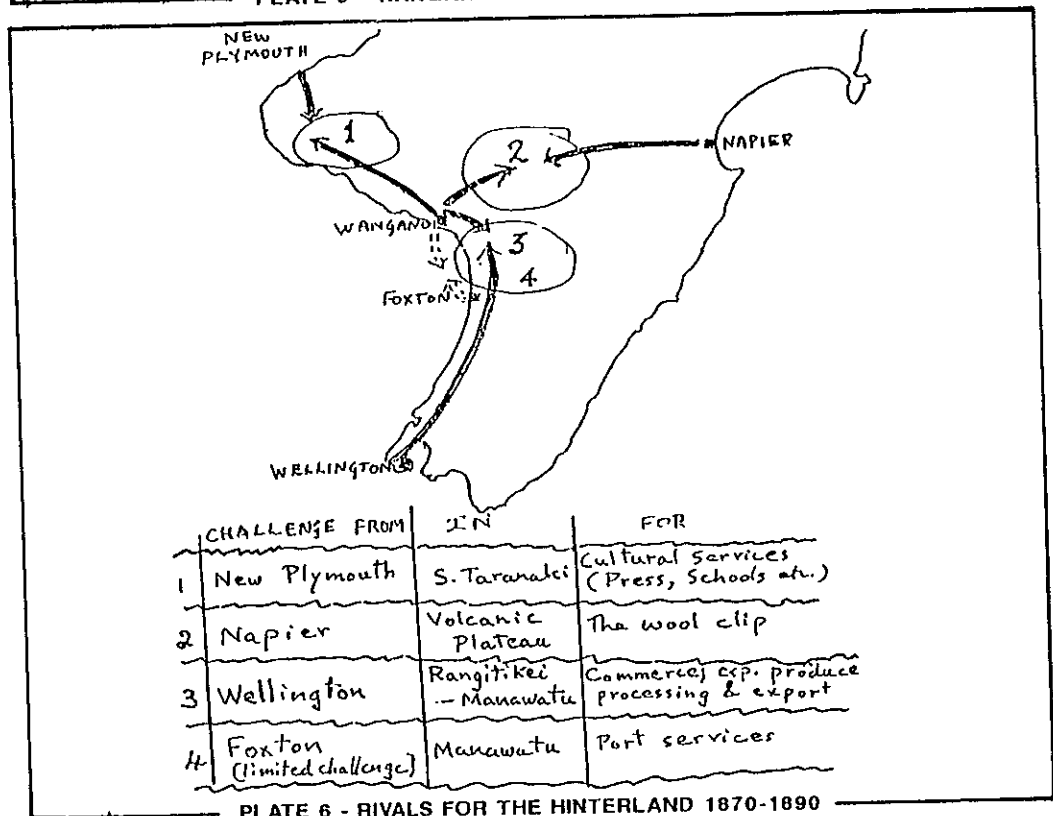
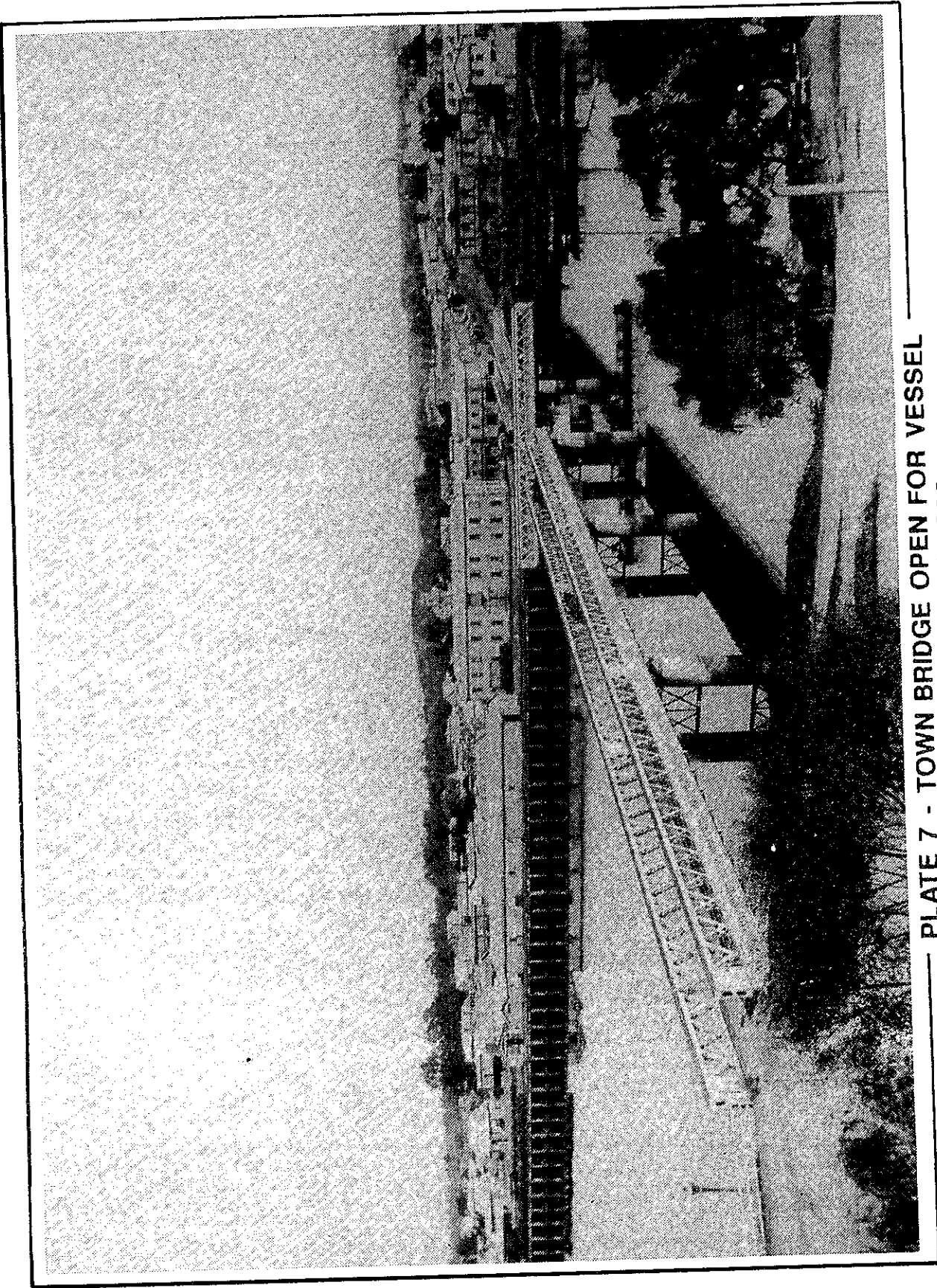


PLATE 6 - RIVALS FOR THE HINTERLAND 1870-1890



— PLATE 7 - TOWN BRIDGE OPEN FOR VESSEL
TO GO THROUGH 1900