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A CENTURY OF LAND TENURE
ON THE
BENMORE SHEEP STATION

by
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Presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of Bachelor of Arts with Honours
in History at the University of
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This long essay sets out to trace the pattern of land tenure that has evolved, over roughly a century, on one of the largest sheep stations in the upper Waitaki area. Of central importance to the Benmore Sheep Station was the subdivision in 1916; it is upon this event that the essay's approach to the topic hangs.

The first chapter begins with the establishment of the run and traces its growth until it stretches over an area of 300,000 acres. Chapter Two is devoted to the planning of the 1916 subdivision, including the aims of the Lands and Survey Department and the public reaction to the subdivision. The remaining three chapters deal with the results of the subdivision. In addition to tracing the fate of the University Endowment runs at Benmore, Chapter Three examines the problems faced by the University in administering its runs. Chapter Four is concerned with the Benmore Soldiers' Settlement and the remaining Crown Lands are dealt with in Chapter Five. The conclusion is primarily concerned with tying up the results of the land tenure pattern at Benmore and with assessing the policy of the Lands and Survey Department.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Mr. H. Morton for encouraging me to study land history and for enabling me to do research beyond the scope of this essay on land tenure in the Waitaki County. I found the staff of both Lands and Survey Department and the Hocken Library very generous with their time and suggestions.
Mr. N.F. Turner, Director of the North Otago Pioneer Gallery and Museum, has always maintained an interest in my studies and has helped me whenever possible. I would also like to thank Mrs. Marr for typing out this long essay in the face of the pressures of time, handwriting, and corrections.
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ABBREVIATIONS

AJHR - Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives.
C.C.L. - Commissioner of Crown Lands.
C.T. - Certificate of Title.
L&S - Lands and Survey Department Records.
M.L. - Miscellaneous License.
NOT - North Otago Times.
NZPD - New Zealand Parliamentary Debates.
ODT - Otago Daily Times.
O.U. - Otago University.
OV&P - Otago Votes and Proceedings.
OWLB - Otago Waste Lands Board.
P. - File Reference.
P.R. - Pastoral Run.
S.G.R. - Small Grazing-Run.
S.T.L. - Special Tenure Lease.
Tracing the pattern of land tenure up to 1916 best illustrates the steady growth of the Benmore Station to an area of 316,880 acres. The company of Robert Campbell and Sons Limited developed Benmore Station in that early period which is best broken into four parts. The first section, 1857 to 1861 - ended with solution to the provincial boundary dispute; the second, 1862 to 1873 - covers developments up to the establishment of a University Endowment in the area; the third traces the changes between 1874 and the snowstorm of 1895; and the last section deals with adjustments under the Pastoral Tenants Relief Act and with the last years of the Benmore Station.

For several reasons facts regarding the earliest period are not at all clear. The first licenses issued for runs were provisional, and because they were often taken up by speculators, there was a rapid turnover in licensees during the early years. Many licensees did not even occupy the land. The boundaries described in the first licenses were not only provisional, but also were usually made without a close examination of the area. Besides all these problems, the Benmore runs were situated in disputed territory between Canterbury and Otago.

A lack of knowledge regarding the headwaters of the Waitaki River caused this dispute. In April 1853 Governor Grey proclaimed the Otago–Canterbury boundary as being "By the Waitangi to its source, thence by a right
That the headwaters of the "Waitangi" contained four large tributaries was not known to Grey, and hence his proclamation formed the basis for a dispute that developed between Canterbury and Otago in 1854. Canterbury claimed that the correct boundary was the Ahuriri River, whereas the Otago Superintendent claimed that the boundary stretched right up to Lake Tekapo. As the two provinces were unable to reach a compromise at this stage, both Land Boards issued pastoral licenses for the areas they believed to be within their jurisdiction. Licenses were issued by both Canterbury and Otago for the Benmore area.

To resolve the dispute the Central Government appointed T.R. Mould to investigate the matter, and in 1861 the issue was finally solved by the compromise solution in the Canterbury and Otago Boundary Act. The boundary was to be the River Waitaki "...and up the Ohau River to the point where it issues from Lake Chau, thence by a right line to the summit of Mount Aspiring, thence by a right line to the mouth of the Awarua River." As a result most of the Benmore Station was in Otago after 1861.

Parliament made provisions in the Act, and in a

2. "Waitangi" was the original Maori name for the Waitaki River.
second one of the same year, for settling land claims in the disputed area. Licenses that had been issued by either Land Board were to be accepted by the respective Land Boards in whose territory they now were. In cases where licenses had been issued by both Boards for the same piece of land, then preference was to be given to people who were occupying the land at the time of the passing of the Act.

The Canterbury Land Board issued the first licenses for the Benmore area in 1857. A son of John Fraser at Ben Ohau tells how Benmore was originally taken up. Evidently in 1856 John Fraser and Alexander McMurdo, with settlement in mind, travelled over much of Canterbury and Otago searching for good run country. They eventually came across the Benmore Range with its "northern tussock covered ridges sloping gently to rich grassy plains." As they both wanted to take up the area, it seemed that they would have to race each other to Christchurch with the first one to file his claim getting the land. Deciding that this would be foolish, they raced each other to a nearby Matagouri bush. The winner, McMurdo, took up Benmore Station; the loser, Fraser, settled for what was to become Ben Ohau Station.

The first license for the area was number 178, issued to Edmund Hodgkinson in 1857. Edmund was the

GEORGE HODGKINSON

(O.W. 19 January 1926)
younger brother of George Hodgkinson, with whom McMurdo had gone into partnership. The partners settled at Benmore in 1856 and Edmund joined them a year later. License 178 was for 10,000 acres at the southern end of Lake Ohau, but in addition McMurdo and Hodgkinson received three other licenses (numbers 176, 177, and 188) in the same year. In the following years they took out two other licenses (203 and 243), and by 1861 they held 90,000 acres in the Benmore area. The exact boundaries of this run are impossible to define as the licenses, provisional in nature, gave only vague descriptions of their respective limits, and were subject to change as knowledge of the area became clearer.

McMurdo and Hodgkinson were not the only licensees in the area. In 1858 M.J. Burke took out two licenses (221 and 222) comprising 50,000 acres. The area covered by these licenses stretched from Lake Ohau right down past the Quailburn Stream to the Ahuriri River, and bordered McMurdo and Hodgkinson's Benmore runs.

Except for part of runs 221 and 222, all of this land passed into the Otago Land District in 1861, although Otago had claims to this area before that date. The Otago Land Board had issued license 189 in 1859 to P.B. Luxmore. This run covered a large portion of the Benmore area. In

6. Otago Witness, 19 January 1926, p.81
8. Depasturing License Book, L&S.
LICENSES HELD ON BENMORE, 1860.

Sources: A Run's Class 3 28/1
C. Canterbury Museum,
Departing License
Book Otago.
December 1861 Burke applied to the Otago Land Board to have this license declared void under the Canterbury and Otago Boundary Act as he claimed that it infringed on the area he had under license from the Canterbury Land Board. The Board did not see any reason for declaring license void, refused Burke's application, and run 189 remained unaltered. There is no reference to Burke's claim to land in Otago following this. 5,000 acres of runs 221 and 222 remained in Canterbury. Much of the land south of the boundary appears to have been unoccupied until it was taken up with Otago licenses later in the 1860's.

This was not the case with the other licenses in the Benmore area. In this period land regulations in New Zealand were formulated by the various provinces and Canterbury run licenses differed from their Otago counterparts. In Canterbury, run country was leased on a year to year basis, the rent being determined by a certain rate per acre, depending on the size of the holding; that is, the larger the holding the lower the rate. In Otago depasturing licenses for fourteen years were issued. Certain stocking requirements had to be met before a license was issued, and the rent was made up of sixpence per head of cattle, and a penny per head of sheep, with a license fee

9. OWLB Minutes, 8 January 1862.
10. ibid 13 January 1862.
of five pounds for up to 5,000 sheep, and one pound for every additional thousand sheep.\textsuperscript{12} When the Canterbury licenses came under Otago jurisdiction, new licenses were issued in their place, and therefore in August 1862 McMurdo and Hodgkinson received three new Otago licenses, 1 of C, 2 of C, and 3 of C.\textsuperscript{13}

The most important feature of the second period of Benmore's development was the change in ownership in 1863. In 1862 McMurdo was killed by a kick in the chest while breaking in a horse.\textsuperscript{14} Hodgkinson, not wanting to manage the run by himself, decided to sell Benmore, and it was auctioned on Friday, 10 April 1863. By this date the run was 200,000 acres in extent (i.e. comprising of license numbers 1 of C, 2 of C, 3 of C, and 189). From descriptions in advertisements for the sale, the run appears to have been well established by 1863, comprising a number of buildings, a garden and 16,000 sheep, as well as the huge acreage.\textsuperscript{15}

The auction attracted several bona-fide competitors and the run went to Messrs. Campbell and Low for £36,000. "The run is the largest, and one of the best in the Province and although the price fully satisfied the expectations of the vendors, it was not considered, by any means, that the

\textsuperscript{12} ibid p.86.
\textsuperscript{13} OWLB Minutes, 15 August 1862.
\textsuperscript{14} E.S. Elwell, \textit{The Boy Colonists}, p.164.
\textsuperscript{15} ODT, 10 April 1863, p.7.
THE HON. ROBERT CAMPBELL

(Estate of J. Cree: North Otago Museum)
CAMPBELL'S HOUSE AT OTEKAIKE

(Estate of J. Cree: North Otago Museum)
buyers committed themselves to too high a figure." 16

Robert Campbell, who bought the lease of Benmore in partnership with Low, was the son of Robert Campbell Senior. He was born in England in 1843, and educated at Eton. The Campbells were related to the well known Sydney family of Campbells, who had made a fortune in the New South Wales gold discoveries. Early in the 1860's Robert, with a brother, landed in Auckland. They travelled by land down to Otago, inspecting the country on behalf of their father on the way. They decided on Benmore in 1863.

Robert went on to buy other properties, including the Otekaike estate, where he settled and built a grand house in 1876. He led an active political life as a member of the Otago Provincial Council, and then represented the Waitaki District in the House of Representatives for a short while. In 1870 he was appointed to the Legislative Council. Of more note were his activities in local politics. Among other things he was the first Chairman of the Waitaki County Council, a member of the Oamaru Harbour Board, and also of the New Zealand University Senate from 1871 to 1879. After a period of illness he died a relatively young man (aged 46) in December 1889, leaving a widow, but no children. 17

Great changes followed Campbell's purchase of Benmore, among other things the building of a new stone

16. ibid 11 April 1863, p.4.

VIEW FROM HILL BEHIND BENMORE HOMESTEAD. In the foreground is the large shearing shed. (Hocken Library)
house and a large wool shed. In 1864 and 1865 Campbell bought pieces of freehold land on Benmore as part of his pre-emptive rights. These areas were probably required for the new buildings. In May 1865, the remnants of Burke's Canterbury runs, 221 and 222, were transferred to Campbell, along with run 477, another Canterbury run. The license to run 477 had only been issued to John McLean the year before. In 1867 Campbell and Low applied for a license to the land west of run 189, but the Otago Waste Land Board refused this request and ordered that the land be sold by auction. By June 1869 runs 421 and 429 had been created and were ready for auction. Campbell and Low bought the lease of run 421 (25,000 acres) while a T.C. Hill acquired 429 (48,000 acres). Thus within the first ten years of Campbell and Low's management of Benmore, the station grew until it stretched between the Ahuriri and Ohau Rivers, and northwards past the Land District Boundary to the extent of over 5,000 acres in Canterbury.

Robert Campbell was to add yet more land to the station in the third stage of its development. The beginning of this stage was marked by the granting of 100,000

18. Elwell, op cit, p.165.
19. OWLB Minutes, 6 January 1864 & 24 June 1865.
21. OWLB Minutes, 19 March 1867.
acres of the Benmore Run to the Otago University as an endowment. The problems encountered by the University Council in administering this Endowment will be dealt with in a subsequent chapter.

Campbell's leases for the Endowment area (i.e. 1 of C, 2 of C, and part of 189) had been renewed, along with the remainder of 189 and 3 of C, in the early 1870's before the University takeover. In 1879 the lease to run 421 expired and it, with 429 was sub-divided by the Waste Land Board in the same year and re-auctioned. Campbell bought license numbers 421, 421A and 429B, which meant an increase of 13,200 acres on Campbell's previous leases. These three licenses were renewed in 1891, but were surrendered shortly after that under the Pastoral Tenants Relief Act of 1895.

The Company of Robert Campbell and Sons had been founded in 1881 and was organised to take over established sheep runs. By 1885 the Company held leases to several large runs in Canterbury and Otago. These included Station Peak, Bermore, Otekaike, Galloway, Maroroa Downs and Burwood. The 1883 sheep returns reveal that the total number of sheep held on these runs was 288,254. In 1885 representatives of Robert Campbell and Sons were questioned by a Waste Lands Committee investigating alleged breaches of the "McKenzie Clause" of the Land Act, which stated that no leaseholder who held a lease from the Crown capable of

23. Lists of Runs Sold by Auction, L&$S$, f.2 & 3.
25. AJHR, 1885, H-11.
carrying 20,000 sheep or more could purchase any additional lease.\textsuperscript{26} To try and circumvent the McKenzie Clause the Company had had some of its leases issued in different names. For example, in 1884 runs 189 and 189A were issued to W.L. Clifford, and runs 3 of C and 4 of C were issued to C.W. Clifford. Both lived in London. Outside the Benmore area a license for 12,670 acres was taken out in the name of A.C. Begg, the Company's agent in Dunedin. Despite this the sheep returns indicated that the number of sheep held by the Company did not drop. Indeed the number had risen to 294,300 by 1885.\textsuperscript{27}

Robert Campbell himself was examined by the Committee in July 1885.\textsuperscript{28} He showed a surprising lack of knowledge concerning the business arrangements of a company of which he was the Managing Director. He agreed that the total number of acres held by his Company in Canterbury and Otago by lease was 608,997 acres and was forced to admit that despite the change in name of leaseholder over 114,078 acres of land formerly leased by the Company, Robert Campbell and Sons still ran sheep on these areas. Campbell did his best to be evasive, but his clumsy efforts fooled no one:

Can you tell on what terms - do you lease from Cliffords and Begg? - I really could not tell you for certain, but I believe the Company rents from them. Then there would be no change in

\textsuperscript{26} Land Act, 1877, Amendment Act, 1882, Sec. 67.
\textsuperscript{27} AJHR, 1885, H-11.
\textsuperscript{28} ibid 1885, I-4a.
the management of these stations? - No. Are they still carried on as stations of your firm? - Well I cannot state that exactly. 29

The committee examined A.C. Begg in August. Besides being one of the lessees concerned, he looked after the company's books and was the General Manager of its business. He proved more skilful than Campbell at evading the intention of the Committee's questions. Under examination he revealed that there was virtually no agreement between the company and holders of the pastoral leases. In fact the company controlled their leases as though they were its own.

But to establish that the company was breaking the law, the Waste Land Committee had to establish the number of sheep run by Robert Campbell and Sons on the Crown Leasehold portions of their holdings. The company land was a mixture of freehold, Crown Lease, and University Endowment lands. The McKenzie Clause applied only to land leased from the Crown whereas the issue was confused by the fact that the Crown Land was worked in conjunction with the other areas held by the company. When Begg was asked how many sheep were carried on the Crown Lands, he replied:

Well, as I tell you, for a large portion of the year there are no sheep carried on parts of the leasehold. It is impossible to give any direct evidence in a case like this, where you have to work the leasehold with freehold, and move the sheep from one to the other. And it is impossible to say how many sheep the pastoral country could carry by itself. 30

29. ibid p.2.

30. ibid p.3.
Because the Committee was unable to establish how many sheep were being carried on the Company's leasehold land, they were unable to build up a case against Robert Campbell and Sons. Nonetheless in its report the Committee stated that the spirit of 67th Section of the Land Act was being evaded and that "the intention of the Legislature to prevent the monopoly of large areas of pastoral country is being defeated ..."31

Robert Campbell and Sons escaped Government action and was able to continue its sheep business on this vast scale. Nevertheless the enquiry by the Waste Land Committee indicated the changing attitude of Parliament and of the public about the large pastoralists in New Zealand. It is interesting to note that despite the change in Government policy introduced by McKenzie in the 1890's, the Company was able to hold onto its large holding of over 300,000 acres at Benmore right up to 1916. The affairs of Robert Campbell and Sons were wound up from 1917 to 1920 after the Benmore subdivision.

The land transfers that led to the final shape of the Benmore Station began in 1891, when more Canterbury land was added to it. This was a result of the division of Lake Ohau Station, which stretched from the sides of Lake Ohau up the Hopkins and Dobson Valleys at the head of the Lake. Archibald McEwen had founded the run in 1859 with license number 307 for 10,000 acres at the head

31. ibid p.1.
of Lake Ohau. As with the Benmore run, a number of other licenses were added until the area covered by the run was quite extensive. Hodgkinson took over the run in 1863 after he had sold Benmore. In the following years a number of people held the run until National Mortgage took it over in 1884. They were unable to get rid of it until in 1891 the station was auctioned as two runs.

In 1889 many Canterbury runs were re-numbered including Campbell’s Canterbury licenses (477, 221 and 222). These were combined to make up run 92; Lake Ohau Station was re-numbered 93. These runs were auctioned in May 1889, run 92 consisting of 24,000 acres and run 93 of 200,000 acres. Neither were taken at the auction, and they were re-auctioned in January 1891. This time Lake Ohau Station was offered as two units - 93 being 55,000 acres on the western side of Lake Ohau and the Hopkins River, and 93A the remainder of the run on the other side of the Hopkins River. Run 93 was taken by D.G. Matheson, but run 92 was again passed in.

33. See R. Pinney, Early South Canterbury Runs, Chpt. 19.
34. A Runs Class 3, 28/1, L&S, Canterbury Museum.
35. ibid
36. ibid, op cit, pp. 153-4.
37. Pasturage Runs Reauctioned 1890, 69/1, f. 5, Canterbury Museum.
38. ibid f. 28.
Matheson took up this run also when it was auctioned a third time.\textsuperscript{39} As for 93A, it eventually formed the basis of a new Canterbury run named Glen Lyon.\textsuperscript{40}

Matheson seems to have held on to 92 at least until 1895 when he was issued with a temporary license for it for two years;\textsuperscript{41} Robert Campbell and Sons took over the license of 93 from him in the same year that it was auctioned.\textsuperscript{42}

The Pastoral Tenants Relief Act 1895 marked the beginning of the final stage in the development of the Benmore Sheep Station. The South Island experienced a serious snow storm in the winter of 1895, which had a disastrous effect on many high country sheep runs. Losses incurred by the pastoralists were so great that even McKenzie felt compelled to take up their cause.

\textit{... my first duty is, whatever my own feelings may be towards those gentlemen who have for years opposed me in every shape and form here, to look after the interests of the Crown ...} Large numbers of sheep have been lost, and unless some relief is given to these people the result will be that the country will be lying vacant in a short time. It is impossible for these people to re-stock the country without some financial assistance.\textsuperscript{43}

From this it seems that it was the spectre of thousands of acres lying vacant which stirred McKenzie

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{39} ibid f.29.
\item \textsuperscript{40} R. Pinney, op cit, p.154.
\item \textsuperscript{41} P.R. Book 1890-95, 25/2, p.115, Christchurch Lands and Deeds Office.
\item \textsuperscript{42} Waste Lands Board Licenses, 1874-95, 28/3, p.169, L&S, Canterbury Museum.
\item \textsuperscript{43} NZPD, Vol.91, p.468.
\end{itemize}
into proposing relief action, rather than the plight of the large pastoralists. He went on to state that the runholders would have to seek financial assistance to re-stock their runs and that they would not be able to obtain this if they did not have some sort of security of tenure for their properties. The Act in its final form embraced several possible forms of relief. These were: remission of a year's rent, extension of the term of lease, the issue of a new lease embodying concessions, and remission of the sheep rate.\textsuperscript{44} Benmore was hit hard by the snow storm, and lost fifty percent of its stock (i.e. 34,000 sheep).\textsuperscript{45} The relief given to Robert Campbell and Sons entailed the granting of a new license. All of its licenses in the Otago portion of the Benmore Station (excluding the Endowment runs) were surrendered and a single license issued for the lot.\textsuperscript{46} It was for 133,880 acres including runs 189, 421, 421A, 429B and 4 of C, and was to run for 20\textfrac{1}{2} years from September 1895 at an annual rent of £1,200. This was £355 a year less than had been paid for the same area under the previous licenses.

In Canterbury a new lease was issued for run 93 under the Act, at a reduced rent, and then in 1897 the Company received a new license with a term of thirteen years for both runs 92 and 93.\textsuperscript{47} As part of the considera-

\textsuperscript{44} Pastoral Tenants Relief Act, 1895.
\textsuperscript{45} NZPD, Vol. 175, p. 256.
\textsuperscript{46} P.R. License Book, No. 1019.
\textsuperscript{47} P.R. Book, License No. 150, Christchurch Lands and Deeds Office.
Benmore Station By 1900
Sources: Pastoral License Books
for Canterbury and Otago.

HOPKINS RIVER
DOBSON RIVER
LAKE
OHAU

429B 421 421A 189

3°F

AHARIRI RIVER

PUKAKI RIVER

OHAU RIVER

WAITAKI RIVER

1°F

5°F

2°F

4°F
tion agreed upon by both parties when the Government purchased the Otekaike Estate from the Campbells, the term of this license was later extended to the end of February 1916, in line with the expiry date of the Otago license issued under the Relief Act. If this Act had not been passed the licenses held by the Company in Otago, along with the lease of the Endowment, would have expired in 1912. Relief given under the 1895 Act ensured that the Benmore Station would survive at least until 1916.

By the end of the century the growth of the Benmore Station had reached its peak and its last years were spent with the shadow of its inevitable subdivision hanging over it. Benmore reached its greatest extent in the 1890's, the period when the Government began encouraging closer settlement of the land. This policy attracted much popular support and this had not abated by the time the Benmore licenses were drawing to an end.

48. ibid.
CHAPTER TWO
THE 1916 SUBDIVISION

In 1914 the question of subdividing Benmore came to the fore. Benmore was still held under the three 1890's leases covering an area of 316,880 acres, and was one of the last great runs to be broken up in the district. The Land Board split up and put settlers on the neighbouring Omarama run in 1915 and the short period between this and the subdivision of Benmore meant that many of the same issues of planning, balloting and auction affected both. Breaking up these two stations, remnants of the era of large pastoralists, engendered much public feeling. Public pressure for close settling of these runs was strong enough that residents of the area drew up a petition for Massey, Minister of Lands, in January, 1914.

It is needless for us to point out to you the hundreds of applicants in this neighbourhood anxiously waiting to acquire a block of either of these runs, which are admirably adapted for subdividing into smaller areas ... We therefore unhesitatingly assure you that if these runs are subdivided every one will be taken up.¹

Such public enthusiasm for the subdivision of the Omarama run led to conflict with the more restrained and cautious policy of the Land Board. When it became known how many runs the Land Board proposed to make out of the old Omarama Station many complained that more runs could be made and closer settlement could be achieved.

While inspecting Benmore in October 1914 Sadd,

Commissioner of Crown Lands, met with the local inhabitants of the upper Waitaki. They "made it very plain to the Commissioner of Crown Lands and his conferees that they expected Omarama to be cut up under the small grazing-runs system, that they expected at least a dozen divisions, and that they anticipated no gift of preference to absentees."\(^2\) Sadd appeared to be in sympathy with the demands of the local residents, but his superiors frowned upon his attendance at a public meeting on the subdivision issue. The Under-Secretary of Lands rebuked him:

... the matter of the future disposal of the land is one that has given the Department and the Minister much trouble ... As it is now, the Minister has either to approve the recommendations of the public meeting or else suffer a considerable amount of odium. \(^3\)

1914 was an election year and no doubt the Government was especially sensitive about its public image, but nevertheless the Under-Secretary's letter illustrates the type of problem public pressure could create.

As could be expected the meeting did not quieten the issue as the Commissioner had hoped, but rather gave it publicity. Parliament passed some land legislation in 1914, and therefore there was considerable public attention directed at the problems of subdividing these large runs. Mr. W.A. Bodkin, candidate for the Otago Central seat in the elections, with the support of the Alexandra Liberal League, led a sharp attack on the policies of Massey as

2. NOT, 5 October 1914.
3. 4776/A, f.90.
Minister of Lands. Bodkin claimed that Massey favoured the wealthy runholders and, in defiance of the Land Board's actions, was holding up the subdivision of the Omarama run to make secure the interests of the wealthy absentee lessee of Omarama. 4

Such allegations, merely part of the opposition's election rhetoric, were easily refuted, but they do reflect a degree of spirited public attention focussed on the subdivision of the Omarama and Benmore runs. The general demand for close settlement of the area comes through clearly; the public wanted as many small holdings as possible. Against this background of public sentiment, the policy of the Land Board seems more restrained. Although it had expert advice to guide its decisions, its policy could not be divorced from public feelings about land settlement. The Lands and Survey Department was quite sensitive about its public image, as the newspaper clippings and correspondence in its files show. In creating rather small sized holdings in the Benmore subdivision the Land Board appears to have been significantly influenced by public opinion at the time, and after the problems and criticism of the Omarama subdivision it is understandable that the Land Board was determined to tread cautiously with Benmore.

In June 1914 the Government appointed three commissioners to classify runs in Otago; R.T. Sadd,

4. ODT, 3 & 4 December 1914.
C. Anderson and T.A. Munro. By October of that year they were looking at Benmore, and the first problem to be faced was whether they should deal with the whole run. As most of the Benmore run was in Otago there was no question that the subdivision should be handled by the Otago Land Board, but 83,000 acres of the station (i.e. runs 92 and 93) was administered by the Canterbury Land Board. Natural access to these Canterbury runs was from Otago, and if not worked in conjunction with Otago land the area would be isolated and of little use. The Commissioners also felt they could do a better job of planning the subdivision if given a free hand over the whole area. Therefore in December 1914 the Canterbury Land Board agreed to an alteration of the Otago-Canterbury boundary so that the whole of the Benmore run could be included in the Otago subdivision.

Meanwhile the Commissioners drew up their report and it was considered by the Otago Land Board on 13 January 1915. The report set out three categories of land corresponding to the three existing leases. The first

5. New Zealand Government Gazette, No. 60, p. 2536. Sadd was the Otago C.C.L. Born in Nelson in 1858, he joined the Department as a Field Surveyor in 1874. From there he worked his way up to the top. He was C.C.L. for Otago from 1914 till 1923. G.H. Scholefield, Who's Who in New Zealand and the Western Pacific, 1925.


7. P.R. 1019, f. 15.
dealt with the Endowment Lands. To best subdivide this area the Commissioners recommended that 6,840 acres of the reserve should be exchanged for two pieces of Crown Land, as it would otherwise be impossible to keep Endowment and Crown Lands under separate leases. Secondly they recommended that the 1,900 acres of Crown Land fronting the Ahuriri and Waitaki Rivers (run 5 of C) should be added to the Endowment. Subject to these two alterations, the Commissioners suggested that the area be divided into eight small grazing-runs.

The second category was the Crown Lands covered by runs 189, 421, 421A, 429B, 3 of C and 4 of C, which made up 133,880 acres of land facing the road between the Ahuriri River and the Benmore homestead. Six thousand acres of this area was considered to be good agricultural land, too good to be offered as run country. Therefore the Report recommended that it be let as farms on renewable leases. The remainder of the land was to be divided into five small grazing-runs and two pastoral runs, but 26,400 acres of high summer country were to be left out of the subdivision for the present. The hope was that this high land might be worked on a commonage system by the surrounding runholders.

For runs 92 and 93, the final category, the report suggested that the area be divided into three small grazing-runs leaving out 12,000 acres of high country in the south to be added to the proposed commonage system.

The Land Board adopted the report and spent most of 1915 in clarifying details and modifying the original plan.
Numerous factors influenced the Lands and Survey Department in drawing up the subdivisions, but the overriding consideration was that the subdivisions should be of a suitable size to support a normal family living on the property. This was estimated by the number of stock deemed necessary to do this, which was of course related to the carrying capacity of the land. In 1916 it was very hard to determine this even with the aid of expert advisers, as until that time the whole area had been worked as one unit. The stock had not been confined to one part of the old station all year round and so carrying capacity estimates for small sections of the old run were understandably not very accurate. They also were possibly influenced by the optimism of the local inhabitants about close settlement.

The Department also took into consideration other factors when drawing up the boundaries, such as creating a balanced run, that is of matching up suitable summer and winter country in each unit. Improvements already present on the run, which included fencing, suitable access, water supply and suitable homestead sites, were taken into account. The Department found the advice of James Sutherland, Station Manager of Benmore, an important aid in drawing up the subdivisions. 8

The reason for suggesting a commonage system for

8. Sutherland had been Head Shepherd at Benmore prior to his appointment as Station Manager in 1900. He held this position until the subdivision. Thus he had had many years of experience at Benmore. - P. Newton, Sixty Thousand on the Hoof, p.106.
the north western high country was that the rough nature of the area made it almost impossible to subdivide and fence it. It was proposed that this area should be used by the tenants of the surrounding small grazing-runs, administered by a committee of the runholders using the area, which would determine the number of stock allowed on the run and organise such things as the mustering of the area. A reservation was to be set aside in the subdivision where yards and holding paddocks for this high country could be built. A similar co-operative system in operation on a Naseby run was the model for the project. The Under-Secretary for Lands believed that the scheme had little chance of success, and therefore it was decided at the last minute (in January 1916) that the area should be auctioned off as pastoral run 556, with the proviso that if it were not taken up, the commonage system would be adopted.

In February 1915 the Department marked off 12,179 acres as a proposed afforestation reserve. Similar areas had been set aside in the Omarama subdivision as part of the planned establishment of large scale afforestation operations throughout New Zealand in 1915. The fate of the Benmore reserve after 1916 will be traced later.

As with the Omarama Run there was keen local interest in the Benmore Subdivision. In November 1915

10. ibid f.126 & 133.
a large public meeting at Ngapara passed two resolutions about subdivision:

(a) That the Benmore runs be retained for settlement by returned soldiers.
(b) That the Government be asked to postpone the settlement of the Benmore runs for twelve months. 12

The Commissioner of Crown Lands rejected the idea embodied in these two recommendations because he felt the land was not suitable for returned soldiers. 13 He pointed out that the prospective lessees of the Benmore runs would require much capital to enable them to fence and stock their runs, in addition to building homes on them. In any case soldiers with sufficient capital would be able to put their names in the ballot through agents and would be given preference. The Commissioner went on to add that returned soldiers would be more suited to taking up such smaller farm units as the twelve proposed farms on the best country in the Benmore subdivision. As a result the Minister of Lands decided that the disposal of the runs should proceed, but that the twelve farms should be retained as a soldiers' settlement. 14 In December 1915 the Department decided to reduce three of the northern units in the settlement to two larger units, while adding to the settlement four runs (536, 537, 538 and 539) in the south. 15

12. P.R. 1019, f.80.
13. ibid f.95.
14. ibid.
15. ibid.
The final number of runs set aside for soldiers was fifteen covering an area of 23,000 acres. The Commissioner described the settlement as comprising of "most of the best land on the run and being also that at the lowest elevation is the most suitable for the proposed purpose."\(^{16}\) The creation of a soldiers' settlement did not satisfy many of the people who wanted the subdivision held up until the war ended; they felt that the whole area should be reserved for soldiers. In December at places such as Kurow and Duntroon various people called further meetings, which passed similar resolutions to those adopted at Ngapara. Their protests were registered in the North Otago Times: "No reasons have been stated by the Government for its amazing decision to proceed with the Benmore ballot ..."\(^{17}\) This statement by the Editor clearly illustrates his sympathy with the view of Y.T. Shand of Ngapara, the originator of the idea of postponing the subdivision, and many letters to the Editor also reflected widespread support. J. Anstey the local M.P., took up the matter with the Minister of Lands. Massey stood by the recommendations made by the Otago Commissioner and refused to postpone the subdivision. He said: "... we cannot allow productive land which has already been occupied to remain idle any longer than is absolutely necessary."\(^{18}\) He also mentioned that the Cabinet had "decided that no man of military age who is

\(^{16}\) ibid.  
\(^{17}\) NOT, 20 December 1915, p.4.  
\(^{18}\) ibid 22 December 1915, p.6.
physically fit shall be allowed to take part in a land ballot during the war period."^{19}

Besides criticising the Government on this issue Anstey reflected local feeling when he openly charged the Government with not making as many runs as possible out of the area. Anstey and C.J. Talbot, M.P. for Temuka, with some members of the Ngapara Patriotic Committee, inspected Benmore in December 1915. Their observations were published in the North Otago Times. Although the Land Board had decided to create thirty-seven runs in the subdivision, Anstey and his colleagues thought that many more economic units could be developed:

After seeing the extent and possibilities of the run, the consensus of opinion of the members composing the party of visitors — all of whom ... were practical farmers — was that the number of holdings could be increased to sixty or even more. \(^{20}\)

And the newspaper itself approved:

Mr. Anstey thought the Otago Land Board was to be complimented on having been the first Board to realise that runs could be cut down to a carrying capacity of 2,000 to 3,000 sheep. The present was the first attempt to do so since the commencement of the cutting up of large estates. He thought however that the Board could have gone a step further, and still have left holdings of sufficient size to provide a decent living for a working sheep farmer. \(^{21}\)

Anstey did not lack experience in such matters. He was a South Canterbury settler, and in 1905 he had been appointed a member of the Royal Lands Commission. A member of the Legislative Council from 1907 till 1914, he

19. ibid.
20. ibid 10 December 1915, p.2.
21. ibid.
became the Member of Parliament for Waitaki in that year. Later he became Director of the Canterbury Farmers Co-operative Association.22 His arguments were those of a reasonable man; it was not simply the ill-informed who believed closer settlement would be a success at Benmore.

How much effect the protests of men like Anstey had on the Lands and Survey Department is hard to determine but it is interesting to note that the final subdivision plan differed significantly from the report of the Classification Commissioners back in 1914. They had suggested that eight small grazing-runs should be made out of the Endowment Lands, and linked to this the proposal to add Run 5 of C (1,900 acres) to the Endowment. Even though this was not done, the University Endowment was eventually divided into eleven pastoral runs. Similarly, for the remainder of the Benmore run, more small grazing-runs and soldiers' Lots came into being than had been originally recommended, while in addition an afforestation reserve was set aside. Thus the original scheme drawn up by the Classification Commissioners was modified in favour of closer settlement. The importance that public pressure had in causing this change, as opposed to the Lands and Survey Department's increasingly more detailed knowledge of the area, cannot be estimated accurately. It does seem likely that the role of public pressure was not an insignificant one.

The major work in surveying the area was completed by the end of 1915, with January and February of 1916 spent in tidying up loose ends and in preparing the sale plan. The surveyors finally left Benmore in January. Robert Campbell and Sons' lease of Benmore was due to expire at the end of February, 1916, but the Company requested that their lease be extended for another year in order that the ballot might be held after the war had finished. The Board refused this request but did give a two month extension to allow sufficient time for the run to be mustered and the stock sold.

The Land Board agreed to the Company's transfer of the run to James Sutherland in February 1916, in order that he could have preference in choosing one of the subdivisions. The lessee of the run prior to subdivision was entitled by law to preference. The transfer of ownership was to be in name only, with Robert Campbell and Sons retaining both the right to occupy the run up to the last day of the lease and the right to the valuation for improvements on the runs. Sutherland chose the lease of run 543, one of the best runs in the subdivision, and which surrounded the original Benmore homestead.

In the early months of 1916 the details of offering

23. P.R. 1019.
24. ibid, f.12
25. ibid, f.113.
26. Sec. 27 of the Land Laws Amendment Act, 1914 provided for this.
27. P.R. 1019, f.149-50.
the runs to the public were completed and the sale sheet drawn up. The two schedules on the sale sheet listed first the small grazing-runs and next the pastoral runs. The main distinction between these two types of run was that the small grazing-runs were balloted while the pastoral runs were auctioned; both were for a term of twenty-one years with the right of renewal. One person was entitled to hold only one run unless approved by the Minister of Lands. Lessees of the small grazing-runs were required to carry out improvements on their runs while there was a special tree planting condition for those on the pastoral runs. On average the small grazing-runs tended to be larger than the pastoral runs.

A brief description of each run on the sale sheet gives one a general idea of the condition these runs must have been in at the time of the subdivision. About half of the small grazing-runs had what was described as a "fair" road to them, the remainder had access by dray tracks. Most of the improvements consisted of fencing, but one small grazing-run had a woolshed and cottages, another had cattleyards, and yet another had no improvements at all. The pastoral runs were in a similar condition, about half having "formed" roads to them and three having huts. Many of the proposed roads were still to be built at the time of the ballot and auction.

28. Otago Land District No. 572. See xeroxed copy of the map.
29. ibid.
Most of the settlers would be starting from scratch with very little in the way of improvements, while all the lessees had to stock, equip and (possibly) fence their runs. In addition to this the rules required lessees of the small grazing-runs to take up residence on their runs within one year; many of them would have to build a house. The settlers would be involved in a considerable outlay of capital, most of them going seriously into debt; they would be very vulnerable to market fluctuations during their first years on the Benmore runs.

In selecting applicants for the small grazing-run ballot, the Land Board was to look at their general ability and financial position. Preference was to be given to soldiers and landless applicants:

The application of any single man of military age may be refused by the Land Board unless he can produce evidence of rejection from service by the military authorities. 30

The reason for auctioning the pastoral runs was that all of them except one were part of the University Endowment. To get the highest rents possible for these runs was of "paramount importance" to the University.31

As the sale of the Benmore stock was to take place on March 21st, to allow the new settlers the chance of buying stock reared on the country they were taking up the settlers would have to be chosen before this date.32

30. ibid.
32. ibid.
It also seemed best to hold the auction after the ballot to give those who had missed out in the ballot the chance to bid for the pastoral runs.

Although it was decided to hold the ballot on March 16th and the auction on the 18th, the ballot of the small grazing-runs was delayed a day, the results being released on March 17th. The Oamaru "Courthouse was crammed to overflowing" to hear the results. There were 866 names in the ballot and understandably the atmosphere was tense as the results were read out.

Three members of the New Zealand Forces drew runs, and in each case there was demonstration of satisfaction, while the name of a newly married young man drew some uncomplimentary expressions.

Each run had attracted a considerable number of applicants. The least popular run was 544 which attracted sixty applicants, while the most popular runs were 534 and 535 for which 195 and 194 applications were considered.

The public also showed keen interest in the auction of the pastoral runs on March 18th. The rent on each run was raised higher than the upset rent; on several of the runs it was almost doubled. Run 548 fetched £500, the highest rental, and an increase of £375 on the upset, the largest increase raised by the auction.

33. NOT, 18 March 1916, p.7.
34. Lists of Applications Decided by Lot, L&S.
35. ODT, 18 March 1916, p.11.
36. Lists of Applications Decided by Lot, L&S.
37. See Appendix II.
The Company held its first stock sales at Benmore on March 21st and the sheep fetched good prices. The second sale was scheduled for April 19th.

The distribution of the runs had not silenced public criticism of the subdivision; immediately after the ballot and auction rumours began concerning the successful settlers. The Under-Secretary for Lands wrote to the Commissioner several times in April and May for information on the lessees so that he could refute claims that some of the runs had been drawn by "aggregators and speculators." One of the allegations encountered by the Under-Secretary was that two ladies held enormous areas of Crown Land and Education leases at Benmore. Rumours spread that one of these ladies had already sold her run to a relative of one of the members of the Land Board. The grounds on which such allegations were made are plain to see, but in fact such rumours were both unfair and completely inaccurate.

One of the successful applicants in the ballot, T. Hall, was a young man eligible for military service. Public displeasure at his success was strong in Oamaru. Because of complaints made by the public, Hall's application was to be reviewed by the Land Board but he decided to stand down in favour of the soldier who had drawn second marble for run 534.

38. NOT, 22 March 1916, p.7.
40. ibid f.175.
41. NOT, 15 April 1916, p.2.
Another case was also reviewed in which the Land Board dismissed the allegations made against the successful applicant.\textsuperscript{42}

Anstey led a vigorous attack against the Government's Land policy in the Address in Reply debate in Parliament on May 12th. The allegations already mentioned, plus others, were included in his speech and Anstey described Massey's land policy as "a policy of aggregation and absenteeism."\textsuperscript{43} His speech linked the cry for closer settlement with the popular demand that the area be reserved for soldiers. Instead of "land being provided for returned soldiers it has been dissipated in the most wicked way amongst gamblers, land speculators, land grabbers and absentee; and I charge the Prime Minister with deliberately conniving at the disposition of the land in that way."\textsuperscript{44} Anstey claimed that the maladministration of land was having a harmful effect on recruiting in the South Island. In reply to Anstey's speech, Massey emphasised the amount of land at Benmore that was in fact taken up by soldiers.\textsuperscript{45} In addition to the Soldiers' Settlement five soldiers had been successful in the small grazing-run ballot and one at the auction. Massey also pointed out that a large portion of the Benmore Station was not suitable for soldiers. The

\textsuperscript{42} ibid.
\textsuperscript{43} NZPD, Vol.175, p.87.
\textsuperscript{44} ibid p.86.
\textsuperscript{45} ibid p.256.
climate at Benmore was harsh, the area being subject to very heavy snow falls every five to seven years; management of stock in such years made experience essential.

Much of what Anstey said was politically motivated and easily disproved. However, his statements regarding the existing Soldiers' Settlement were closer to the truth than the Government was prepared to admit, as became apparent in the following years. But soldiers and their settlement were not the only problems. The University Endowment, from its inception, provided plenty of these.
CHAPTER THREE

THE OTAGO UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT

Benmore was not among the first endowments set aside to establish the University in 1870. It was in response to a memorial sent to the Provincial Council in May 1872 complaining about the inadequacy of funds, that the Endowment was granted.\(^1\) Runs 1 of C, 2 of C, and part of 189 (100,000 acres) were set aside.\(^2\) This area was easily defined; it was bounded on the north and east by the Waitaki and Ohau Rivers, on the south by a reserve and the Ahuriri River and on the west by run 3 of C and the remaining portion of 189. Eager to get the increase in revenue, the Council was no doubt pleased to hear that they were to receive the rental due in October for 1872.\(^3\)

The Provincial Government expected the establishment of a medical school in return for the new Endowment and therefore appropriate steps were taken by the Council to appoint a Professor of Anatomy and Physiology to the University.\(^4\) In the following decades the Benmore Endowment was tied to the development of the Medical School.

At first the University did not control its new Endowment; it was held by the Superintendent of Otago in trust for the University.\(^5\) But following the abolition

4. ibid, Superintendent to Registrar, 20 November 1873.
of the provinces the situation was altered. The Otago University Reserves Vesting Act, 1881, removed any control the Otago Land Board had had over the runs and vested all powers of control in the University. This gave the Council the power to control its income from these runs and even to sell them if it so desired.

When the University took it over the area was leased to Campbell and Low in three licenses due to expire between 1881 and 1884. The rent, determined by the number of sheep grazing the land, was £842 in 1873. Campbell and Low offered the University £1,400 a year for the Endowment if their licenses were extended for twenty-one years, but the Council refused this offer because it felt it could do better than this by auctioning the leases when they expired. In 1881 the licenses of 1 of C and 2 of C (due to expire in 1881 and 1882) were extended to 1884 so that the Endowment could be let as a whole in future. When the Endowment was auctioned in 1884 a substantially increased annual rental of £3,600 was obtained, from leases granted to Robert Campbell and Sons for ten years.

Low wool prices and the rabbit invasion caused serious problems in the 1880's. Income from the University Endowments declined and by the 1890's the University found itself in financial difficulty. The outlook was such that the University had to prepare for a further decline in

6. O.U. Letters, Registrar to Superintendent, 10 October 1873.
7. O.U. Council Minutes, 18 November 1873.
8. ibid, 19 January 1881.
revenue with the expiry of the Benmore leases in 1894.

The Council once again faced the problem of how to extract the maximum amount of rent out of the Endowment. A committee was set up in 1893 to investigate prospects. It arranged for Scobie Mackenzie to report on the Benmore Run and to value its improvements. The report he drew up was considered in March 1893. Before the 1884 auction the Crown Land Office had recommended that the Endowment be leased as one unit. Mackenzie agreed; if the Endowment were to be subdivided he recommended that it be cut into three units. After describing the best type of subdivision the report dealt with how to get the largest possible rental from the land. Although Mackenzie believed the "highest and safest" rental would be got from Robert Campbell and Sons, he feared that if the area was auctioned as one unit there would probably be no competition in the bidding and the Company would be able to command its own price. Therefore he recommended that the Endowment be auctioned as three runs; there would be nothing to stop Robert Campbell and Sons from bidding for all three as in 1884. In fixing the upset rental the report suggested that the relative value of the Endowment to the Benmore Station as a whole should be considered. Mackenzie claimed that the Crown Land portion of the station was "only

9. ibid, 10 February 1893.
10. ibid, 15 March 1893.
11. O.U. Letters and Papers Connected with the Reserves, f.49.
12. ibid, f.121.
rendered valuable, perhaps workable" by the Endowment, because it formed the lambing country of the run. 13 Therefore the Council would be justified in demanding a high rent from Campbell in view of the much lower rent he was paying to the Crown for the rest of Benmore Station.

After hearing the report the Council decided to put the Endowment up for a fourteen year lease with the understanding that if it did not fetch the upset price of £3,000, it would be offered in three runs. 14 The Council was afraid that if the land were offered as three runs initially, only one or two of the subdivisions would be taken up, leaving the problem of disposing of the remainder.

The auction was not held until after legislation had been passed granting the University more freedom of control over the Endowment by excluding it from the provisions controlling the size limitations of any of the preceding land acts. 15 In December 1893 the Council appointed a special sub-committee to arrange the re-leasing of Benmore, and it granted the lease to Robert Campbell and Sons for eighteen years at the upset rental of £3,000. The Crown leases for Benmore were renewed in 1894 for eighteen years also.

The serious financial situation of the University prompted the Council's consideration of a special report of the Finance Committee in June 1894. 16

13. ibid.
15. Otago University Reserves Vesting Act, 1893.
stated that the serious situation had been brought about "solely by diminished revenue from the several Endowments."
The immediate decline in revenue in the past year had been £1,300, of which £600 per annum had been lost in the re-leasing of Benmore alone. The Report revealed how unreliable the University's income was: "The decrease in revenue corresponds with the decreased price of wool, the income of the University being derived almost exclusively from pastoral purposes." The Report went on to recommend where cut backs should be made. It was becoming clear that the unstable income provided by pastoral endowments was not satisfactory for the University's purposes.

The Harbour and Education Reserves Bill of 1894 posed a further threat to the University's income. This Bill was designed to allow the Land Board to regain control of Endowment leases and it stated that the costs of administration and such things as roading were to be deducted from the rentals. The Council protested vigorously against this Bill, writing letters to local M.P's and Ministers of the Government in Wellington, which pointed out that:

If the Bill passes in its present form, the University revenue will suffer to the extent of at least £2,000 a year ... [This] will not only cripple the finances, but prevent the Council meeting its existing engagements. 17

Fortunately for the University the Bill was withdrawn.

Prospects for the future were not brightened by the
1895 snow storm. The Company's application to the Council for a reduction in rent was refused.\footnote{18}

By 1904 the Council was prepared to relinquish control over its Endowment runs in return for a stable income. The problems posed by the re-leasing of the Barewood run acted as a final spur in this matter.\footnote{19} In October the Council asked the Government if it would take over its reserves with the proviso that the University be paid annually the present amount it received from them and that the reserves be made inalienable.\footnote{20} The Government agreed and the ensuing Act gave control of the endowments back to the Otago Land Board.\footnote{21} The rentals, less two and a half percent for administration costs, were to be paid to the Council, but if the rents were reduced, the difference was to be made up by the Government, with the expenditure to be recouped in years when the rents were above the existing level. It was under the provisions of this Act that the Endowment was managed until the 1916 subdivision.

In 1915 the Council was approached regarding the exchange of land suggested by the Classification Commissioner's Report. The exchange was to be to the University's advantage, so there was no difficulty in securing the Council's consent to the matter.\footnote{22}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \footnote{18} O.U. Council Minutes, 1 April 1895.
  \item \footnote{19} \textit{ibid}, 31 October 1904
  \item \footnote{20} \textit{ibid}.
  \item \footnote{21} \textit{Otago University Reserves Act, 1904}.
  \item \footnote{22} O.U. Council Minutes, 20 July 1915.
\end{itemize}
University transferred 7,240 acres to the Crown and in return the University got three areas of land making a total of 7,570 acres.  

The auctioning of the eleven University runs in 1916 led to a substantial increase in revenue coming from the Endowment at Benmore. An increase of £2,520 was obtained on the old rental of £3,000 for that station. Tremendously high prices were paid for the runs; three of the runs (548, 549 and 551) had their upset rentals almost doubled at the auction, while there were only two runs whose rents were not raised by over £100 (553 and 554). In total the rents increased £2,320 above the upset rental.  

Unfortunately this large increase in revenue was not to go to the University. Under the terms of the 1904 Act the University was to continue to receive the fixed sum of £3,000, less two and a half percent for administration. The Council attempted to get this situation remedied in 1916 and had a draft bill prepared annulling the 1904 Act. This would not only have given the University the increased revenue coming off the runs, but would also have restored its control over the Endowment. The Government did not respond immediately to the Council's appeal. Not until 1917 when the Government's deficit, caused by the 1904 Act, had been made up, was the University granted all

23. Reserves and Other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1915, Sec. 87; O.U. Council Minutes, 15 August 1916.

24. See Appendix II.

25. O.U. Files, No. 6, 6 May 1916.
surplus revenue from the Endowment. Against the Council's wishes the existing method of managing the Endowment was left unaltered, but by once again subjecting the University to the effects of the fluctuating income received from the sheep runs, it was inevitable that an element of University control would creep back into the handling of the Reserve. The University having gained this increase in its income naturally would be very reluctant to face reductions at a later date.

With the post-war slump in prices the University runs were hit hard. Requests for the postponement of rents started coming in to the Land Board in 1921; by July it was recognised that some sort of assistance would have to be given to these runholders. The Government enacted legislation early in 1922 to enable the Land Board to act. The Board was authorised to reduce the rents on the Benmore runs to the original upset rental for not more than five years, but had to obtain the consent of the University to any relief measures considered necessary. The Council's veto on rental matters meant that the University was able to substantially influence the management of its runs.

As early as July 1921 the Council had stated its view regarding the impending concessions. It was

26. Reserves and Other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1917, Sec. 118.
27. Reserves and Other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1921-22, Sec. 63.
28. O.U. Letters, Registrar to C.C.L., 7 July 1921.
against the idea of surrendering the leases so that new ones could be issued at lower rentals; it did not want any reductions in rent to be made for more than three years; and it stipulated that reductions were not to be made retrospective. The Land Board felt that greater concessions than allowed by these restrictions should be given; it wanted the remissions in rent to be granted for the maximum term of five years. In June 1922 the Council agreed to the proposed remissions for one year only, but said it was prepared to review the situation annually. The Commissioner replied that:

The Members of the Board are of the opinion that the concession is not sufficient to induce the licensees to remain on their runs; that the present rents were too high even when prices for wool etc., were abnormally high during the war period and that the upset rentals are quite sufficient for the carrying capacity of the runs. The Council was not prepared to commit itself to remissions extending too far into the future because it believed that an expected improvement in the wool market would soon solve the lessees' problems. The remissions recommended by the Land Board would have meant a loss of £2,000 to the University for every year the concessions were enforced, and therefore the Council was not prepared to grant them for longer than they thought was absolutely necessary. While the Council temporised on the problem the plight of the lessees worsened. The rents fetched in

29. O.U. Files, No. 55.
30. ibid.
1916 were ridiculously high and the runholders were simply unable to meet their obligations.

Six of the eleven runholders sent in applications to surrender their licenses by the end of 1922, and the Commissioner forwarded these to Wellington for the consideration of the Governor General. He had already approved of the surrender of run 548 in 1921, but he did not do so for the other six because of the intervention of the Minister of Education on behalf of the University. Nevertheless the action taken by the Council hindered the development of a satisfactory solution. The Commissioner, prevented from granting adequate relief to the lessees, sought some other solution to the problem. It was eventually decided to forfeit the licenses because of non-payment of rent.

The Council had acted badly in the circumstances; by refusing to grant sufficient concessions it had brought about the very situation it had sought to avoid. If the Council were not prepared temporarily give up the high rentals it was receiving it seemed likely that it would lose these high rentals altogether.

Because of the Council's slow reactions to the settlers' plight the situation by 1923 became so bad that the question of concessions was no longer relevant. The Council faced the choice of accepting the surrender of the

32. *ibid*, Sec. of Education Dept. to Registrar, 4 November, 1922.

licences and the issuing of new ones to the same lessees or of forfeiting the runs and re-auctioning them. The University chose the latter course.

When Run 548 was put up for auction in March 1923 no bid was received for it, but despite this setback to its policy the Council continued to favour the choice of re-auctioning the runs. It was thought this course of action would rule out the possibility of merely issuing new licenses at reduced rentals. Re-auctioning would mean that an element of competitiveness would be retained and that the rents obtained, though less than before, would be the highest possible.

Relations between the Land Board and the Council were strained by the Bermore issue. In July 1923 the Council considered resuming control over the Endowment. It wrote to the local Member of Parliament:

The Council is not altogether satisfied with the manner in which the reserves have been administered by the Land Board, it being felt that the Land Board was inclined to consider the interests of the tenants at the expense of the interests of the Council. It has further been thought that the forfeiture of the leases would be an opportune time for the Council to resume control, since a new form of lease might then be instituted in these particular cases.

Nothing came of this idea, nor was the Government responsive towards the Council's requests that it should make up the loss facing the University.

Five of the licenses were eventually forfeited on

34. ibid, C.C.L. to Under-Sec. for Lands, 30 January 1923.
35. ibid, Registrar to Sidey, 4 July 1923.
October 15th, 1923. Run 548 was added to this list and all were auctioned in January 1924. The remainder of the runs chose to accept the University's offer of concessions lasting for one year. There was no competition at the auction; all of the runs were taken at their upset rentals except run 552, for which there was no offer. It was taken up when re-offered in February.

All these runs were taken up at substantially reduced rentals, three of them being at the 1916 upset rental price and the other three being close to it. Three of the previous lessees had regained their runs at the auction. The five who had not had their runs forfeited felt that they were missing out on what they saw as concessions. They asked if they could have their rents reduced in like proportion, but the Council refused.

The University had been a hindrance in the management of the Benmore runs during the early 1920's, because its stand concerning the problem of rents merely aggravated the situation and brought it to a head. But the Council's reaction to the situation was understandable; hard pressed for finance, it could not afford to give up any of its income lightly. There was clearly a conflict of interests.

36. ibid, C.C.L. to Registrar, 15 October 1923.
37. O.U. Files, No. 75.
38. P.R. 1737, f.89.
39. O.U. Files, No. 75.
40. See Appendix II.
41. O.U. Letters, C.C.L. to Registrar, 23 February 1924.
between the University and its lessees. The University required the highest rents possible for its land and this meant that the runholders were vulnerable to adverse market fluctuations.

Following the 1924 auction there was a period of relative calm for the University runs. But the depression of the 1930's ensured that by 1932 most of the tenants were behind in their rents. Because of the difficult situation faced in that year representatives of the tenants, the Land Board and the Council met in May at a conference in Oamaru. The views of the respective parties were much the same as those held in 1922. The Field Inspector of the Lands and Survey Department had drawn up reports on the runs in 1931, and they moulded the Land Board's attitude. For example, he reported that:

Run 552 like all other runs on the Benmore subdivision was very much over-rated and the carrying capacity over estimated. The upset was much too high, and at auction reached a still higher value as is often the case. 42

Because of the low wool prices, the high rents, and in some cases the poor subdivisions it was thought by the Land Board that considerable concessions would have to be granted. But at the Oamaru conference the representatives of the Council would only agree to short term reductions in rents and partial remissions of arrears. 43

The Council, as in 1922-1923 was reluctant to grant any more concessions than it considered absolutely necessary.

42. P.R. 1737, f.152.
43. O.U. Files, No. 179.
It must be remembered that in addition to demands made by the Benmore settlers, lessees on all the other Endowments of the University were in similar difficulties and were asking for similar concessions. The University faced "an alarming decline in revenue" during the depression.44 The depression made the conflict between the lessees' and University's interests clear; the Council was forced to accept reduced rentals at the very time it could least afford to do so.

To cope with the exceptional nature of the lessees' problems Parliament passed special legislation making the University tenants eligible for the same relief measures that were available to Crown lessees.45 Up to one year's rent could be remitted and up to three years rent postponed, but the consent of the University Council still had to be given to any concessions granted.

The Land Board and the Council finally reached agreement in August 1933, following a special meeting held in July to consider the problem.46 During the early 1930's the Council gave all of the University runs at Benmore considerable relief, depending on the merits of the individual cases. Nevertheless this did not solve the problem of the high rents still being paid for some of these runs - notably those which had not been re-auctioned in 1924.

45. *Reserves and Other Lands Disposal Act, 1932*, Sec.17.
In December 1935 the lessees of runs 549, 553, 554 and 555 applied to surrender their licenses and get new ones with lower rents. The University did not approve the new rentals proposed by the Land Board: "The Council is unable to agree to rentals which would result in a total rent for Benmore lower than the upset fixed when the land was cut up in 1916." The Council went on to point out that the total of these upsets was actually less than the rental received for the area between 1884 and 1894, and wanted the term of the proposed new leases reduced from twenty-one to fourteen years. As a result the final offer to the lessees entailed rents that were lower than the present ones but higher than those recommended by the Land Board, and leases with fourteen year terms. The lessees refused these terms as they felt that the rents were still too high.

The licenses to five of the runs were due to expire in 1938. These were the runs that had not been re-auctioned in 1924 and thus their rents were still at the very high 1916 level. The question of renewing these licenses was considered in 1936 and again the new rentals approved by the Land Board were not acceptable to the Council. The proposed rents were raised by the Council and the license terms reduced to fourteen years. As in the previous

47. This could be done under Sec. 277 of the 1924 Land Act. P.R. 1734, f.194.

48. ibid, f.199.

49. ibid, f.206.

50. P.R. 1507, f.154.
case these conditions were not acceptable to all of the lessees. Two of them declined the offers and therefore independent arbitrators were appointed to fix new rents in these cases. In December 1937 they recommended lower rents than the University had proposed and these were accepted by the runholders and incorporated in the new licenses.\footnote{P.R. 1937, f.56.}

Not until the 1940's, when all of the University licenses had been renewed, were the problems caused by the high rents fetched at the 1916 auction eradicated. The poor subdivisions of 1916 had exacerbated the problems, because most of the runs were too small to form good economic units that could withstand fluctuating market prices.

As with the small grazing-runs one person was allowed to hold only one University pastoral run. But the Land Board had no control over the bidders at the 1916 auction, and this regulation was easily circumvented by brothers obtaining neighbouring properties and subsequently working the two runs together as one concern. The Kelland Brothers did this, obtaining runs 545 and 546 at the auction while the Smith Brothers worked runs 552 and 555 together until re-auctioned in 1924. Similarly runs 553 and 554 were worked by the Shanks Brothers. In addition to this some of the lessees held other land outside the Benmore area. The Aubreys who leased run 547 also had a small grazing-run in the Omarama subdivision, and by 1920
run 550 was being farmed in conjunction with an Otemetata run (160A). 52

By the 1930's it was realised that most of the University runs were too small to be considered economic units and the Land Board therefore was prepared to allow a certain amount of amalgamation. In 1938 the Board approved of the transfer of run 553 to T.D. Shanks, who had in fact by himself worked run 553 in conjunction with 554 since 1923, although this was not officially recognised until the date of this transfer. 53 A similar case had cropped up in 1923 when the lessee of run 546, Kelland, applied to have his brother's run (545) transferred to him. The Land Board's reply was that: "the transaction would practically amount to aggregation, and could not, therefore, see its way to recommend the transfer." 54 He continued to work the run but did not hold it in his name. In actual fact runs 545 and 546 were not held under one license until 1959. 55

The Field Inspector's Reports of 1931 reveal that there were other faults in the University Endowment subdivisions. Some of the runs were not well balanced; for example, run 552 had too much summer country with only a small proportion of winter country; 56 as another,

52. See Appendix III.
53. P.R. 1937, f.78.
54. P.R. 1507, f.83.
55. C.T. 386/127.
56. P.R. 1737, f.152.
the very poor access available to run 550 ensured that it could only be worked from a neighbouring run.\footnote{7} Besides such circumstances, some of the country was of very poor quality (part of run 545 was diseased land).\footnote{8} Therefore the Field Inspector believed that the amalgamation of University runs that had occurred since 1916 was necessary and not simply the work of land aggregators.

Perhaps the best example of the process that led to amalgamation on the Endowment was the case of runs 553, 554, and 555. The Board considered run 555 too small to be an economic unit and so in 1941 made arrangements to have it amalgamated with runs 553 and 554. The Field Inspector outlined the problem in a letter to the Commissioner in November 1941:

Evidence is accumulating that small holdings in the Omarama District area are almost a liability, particularly in view of steeply rising charges balanced against very poor returns obtained for surplus stock. \footnote{9}

He pointed out that in assessing the minimum number of stock necessary to support a family, factors such as the cost of transport, market conditions and climate must be weighed against the possibility of increasing stock numbers on a run. The increased stock numbers might not warrant the expense involved. Of more importance was the quality of the flock and efforts to increase the existing wool clip and lambing percentage. The Field Inspector

\footnote{7}{O.U. Files, No. 179.}
\footnote{8}{P.R. 1507, f.11.}
\footnote{9}{P.R. 1985, f.124.}
in this letter was seeking to justify a more extensive use of the land. He admitted that the land was capable of carrying more sheep, but felt that this was not advisable in the Benmore area because of the economic cost and risk involved; a large run farmed less intensively would be a more viable proposition. This letter by the Field Inspector reflects a very different attitude to that current in 1916 when it was felt that more intensive use of the land would always justify the increased expense in farming it. The experience at Benmore had shown (by 1941) that this was not so.

The three University runs amalgamated into one holding in 1942, for the reasons expressed by the Field Inspector. The amalgamation was "considered to be the only real solution to the problems continually recurring on these runs, which cannot be regarded as economic separate units." 60

The subsequent history of the University runs has been one of little change except for those which were partially flooded by the Benmore Hydro Electric Power Scheme. The runs affected were 548, 549, and 550, as well as a run outside the Endowment, 5 of C. In 1966 three new runs were created out of the portions of land not flooded on the University runs and were named 746, 747 and 748. The unflooded portion of 5 of C was re-named run 728.

60. ibid f. 14.
The history of run 5 of C is of interest in that it was not affected by the 1916 subdivision, and because in its holding and administration it stands clearly apart. The run consisted of 2,270 acres wedged in between the University Endowment and the Ahuriri River, and was an area originally set aside as a possible mining reserve. Robert Campbell and Sons held the lease to it from 1888 to 1894 when it was taken up by W.H. Munro. Thereafter it remained in the Munro Family until partially flooded in the 1960's. Scobie Mackenzie's report of 1894 had strongly recommended that it be added to the University Endowment as it belonged to the reserve by nature, and it blocked off access to the Ahuriri River. In 1914 the Classification Commissioners recommended that it be included in the subdivision, but nothing had come of either of these suggestions. Though originally part of the Benmore Station, this land was held as a separate unit from 1894 till 1962.

The history of the University Endowment reveals the serious problems encountered following the 1916 subdivision and how they were dealt with. If anything the problems faced on the Soldiers' Settlement were more serious and a similar process of adjustment can be traced following the subdivision.

62. C.T. 386/141.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOLDIERS' SETTLEMENT

The fifteen sections reserved for soldiers at Benmore came under the jurisdiction of the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act, passed in 1915. It was a popular measure and if anything was criticised for not going far enough. Anstey, for one, felt that a portion of every large estate due to be cut up should be set aside for returned soldiers.¹ The Act provided for the setting aside of Crown Land to be leased or sold to soldiers under favourable conditions and incorporated in this was the idea of encouraging closer settlement. "The land so set apart shall be subdivided into such allotments as the Land Board ... determines."² In selecting settlers the Land Board was to take into account, among other things, the applicant's service record, his experience in farming, and his financial standing. Financial assistance was to be given to those who needed it and in addition rents could be remitted or postponed when necessary. This Act was designed to settle the soldiers on the land under very favourable conditions. To safeguard the Government's generosity Massey said:

We make it impossible for any man to part with his section without the consent of the Minister of Lands; and it will be the business of the Lands Department to see that no aggregation takes place, and that no speculation in these holdings is permitted. ³

2. Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act, 1915, Sec. 4 (2).
The Benmore settlement was among the first areas to be proclaimed under this Act, and by the end of March 1916 one of its runs had already been allotted. By 1919 the rest had all been taken up. The leases granted were for sixty-six years and during the first six years the tenants were required to carry out substantial improvements.

Despite this favourable start given to soldiers, the settlement at Benmore turned out to be a complete failure. This was true of many soldiers' settlements throughout New Zealand. The politicians, when formulating a new land settlement policy during the Second World War, recognised this.

The settlement of our returned soldiers after the 1914-18 War cost in round figures, £20,654,000, and the losses, including write-off, re-valuations, remissions and various concessions totalled £12,567,704.

Government aid to soldiers settling on the land after the First War created a boom in land values and disaster with the post war slump in prices. The popular demand to see soldiers placed on the land was combined with the trend towards closer settlement. "Public opinion was such that Mr. Massey was compelled to go in and buy land and put men on it."

The influence of such nationwide factors can be traced at Benmore. The pressure placed on the Minister of Lands to create a large number of small holdings for soldiers in the 1916 sub-division has already been dealt

6. ibid p.252, Polson.
with; the result had been the fifteen farms set aside in the Soldiers' Settlement. The decision to make such small units turned out to be disastrous because, as was soon discovered, they were not economic units. Combined with all the other problems encountered, this lack of sufficient income caused rapid changes in ownership during the first decade of the Settlement's existence, with a marked amalgamation of the runs. Today, in 1976, there are only five tenants holding the soldiers' runs and most of them farm land outside the settlement as well.

The Government's policy of settling soldiers on the land was a failure. Much hardship was experienced by the soldiers at Benmore, while some of the settlers had to give up in the 1920's with nothing to show for the hard work and investment they had put into their holdings. Others had to leave because of bad health; the relatively hard climate and rugged life did not suit veterans not in the best of health.

Similarly, the intertwined policy of close settlement at Benmore proved quite foolhardy. The reasons for the failure can be placed under four main headings: The immediate problems faced by the settlers; the selection of settlers; the suitability or otherwise of the area; and the size of the holdings.

The problems facing the settlers were many and great. There were very few improvements on the Soldiers' Settlement, and therefore in addition to stocking, equipping and fencing their runs, the soldiers had to have homes built. All of this had to be done during a period of high war-time
prices and this plus the optimism stimulated by the high prices being fetched for primary produce, both encouraged and forced most of the Benmore settlers to go heavily into debt. The low returns received by the settlers in the first few years while establishing their runs made servicing this debt very difficult.

The problems were increased by the bad winter experienced in 1918, in which a snowstorm caused the soldiers to suffer stock losses at the very time when they could least afford to. The Commissioner reported that;

All the settlers on Benmore suffered more or less by the heavy snowfall last winter and the Land Board after inspection decided to recommend a postponement of rent, free of interest, as a temporary relief to them. 7

The damage caused by the 1918 snowstorm was greatly increased by the soldiers' ignorance of how to deal with such problems. The tenant of run 540 lost 400 sheep that winter because he had no winter feed. 8 The lack of feed was common among the soldier settlers that winter and it was due to their carelessness or inexperience. 9 One flock was reduced from 1,400 to 380, the sheep dying because they got wet after the snowstorm. 10 Thus lack of experience meant that most of the settlers made mistakes which resulted in losses they could ill afford.

The soldiers, having gone into their holdings when prices were high, had to face the post-war slump in prices

7. S.T.L. 6, f.62.
8. S.T.L. 4, f.65.
9. AJHR, 1919, C-9, p.9.
before they were properly established and earning reasonable incomes. By 1921 most of the settlers were behind in their rents and required concessions, with financial positions going from bad to worse. Some of the settlers simply were unable to carry on even at this early date.

A combination of problems between 1916 and 1923 caused the settlement at Benmore to get off to a very bad start. The lack of improvements in the settlement, high war-time prices, the snowstorm of 1918 and the post-war slump meant that the settlement's hopes of success were dashed virtually from the beginning. The poor selection of settlers made the effects of these preliminary problems even worse. The Land Board was clearly not careful enough in picking suitable settlers for Benmore. Many of the soldiers who went there lacked experience in the type of farming they were about to take up and, faced with the rugged conditions at Benmore they were unable to make the best of their opportunities. The degree to which the losses of the 1918 snowstorm were unnecessary clearly demonstrated this.

Another factor not considered carefully enough when the Board selected the settlers was their financial position. Most of the soldiers had very little capital of their own, and therefore they were heavily reliant on loans from the Government and from other sources. With the high prices the settlers were forced to pay to equip their runs, and the following slump in market prices

11. AJHR, 1923, C-9, p.11.
the settlers found they were overburdened with debt. Wright Stephenson and Company was financing nearly all of the settlers, and early in 1922 it threatened to stop credit to the soldiers if something was not done by the Land Board to alleviate the situation.\(^{12}\)

In 1923 Parliament set up an Enquiry Board to investigate the failure of soldiers' settlements. The Otago Report recognised the damage done by fluctuating market prices to those soldiers who were paying rent and interest on debts.\(^{13}\) The settlers had no financial reserves to tide them over bad years. When they got behind in their payments they had no chance of recovering their losses, and the Board felt that it was "essential at this stage to re-establish on a sound financial basis all good settlers who have practically got into a state of bankruptcy through no fault of their own."\(^{14}\) In spite of an effort to do this by the end of the 1920's, all but one of the original settlers had left the Benmore settlement and even his run (559) was forfeited in 1932. Had more attention been paid by the Land Board to the amount of cash the soldiers had, when selecting settlers, rather than the amount the soldiers were capable of raising by loans, the problem of debts would have been reduced.

Some of the soldiers should have been rejected on health grounds. As early as 1919 the lessee of run 560

12. S.T.L. 10, f.27.
13. AJHR, 1923, C-9A.
14. ibid p.29.
Another of the settlers abandoned his lot in 1920 and it was found that this man had a history of mental illness. The Commissioner's comment on this case was:

> It is a pity he ever took up the land as, apparently he was not in a fit state, mentally, financially, or sufficiently experienced to make a success of the run.  

This case was rather exceptional, yet quite a number of other soldiers had to give up their runs because of ill health. The harsh conditions of life on the Benmore runs was suited only to strong healthy men; not enough attention was given to this by the Land Board. What is possibly the best indication of the poor selection of soldiers settled at Benmore is that by 1932 not one of the original settlers was still on his run. It was not uncommon for the runs to have changed hands three times within that period. By as early as 1923 nine of the runs had been transferred to new lessees.

Yet the area set aside for the settlement was recognised as being the best land on Benmore. The Board had designed lots 536 to 542 to be small sheep runs, and it described the remainder, 557 to 564 as being suitable for mixed farming. Nevertheless the state of the soil alone did not necessarily mean it was suitable for small farms. The settlement lands were fairly flat; this meant

15. S.T.L. 40, f. 1.
17. P.R. 1019, f. 188.
that if snow fell it would lie. Benmore was known to experience snowstorms every eight to ten years. As the Soldiers' Settlement covered only flat lands there were no bare ridges onto which the tenants could move their stock when it snowed. The Commissioner ignored this problem by stating that the runs "would be as unsafe for stock as any of the flat lands anywhere in this locality, say in the Waitaki Valley from Kurow upwards." It turned out that Anstey's claim that this area was unsuitable for close settlement was closer to the truth.

Those who know anything about snowy country know perfectly well that the flat land is unsafe land. The Benmore management never lambed their ewes on the flat, because it is neither a fit nor a safe place. There are heavy fogs there which, in the spring, form ice on the tussock, and such land is quite unsafe to hold by itself.

Even Massey had had doubts as to the suitability of the area for a soldiers' settlement. In a letter to Anstey he wrote that:

I have had very bad reports as to the suitability of Benmore for returning soldiers. Even the 23,000 acres which the Land Board recommends should be set apart, are said to be waterless, and not the sort of land on which men should be placed.

In the light of this it is interesting to note how W.J. Polson, when speaking in Parliament in 1940, described Massey's dilemma:

18. ibid.
19. NZPD, Vol. 175, p.88.
20. ibid, p.90.
There was almost public hysteria at the time, in a desire to do the best for the soldiers on their return. Public opinion was such that Mr. Massey was compelled to go in and buy land and put men on it. 21

From this and other evidence examined in Chapter Two, it seems that although Massey held reservations about the suitability of the area, he let himself be forced by public pressure into establishing the Soldiers' Settlement at Benmore. Be that as it may, the Report of the Classification Commissioners had recommended some kind of farming settlement on the flat lands before the actual decision to set aside the area. Stock loss in the 1918 snowstorm was one of the first indications that the Land Board had misjudged the suitability of the land for close settlement.

Before 1916, this flat country was part of a very large run and as such considerably underdeveloped. The Board of Inquiry in 1923 pointed out that much of the land subdivided in Otago had been in poor condition, often being worn-out pasture, bad with weeds. 22 This was almost certainly applicable to Benmore. Improvements in the pasture were necessary before the area could have been used profitably by a farming settlement.

Gradually experience confirmed that the area had not been suitable for a soldiers' settlement. By the 1930's such reports as the following were being written about some of the runs:

The property is not a desirable one as it is all flat and is very cold in winter. It would give

21. ibid, Vo. 258, p.252.
much better results if worked in conjunction with a hill property. 23

The runs, though clearly far too small, were also poor subdivisions, because they were situated entirely on a flat low lying area of Benmore. The winter of 1918 had shown that the settlement lands were a snow risk and the Field Inspector recognised that a sounder subdivision would have matched these low lying areas with the surrounding high country runs to make well balanced units.

... Much better results would be achieved if it were possible for these small areas on the Benmore flats to be attached to the high country runs in the district, and so enable the run-holders to winter their hoggets and weak sheep on the lower levels. 24

The question of size was of major importance. The Lands and Survey Department had clearly misjudged the conditions when it drew up such small holdings, but there were many pressures on it. The motives for creating these small holdings are somewhat clarified by a letter written by Sadd, Commissioner of Crown Lands, at the time of the subdivision.

The reason for making small subdivisions was partly that the returned soldiers at that time had very little capital of their own, certainly not enough to work several thousand acres and stock it properly ... And partly with the idea that these small holdings would provide a home and furnish a small return while there would be plenty of remunerative employment on the larger subdivisions on Benmore and Omarama. 25

24. S.T.L. 40, f.58.
25. S.T.L. 6, f.1.
The Land Board quickly realised the failure of this policy and in the 1920's it was the rule rather than the exception for them to allow runs to be amalgamated when and where the settlers found that they were simply unable to make a living. By 1930 the number of settlers had been reduced to seven and at least three of these held other runs outside the settlement. 26

Although the Land Board had the power to accept or refuse transfers it found that in some cases, in spite of this power, it was unable to control the pattern of settlement that emerged. The policy of the Board was to encourage the transfer of the settlement runs to those in need of such low lying areas - that is the lessees of nearby high country runs. But it was hard for the Land Board to find suitable applicants for the soldiers' lots when they became available for transfer. As a result the Land Board was unable to prevent a trend toward aggregation of the valuable low land runs into the hands of a few.

A good illustration of this was the case of J.S. Woods. In 1924 he took up runs 538 and 539. In 1927 Dasler, an employee of Woods, and acting as a dummy for him, took over run 537. After freeholding the run, the Land Board could not prevent its transfer to Woods. In 1928 Woods' brother took up the leases of runs 557 and 558. As he was not successful in farming these runs, by 1932 the Land Board thought it would be necessary to forfeit his leases. The only other solution to the problem was to

26. See Appendix III.
transfer the runs to someone else and, as it turned out, there were no other applicants but Woods with sufficient capital. The Land Board was against such a proposal:

The proposed transferee already holds Lots 538 and 539 (5,423 acres) which comprises quite sufficient flat country for his needs. The areas held by G.H. Woods would be very suitable for some other settler with high country who would benefit by the transfer, but in the present case it was considered plainly one of aggregation. 27

Unfortunately a suitable transferee could not be found and therefore Woods was granted the leases.

The Land Board had to approve other transfers also despite its attempts to find better solutions. Even yet the problems caused by the small subdivisions of part of the Benmore low lands have not been entirely rectified by subsequent transfers.

One problem the Soldiers' Settlement did not suffer from was high rents. This was true of all the Crown lessees at Benmore. Indeed it was the Crown lessees, holding small grazing-runs, who had the least trouble following the 1916 subdivision.

27. S.T.L. 24, f.81.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE REMAINING SUBDIVISIONS

Compared to the Endowment Runs and the Soldiers' Settlement, the other subdivisions were much more successful. In this category are the two pastoral runs (543 and 556), the proposed afforestation reserve, and the nine small grazing-run s. They differed from the case of the University runs in that a pressing need for finance was not of primary importance in determining their rents, and unlike those in the Soldiers' Settlement these runs were among the largest created in the settlement. Although the changes that have occurred on these runs have been less marked than those already discussed, they do indicate that the subdivisions, especially of the small grazing-runs, were not completely satisfactory.

An important factor in determining the success of any of the runs was the size of the rent. The purpose of the ballot system was not only to give all applicants a fair chance of getting a run, but also was designed to keep the rents at a reasonable level. (The effect of the auction scheme was quite disastrous at Bermore). The small grazing-run lessees were fortunate to be able to take up their runs in 1916 at reasonable rents. The post-war slump in prices did not send these lessees to the Land Board clamouring for relief. The lessees experienced little hardship in the 1920's. It was only with the onset of the depression that a general demand for rental concessions arose. The

1. See Appendix I.
relief granted was temporary, and it was not found necessary to reduce many of the rents when new licenses were granted for these runs in the late 1930's as had been done for the University runs.

In February 1948 a survey of the rents being paid for the Benmore runs found that the total rent paid for the small grazing-runs at that date was £1,267.10.0. This was a reduction on the 1916 total by £107.10.0. The rent on the soldiers' runs had only been reduced by £110.2.0; apparently they were not too high in 1916 either. In comparison the rents on the University runs had to be reduced by £3,218.8.0 between 1916 and 1948. Of the small grazing-runs four of the rents had actually been increased while the other five had decreased. The adjustments made varied from £100 to £5, most of them being fairly small changes. Therefore there seems to have been no real problem caused by rents on the small grazing-runs.

Although hardship was not so common among the small grazing-run tenants, by studying the transfers since 1916, it can be seen that nearly all of the runs have been enlarged. This seems to demonstrate that all of the subdivisions at Benmore were on the small side.

Lessees enlarged small grazing-runs by various means. Runs 528 and 529 bordered forest reserves and the lessees obtained leases to graze these reserves. The Field Inspector, in his report of 1936, noted that the

2. P.R. 1019, f.166.
3. See Appendix III.
tenant of 528 held two forest reserve leases totalling 47,000 acres. These reserves, by estimate, supported a third of the tenant's stock. In the same way run 529 operated in conjunction with a grazing lease for 2,800 acres of forest reserve.\textsuperscript{4}

The proposed afforestation reserve in the Benmore subdivision was also leased out to runholders. Its 12,000 acre area was divided into three lots and in May 1916 public tenders were called for the leases, to be issued on a yearly basis until it was taken over by the Forestry Department for tree planting purposes. In 1917 the Board transferred the lease to Lot 1 of the reserve to T. McCone whose run (544) bordered the reserve. Another neighbouring run (533) acquired the lease of Lot 2 in 1928; this left only Lot 3 being run as an independent unit.

As it seemed unlikely that the area would ever be planted out in trees the Land Board began to consider the future of the area in 1928. The temporary lease system was to be replaced by a more satisfactory permanent form of pastoral license tenure, but the existing boundaries of the lots were not suitable. The question of settling the area to the best advantage had to be re-considered.

In May 1929 the Field Inspector made his report.\textsuperscript{5} In it he discussed the disposal of the afforestation reserves in the Omarama subdivision as well as the Benmore one. He suggested that the three Benmore lots be grouped

\textsuperscript{4} S.G.R. 1199, f.127.
\textsuperscript{5} P.R. 2003, f.25.
with corresponding areas of the Omarama reserves to make three reasonably sized small grazing-runs. Some of the soldier settlers put forward an alternative proposal that the reserve should be added to their holdings, as it would provide good summer country for their runs.6

The Land Board members did not agree about how the land should be settled. In spite of the lessons learned from the 1916 subdivision one member of the Board claimed that seven small holdings could be made out of the Benmore and Omarama reserves.7 The Field Inspector recommended four. In the face of such disagreement the Minister of Lands set up a Special Committee to investigate the problem. It submitted its report in September 1929.8 The Minister had instructed the Committee to consider two questions carefully. Would the cancellation of the temporary licenses cause hardship to the present holders? How could the land best be grouped to make separate economic units? The report answered 'no' to the first question. The holders (McCone and Ireland) already had sufficient areas outside the reserve from which to earn a reasonable living. It recommended that two good runs be formed out of the Benmore afforestation reserve. John Anderson, a member of the Committee, disagreed with the report. He had been head shepherd on the old Benmore Station.9

9. ibid, f.67.
In a letter to the Otago Daily Times he explained his position:

The original proposal was to have four holdings. This I opposed as it was only on a par with the soldier settlement farce in this district. I agreed to make two holdings, as giving a reasonable chance of making a living. 10

In spite of this he thought that best use of the land would be made by leaving it in the hands of the present holders. In subsequent letters Anderson was criticised as being a large land holder and in turn he was defended by others. Despite the results of the 1916 subdivision there were still a few advocates for closer settlement of the area. The issue died down when the Government decided to postpone the problem for at least five years. 11

The problem was not solved until 1937 when it was agreed to adopt a solution similar to Anderson's suggestion of 1929. Lot 1 was re-named Run 669 and remained with the tenant of run 544. The tenant of run 532 retained only part of Lot 2 (approximately a half), re-named run 670. The other portion of Lot 2 was combined with Lot 3 to form a new small grazing-run, number 671. 12 The final decision about the disposal of the afforestation reserve indicated the Land Board's determination not to repeat the mistakes of 1916 by creating small subdivisions. Instead of two or three new runs, only one was created and remaining

10. ODT, 17 September 1929.
portions of the reserve were allowed to continue to augment the size of the two adjoining runs.

Run 671 was balloted in February 1937; the successful applicant was J.M. Gray. He did not hold the run for long; in 1941 it was transferred to J. Hardy, the lessee of run 556. This was the run that had originally been set aside for the commonage system. Although it was eventually auctioned along with the University runs, the rent fetched was not too high (£50 above the upset rental of £150).\textsuperscript{13} The run was worked in conjunction with another property at Fairlie from 1916 to 1928. Not originally designed as a separate run, it consisted mainly of high summer country. When it was suggested that run 671 should be transferred to Hardy the Field Inspector welcomed the suggestion, as 671 contained a hogget block which, combined with run 556, would make a good economic unit.\textsuperscript{14} Thus in the end, the afforestation reserve was not used to augment the size of the runs surrounding it.

The only other cases where the size of the small grazing-runs have been increased concerned runs 529, 530 and 531. Run 531 was drawn by the McKinnons in the 1916 ballot, and was worked with a couple of small holdings outside the Benmore area. In 1934 the McKinnons took over the lease of 559 as well, and then in 1945 one of their sons got run 530 alongside 531. Run 531 was not a

\textsuperscript{13} ODT, 20 March 1916, p.8.

\textsuperscript{14} P.R. 2003, f.165.
good subdivision. The Field Inspector in 1937 said: "The run worked as a separate property would be purely a dry sheep block and is not suitable for ewes." But run 530 had a good hogget block that would be useful for 531 and therefore in 1956 the McKinnons proposed to cut run 530 in two, transferring part to 531, and part to the other adjoining run (529). At that time it was believed that the flats of 529 would be flooded by the proposed hydro-electricity scheme for Lake Ohau, which would probably have made it uneconomic as a separate unit. Both McKinnon and the Board thought that by transferring the northern part of run 530 to it, this would be avoided. In 1963 the changes, approved by the Land Board, took place. 3,800 acres were added to run 529 and the remainder of run 530 was combined with 531 to form a new run called 725. In addition to this the McKinnons retained their lease of run 559.

One of the best examples of a run successful since 1916 is the Homestead block. This was selected by James Sutherland, former manager of the Benmore Station in 1916. The property has remained in the Sutherland family to the present day; neither the slump of the early 1920's, nor the depression of the 1930's seriously affected run 543 and the run has remained unaltered in size since 1916. In 1936 the Field Inspector described the property as

15. P. 232, f. 52.
16. ibid, f. 135.
17. ibid.
"a particularly valuable one, comprising 14,220 acres, including a large area of ploughable land that would grow good crops of turnips and green feed." It was probably the best run offered in the 1916 subdivision. The Sutherland family still live in the original station house and the huge shearing shed dating from the days of Robert Campbell is still in use.

18. P. 21, f.92.
CONCLUSION

There have been considerable changes in land tenure at Benmore over the past century. The key event in the developing pattern was the 1916 subdivision; here one sees implemented the concrete expression of a new attitude towards land tenure. The period following 1916 has been one in which the new attitude has been modified to fit the realities of the situation. Thus two major areas of interest will be looked at in the conclusion. The growth of Benmore and the forces behind its subdivision are included in the first area; the second deals with developments following 1916. Yet another important field, the one which will be discussed first, is the administration of the University Endowment.

Administering the Benmore Endowment was a problem for the Council right from the beginning. In managing the run finance was always of primary importance to the University - at times it seemed of sole importance - and therefore it concentrated on gaining the highest rental possible for the area. For example in 1884 and 1894 the question of subdividing the Endowment was considered primarily in terms of whether it would lead to an increased income.

As the University was always strained financially it was hit hard by the depression of the 1880's. The special report of the Finance Committee in 1894 laid great emphasis on the inadequacies of an income based on pastoral run endowments.¹ The University needed a stable income

¹. O.U. Council Minutes, 4 June 1894.
rather than one that fluctuated with both wool prices and the condition of the land. A solution to the problem was implemented by the 1904 Reserves Act. This provided the University with a stable income and the Endowment with an expert manager, the Land Board.

Unfortunately this solution was destroyed following 1916. The high rents received as a result of the subdivision led to legislation in 1917 which passed on the benefits to the University, and naturally the University was reluctant to give up its increased income in times of difficulty. Legislation which provided for relief for the University lessees in 1922, also gave the Council the power to veto any concessions granted to the lessees. This created difficulties for the Land Board when it attempted to give relief to the lessees in the early 1920's and 1930's. Indeed the University, by its intervention, successfully blocked satisfactory relief measures and caused six of the eleven runs to be re-auctioned in 1924.

Precisely because the primary factor governing its decisions was finance the University was not a good manager of its Endowment. It needed to get as much rent out of its lessees as was possible regardless of any other factors. Because demands for reductions in rent came at a time of economic hardship for both lessees and

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2. **Otago University Reserves Act, 1904.**
3. **Reserves and Other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1917, Sec. 118.**
4. **Reserves and Other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1921-22, Sec. 68.**
University the Council was called upon to accept reductions in its income at the very times it was least able to afford them. Therefore there was a conflict of interest, resurrected by the 1922 legislation, which severely hampered the Land Board's administration of the Endowment runs.

The major cause of the problem of high rents was the fact that the runs were auctioned rather than balloted in 1916. The reason for the auction was to obtain the highest rents possible for the University runs, but this in turn meant that the interests of the lessees were neglected, by not keeping the rents at a realistic level, and led to the problems of the 1920's. In contrast the system of balloting the small grazing-runs provided a fair distribution of the runs while also ensuring that the rents remained at a reasonable level. The advantages of balloting compared to auctioning were clearly demonstrated at Benmore. The lessees of the small grazing-runs did not experience significant difficulties in the 1920's and on the whole their history has been more characterised by stability and success than that of the University pastoral runs.

Rents continued to be a problem on the Endowment until the renewal of licenses in the 1940's. However the problem of rents was not an isolated issue, it was only one of the factors contributing to the difficulties arising from the 1916 subdivision. Of more importance to Benmore as a whole was the nature of the subdivision and the overriding question of size.

From the founding of the Benmore Station in the late 1850's until the turn of the century there was an
almost constant growth of the run. At Benmore sheep farming was big business - over 300,000 acres being controlled by one company. Benmore was a good example of the type of land tenure common during the era of the large pastoralists.

Yet by the time Benmore had reached its greatest extent in the 1890's it was rapidly becoming an anachronism. The examination of Robert Campbell and Sons by the Waste Lands Committee in 1885 and the success of the Liberals in the 1890 elections heralded a new departure in the history of land tenure. Closer settlement became the aim of McKenzie's famous land legislation of the 1890's and it was designed to destroy the monopoly which companies like Robert Campbell and Sons held over vast quantities of land. Closer settlement was such a popular theme that the eventual subdivision of Benmore was inevitable. Indeed what was unusual was the fact that the station was able to survive intact until 1916. This was a result of such fortuitous events as the relief measures of 1895, the compensation agreed to with the subdivision of Otekaike in 1908, as well as the isolated and rugged nature of the Benmore area.

Prior to Benmore's subdivision the newspapers show that strong demands for close settlement were still prevalent in the 1910's. With the outbreak of the war

5. When one considers the numerous other runs controlled by Robert Campbell and Sons the vast size of their pastoral industry is easily realised.
this issue was combined with another tremendously popular demand - the settlement of returned soldiers on the land. The Government was forced into action and at Benmore the result was the creation of the Soldiers' Settlement.

Exactly how significant public pressure was in influencing the final form of the subdivision is not measurable. What is clear is that instead of thirty runs and a commonage area as was originally proposed by the Classification Commissioners in 1914, thirty-eight runs and an afforestation reserve were decided upon in the final plan. This was a significant shift towards closer settlement. Probably the Land Board members shared, in part, the popular optimism towards close settlement, but they were understandably conservative in the light of popular pressure for even closer settlement because their decisions were tempered by the expert advice of the Lands and Survey Department. Local interests were far from satisfied with the final plan, wishing even closer settlement.

Clearly the results indicate that the 1916 subdivision was a grave miscalculation. In some respects the Department officials were acting in the dark because before 1916 the land had only been farmed very extensively. The Lands and Survey Department was faced with the problem of calculating the size of runs to be operated by a more

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6. Run 5 of C is counted as one run in these calculations because, as part of the conditions for dividing the Endowment into eight runs the Classification Commissioners recommended that 5 of C be included in the subdivision.
intensive use of the area. They had also to take into account the effect that substantial improvements would have on the new runs. By subdividing the area new methods of rotation would have to be employed because large areas could not be spelled as they had been before. Another important consideration was the effect that snowstorms, expected every decade, would have on the smaller units where the stock could not be moved as freely as before. Related to all other questions concerning size was the likely effect of fluctuating market prices on the smaller, more vulnerable units - the runs would have to be sufficiently large to withstand bad years. Decisions made concerning such variables could at best only be informed judgements and therefore it is easy to see how the optimism shared by the local residents and the general public was able to play a significant role in shaping the official decisions. A certain amount of guess-work was necessary in making the decisions - the size of an economic unit could not be calculated exactly. Inevitably the Land Board in making its decisions was swayed by the desirability of closer settlement.

The pattern of land tenure since 1916 has shown that the Lands and Survey Department miscalculated the size of the runs badly. Most runs created on both Endowment and Crown Lands were too small. The most serious miscalculation was the Soldiers' Settlement; there failure was acknowledged as early as 1923. This was because the concept of a farming settlement was put into operation there, on what was
seen as the best land on Benmore. Of course this was not the only factor contributing to the failure of the Soldiers' Settlement. The poor selection of soldiers for the settlement was also a major problem and reflects from a different angle the over optimistic view of the Land Board about the ease with which close settlement could be achieved at Benmore. Other problems that faced the soldiers were the market trends (high wartime prices followed by the postwar slump) and the storm of 1918 (which dramatically revealed the mistake of selecting low lands at Benmore for a farming settlement). These problems were faced by all the settlers at Benmore, but the poor selection of soldier settlers meant that they made more mistakes than the other settlers who were in the main local residents and/or experienced in sheep farming.

Apart from high rents, all the problems showed up more acutely on the Settlement than elsewhere at Benmore. This is not to say that the other runs were necessarily better subdivisions. The problem of size was also recognised by the 1930's on the University runs. Amalgamation of these was seen as a necessary policy by that time and similarly, most of the small grazing-runs were enlarged by one means or another.

The problems encountered with size in the Benmore subdivision and the fact that most of the runs had to be enlarged led to a change in outlook within the Lands and Survey Department. This is clearly shown in a letter written by the Field Inspector in 1941.7 He pointed out 7. P.R. 1985, f.124.
that the cost of closer settlement is not necessarily re-
couped by the more intensive use of the land that follows.
In determining the size of a run factors other than the
capability of the land must be considered. These included
transport costs, market conditions and climate. Referring
to Benmore he wrote:

Thus while it is admitted that the carrying
capacity of most properties can be increased
by cultivating any arable portions, it is
extremely doubtful if the additional stock
carried on these properties would warrant the
expenses involved. 8

He pointed out that rather than increasing stock numbers
it would be much better for the runholder to improve the
quality of his existing stock.

Therefore the Field Inspector by 1941 was arguing
in favour of a more extensive use of the land at Benmore,
a significant change from the widely held belief of 1916
in intensive land use. The experience at Benmore had
shown that factors other than those related to the physical
conditions of the land were just as important in determining
land tenure patterns. Perhaps part of the reason for the
failure of the Benmore subdivision can be attributed to
the Land Board's failure to place sufficient importance on
economic factors such as transport costs and market
fluctuations.

However the problem was not simply one of size.
Often the reason for enlargement was the nature of the runs
created in the subdivision. The question of balance
between summer and winter country was a key issue. A good

8. ibid.
economic unit not only needed a suitable area on which to winter the sheep or grow winter feed, but also the right kind of sheltered country for lambing. Experience after 1916 showed that many of the runs were not balanced and, in addition to increasing the size, many of the transfers and amalgamations were carried out to solve this problem.

Thus the motives for changes in land tenure since 1916 have been to rectify the mistakes made in the subdivision. The aim has not only been to increase the size of the units, but also to improve their balance. Nevertheless this has not always been possible. The Land Board has not always had a free hand in directing the post-1916 transfers. It has been limited by the circumstances of each situation. The best examples of this have been on the Soldiers' Settlement where the Board has attempted to match up the low lying lots with the surrounding high country runs. Unfortunately the Board has had problems in finding suitable applicants for the soldiers' lots at the time that they have become available for transfer. A certain amount of aggregation of these low lands into the hands of a few has been unavoidable.

Since 1916 the size of most of the units has increased, but this does not necessarily mean there has been an improvement in the quality of the subdivision. Areas of land that were isolated by the 1916 subdivision, such as the low lying Soldiers' Settlement and the high country set aside for the commonage scheme, have not been satisfactorily integrated with the surrounding runs by
subsequent transfers. The faults of the 1916 subdivision have not been entirely rectified and perhaps they never can be. Amalgamation has been the only answer to the problem, but does not alter the fact that had better balanced units been created in 1916 the land tenure pattern established would have ensured a more efficient use of the land and closer settlement of the area than exists today.
## Appendix I

### Results of the Small Grazing-Run Ballot, 17th March 1916

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RUN</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Tenant</th>
<th>Rent</th>
<th>Number of Applicants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>528</td>
<td>17,400</td>
<td>J.C. Wigley (w)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>529</td>
<td>16,350</td>
<td>J. Young</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>530</td>
<td>14,170</td>
<td>M. Don (w)</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>531</td>
<td>12,267</td>
<td>M. McKinnon (w)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>532</td>
<td>16,115</td>
<td>A.E. Ryan (w)</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>533</td>
<td>7,580</td>
<td>L.C. Munro</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>534</td>
<td>8,200</td>
<td>T. Hall</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>535</td>
<td>9,800</td>
<td>S. Sillars</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>536</td>
<td>8,953</td>
<td>T. McCone</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS:</strong></td>
<td><strong>110,835</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,375</strong></td>
<td><strong>866</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

w = woman

Source: ODT, 18 March 1916 p.11, L&S Lists of applications decided by lot.

### Results of the Pastoral Run Auction, 18 March 1916

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RUN</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>Tenant</th>
<th>Upset Rent</th>
<th>Actual Rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>545</td>
<td>13,400</td>
<td>A.P. Kelland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>546</td>
<td>11,827</td>
<td>J. Kelland Jnr.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>547</td>
<td>11,230</td>
<td>W.E. Aubrey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>548</td>
<td>11,670</td>
<td>J. Mcilwraith</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>549</td>
<td>8,258</td>
<td>E.F. Kenny</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>550</td>
<td>8,692</td>
<td>G.H. Moore</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>551</td>
<td>9,840</td>
<td>T.M. McAughtrie</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>552</td>
<td>9,531</td>
<td>T.M. Munro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>553</td>
<td>1,688</td>
<td>E.A. Munro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>554</td>
<td>2,195</td>
<td>T.D. Shanks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>555</td>
<td>3,123</td>
<td>B.J. Smith</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS:</strong></td>
<td><strong>91,454</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## The First Tenants on the Soldiers Settlement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOT</th>
<th>ACREAGE</th>
<th>TENANT</th>
<th>RENT</th>
<th>YEAR TAKEN UP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>536</td>
<td>2,245</td>
<td>R. Anderson</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>537</td>
<td>1,810</td>
<td>W. Gordon</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>538</td>
<td>2,530</td>
<td>L.J. Wraight</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>539</td>
<td>2,885</td>
<td>A.L. Aubrey</td>
<td>82.10.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>540</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>H. Bain</td>
<td>43.15.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>541</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>R.S. Smith</td>
<td>39.5.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>542</td>
<td>1,525</td>
<td>P.B.N. Carmichael</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>557</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>J.B. Reid</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>558</td>
<td>1,327</td>
<td>T. Cooper</td>
<td>52.10.0</td>
<td>1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>559</td>
<td>1,025</td>
<td>J. Glenn</td>
<td>51.15.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>560</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>A. McDonald</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>561</td>
<td>965</td>
<td>J. McCreary</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>562</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>J. Kerr</td>
<td>61.7.6</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>563</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>P. Williams</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>564</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>E. Davey</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTALS:** 21,100  

**Source:** C.T.'s
APPENDIX II

RENTAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT.

The total rental fetched at auction in 1884 was £3,600. In the new lease issued in 1894 the rental was reduced to £3,000.

Following the 1916 subdivision:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RUN</th>
<th>1916 UPSET</th>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>1924 UPSET</th>
<th>BY 1948</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>545</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>405</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>546</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>625</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>547</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>548</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>549</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>173.12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>550</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>625</td>
<td></td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>551</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>552</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>553</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>140</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>554</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>170</td>
<td></td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>555</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>190</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTALS: 3,200 5,520 4,070+ 2,301.12.0

+ total includes the rental from those runs not in the 1924 auction.

Source: L&S P.R. 1019.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>RENTS AND LESSEES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Kelland Aubrey McAugtrhrieRunro + 2 other Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Kelland</td>
</tr>
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**Diagrams:**
- [Diagram 1](#)
- [Diagram 2](#)
A diverse range of sources was used in a selective manner, as specified in the footnotes. To avoid undue length the primary sources will only be mentioned generally here.

UNPUBLISHED

(1) Lands and Survey Department:

(a) OTAGO

Information regarding the period prior to the subdivision was primarily taken from a number of old Lands and Survey Record Books. There are large gaps in this information, largely because of the fact that these books have not been kept in any sort of order. Recently the Hocken Library has been given these books and when catalogued almost certainly they will prove more useful. The following is a list of the most relevant volumes consulted:

- Depasturing License Books
- Lists of Runs Sold by Auction
- Otago Waste Land Board Minute Books
- Otago Land Board Minute Books
- Pastoral License Books
- Run Register

Of primary importance to Chapters 2-5 were Lands and Survey Department files. The following were consulted:

- P.R. 1019 and 1150 cover Benmore as a whole prior to the subdivision.
- 4776/A covers the Omarama subdivision.
The University Runs:

P.R. 1505 (Run 545)  P.R. 1733 (Run 547)  P.R. 1734 (Run 549)
P.R. 1732 (Run 551)  P.R. 1737 (Run 552)  P.R. 1973 (Run 553)
P.R. 1938 (Run 554)  P.R. 1735 (Run 555)  P.R. 1985 (Run 555)

The Soldiers Settlement:

S.T.L. 1 (Lot 537)  S.T.L. 5 (Lot 538)  S.T.L. 2 (Lot 539)
S.T.L. 4 (Lot 540)  S.T.L. 9 (Lot 541)  S.T.L. 6 (Lot 542)
S.T.L. 24 (Lot 558)  S.T.L. 22 (Lot 559)  S.T.L. 40 (Lot 560)
S.T.L. 14 (Lot 562)  S.T.L. 10 (Lot 564)

The Afforestation Reserve:

M.L. 2654 (Lot 1)  P/247 (Runs 532 & 670)
P.R. 2003 (Runs 556 & 671).

Pastoral Runs:

P.R. 1518 (Run 556)  P. 21 (Run 543).

The Small Grazing-Runs:

R.L.F. I/57 (Runs 544 & 669)
S.G.R. 1199 (Run 528)
D.P.F. 98 (Run 529)
P. 232 (Runs 531 & 725)

In addition, the Certificates of Title found in the Lands and Deeds Department are very important for filling in the gaps where Lands And Survey files have been lost, for providing the actual run boundaries, and for listing the transfers in ownership.

(b) CANTERBURY

Correspondence File S. 3558.

The Following are held in the Canterbury Museum:

A Runs Class 3, 28/1
Canterbury Pastoral Runs, 25/2
Pasturage Runs Re-auctioned 1890, 69/1
Register of Pasturage Licenses Class 3,
Transfers 1865-76, 29/2
The Pastoral License Books are to be found in the Lands and Deeds Department.

(2) **University of Otago Records:**

Letters and Papers Connected with the Reserves of the University of Otago.

Minutes of the Otago University Council.

University of Otago Letter Books.

From 1917 onwards the only material used was that filed under Reserves in the General Correspondence of the University.

The files referred to were:

6, 14, 21, 30, 39, 47, 55, 62, 68, 75, 84.
(May 1916 - October 1924).

175, 179, 184, 189, 193, 197, 200.
(October 1932 - February 1934).
PUBLISHED

Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand.


Evening Star.

New Zealand Government Gazette.

New Zealand Parliamentary Debates.

North Otago Times.

Otago Daily Times.

Otago Witness.


Votes and Proceedings, Otago Provincial Council.

The 1916 Sale Plan can be found in the Hocken Library under Otago Land District No. 572.
SECONDARY SOURCES


THE 1916 SUBDIVISION

The small grazing-run boundaries are darker than the pastoral run boundaries.

Scale: 1 mile to ½ an inch.

Copy taken from map in the Hocken Library.
BENMORE RUNS.

Scale: 1 mile to an inch.