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Glacier Advance

The Development of Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier

1865-1965

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ABSTRACT

The central theme in the development of tourism at Franz Josef Glacier between 1865 and 1965 is the relationship between people and the environment in a volatile glacier valley, and the ways in which this influenced the interactions between tourism and conservation interests.

The establishment of a tourist infrastructure in the valley necessitated a close working relationship between officers of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts and Franz Josef tourism developers. The dynamics of this relationship had parallels with that of government officials and West Coasters during the struggle to improve access throughout Westland generally. The nature of Franz Josef and its surrounding environment provides clues to its relatively late development compared to resorts such as Rotorua, Mount Cook and Milford Sound.

The most striking conclusion in the study of a hundred years of tourism development at Franz Josef is the way in which glaciation and climate dominated the works of people, enabling thousands of tourists to experience a spectacular and unpredictable wilderness environment, while leaving behind virtually no trace of their presence.

The ascendency of natural forces in the glacier valley limited the potential for conflict between tourism developers and conservationists. Another factor mitigating against conflict was that despite increasing government control of both conservation and tourism interests, West Coasters retained a strong voice in the development of the glacier tourism establishment. This resulted in a productive partnership between local people and officers of both the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts and the Department of Lands and Survey. This was very evident during the foundation years of the Westland National Park, a period characterised by a close cooperation between tourism and conservation interests.

The mountaineering expertise of Alec and Peter Graham and their commitment to sharing the wilderness with others resulted in the evolution of a distinctive West Coast guiding tradition. The Grahams made a major contribution to the development of outdoor recreation in New Zealand, as well as playing an important role in encouraging women tourists to extend their mountaineering skills in the Southern Alps. Women also played a crucial role in the establishment of an individualistic West Coast hospitality tradition, while pioneering aviation
developments in South Westland and at Mount Cook enabled tourists to fly over the glaciers and mountains and land on the snowfields of Westland National Park.

The Franz Josef Glacier region offered unique and varied attractions, and the reason for the relatively late development of a tourist resort there is not easy to quantify, but in the final analysis it seems that ongoing access difficulties and rugged climatic conditions were just as responsible as the alleged neglect by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts during the study period. The Haast Pass highway did not open until 1965, and before that there was no route through the West Coast to Otago, which was a major disadvantage to tourism development.
Growing up within sight of the Franz Josef Glacier, I have been able to recall stages of my own life by thinking of where the glacier was at given times. I was a child when the 1960s advance turned the glacier into a place of magic with its towering pinnacles; I was in my late teens when the glacier receded further than ever before, until it was so shrunken at the terminal that it was dwarfed by scarred rock and moraine. I can remember tapping a thin shell of ice with my ice axe one day, thinking that it was rather like seeing someone you loved dying of cancer. As I write this thesis some 20 years later, the glacier is undergoing its most impressive advance in decades, passing the places it reached in the 1960s in its spectacular push down the valley. It is an environment which is never the same for two days at its time. It is an exhilarating place to be.

Writing a thesis about an environment which has been a major part of my life has been a challenging exercise. My father, Peter McCormack, guided on the glacier for 36 years; my family has always spent a lot of time in the valley. We saw the glacier in all its moods, as we scrambled over the glacier worn rocks, climbed to the ice fall, swam in the freezing pools, or stood on the roof of the guides’ landrover to watch a flooded Waiho River sweeping everything from bulldozers to chunks of the glacier road out of its path. In researching the material for this thesis I found that I had much to learn about this familiar environment. Some of my perceptions held up to an academic scrutiny, others I was forced to change. Most notably, having lived in Franz Josef in the early 1980s, when the whole community was riven by a debate over helicopter access to the glacier, I assumed that conflicts between tourism and conservation had always been a major issue in the valley. This proved not to be so. The period from 1865 to 1965 was notable for its almost total absence of such conflicts, in a glacier environment where nature was in undisputed control.

I am indebted to many people for their generosity and help with this thesis. Dorothy Fletcher, the daughter of guide and tourism pioneer Alec Graham, has given me free access to her historical collection. Most of the photographs used in this thesis have come from her; she has also collected a rich range of archival material, including the diaries of settlers and early tourists, a full set of hotel visitors’ books, and comprehensive material on all aspects of tourism development of the glacier which have made it possible to do much of the research from my home in Hokitika. In
addition to this, Dorothy has told me countless anecdotes about Franz Josef and the
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focus of the time was taken up in the controversy over the new hotel. Fred Ross, my
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suggestions, at a time when my mind was not offering up anything very creative. My
parents, my sister Anne, her husband Richard, and children William and Katie have
been there for me at all times, have made me laugh, and, most recently, helped me
realise that there is life beyond a thesis.
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INTRODUCTION

Let us keep a few spots in Westland, uncontaminated by the ordinary tourist, the picnicker and the photographic fiend, some almost impassible place where what is inside can be left to the imagination... keep them for those who care to risk there (sic) necks and enjoy scenery in a state of nature...1

It was not the destiny of the Franz Josef Glacier to remain ‘uncontaminated by the ordinary tourist’, although this must have seemed likely when Westland explorer, Charles Douglas, wrote these words in 1900.2 The region was cut off from the rest of the South Island by rugged mountain passes and a sea coast notorious for shipwrecks, while travel within the region was restricted by a lack of roads and bridges, a heavy forest cover and frequent rain.

Despite the difficulties of access, the South Westland glaciers region has become one of New Zealand’s most famous tourist attractions. There are over 60 named glaciers in Westland National Park, but the only ones readily accessible to tourists are the two largest, the Franz Josef and Fox glaciers.3 They descend precipitously from 2000 hectare snowfields high in the Southern Alps to river valleys some 300 metres above sea level, and are two of the fastest moving glaciers known.4 They flow down through temperate rainforest, a feature which sets them apart from most other glaciers of the world.5 The glaciers, framed by mountains and forest, offer dramatic views as well as the opportunity for a wide range of adventure tourism activities. The evolution of tourist resorts at Franz Josef and Fox demonstrate many similarities, but each glacier village has retained its own identity, making it possible to study their development separately.

This thesis examines the relationship between tourism and conservation interests at Franz Josef Glacier from 1865 to 1965, and the ways in which it was

2 Ibid., p.92.
affected by glacier access and the forces of nature in the valley.Tourism, conservation and glacier access became entwined in a complex and changing relationship, with access creating both conflicts and common interests among tourism operators and conservationists. The overriding dominance of nature in the Franz Josef Glacier valley mitigated against some of the more extreme conflicts experienced in resorts where humans were more able to shape the natural world around them. It is an environment where human actions have often been rendered irrelevant by forces of nature. Any conflicts caused by the differing values of use and conservation were secondary to the struggle to maintain tourist access in a confined river valley where natural forces have ultimate control over the works of human beings.

This thesis also considers the effect of a gradual shift in control of the glacier environment from local enthusiasts and honorary rangers, to a national bureaucracy centred in Wellington, where policy makers often had little practical knowledge of the environment they had custody of. The development of tourism at Franz Josef inevitably involved conflict, and this was felt at many levels. In the early days the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts was blamed for a perceived lack of interest in the tourism potential of Franz Josef, and later Westland National Park was blamed for excessive control over operations in the valley, and for failing to maintain access after floods and during glacier advance and recession.

To establish context for an examination of the development of tourism on the West Coast, it is important to review the human history of the region, with particular reference to the relationship of gold prospectors and settlers with the wilderness. Westland’s reputation as a last frontier of tourism development has often been blamed on the low priority accorded it by the New Zealand tourist industry as a whole, but there were other more compelling reasons in the early days. ‘I doubt if such a wilderness will ever be colonized except through the discovery of gold,’ wrote minister, Henry Harper, of the West Coast as he saw it in 1861, only two decades after New Zealand became a British colony. 6

The West Coast had not passed unnoticed in the years after the establishment of New Zealand Company settlements throughout the country. Explorers had trekked into the region from Nelson, spurred by land shortages in that province, and gone

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home to report on the impenetrable forests and wild landscapes. In December 1846 Thomas Brunner left Nelson on an epic 550 day journey to Tititera Head, just south of the Paringa River in South Westland. He experienced extreme hardship and would have died but for the support of his Maori guides. No rush to settle followed his journey.\textsuperscript{8} Canterbury’s need for land was not as urgent as Nelson’s, and it was not until 1855, when most of the Canterbury Plains had been taken up, that farmers seeking new land turned their attention to the west. However, despite optimistic reports on the potential of the West Coast from explorers, few settlers were persuaded to try it out. Instead the Canterbury Province suggested that a penal settlement for the colony be established there.\textsuperscript{9}

During the Provincial era James Mackay of Nelson was appointed as Land Purchase Commissioner for the South Island and in 1860 travelled to Mahitahi in South Westland to buy the West Coast from the Ngai Tahu. He wrote that on 21 May 1860, ‘the Ngaitahu title was completely extinguished over all that portion of the West Coast district lying between Kaurangi Point in the province of Nelson and Piopiotae or Milford Haven in the province of Otago...’\textsuperscript{10} Three years later the Canterbury Province decided to open up the West Coast and extend a survey to Milford Sound.\textsuperscript{11} The South Westland survey, conducted by Canterbury Provincial Government surveyor, Robert Bain, ended ignominiously, as the party was unable to complete its contract in the harsh West Coast environment.\textsuperscript{12}

The discovery of gold in 1864 populated Westland’s wilderness in a manner which must have seemed incredible to the explorers and surveyors who had suffered such hardship there. South Westland had its share of boom-and-bust gold towns. Okarito, near the Franz Josef Glacier, became a major goldfields port, for example, and its prosperity was such that in 1868 a reserve was gazetted for a ‘Colonial

\textsuperscript{10} James Mackay, \textit{Report on the Purchase of the West Coast from the Poutini Ngai Tahu in 1860}. SO8621, Land Information New Zealand, Hokitika.
\textsuperscript{12} R.P. Bain, ‘The West Coast Expedition’, \textit{Lyttelton Times} (Lyttelton) 24 March 1864, 3; Philip Ross May, \textit{The West Coast Gold Rushes}, p.95.
University' there. In March 1866 4,400 people were living in the area, including several prospecting parties in the glacier-fed Waiho River valley. Most of the prospectors disappeared soon after, lured to new goldfields in the Buller region, and by December 1866 South Westland's population had fallen to 655.

Once the rush was over, those who remained lived in extreme isolation in an environment where development was hampered by inaccessibility and a wet climate. Despite the exciting gold interlude, little had changed, except for an emerging sense of West Coast identity. This manifested itself in a fight for autonomy, as the new breed of West Coasters had no wish to be seen as "West Cantabrians". Westland achieved provincial status in 1873. Subsequent survey work in the region included the construction of a rudimentary roading infrastructure in South Westland. The roads were little more than rough tracks and the many rivers were unbridged.

Although various tourist resorts were established throughout New Zealand in the nineteenth century, no government tourism organisation was formed until 1901 when Minister of Railways, Sir Joseph Ward, realised that if the country's scenic and health resorts were publicised, roads and railways would be better utilised. A Tourist Traffic Branch of New Zealand Railways was formed in 1901, and while this proved ephemeral, the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, formed the following year, was to become a powerful influence in the development of New Zealand's tourism industry. It became part of the Department of Industries and Commerce, and had responsibility for developing hotels, sanatoria and other accommodation; providing or improving access to scenic attractions; establishing a network of travel agencies; and implementing tourist publicity. At the beginning of the twentieth century the tourist attractions of Franz Josef, like those of the rest of New Zealand, were virtually unknown overseas. In 1902 the Superintendent of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, Thomas Donne, lamented the fact that tourists travelling by steamer from America were passing through Auckland en route

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14 Ibid., p. 187.
15 Ibid., p. 229.
17 'Chief Surveyors' Reports', *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives*, 1882, C-3, p.27; 1901, C-2, p.41; 1901, C-1, p.102.
18 Anon, 'Historical Note. Department of Tourist and Publicity' File TO 1, National Archives, Wellington.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
for Australia with no intention of exploring New Zealand. ‘This is the result of want of information before they commence their journey as to the wealth of scenic grandeur and beauty and the natural wonders of New Zealand,’ he wrote.\textsuperscript{21}

The provision of information for prospective travellers was one of the first projects of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts. From 1902 onwards, departmental photographers roved New Zealand’s wild places, gathering images for publicity purposes. Guide books, postcards and pamphlets were produced, articles written for newspapers, lantern slide shows presented, and target audiences canvassed, as the department began developing itineraries for mainstream tourist routes throughout New Zealand. In 1902 Donne called for better steamer accommodation for travellers, saying that tourists avoided coming to New Zealand from Australia because they did not like travelling in the ‘small steamers which ordinarily maintain the service between the commonwealth and this colony.’\textsuperscript{22}

The majority of New Zealand’s overseas tourists came from Australia. In 1907 5612 Australians visited New Zealand, while 2394 came from Britain, 763 from America, 260 from Europe, 196 from Africa, 85 from India and 374 from other countries.\textsuperscript{23} These modest numbers actually represented an increase, due to the staging that year of an International Exhibition in Christchurch.\textsuperscript{24} New Zealand might have been perceived as an outpost of the globe, but its tourist agents were doing their best to make it more accessible, learning an international language, Esperanto, in recognition of the need to attract non-English speaking tourists.\textsuperscript{25} A New Zealand tourist agency opened in Chicago in 1907, but the industry received a setback the following year when the direct steamship service between San Francisco and New Zealand ceased, resulting in a major decline in American visitor numbers.\textsuperscript{26}

Westland received some attention from the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts during the first decades of the twentieth century, but many West Coasters felt that more could have been done. The region was not on any of the main tourist routes,

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., p.21.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., p.5; James McGowan, ‘Seventh Annual Report of the Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts’, \textit{Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives}, 1908, H-2, p.1.
due in part to its remoteness and the lack of road access, but a perceived lack of interest by the Department was also blamed for the situation. In 1920 West Coast M.P. Tom Seddon described South Westland as the 'Cinderella' of New Zealand, and criticised the excess of publicity given by the department to resorts like Rotorua. It was a complaint that was to surface again in subsequent decades.

The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts had others problems which probably took its attention away from complaints such as Seddon's. It had been formed at a time when the use of the land for settlement was considered more important than preserving the environment for future generations, and Thomas Donne was outspoken in his criticism of this, writing in 1903:

> Our forests have been and are still being destroyed in a wholesale ruthless manner, without a thought being given to the future. In many cases bush lands have been sold for very small sums, and valuable timber has been wasted in a manner which is absolutely a crime against the nation... It is pitiful to travel through such districts in New Zealand made bare and desolate by the destruction of these grand growths of untold centuries... 

Donne, with his interest in both tourism and conservation, reflects the inherent conflict between the two groups. Although he was outspoken about forest destruction, he did have his Achilles heel when it came to conservation. An enthusiastic sportsman, he used the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts as an effective vehicle for importing deer and chamois to New Zealand, arguing that the availability of wildlife hunting opportunities would act as a powerful magnet to tourists. It may have done so, but more indisputable is the damage done by these browsing animals to New Zealand's forests. South Westland's forests are still suffering from the effects of the release of Donne's chamois and thar in the Southern Alps. He was not the first deer importer to New Zealand, but he was one of the most effective ones, able as he was, from 1902 onwards, to mobilise the support of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts for the project.

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30 Ibid., pp.343-345.
The formation in 1902 of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts was an important landmark in New Zealand's tourism history, building as it did on the innovation that had gone before it in resorts established by private enterprise in the nineteenth century. During the same decade innovation was also taking place in New Zealand's conservation field. The passage of the 1903 Scenery Preservation Act, driven to a large extent by Christchurch politician Harry Ell, and the appointment of a Commission to report on all lands in New Zealand with scenic or historic interest, enabled an impressive network of scenic reserves to be formed, many of which were later incorporated into national parks. In 1906 the commission was superseded by a permanent Scenery Preservation Board, and the links between tourism and conservation were emphasised when both the Surveyor-General of Lands and the General Manager of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts were appointed to it.

These early twentieth century developments, backed with government money and benefiting from being well documented and publicised, tend to obscure much earlier innovations in both fields. In a thesis on the relationship between colonists and New Zealand's natural environment, Paul Star identifies early conservationists like T.H. Potts, amateur ornithologist and farmer, who was expressing concern for native forest as early as the 1850s. Tourism was an important component in arguments for conservation in the nineteenth century, giving economic incentives for scenery preservation which would have been much harder to justify for aesthetic reasons. As Shaun Broadley comments, in a dissertation on politician A.K. Newman, '...if a person wished to conserve natural resources for sentimental or aesthetic reasons alone, his or her view would have been roundly rejected.' This was a fact which did not escape some of Westland's first conservationists, who saw no conflict in their pursuit of tourism development in the region.

The glaciers region, despite its outstanding scenery, was not to become a national park until 1960, a fact attributed by W.W. Harris, in a thesis on the origins of the national park movement, to the region's isolation, and the impossibility of...

32 Ibid., p.180.
modifying or developing a glacier valley. However there were other factors involved. Star has demonstrated that it was not until more New Zealanders were urban based, and free from the drudgery of land cultivation, that a positive attitude to the indigenous environment was able to flourish. The West Coast was not developed until two decades after New Zealand’s main European settlement, and encompassed some of the most rugged landscape in the country. West Coasters were still struggling to break in the land, when the battle was largely over in other regions. It is not surprising if most settlers were focussed on survival rather than conservation. This was probably another reason why no scenic reserve was created at Franz Josef Glacier until 1915. Tourist interests had already influenced the creation of scenic reserves in South Westland by this time, notably in the preservation of bush along the main highway. No further conservation initiatives took place in the region until 1930, when the Fox Glacier and an area south as far as the Copland Track were gazetted as scenic reserve. The Franz Josef and Fox reserves, together with a subsequent extension of the Fox Glacier reserve to the Tasman Sea and other more minor extensions and modifications, had, by 1937, set the boundaries for the future Westland National Park.

By 1921 New Zealand had 313,233 acres of land in scenic reserve and a further 2,771,202 acres in the country’s seven national parks. Public response was noted by Under-Secretary for Lands J.B. Thompson in 1928:

The public are taking a much keener interest in our scenic reserves than was formerly the case, the largely increased use of private motor-cars rendering it possible for many people to visit areas well away from the main centres of population. The increased use that is now being made of many reserves has brought with it additional

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39 Ibid., p.193.
40 Ibid., pp. 200-201.
41 T.N. Brodrick, ‘Department of Lands and Survey Scenery Preservation Report’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1921, C-6, p.2
responsibilities and difficulties in connection with control and management...42

Increased tourist use of the Franz Josef Glacier valley did not reach the volume of some of New Zealand’s more accessible resorts, but its confined and volatile nature caused a correspondingly lower tolerance for such growth than was evident in other places. The management of visitors in the glacier valley, influenced by everything from government legislation to glacier advance and retreat, is a major theme of this thesis.

Increased public use of resorts may have caused problems, but it also generated an enthusiasm for New Zealand’s wilderness which would ultimately facilitate its protection. By the 1930s public opinion was growing in favour of the preservation of native bush.43 In 1955 the Department of Lands and Survey could claim that:

The Dominion has in its national parks a natural environment possibly unexcelled in any other country in the world, and every individual citizen owes a debt of gratitude to those far-sighted people in the years gone by who preserved in this way nearly one-twentieth of the total area of the country.44

Among the wide range of people who contributed to the development of Franz Josef’s tourism industry, special attention is given to the role of women. This is woven into the main text instead of being considered in isolation, to avoid creating an artificial separation of the work done by everyone. Women had important roles at key points of the village’s history, and their extension of boundaries seems to have been largely unconscious. The women of Franz Josef did not seem aware that they were doing anything unusual when they left their families down in the village and climbed to one of the glacier huts to spend a few days making mattresses; there is no evidence to suggest that Janet Westland was on a crusade for women when she brought her

42 J.B. Thompson, ‘Department of Lands and Survey Scenery Preservation Report’. Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1928, C-6, p.3
43 W. Robertson, ‘Department of Lands and Survey Scenery Preservation Report’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1933, C-6, p.3.
family to the glacier from Canterbury in 1894. This provides an interesting contrast with the attitudes of Freda du Faur, the first woman to climb Mount Cook, who was deeply conscious of her role as a standard bearer for women.

The organisation of this thesis is chronological with the major themes referred to above examined through the decades. Chapter One, ‘Tourism in the Wilderness’, compares nineteenth century tourism development at Franz Josef Glacier with that at Mount Cook, Rotorua, Fiordland and Mount Cook. It assesses whether access difficulties were the cause of its relatively late development, or if other factors, such as the lack of promotion and a glacier-based tourism developer, and the indifference of most West Coasters to the glacier environment were equally responsible. It also examines late nineteenth century writings on the outstanding natural values of the Franz Josef Glacier; as well as contemporary accounts of the region’s first visitors, who included surveyors, explorers, scientists and tourists; and the relationship between tourism and conservation.

Chapter Two, ‘Opening up the Glaciers Region’, examines the role of the goldmining and tourism industries in the establishment of the Franz Josef village; and that of public and private enterprise in the development of a tourism infrastructure in the glacier valley. The challenges created by natural conditions in the valley, and the broader problems of access to South Westland as a whole, merit close scrutiny. The establishment of a West Coast hospitality tradition, and the promotion of the Franz Josef Glacier throughout the country are discussed in relation to the upsurge of tourists by 1930. An understanding of the ways in which conservation and tourism interests converged and conflicted is crucial to the study of early tourism development in Franz Josef, and this is examined in detail.

Chapter Three, ‘The Guiding Tradition’, examines the evolution of a South Westland glacier and mountain guiding tradition, and the theory that it had a different background to that of Mount Cook, which was more heavily influenced by European traditions. The contribution of Alec and Peter Graham, who grew up near Okarito and pioneered guiding and tourism at Franz Josef, is assessed, with particular reference to their role in developing outdoor recreation by introducing thousands of tourists to the mountains. The Franz Josef based guiding system was more informal than some, and

45 Mildred Westland, _Diary of a Trip to the Franz Josef Glacier from Canterbury 1894_. Copy in A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.

the strengths of this system are examined, such as the resulting opportunities for women, who had experienced censure for climbing with guides and without chaperones at the Hermitage, but were relatively free of such restrictions on the West Coast. The increasing recognition of the Franz Josef guiding establishment can be measured in the change of the village’s tourist population between 1900 and 1930, from a predominance of West Coasters to increasing numbers from other parts of New Zealand and overseas.

Chapter Four, ‘Glacier Diversity, examines the challenges of coping with a doubling of tourist numbers from 1930 to 1947, the consequent stress placed on tourist infrastructures in the village and valley, increasing calls for safety regulations for the guiding industry, and challenges for the tourism-conservation relationship. The inauguration of New Zealand’s first licensed, scheduled airline in Hokitika opened the way for a major new glacier tourist attraction, and the effect of this, together with publicity generated by VIP visitors to Franz Josef, is assessed. The impact of external factors such as the 1930s Depression and World War Two, is examined, with particular reference to their effect on tourism numbers and the overseas tourist traffic, and the impact of the war on the West Coast guiding establishment.

Chapter Five, ‘Bureaucracy, Fire and Nature’, assesses the effect of the change of management of the Franz Josef tourist resort after the Graham family sold their hotel to the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts in 1947. The impact on Franz Josef’s tourist industry of the loss of the hotel to fire in 1954 is examined, together with the reasons for the eleven year delay in rebuilding the hotel, which pitted local people against a Wellington bureaucracy and provided compelling evidence of long-held assertions that the West Coast was of low priority to the New Zealand tourism industry. This chapter analyses the role of the guiding establishment and scenic flight excursions in maintaining a strong Franz Josef tourism base, despite a lack of accommodation in the village, and the impact of the establishment of Westland National Park in 1960, with particular reference to the relationship between tourism and conservation. It also examines the effect of two major developments, the completion of the Haast Pass highway and a new hotel at Franz Josef in 1965.

There is a comprehensive range of source material available on the development of tourism at Franz Josef Glacier. The annual reports of the Department of Lands and Survey from 1882 to 1965 and those of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts from 1902 to 1965, published in the Appendices to the Journals of the
House of Representatives, have been analysed and used extensively. These are especially useful for the insights they provide on tourism and conservation issues, their contemporary perspectives on the relationship between the two factions, and the detailed annual summaries of achievements and difficulties experienced in each field. The material on policy published in these reports must be considered against their actual effectiveness, and newspaper editorials are particularly valuable in this area. This thesis draws on extensive newspaper research, incorporating comment from a total of 92 articles, most of which are taken from the West Coast Times, Hokitika Guardian, Greymouth Evening Star, and Grey River Argus, the remainder from The Press of Christchurch and other national newspapers. A close reading of departmental reports and newspapers highlights some weaknesses – a desire for positive publicity on the part of the departments and a tendency for criticism on the part of the newspapers. Government files on a wide range of Franz Josef tourism issues, held in National Archives in Christchurch and Wellington, are useful in the detail they provide, and the fact that they have not been shaped to fit either of the above arguments. Oral history sources, which draw on the experiences of people who worked within the Franz Josef tourism industry during different eras, are a valuable means of measuring theory against practice, and provide important details not contained in any written records. Taken collectively, these sources enable a detailed picture to emerge of the development of tourism in Franz Josef, its place within the industry as a whole in New Zealand, and its relationship with conservation interests during the study period. Unpublished theses and research essays on conservation and tourism topics have added an important dimension to this study, enabling the Franz Josef experience to be set in the wider context of human relationships with the New Zealand landscape, as well as providing insights into the subsequent development of conservation consciousness and the ways in which it was influenced and affected by tourism issues.

It has been possible to draw upon the wide range of reports, diaries, letters, articles and books written by tourists, settlers, mountaineers, guides, explorers and surveyors, which give valuable contemporary accounts of tourism at different stages of Franz Josef's development. These, together with numerous articles published in the New Zealand Illustrated Magazine, New Zealand Railways Magazine, New Zealand Alpine Journal, and other magazines and journals, make possible a detailed study of actual tourist experiences at Franz Josef Glacier. Pamphlets and publications add
another dimension to this study, giving insights into the ways in which tourism was marketed and the range of tourist excursions at Franz Josef in different eras. A complete set of visitors’ books, covering the Graham family tenure of the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel from 1911 to 1947, has proved a particularly valuable source, allowing statistics on annual tourist numbers to be prepared, and the change from a predominant West Coast clientele to an increasing proportion of visitors from other parts of New Zealand and overseas to be measured. The early visitors’ books are valuable for the detailed comments made by tourists, which enable the major characteristics of the resort to emerge, as well as a daily record of the types of excursions undertaken in the Franz Josef Glacier region. Published secondary sources include books and articles on pioneer New Zealand tourism operators, tourists, explorers, scientists and mountaineers in South Westland; books on West Coast developments which preceded its tourism industry; and books on the effect on the environment of tourist-driven initiatives, such as the introduction of deer and chamois to the Southern Alps. These have the benefit of hindsight, are useful for the fresh perspectives they give to contemporary accounts, although they do have to be treated with some caution as their material is often organised to prove theories advanced by their authors.

The relationship between conservation and tourism interests and the ways in which it was affected by glacier access is the central theme of the thesis. The relationship between Westland’s first tourism developers and conservationists and the bureaucracies which gradually assumed more control of the glacier valley tourism estate is also important. However there are other threads which are crucial to the understanding of the development of a glacier tourism industry. The central ones are the establishment of West Coast guiding and hospitality traditions, and the place of guiding in the development of outdoor recreation in this country. Both tourism and conservation are as yet understudied in New Zealand, so a case study of their interaction at Franz Josef Glacier provides some useful insights, with relevance to other parts of the country.
Mildred Westland camped in the Franz Josef Glacier valley with her family in 1894, and wrote in her diary: "The glacier rose sharply to the Divide, and on each side of the Pass were sharp snow hills. It was a wonderful spot and rather awe inspiring, and we felt we really were in the wilds this time.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
CHAPTER ONE
TOURISM IN THE WILDERNESS 1865 – 1899

We saw ahead of us the terminal face of the Franz Josef Glacier, bush covered down to its brink, with the Waiho rushing out of it, the smoke rising from its white waters. The glacier rose steeply to the Divide and on each side of the pass were sharp snow hills. It was a wonderful spot, and rather awe-inspiring, and we felt we were really in the wilds this time... ¹

When Mildred Westland visited the Franz Josef Glacier in 1894 there were no facilities there for tourists. At a time when tourism was well established in other parts of New Zealand, the glacier attracted few visitors. The difficulties of access are highlighted in many of the accounts written by early travellers, and seem the most obvious reason for the apparent neglect of one of New Zealand’s most outstanding scenic places during the nineteenth century. However it is also worth considering the possibility that these access difficulties were more than physical obstacles, that there was an indifference to the West Coast that worked against the development of a tourist industry there. The local media believed this, as evidenced in numerous editorials on government neglect of the region, and the only way of testing the validity of these claims is to look at actual promotion initiatives of the nineteenth century and assess their effectiveness. At the same time, it is important to consider West Coast attitudes to wilderness generally, given the premise that for tourism to flourish, there was a need for locally-based promoters. The relationship of expediency between tourism and conservation merits scrutiny, with particular reference to whether it was fraught with contradictory needs during this period.

Access to South Westland

The discovery of gold on the West Coast in 1864 attracted people from all over the world to a previously unutilised part of New Zealand. Most left when the gold was exhausted, and those who stayed faced major obstacles to settlement, which would later discourage tourism. There was no road through South Westland. The only

¹ Mildred Westland, ‘Diary of a Trip from Christchurch to the Franz Josef Glacier’, 1894 Typescript of MS in A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
means of access was along the sea coast, and this involved hazardous river crossings and scrambles around coastal bluffs. In 1866 the West Coast Times observed, ‘the catalogue of deaths by drowning in the West Coast rivers is becoming truly appalling.’ This was confirmed by people such as explorer Charles Douglas, who referred to the graves on every riverbank as ‘a gentle hint’ to travellers of the danger of crossing rivers. The coastal bluffs were also dangerous, and the Hokitika newspaper, the West Coast Times, made frequent mention of mishaps to travellers, some of which were embarrassing rather than fatal, such as the accident to a woman who was washed off her horse near Okarito in South Westland and ‘stripped of her hat, cloak and other portions of her outer attire.’ In 1865 the Canterbury provincial geologist Julius von Haast went to the West Coast to report on the goldfields, and wrote a graphic account of the hazards of coastal travel:

So we toiled on, now and then caught by a great wave; the feet of the horses slipped between the boulders... and although the poor animals were bleeding and exhausted we could not lose a moment as the tide was rising...

Travellers negotiating these hazards would have already endured either a sea voyage to Hokitika, with the high probability of being wrecked on arrival, or a journey across the Southern Alps by way of Arthurs Pass. The Cobb and Co. coach trip was unsuitable for any but the most adventurous tourist. Goldfields surveyor Gerhard Mueller travelled the route in 1865 and later said he had never driven over a more dangerous road. Referring to one section of the road, near the Waimakariri River, he commented: ‘if ever anything about the coach fixings should give way, or a horse startle, it would be death for every soul on the coach.’ His impressions were confirmed by goldfields minister Henry Harper who travelled over the pass in 1866 and wrote of a journey where there was ‘no room for a mistake or any hesitation on the driver’s part.’ He described the descent into the Otira Gorge as: ‘sterile bleak and savage’, adding:

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2 West Coast Times (Hokitika) 19 April 1866, 2.
3 Charles Douglas, ‘Westland from the Hollyford to the Arapuna 1899’, The William Wilson (Hokitika) Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, p. 120.
4 West Coast Times (Hokitika) 12 June 1866, 2.
For eighteen hundred feet it zig-zags down with such sharp turns that at several corners the leaders’ feet are within a yard of the edge; they curve round about like circus horses...

One of Harper’s fellow passengers emerged from this experience vowing to return to Australia by sea rather than risk travelling over Arthurs Pass again.

Sea travel was equally difficult. Sailing ships had not been able to cope with the frequent storms and lack of safe anchorages on the West Coast, but the use of steam-powered ships in the 1860s made it possible to establish a coastal traffic in the region. Hokitika, with its surrounding goldfields, became a busy port, with ships arriving from Australia and other parts of New Zealand, and wrecks began to accumulate on its notorious river bar. The danger of the West Coast ports was exacerbated by the many unseaworthy and overcrowded ships plying the route. As the gold rush moved south, Okarito became a popular port and soon earned a reputation for shipwrecks similar to that of Hokitika.

People had to have a compelling motive for travelling to the West Coast by sea. Gerhard Mueller, writing to his wife, Bannie, from the West Coast goldfields in 1865, described a typical crossing of the Hokitika bar:

I never got such a knocking about in any vessel as when crossing it – wave after wave broke over the vessel, drenching the passengers on the deck to the skin... Of the Hokitika bar, I forgot to remark, it is strewn with wrecks and fragments of wrecks – certainly not very encouraging for new arrivals.

The West Coast was like the roadless country north of Auckland in its reliance on coastal steamers, and benefited from a nationwide expansion of shipping. A bi-monthly steamer service was established between Hokitika and South Westland in the mid 1860s, but this was notoriously unreliable. As Charles Douglas commented,

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8 Ibid., p.95.
9 Ibid., pp 95-97.
11 Ibid., p. 187.
13 Rollo Arnold, *New Zealand’s Burning* Wellington: Victoria University Press, 1994 p.194. Arnold describes Greymouth as part of the ‘Cook Strait Lakers’ run. Food and goods were brought into this port by ships leaving with cargoes of coal.
14 *West Coast Gazette* Vol II, 1869 p.4.
A typical scene at Okarito in the late nineteenth century after the bar became blocked, necessitating the landing of vital supplies through the surf and onto the beach.

Photo: A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika
the ‘bars on the various rivers had an evil habit of closing up just at the wrong time.’¹⁵ Vital supplies then had to be unloaded directly onto the beach, through the surf, but this was dangerous in rough seas, and few passengers would have wished to arrive on the West Coast that way.

In 1878, an inland packtrack was constructed between Ross and Okarito. This project was part of a government scheme to build roads, so settlement could be extended into the New Zealand bush country.¹⁶ If the packtrack had been developed in the years of the gold rush, and the fords moved inland from the river mouths, many drownings might have been avoided, but, as Douglas later commented, it was not obvious that a low-lying inland route was available, given the region’s high, rocky coastline.¹⁷

The packtrack, while improving the safety of South Westland travel, was to become a major source of discontent in subsequent decades. In 1896 the Department of Lands and Survey claimed that the road would soon be ‘available for wheel traffic to within 12 miles of this (Franz Josef) glacier’.¹⁸ It was an over-optimistic assessment. The following year a 50 kilometre section of the so-called ‘Great South Road’ was taken over by the Westland County Council and had to be practically reformed as it was so rough to be almost impassable in places.¹⁹

The department continued to report good progress on the road each year, but newspapers told a different story. Newspapers throughout the country played an important advocacy role for settlers.²⁰ The West Coast Times took up the cause of the South Westland road. One of the key obstacles was the Franz Josef Glacier-fed Waiho River and in 1891 the paper criticised the Westland County Council for failing to re-route the road, which disgorged at a dangerous ferry crossing near the mouth of the river.²¹ The following year an editorial criticised the government for spending a

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¹⁹ W.G. Murray, ‘Appendix 3: Road Construction and Maintenance’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1897, C-1 p.80.
²⁰ Rollo Arnold, New Zealand’s Burning, p.226.
²¹ West Coast Times (Hokitika) 25 November 1891, 4.
large sum of money on a coach road to the Hermitage, Mount Cook, while it did nothing for Westland, commenting that, ‘In the one case the country is little more than desolate sheep country whilst with us the road would open up vast tracts of mineral, agricultural and timber country.’ Parochial grievances continued to be aired but there was no easy solution to the problem, and the South Westland road languished in poor condition with seven major rivers and numerous creeks unbridged between Hokitika and Franz Josef Glacier.

By the end of the century many West Coasters had lost patience with Premier Richard John Seddon for his failure to implement roading improvements in the region. An editorial in the West Coast Times accused him of taking credit for progress throughout New Zealand while neglecting a vital road in his home electorate:

Twenty years ago it was possible, with difficulty, to take a narrow vehicle from Ross to Okarito – it is not possible to do anymore now. This road has been utilised to maintain the Seddonian regime; to ensure political support... The whole history of the Ross-Okarito road is one long record of specious promises and professions with tardy performances. The district is well worthy of the expenditure because of its vast scenic and agricultural attractions which would pay the amount a thousandfold, but is kept back to enable Mr Seddon and his political thimble-riggers to enthuse about what is going to be done...

The problems with roading were not confined to South Westland. The Arthurs Pass-Otira Gorge route was subject to slips, flooding and heavy snowfall, resulting in frequent road closures and delays for travellers. As principal means of access to the West Coast, on the many occasions when its sea ports were unnavigable, the Arthurs Pass route was important, but it was expensive and difficult to maintain. In the winter of 1895 heavy snow blocked the route to wheeled traffic for ten weeks, while in 1897 the road was damaged nine times by spring floods. It was a problem that recurred yearly and must have discouraged tourism. There could be no guarantees that the road

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22 West Coast Times (Hokitika) 9 January 1892, 2.
23 Our Special Reporter, ‘A Visit to the Wataroa Flat’, West Coast Times (Hokitika) 1 March 1894, 3-4.
24 West Coast Times (Hokitika) 31 January 1899, 2.
would be open at any given time, and few tourists would have wanted this kind of uncertainty when making travel plans.

A Place of Great Tourism Potential

Although the Department of Lands and Survey roading work was done primarily to open up the land for farming, its officers were very aware of the possibility that tourism could become an important West Coast industry. The spectacular Otira Gorge was already attracting a small number of tourists. By the 1890s it was, according to a report of the time, world famous, and had become the favourite route for tourists travelling to the West Coast. During the summer of 1891-92, an average of three five-horse coaches were bringing tourists to the West Coast twice weekly.26

Despite the continuing criticism, the Department of Lands and Survey was making some progress with the road. Meanwhile the search for settlement land took them into South Westland’s alpine valleys, where the potential for tourism was recognised. ‘There is here more to attract the adventurous traveller in quest of the grand and sublime in nature than the settler in quest of a home,’ Surveyor-General James McKerrow wrote of the Clarke and Landsborough valleys south of Franz Josef Glacier.27 Gerhard Mueller, who had been promoted to the position of Chief Surveyor for Westland, explored the Okuru, Actor and Burke Rivers in South Westland in 1890 in search of a railway route to Otago. He commented that a ‘grand canon’ (canyon) in the area ‘rivals many of the famous canons we read of in the Rocky Mountains of America.’28

In fact, South Westland’s tourism potential had been recognised long before the Department of Lands and Survey began its work in the region. Julius von Haast, wrote a lyrical description of the bush and mountain scenery at Okarito in 1865:

...what struck me more than anything was the low position reached by an enormous glacier, descending north of Mount Cook from the ranges and appearing between the wooded hillocks at the

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Sir Julius von Haast completed this sketch on the day he visited and named the Franz Josef Glacier on 16 June 1865. He wrote: ‘One may easily imagine how extremely striking is the contrast between the stupendous ice-masses, enclosed by that tremendous mountain chain, and the aborescent ferns, pines and other luxuriant vegetation which are in general only found in more genial parts of the Coast.’
Alexander Turnbull Library.
The first known photograph of the Franz Josef Glacier, taken by Thomas Pringle in 1867.
A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
foot of the Alps; forming with its pure unsullied ice, broken in numberless seracs, a most remarkable and striking contrast to the surrounding landscape... It was late at night before I could leave this glorious view, and my heart swelled with such a pure delight as only the contemplation of nature can offer to her admirers...

Haast spent some time sketching the glacier, which he named Francis Joseph after the Emperor of Austria. He was not the first to see the glacier. Henry Harper's son, Leonard, visited the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers in 1857 and is said to have named them Victoria and Albert after the English monarchs. The first published description of the glacier appeared in the Lyttelton Times and was taken from the log book of a sailor on the schooner Mary Louisa, which sailed along the coast in the winter of 1859. In 1865 a party of gold prospectors had ventured up the Waiho River until 'stopped by a large glacier'.

Haast's comments in 1865 are an early expression of a different attitude to the glacier. It was not just a barrier to gold miners, nor a geological curiosity, but also a place of beauty and inspiration. This attitude was shared by others, like Thomas Pringle, later employed as a photographer with the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, who took the first known photograph of the Franz Josef Glacier in 1867. Five years later Premier William Fox rode to the glacier from Hokitika. His party had a typically difficult journey, including one dangerous circumnavigation of a coastal bluff, and experienced numerous problems finding river fords, but Fox was so inspired by the scenery that he made light of all physical discomforts.

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30 Ibid., p.424; By 1894 the spelling had been changed to 'Franz Josef' by the Department of Lands and Survey; then changed to 'Franz Joseph' by the New Zealand Geographic Board, on the grounds that this was the correct spelling of the Emperor's name. It was then changed officially to 'Franz Josef' in 1947, after protests from the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts and others concerned with the inconvenience of altering such a long-established name: Arthur P. Harper, *Memories of Mountains and Men* Christchurch: Simpson and Williams Ltd, 1946 p.62 (note); Dorothy Fletcher, 'Notes on the Naming of the Franz Josef Glacier' in File 2 F.J.G 6.5, A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
32 'Local Intelligence' Lyttelton Times (Lyttelton) 6 July 1859 pp4-5.
33 Philip Ross May, *The West Coast Gold Rushes* p.179.
Sir William Fox's water colour impression of the Franz Josef Glacier, painted after an adventurous horse ride inland from the port of Okarito, 1872.
Alexander Turnbull Library
various sketches of both the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers, then watercolour paintings of each, making a particular effort to capture the greenish hue of the ice in his work.\(^{35}\)

With the growing appreciation of the spectacular scenery of the Franz Josef Glacier area came the realisation that it was a place of immense tourist appeal, and thus of potential revenue earning capacity. Arthur Harper, who in 1892 was employed by the Department of Lands and Survey to explore the glaciers and valleys of South Westland, commented that the journey to the glaciers was so difficult that it would ‘frighten most people’, and noted that the sparse population would deter the government from constructing roads and bridges in the region. However he felt that Westland:

had a great future before it, if properly and energetically pushed, as a tourist resort. Nowhere else in New Zealand is there such magnificent scenery, equalling, if not surpassing, that of Switzerland and Norway in grandeur.\(^{36}\)

George Roberts, who had done extensive explorations of Westland in the course of his survey work, is remembered today for his commitment to the mapping of the region. In 1893 he encouraged Harper and Charles Douglas to try and find a pass across the Southern Alps which was free of snow and ice for three months of the year, so that a road could be constructed to bring tourists into the region from the Hermitage.\(^{37}\) Roberts doubted the existence of such a pass, but saw it as a good opportunity to map and explore the upper reaches of some of the river valleys of South Westland.\(^{38}\) As Roberts had expected, their search was unsuccessful. They found no country benign enough for road construction, but did explore a direct route over the Copland Pass.\(^{39}\) It was an alpine crossing, and those using it needed mountaineering skills, so it was obvious it would not bring the large numbers of tourists to South Westland who might have been expected, had the construction of a road been possible. However the development of this track was later to become a key asset to the region’s fledgling tourist industry. The tourist potential was immense, according to the well-travelled Harper:

\(^{35}\) Ibid., pp. 12-18.
\(^{37}\) Ibid., p.85.
\(^{38}\) Ibid., p.85.
\(^{39}\) Ibid., pp. 179 & 270.
Explorer, Charles Douglas, who wrote of the need to 'keep a few spots in Westland uncontaminated by the ordinary tourist', recognising the sanctity of New Zealand's wilderness, yet playing a major role in developing tourism at Franz Josef Glacier during the 1890s.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
The South Westland supply ship, Jane Douglas, on the Hokitika River. Given the rough nature of the road to the glaciers in the late nineteenth century, some promoters suggested tourists should travel by sea to Okarito and hire horses to ride inland to Franz Josef. A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
I now say, without hesitation, that the Southern Alps can not only be compared to, but in many cases exceed in grandeur, the scenery of Switzerland. The only thing lacking is the presence of human interest, for there are no picturesque peasants and chalets to give an added charm to the wild and glorious scenes met with at every turn...  

Harper did sound a warning, however, about the need for a sensitive approach to development. He did not wish to see ‘hotels springing up like mushrooms’ in some of the mountain valleys he had explored with Douglas, nor ‘the crack of the whip and the clatter of Cobb and Co.’s mail coaches disturb their solitudes’. He wanted people to be able to come and see South Westland, but to be prepared to go to a little trouble and discomfort to do so. Tracks and huts were needed, according to Harper, not highways and hotels. Charles Douglas had probably influenced Harper’s views. Douglas was well known for his opinion that ‘it isn’t by trotting out of (a) comfortable Hotel & back the same day that nature’s real wonders can be seen.’

In 1894 Charles Douglas suggested that, if sufficient tourists could be encouraged to visit the Okarito district, a steamer service could be established for this traffic during the summer. He mentioned several interesting places to visit within reach of Okarito, one being the beach north of the town, which offered a magnificent panorama of the Southern Alps. Lake Mapourika, near the Franz Josef Glacier, earned high praise: ‘That glorious lake is like Melrose Abbey; it ought to be visited in the moonlight; and it is worth coming down at the time of the full moon if for no other purpose.’ Douglas was enthusiastic about the rugged gorge in the Callery River, a tributary of the Waiho. ‘If the tourist is in a hurry, and they always are apparently, the Spit of Okarito, Mapourika, the gorge of the Killery (Callery), and the Franz Josef Glacier can all be visited in a long day (from Okarito),’ he wrote.

Douglas urged that a hut be built in the glacier valley so tourists would not have to cram all these activities into a day:

To camp in a digger’s hut for a night is awkward, especially if ladies are of the party, as the owner

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40 Ibid., p. 315.
41 Ibid., p. 316.
44 Ibid., p.74.
Arthur Harper, while comparing the Franz Josef Glacier region favourably with Switzerland and other parts of the world, wrote after his exploration of the glacier in 1894 of 'a confusion of deep crevasses and high hummocks', adding: 'to see a rata-twig about 20 ft. away and to take some ten or fifteen minutes to reach it, is not encouraging, to say the least of it...'

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
would have to clear out and camp under a flax bush. Besides the usual hospitality of the digger will gradually be overtasked, as tourists come into the country, and before hotels will pay to put up...\textsuperscript{45}

In a separate report, Arthur Harper wrote that the Franz Josef Glacier had features which set it apart from other glaciers of the world, commenting that ‘The combination of ice, sub-tropical plants, tree ferns and rata bush is not easily forgotten.’ He added:

Another somewhat new experience to most people would be to bathe in a hot spring... which, if too hot, can be cooled by letting in some ice-water, or even take a block of ice which has come down the river and cool the spring-water. While enjoying your bath you have a fine view of bush, glacier and alpine peaks within two miles...\textsuperscript{46}

Westland’s first tourism promoters worked from the Hokitika survey office and seem to have functioned as a practical and complementary team. Charles Douglas, with his cynical attitude about everything from bureaucracy to acclimatisation, possessed a self-deprecating sense of humour and a keen eye for the ridiculous as well as a profound love of the Westland environment. In this he found a staunch ally in Roberts, who was appointed Commissioner of Crown Lands for Westland in 1902, thereafter refusing promotion so he could stay in Hokitika.\textsuperscript{47} As Roberts later wrote, his relationship with Douglas was one of ‘two human beings who fully understand each other and, ignoring our many weaknesses, fully appreciate the remainder.’\textsuperscript{48} Arthur Harper, who made a major contribution to tourism and conservation development in Westland, was a relative latecomer to the Hokitika survey office and criticised Roberts for being ‘fanatically opposed to publicity’, blaming him for the fact that Douglas’s exploration work was unknown outside official circles for many years.\textsuperscript{49} A hint of the differences between the two men is contained in a brief observation by Roberts on ‘how unconsciously full of self’ Harper

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p.75.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p.110.
\textsuperscript{49} John Pascoe, Mr Explorer Douglas, p.ix.
was.\textsuperscript{50} Roberts' close friendship with Douglas was apparent to all who knew him, as expressed in his anxiety when Douglas returned late from any of his explorations, and in his generous tribute upon Douglas's retirement:

A man of wide repute, yet modest to a fault, of winning, unassuming manner, he never advertised himself, but was ever willing to impart his knowledge, with the result that many publications regarding Westland contain much of Mr Douglas's wheat amongst the chaff of their egotistical compilers.\textsuperscript{51}

Roberts' survey team, with its depth of knowledge of Westland, could speak with authority of the tourism potential of the region, and the Government eventually took notice of their comments. In 1894 Premier Seddon authorised the spending of 100 pounds for a bridge across the Waiho River, to give tourists access to the Franz Josef Glacier without the risk of having to ford the river.\textsuperscript{52} By 1897 Charles Douglas had built tourist tracks up the Franz Josef and neighbouring Fox Glacier valleys.\textsuperscript{53} He also built an iron tourist shelter hut in the Franz valley, within easy reach of the glacier.\textsuperscript{54}

South Westland's First Tourists

In the 1890s access to the West Coast by sea or by mountain pass was as difficult as it had been during the gold rush of the 1860s, while the South Westland roading network was rudimentary, despite the efforts of the Department of Lands and Survey. Tourist developments were piecemeal, and although there was a growing appreciation of the scenery in the glaciers region among a few people, it was far from well known. Yet tourists had started going there, travelling for recreation, unlike most of the visitors mentioned so far, explorers, surveyors and scientists who had gone

\textsuperscript{50} John Acheson, 'Mr Surveyor Roberts', p.110.
\textsuperscript{51} John Pascoe, Mr Explorer Douglas, p.44; G.J. Roberts, 'Appendix 1: Surveys - Westland', Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1908, C-1A, p.18.
\textsuperscript{52} David Barron, 'Appendix 3: Road Construction and Maintenance' in 'Department of Lands and Survey Annual Report, 1894-95', Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1895, C-1, p.67; David Barron, 'Appendix 3: Road Construction and Maintenance' in 'Department of Lands and Survey Annual Report, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1896, C-1, p.77.
\textsuperscript{53} W.G. Murray, 'Appendix 2: Survey Operations' in 'Department of Lands and Survey Annual Report, 1897-98', Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1898, C-1, p.38.
\textsuperscript{54} W.G Murray, 'Appendix 3: Road Construction and Maintenance' in 'Department of Lands and Survey Annual Report, 1897-98', Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1898, C-1, p.80.
there in the course of their work. Records are sparse for this period, but it seems few tourists ventured as far south as the Franz Josef Glacier, as those who did usually aroused sufficient interest to have their visits recorded in the *West Coast Times*.

The glaciers region enjoyed some valuable publicity when New Zealand Governor, Lord Onslow, made a trip through South Westland in 1892. At a civic reception held in Hokitika before his departure for the glaciers, Lord Onslow was described by the Hokitika mayor as ‘a second Stanley’. Lord Onslow’s journey received extensive newspaper coverage. He was accompanied by Premier Seddon, and his entourage travelled overland from Hokitika. They were met by most of the mining population of the district at Lake Mapourika, then went on to the glacier where they enjoyed a climb on the ice. Lord Onslow described the glacier as ‘wonderful, extraordinary and quite unlike any glacier he had seen’. The following year a tourist enthused about Westland’s scenery to the *West Coast Times*, after a day trip to Franz Josef from Hokitika, commenting that ‘What will make Hokitika some day is the tourist traffic. For as a centre from which excursions can be made it can hardly be excelled’. One of Westland’s early tourism advocates, James Park of Hokitika, took his family to the Franz Josef Glacier in 1894, travelling in horse-drawn trap. ‘The wonder is that with the easy access hundreds of others do not do likewise. A better object lesson for children could not be conceived than a week’s exploration of the face of the glacier...’, Park wrote.

The access might have been easy for those living in Hokitika and able to pick their weather for a journey to South Westland, but those living further afield needed plenty of stamina and luck. Janet Westland, her daughters, Mildred and Dolly, and young son, Peter, also visited Franz Josef in 1894. Mildred kept a diary of their journey. This record of a pioneering tourist expedition supplies interesting details of South Westland in 1894. Mildred does not mention why her family decided to visit Franz Josef, and gives few details about herself, concentrating on descriptions of

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55 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 6 January 1892, 2.
56 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 20 January 1892, 4; 26 January 1892, 2.
57 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 25 January 1893, 2.
58 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 16 January 1894, 4.
59 Mildred Westland, ‘Diary of a Visit to the Franz Josef Glacier, 1894’, Typescript of MS in A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika: Peter’s Pool, a tarn famed for its glacier and mountain reflections was named after Peter, while the three women had Mildred and Dolly Creeks and Lady Westland’s Lookout, all in the Franz Josef Glacier valley, named after them. The Westlands had immigrated to New Zealand from India where Janet’s husband. James, worked as finance minister of the Indian Viceroy’s Council: G.E. Mannerling, *New Zealand Alpine Journal* No. 20, 1933 p229.
Janet Westland and her family en route for the Franz Josef Glacier in 1894 (above) and in a camp in the glacier valley (below).
A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Early tourists exploring an ice cave on the Franz Josef Glacier.
A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
their journey. However she was obviously proud that she, her mother and sister were the ‘first women to go touring down the West Coast’. Even if this was not necessarily true, theirs was certainly the first woman-led expedition. The photographs they took of their trip show they were able to establish comfortable camps, and give the impression that the family was thoroughly at home in the wilderness.

The family travelled to Hokitika by coach, where they found scenic attractions but a limited tourist infrastructure. They boated on the mirror-like waters of Mahinapua Creek, spent a miserable night at the mosquito-ridden Glossops Retreat Hotel at Lake Kaniere, and experienced a flood at Hokitika, while Peter Westland participated in a Hokitika Fire Brigade celebration. The Westlands left Hokitika for Ross on 4 January 1894, then travelled on to the glacier on horseback, learning to ride as they went along. Their journey was made relatively easy by good weather, and, although Mildred noted that the road was non-existent in places, she made scant reference to the rivers, which were formidable obstacles when it rained.

The family knew Arthur Harper, who was exploring the Franz Josef Glacier with Charles Douglas at the time, and he guided them to the glacier and helped them set up camp in the valley. The Westlands had arrived in Waiho, as the village of Franz Josef was then called, well ahead of any tourist accommodation. Mildred was happy to admire the glacier from a distance after an expedition onto the ice with Harper. ‘We crossed some lovely crevasses and looked down into their blue and green depths into lovely pools and wondered, anyway I did, what would happen if you fell in.’ Janet and Dolly were relaxed on the glacier and accompanied Harper into the icefall. The family later scrambled round the terminal face of the glacier and explored the ice cave out of which the Waiho River emerged. They lay in their camp at night listening to the ice creaking as the glacier moved. They enjoyed a closeness to nature that tourists miss out on today, insulated in their hotels and motels, well out of sound of the glacier.

The Westlands had 10 days of fine weather before their camp was flooded. Mildred was impressed by the force of nature in the valley: ‘The Waiho was a sight as

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60 Mildred Westland, ‘Diary of a Visit to the Franz Josef Glacier’, p.5
61 Ibid., pp. 2-5.
62 Ibid., pp. 5-9.
63 Ibid., pp 10-11.
64 Ibid., p. 13.
65 Ibid., pp. 13-14.
Early tourist accommodation at the glaciers region included Clohers Hotel (above) where the Westlands were kept awake by a miner's funeral party, and Jim Nesbit's hut at Waiho (below) where they were offered shelter after their camp was flooded. A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
it tore along, the steam rising off it and large pieces of ice whirling on its surface." During a break in the weather some gold miners arrived at the camp and advised the Westlands to leave before the bridges were breached by flood waters. One miner, Jim Nesbitt, lent them his hut for a few days, then they spent a night at Okarito, and went back to Hokitika.

The appropriately named Westland family generated a lot of interest from the local people. As Mildred wrote, ‘Visitors were infrequent, for we were really regarded as an event.’

Mildred’s diary is interesting in the way it highlights the idiosyncratic style of West Coast tourism in the nineteenth century. The Westlands’ guide, mailman Jock Adamson, kept them waiting for days in Hokitika as he had a horse running in the Greymouth races. As Mildred said, ‘H.M.’s Mails and their delivery might jolly well wait, and no one thought it anything but most natural.’ This easygoing attitude proved an advantage, when they arrived at Kaniere township after a wet walk from Lake Kaniere and found that the driver of the tram was prepared to delay its scheduled departure time so they could have tea at the nearby hotel before going back to Hokitika. When they got to Ross, the Westlands were treated like VIPs by the Healeys, the publicans of the Junction Hotel. Mr Healey, dressed ‘in a smart tussore silk coat in honour of the occasion’ took them on a tour of the Mont D’or Goldmine, and the town organised a musical evening in their honour. They did not, however, appreciate the celebrations at the Clohers Hotel at Lake Mapourika, near the Franz Josef Glacier. A goldminer’s wake was in full swing, a not-to-be-missed social gathering for the scattered local population, and the presence of a party of women tourists did not deter proceedings: ‘They sat up in the bar all night singing and shouting, and of course as the night wore on the songs got more spicy and the shouts less restrained.’

Tourists travelling on the Coast in the nineteenth century were absorbed into the daily life of the local people, and various anecdotes in Mildred’s diary suggest that there was little artificial separation between tourists and settlers in the nineteenth

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68 Ibid., p. 15.
69 Ibid., p. 2.
70 Ibid., p. 5.
71 Ibid., pp. 6-7.
72 Ibid., p. 9.
century. The Westlands stayed in a miner’s hut at Franz Josef and joined a horse muster at Whataroa. Janet Westland had taken her family on an adventurous holiday and as a result it is tempting to regard her as a feminist, but despite her obvious love of the outdoors there is nothing to suggest that she was conscious of extending boundaries for women when she took her children to the Franz Josef Glacier. Feminism did not appear to spill over into other areas of her life. She did not sign the women’s suffrage petition, nor did she register as a voter after 1893. There are no rallying calls for women in the pages of Mildred’s diary either.

Janet Westland was not the only woman exploring New Zealand’s wilderness in the nineteenth century. In 1883 Anna von Lendenfeld climbed Hochstetter Dome at Mount Cook with her husband; in 1890 Forrestina Ross explored the Tasman Glacier at Mount Cook, and in 1892 she climbed almost to the summit of Mt Earnslaw in the Mount Aspiring region. Janet Westland had been active before her Franz Josef expedition, exploring the headwaters of the Rakaia River in Canterbury in 1893. Constance Astley, of North West Scotland and her English travelling companion, Margaret Shaen made an extensive tour of New Zealand in 1898, visiting many tourist resorts. However they did not venture to such rugged places as the Franz Josef Glacier. Constance wrote of sailing up the spectacular Milford Sound; travelling by coach to Mount Cook; and of a boating excursion at Rotorua. Janet Westland’s trip to the Franz Josef Glacier was arguably a greater adventure, given the much rougher access to South Westland than that on any of the routes Constance Astley travelled. Janet also had responsibility for her family, including a young son, unlike most outdoors women of the time, many of whom were supported in their adventures by their husbands.

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73 Ibid., pp. 14, 17.
77 Ibid., pp. 62, 100-104, 130.
Tourism Development at Other Resorts

The Westlands and the few others who visited Franz Josef Glacier during the 1890s laid the foundations of a tourism industry on the West Coast. The development was modest compared with what was happening elsewhere in New Zealand. The world famous explorer, Henry Stanley, who visited New Zealand in 1892, predicted a bright future for tourism here, commenting that 'these are some of the most beautiful islands in the world.'**78** Tourism was already well established in Rotorua, Milford Sound, Mount Cook and other parts of New Zealand by the time of Stanley’s visit.

Rotorua’s tourism industry was centred round the ‘boiling lakes’ and the famous Pink and White Terraces. The area was publicised in 1881 as the ‘sanatorium of the Pacific’. Novelist Anthony Trollope described a bath near the terraces as ‘a spot for intense sensual enjoyment.’**79** Others obviously agreed and the Lake House Hotel was built at Ohinemutu in 1881 to accommodate the increasing numbers of tourists. The hotel boasted excellent cuisine, electricity and mineral hot baths with ‘curative powers of great repute’.**80** There was another hotel at Wairoa, and boats were available on Lake Tarawera to ferry tourists to the Pink and White Terraces.**81** The terraces were destroyed by the eruption of Mt Tarawera in 1886, but the growing fame of the therapeutic waters of Rotorua ensured that it remained a focal part of the New Zealand tourism industry. The Department of Lands and Survey developed roads to other scenic attractions once the terraces were destroyed, and in 1891 called for urgent work on the road to Rotorua, saying many tourists were frightened to travel because of the ‘jolting and shaking they got while travelling through the bush.’ Despite this, nearly 2,600 people had visited Rotorua during the tourist season.**82** In 1892 17,521 baths were taken at Rotorua, despite the perceived disadvantages of invalids having to travel 215 kilometres by train and 58 kilometres by coach in one day, a journey of ‘excessive weariness’.**83** If this seemed difficult, it was no wonder few tourists were prepared to undergo days of hardship to get to South Westland.

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**78** West Coast Times (Hokitika) 18 February 1892, 2.


**80** Ibid., p. 174.

**81** Ibid., p. 177.


South-west New Zealand, the area now encompassed in the Fiordland National Park, was a much more popular tourist destination than the West Coast. This was probably due to the relatively easy access. Tourists could sail into the heart of the fiords and mountains by ship. Tourism in the area owed much to the innovation of Donald Sutherland, a Scottish adventurer, who had served in Garibaldi’s army in Italy, before joining the Otago gold rush. He reached Milford Sound in an open boat in 1877, settled there, and discovered the Sutherland Falls, which were named for him and became a key tourist attraction in the area. In 1888 Otago’s Chief Surveyor, Colin Adams, urged the government to open up Fiordland for tourist traffic, writing that the ‘magnificence of scenery’ was superior to anything in the known world, and development would augment ‘the stream of tourists visiting our shores’. The government funded the construction of the Milford Track under the umbrella of Crown Lands for Sale. While admitting that the track would not greatly advance this cause, Adams justified the development, claiming that increasing tourist numbers would lead to the demand for a few small holdings in the area. This lateral thinking made possible the construction of a tramping track which would become famous as the finest walk in the world. Sutherland built an accommodation house at Milford Sound to cater for the growing number of tourists arriving via the Milford Track. Approximately 40 tourists visited the Sutherland Falls in the 1888-89 season, and 100 the following season. While modest compared to the numbers of tourists visiting Rotorua, Milford Sound was attracting far more tourists than the Franz Josef Glacier.

On the other side of the Southern Alps to Franz Josef, the Hermitage-based tourist resort was also becoming increasingly popular with visitors. The impetus for tourism in the Mount Cook region was the 1882 arrival of an Irish clergyman, William Green, who was intent on climbing New Zealand’s highest mountain, Mount Cook. Green and his companions, Ulrich Kaufmann and Emil Boss, climbed to within 60 metres of their goal, triggering a race for the summit and considerable tourist

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87 W.T Parham, ‘Sutherland, Donald 1843/44(?)—1919’ p.491.
interest. In 1884 the first Hermitage hotel was built by a private company. In 1891 the Department of Lands and Survey built tourists tracks up the Tasman Glacier and Hooker valleys and a hut by the Ball Glacier with a special room for women tourists. The New Zealand Governor Lord Onslow visited, and commented publicly on the spectacular scenery. The subsequent increase in visitors to the area led to calls for government to spend more money on tracks. One particular problem was that tourists could not reach clear ice easily and were left, according to a Lands and Survey Department report: ‘disappointed with the impression that our glaciers are entirely covered with moraine and are not worth seeing’. The Franz Josef Glacier was practically free of moraine but no serious attempt was being made to develop its tourist potential at that time.

The Hermitage was purchased by the government in 1895 after being threatened with closure. Guides were employed and climbing facilities built, such as the Malte Brun hut above the Tasman Glacier. Poor access and the lack of a faster coach service were blamed for impeding tourism in the area, but the Department of Lands and Survey was optimistic about the Hermitage’s future. ‘The scenery is acknowledged on all hands to surpass anything of its kind in Australasia, while the attraction it offers to alpine climbers is equal to many well known mountain ranges of Europe and America,’ wrote Surveyor-General Stephenson Percy Smith in 1899.

During the 1898-99 season, 100 tourists had stayed at the Hermitage, including an economics writer from Chicago, who commented that the place was ‘surrounded by a dozen attractions, any of which would make the fortune of a whole Swiss village.’ There were problems with this Southern Alps resort, though. Arthur Harper, who had climbed in Switzerland before coming to New Zealand, noted that the hut

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90 F. Wither, ‘Appendix 2: Road Works Undertaken by the Survey Department’ in ‘Report of the Survey Department, New Zealand, 1890-91’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1891, C-1A, p.32.
92 Ibid., p.40.
accommodation and terrain was rough by Swiss standards, while the lack of guides and porters made climbing expeditions more difficult than they were overseas.\textsuperscript{97} However, like Fiordland, the Hermitage region was attracting considerably more tourists in the 1890s than the Franz Josef Glacier.

**Publicising the Franz Josef Glacier**

It was easier to reach Rotorua, Milford Sound and the Hermitage than it was to get to South Westland, but there were other reasons why the glaciers were largely ignored by mainstream tourists last century. Nationwide, the government paid for road and track construction, and contributed in some cases to the development of resorts, but many felt the West Coast received low priority, despite its outstanding scenery. The other resorts could boast unique selling points. Rotorua had the ‘sanatorium of the Pacific’ in its thermal springs, while Milford Sound claimed (erroneously) to have the highest waterfall in the world, and the Hermitage overlooked New Zealand’s highest mountain, Mount Cook. Added interest was given to this last attraction by the race for its summit. No one had come up with a similar selling point for the Franz Josef Glacier at the time.

The *West Coast Times*, which had become an enthusiastic campaigner for tourism, had grasped the fact that the region’s best chance of promotion lay in attracting VIP visitors to the glaciers. During the 1890s the paper continued to push for publicity for South Westland, and lamented what it saw as tourist development in other regions at the expense of the West Coast. South Westland was left off most itineraries. The 1890 visit of the Governor of South Australia, Lord Kintore, to the West Coast, was an opportunity missed, as he did not land at Okarito and visit the Franz Josef Glacier. The *West Coast Times* temporarily forgot its criticisms of the South Westland road, asserting that travel was ‘fairly easy’ and that Lord Kintore should have had the chance to enjoy ‘some of the grandest and most picturesque scenery in New Zealand... the journey would have the additional charm of novelty, so few of the outside public having seen it.’\textsuperscript{98} The paper complained that the Kintore party had left without seeing Westland’s best features, and expressed disappointment at the region’s


\textsuperscript{98} *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 31 January 1890, 2.
failure to attract tourist traffic ‘which bids promise in the immediate future to leave considerable wealth on our shores’.  

The Thomas Cook travel agency was blamed for poor management of the Kintore itinerary and the same editorial criticised government for building a road ‘over the dreary McKenzie country to the Hermitage, Mt Cook’, claiming that South Westland offered superior attractions to the tourist. ‘So far, as in everything else affecting the Coast, Government will grant no assistance... We see that they can make roads of a similar nature in other parts of New Zealand – why not here?’

Franz Josef missed out on an important opportunity in the 1890s when the international Thomas Cook travel agency left the region out of its guidebook and tourist itinerary. The agency suggested that tourists travel over Arthurs Pass to Greymouth, and depart a day later by train, leaving no opportunity for a trip to South Westland. The *West Coast Times* criticised the omission of the West Coast lakes from Cook’s guidebook, saying they were ‘as deserving of notice as the cold lakes of Otago and Canterbury’, but later praised the work of the agency generally, describing it as ‘one of the great factors in modern organisation for travel and sightseeing.’

Some promotion was being done in Westland, however. Encouraged by visits from Lord Onslow and others, a Westland Tourists’ Association was formed. Its secretary, James Park, prepared photographs of the Franz Josef Glacier and Hokitika Gorge for an exhibition in Greymouth. The Association later published a ‘Guide to the West Coast’, which was compiled by George Roberts, and distributed free to all shipping companies, clubs and public libraries in Australia, though it was not distributed free throughout New Zealand, which limited its impact.

Artists Petrus van der Velden and Charles Blomfield possibly helped the West Coast promotion cause. In 1891 van der Velden visited the Otira Gorge and his

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99 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 31 January 1890, 2; & 1 February 1890, 2.
100 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 21 February 1890, 2.
101 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 8 February 1892, 2.
102 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 8 February 1892, 2; & 5 April 1899, 2; Thomas Cook’s agency had begun in England in 1841, when it organised the country’s first publicly advertised railway excursion to a temperance conference. By 1890 Thomas Cook had agencies all over the world: A.J Norval, *The Tourist Industry: A National and International Survey*, London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, 1936, pp 41-43.
103 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 20 March 1893, 2; & 16 December 1893, 2.
104 *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 11 May 1899, 2.
subsequent paintings of that wild landscape received much critical attention.\textsuperscript{105} It was around this time that tourist parties began travelling over the Otira Gorge in increasing numbers. Charles Blomfield, famous for his oil painting of the Pink and White Terraces, also painted the Franz Josef Glacier in 1893.\textsuperscript{106} His love of the native bush and wild places took him on painting expeditions all over the country and he was exhibiting to critical acclaim from 1873 onwards. His Franz Josef expedition came at a time when his popularity was waning and he was being accused of painting for the tourist market.\textsuperscript{107} However the fact that such a well-known artist had recorded the glacier could have given it some useful publicity throughout the country.

The Department of Lands and Survey was also involved in tourist promotion during this period, distributing pictorial publications on New Zealand's scenic attractions to overseas agencies. Framed photographs of the country's scenery were placed on mail steamers and in steamship company offices in London and San Francisco.\textsuperscript{108}

Promotion work was being done during the 1890s, then, though some, notably Westland's watchdog the \textit{West Coast Times}, were concerned that the region was not getting its fair share. Another important promotion tool, word-of-mouth, deserves some attention, although its effect is hard to measure. Some discussion of the attitude of the people who colonised the land surrounding the Franz Josef Glacier is important for full understanding of the promotion story.

One advantage Rotorua, Milford Sound and the Hermitage had in the nineteenth century, which Franz Josef Glacier lacked, was a person living in the area promoting its tourist potential. All three resorts were advantaged by private individuals building hotels in the area, while at the glaciers, gold miners and other locals accommodated the occasional visitor free of charge and had no need to do any promotion as they were not making a living from them. Promotion was only of limited value without a tourist infrastructure, and this deficiency was one of


\textsuperscript{106} S.C. Williams, Letters about Charles Blomfield's painting trip to Franz Josef Glacier from S.C Williams (Blomfield's grand daughter's husband) to Dorothy Fletcher from Auckland, 15 January 1979, 22 August 1979. A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.

\textsuperscript{107} Muriel Williams, 'Blomfield, Charles 1848 – 1926' \textit{Dictionary of New Zealand Biography Volume Two 1870 – 1900} p.46.

\textsuperscript{108} Stephenson Percy Smith, 'Department of Lands and Survey Report, New Zealand, 1895-96', \textit{Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1896, C-1, p.xvi.}
Westland’s greatest problems. In 1897 the Department of Mines highlighted the need for tourist accommodation at Franz Josef Glacier, saying that until a hotel was built ‘one of the greatest sights in New Zealand is practically closed to the average comfort-loving tourist and invalid.’

**West Coast Attitudes to Wilderness**

How important was the Franz Josef Glacier and mountain landscape to the people who lived in the region? Until about 1897, when William Batson opened a tourist hostel at Waiho, no local person had attempted to lay any foundation for a glacier tourist industry. This does not denigrate the hospitality of West Coast families, who opened their homes to travellers in the nineteenth century, but it does suggest they saw nothing remarkable enough to promote in the region they lived in. Perhaps the mountains were unimportant to them because they were of no use to settlement. In an article on attitudes to landscape, Lawrence Jones suggests that ‘The mountains, the rivers, the waterfalls, the thermal area provided sublime or picturesque backdrops, but they were merely the pictures on the wall, and the focus was on what could be remade.’

West Coasters, with their legendary hospitality, were, in fact, establishing the basis of a local tourism industry, but this seems to have been a largely unconscious development. Women played an important role in this, and their contribution was wider than simply providing beds and meals for travellers. Like women settlers all over the country, West Coast women had to learn outdoor skills in order to survive, and they often participated in farming, goldmining, fishing and other activities. When tourists stayed with a farming family, it was often the women who acted as their guides. Mrs Healey took the Westland family swimming in the sea at Ross in 1894, an adventurous activity given the strong undertows in the area; a few years later, the Okarito harbourmaster’s daughter took English horse trekker Maud Moreland on a scramble around the cliffs of Okarito. There is plenty of evidence to suggest West Coast women enjoyed living in the outdoors. Diarist Catherine Adamson of Whataroa

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109 D. MacFarlane, ‘Reports of Wardens and other Officers on Goldfields 1897’. Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1897, C-3A, p. 18.
makes frequent reference to participating in horse musters and other farm work. The highlight of her year was always the Christmas-New Year holiday at Okarito, where she and her family boated on the lagoon and went horse riding and picnicking. However Catherine makes no mention of the Franz Josef Glacier or the mountains in her diaries, though she makes frequent reference to having travellers to stay, many of whom would, no doubt, have been bound for the glaciers. Catherine Adamson is not alone in her apparent lack of interest in the scenery which would one day make Westland famous. There are no accounts of West Coast women of this era having anything to do with the mountains. The three volumes of *Women of Westland*, a compilation of life stories of women from all over the region, provide compelling evidence of this point. There is no mention of any of these women having an empathy with the mountains and glaciers, apart from an artist, Ethel Richardson, who was not a West Coaster but moved to Franz Josef after a career in Wellington.

What is the reason for this? Women were climbing mountains and exploring wilderness all over the country, yet Westland women lived within sight of the mountains and apparently ignored them. It is impossible to know if the mountains did have any influence on them, but the fact remains that such an influence was not mentioned by either the women or their biographers. Catherine Wallace lived near the mouth of the Waiho river, where she managed the ferry after her husband's death. She probably had more reason to fear the Franz Josef Glacier than to love it. It fed one of the most dangerous rivers on the West Coast, and she and her 13 children were isolated on the southern side of it. Life would have offered Catherine little time for recreation. It is tempting to think she might have gazed appreciatively at the Southern Alps and the Franz Josef Glacier as she dragged seaweed off the rocks for her potato and onion gardens, but we have no way of knowing. West Coast women were at home in the wilderness, but that did not impel them to explore the mountains. They were more likely to try and recreate a portion of their homeland, establishing gardens and orchards in the bush. Hydrangeas and rhododendrons still bloom in remote places along the South Westland coast, where all other traces of homeplaces have long

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112 Catherine Adamson, 'Diaries 1895–1902'.
vanished, a testimony to the things that were most important to these pioneer women.\textsuperscript{115}

In all the stories written about West Coast women, much has been made of their endurance but almost nothing of any empathy with the wilderness. There are limitations in how far this can be interpreted, however, given that few of these women wrote of their own lives and, as Frances Porter and Charlotte MacDonald say in their introduction to a compilation of nineteenth century women’s letters, there was no single response to a given set of circumstances.\textsuperscript{116} Westland’s pioneer women are remembered for the things they achieved in a harsh environment, but their thoughts have been lost. It seems unlikely that many were inspired by the Franz Josef Glacier and the mountains, but we cannot say this with any certainty.

There is, however, some evidence to support the theory that the alpine environment fringing their world was largely irrelevant to both women and men struggling to develop the West Coast. Charles Douglas, describing the most outstanding scenery of South Westland in 1894, mentioned the panorama of the Southern Alps from the beach near Okarito, saying that the view was virtually unknown; ‘not even the inhabitants who live on the spit appear to know it, and they consequently never suggest to a traveller to cross the river.’\textsuperscript{117} Arthur Harper, exploring the upper icefall of the Franz Josef Glacier the same year, had difficulty finding a local man to accompany him on the glacier, ‘the mere mention of going on to the ice frightening most of the young fellows in the district.’\textsuperscript{118} Perhaps the most compelling evidence is the fact that, with a few notable exceptions, the majority of people born and bred on the West Coast did not become mountaineers, though many tramped the river valleys in search of gold or deer.

They may have taken it for granted, but nineteenth century West Coasters enjoyed an informal custodianship of the wilderness surrounding the scattered settlements, and they were not to appreciate losing this control in later years. Even if

\textsuperscript{115} Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 26 April 1998; There are parallels with women moving to the American West who, as Anne LaBastille says, ‘become wilderness women in order to survive. Love of wilderness was neither required nor appropriate for women uprooted from their homes and confronting a wild new landscape. La Bastille suggests ‘the move to wilderness was a series of shocks almost guaranteed to strip away what was most important to them...’: Anne LaBastille, Women and Wilderness: San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1980 pp. 5 & 12.

\textsuperscript{116} Frances Porter and Charlotte MacDonald, My Hand will Write what my Heart Dictates Auckland: Auckland University Press/Bridget Williams Books, 1996 p.4.


\textsuperscript{118} Arthur P. Harper, Pioneer Works in the Alps of New Zealand p.159.
they were not especially interested in the mountains, it was generally accepted that this world was an extension of their farms. This English tradition sanctioned the harvest of forest products and grazing of stock on common land. The tradition seems to have been exported to Westland. Sheep and cattle grazed in the Franz Josef Glacier valley and birds were shot there, a practice that was to continue well into the twentieth century. In the days before refrigeration, the glacier itself was used as a deep freeze, with locals taking meat up the glacier on horseback to deposit in crevasses. The hot springs in the valley were adopted as baths first by miners, who also took over the building known as the hospital at the springs; and later by settler families. Local people were able to do what they liked in the glacier valley, until realisation of the value of tourism led to calls for scenic reserves and consequent regulation of the glacier environment

West Coasters’ apparent lack of empathy with the mountains can be understood as an extension of settler lack of empathy with the indigenous environment generally. This has been examined in detail by Paul Star, who has concluded that New Zealand’s European settlers believed that the forest was an obstacle rather than an environmental treasure. Thus there was little interest in any measure to conserve New Zealand’s wilderness. The colony’s scientists were no more enthusiastic about conservation than the settlers. Julius von Haast, who had visited Westland to report on the goldfields, wrote lyrically of the mountainscenery in South Westland. However he was in Westland to find practical uses for features of the indigenous environment, not to advocate the creation of national parks and reserves.

These attitudes go some way towards explaining the origins of a conflict between use and preservation. West Coasters, raised in an environment where their survival depended on their being able to farm the land, were not likely to advocate the preservation of indigenous forest. As geographer Graeme Wynn comments, for

settlers, forest exploitation was constructive not destructive. ‘They could neither conceive of the exhaustibility of the timber supply, nor believe that their efforts to provide a competency for their own and their children’s children might impoverish the future.’ This was especially understandable in Westland, colonised 25 years after the first European settlement of New Zealand, and covered in some of the heaviest rainforest in the country.

Conservation and Tourism

Some attention was being given to conservation in the nineteenth century but its rationale was usually economic rather than aesthetic. Colonial treasurer Julius Vogel’s Forest Conservation Act of 1874 involved conserving trees for sustainable use, not reserving them in perpetuity for aesthetic purposes. Vogel drew on literature demonstrating the negative effects of deforestation in America and Europe, and was denounced for relying on theoretical rather than practical knowledge, while provincialists saw the bill as ‘a scarcely-disguised attempt to take land from the provinces.’ It was also seen as an infringement of individual rights, alarmist and unnecessary. Against such opposition, Vogel’s views were enlightened, but his arguments for sustainable use of forests do not equate to the aesthetic values of the conservation movement of the present day.

There are parallels between Vogel’s bill and the scenic reserves movement. When New Zealand’s tourist potential was recognised, calls for scenic reserves soon followed, driven by economic rather than aesthetic considerations. Paul Star argues that a ‘worthless lands’ hypothesis, identified in the United States, and meaning that only land unfit for development could be designated national park, seems to fit New Zealand. It certainly fits the West Coast. Many of the region’s scenic reserves had little or no settlement valuable. There was no way of farming a glacier or converting the Southern Alps into pasture. Even the West Coast lowlands defied settlement in many instances. In colonial New Zealand, settlement needs were paramount, and conservation needed its own pragmatic reason for existence. Conservation and

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Zealand literature of the time, with poems such as Blanche Baughan’s A Bush Section, justifying forest destruction in the interests of the development of farm land.  
125 Ibid., p.126-30.  
tourism thus depended on one another, but the alliance was fraught with contradictory needs.

In 1894 surveyor-general Stephenson Percy Smith recommended the creation of a large reserve in Fiordland, ‘land that was quite unsuitable for settlement.’\(^{127}\) He commented:

> There can be little doubt that the scenery of New Zealand is yearly the means of attracting a large number of visitors who are the source of considerable revenue to the people and the state, and that this throng of visitors will increase year by year as greater facilities are offered for seeing the natural beauties of this country is certain...\(^{128}\)

By 1895 the Department of Lands and Survey was calling for the reservation of ‘all places where there is attractive scenery, or places of historic interest.’\(^{129}\) Commissioners of crown lands in each district were instructed to set aside all places of scenic and historic interest from sale, as it was recognised they would have increasing value to future generations.\(^{130}\) In 1897 the Westland Tourist Association led calls for the reservation of Westland’s scenery, and members met with Department of Lands and Survey officials, calling for 1000 acre reservations at both the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers ‘It is desired to have these dealt with now lest speculators recognising the great value they will attain in the future should endeavour to secure them,’ reported the *West Coast Times*.\(^{131}\) However the Franz Josef Glacier did not achieve scenic reserve status until 1915.\(^{132}\)

There can be little doubt that tourism and its associated revenue provided a compelling reason to create scenic reserves throughout the country. However, this does not mean that all nineteenth century tourism advocates were money-driven pragmatists. Surveyor George Roberts spent a lifetime within sight of the Southern Alps, refusing promotion to stay in Hokitika. ‘All for what?’ he wrote. ‘All for sight

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\(^{128}\) Ibid., p.iv.


\(^{131}\) *West Coast Times* (Hokitika) 29 April 1897, 2.

of the old giants in the east and south and a sniff of mountain air.' His writings clearly demonstrate his empathy with the Westland wilderness. 'No-one can dream how I love the hills nor how bitter the reflection at times, that I shall never scale a peak again,' he wrote in 1892. The mountains were his friends. He wrote of studying 'every crease and cranny of old Cook through a powerful telescope,' and made numerous references to Westland demonstrating his affection for and knowledge of its wild places.133 Voices like Roberts' were relatively rare in nineteenth century New Zealand and as Paul Star comments: 'Land reservation for tourism provided a scenario, without which it would have been much harder for preservation to gain hold.'134 It is possible, though, that nature lovers, recognising this, used economic arguments to secure scenic reserves throughout the country, when it was really aesthetic considerations that had motivated them.

Tourism was slow to gain momentum in Westland. While each year thousands of people visited Rotorua, and hundreds visited the Hermitage and Fiordland, only a few ventured to the Franz Josef Glacier. The most important reason for this was the difficult access to the glacier, but other more subtle influences had an effect. Westland was not well promoted and lacked a readily identifiable selling point to set it apart from the rest of the country. The few people who knew Westland well were in no doubt that the glaciers region offered some of the most spectacular scenery in New Zealand, and compared it favourably with resorts in Switzerland and the United States. However Westland lacked a glacier-based tourism developer until 1897. The region also lacked a resident population with an enthusiasm for the mountains, and thus an important opportunity for informal promotion was lost. It was a time when tourism and conservation were interdependent, with tourism providing an economic incentive for conservation, and nowhere was this more noticeable than in South Westland. In the nineteenth century, tourism developers were wholehearted in their support for conservation, while nature remained in the ascendant in the Franz Josef Glacier valley, a point which would be proved many times in the struggle to develop tourist facilities there.

134 Paul Star, 'From Acclimatisation to Preservation', p.198.
The swing bridge over the Waiho River, which gave tourists access to the Franz Josef Glacier, 1906. Behind the bridge support is the site of the Waiho Sluicing Company gold claim. Alexander Turnbull Library.
CHAPTER TWO
OPENING UP THE GLACIERS REGION 1900 - 1930

The (Franz Josef) glacier is really one of the geological wonders of the world and no New Zealander ought to go hunting for scenery in other countries until he has seen this and similar remarkable sights in his own country.¹

At the time when Wellington tourist, Ethel Atack, made this comment in 1916, people from all over the world had ventured along the rugged South Westland highway to visit the Franz Josef Glacier. The significance of tourism to Franz Josef can be measured by its contribution to the economic base of the village, with particular reference to the development of a hospitality tradition there. To understand the difficulties of building a tourism infrastructure in the glacier valley, a detailed consideration of the roles of local people and officers of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts is necessary. While the key reason for the relatively low tourist numbers between 1900 and 1930 appears to have been the ongoing South Westland access problem, it is important to look at other possible causes, such as the extent to which the region was publicised. The relationship between tourism and conservation is also worthy of attention, both for the way in which conservation initiatives may have helped tourism development, and for the conflicts of interest which may have resulted from their often complex interaction.

From Gold to Tourism

Although the outstanding features of the Franz Josef Glacier were recognised well before the twentieth century, it was not tourism but gold which lured the first settlers to Waiho Gorge, as Franz Josef was then called. The British-owned Waiho Sluicing Company mining operation involved a major tunneling project, and operated sporadically from about 1897 to 1907. The company employed 60 men, and was a lifeline to settlers struggling to establish a living in South Westland in the wake of the gold rush. The fact that there was a resident mining population in the area

William Batson, who opened Franz Josef's first tourist hotel, in 1897 was a colourful character who entertained tourists with yarns about tiger hunting in India, took them on the glacier, and operated a thriving sly-grogging business.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
encouraged the development of a bakery, store and other village facilities at Waiho. The village was small, however, and although some of the miners stayed on, others drifted away after the company ceased operation. There was probably no real sense of permanence there at the time, given that West Coast miners were used to moving on when the gold prospects ran out.

The occasional tourist was travelling to the Franz Josef Glacier by this time, and it occurred to one miner that there might be gold in the pockets of these visitors which had greater long term prospects than the elusive mother lode in the nearby Callery valley. Captain William Batson, the son of an English railway policeman, had served in the army in India before coming to the West Coast goldfields. He was a colourful character who first came to public attention when he was brought before the Magistrate’s Court in Okarito after he and his wife Emily were involved in a brawl on the beach. Batson later moved to Waiho, where he took up several blocks of land and continued gold prospecting. His hotel venture had an inauspicious start. Local miners were concerned that Emily had nowhere to live when the Batsons arrived in the village. They built a dwelling of tree fern logs, and Batson invited them to dinner, then charged them half a crown each for their meal. This tree fern log building, which Batson named Toi Toi House, became Waiho Gorge’s first hotel, and the miners helped supplement the sporadic tourist income, especially when Batson began sly-grogging as a sideline to his accommodation business.

Batson’s guests came from a wide range of backgrounds. One was the newly appointed Superintendent of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, Thomas Donne, who visited the Franz Josef Glacier in 1903 with department photographer, Thomas Pringle. Unfortunately no records remain of their impressions of their host and his hotel. English horsetrekker Maud Moreland, who rode to South Westland from Christchurch with her brother in 1906, was intrigued by the unusual materials used to build the hotel, writing: ‘A house of this kind may even grow – for the ferms

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3 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 3 November 1998.
4 Personal File, William Henry Batson. 11P A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
5 ‘War in the South’ West Coast Times, (Hokitika) 24 February 1895.
7 Ibid., p.32.
The grandly named 'Toi Toi House, Batsonville', constructed of tree fern logs, is described in several early tourist accounts of visits to Franz Josef Glacier. English horsetrekker, Maud Moreland, who visited in 1906, wrote: 'A house of this kind may even grow – for the ferns are very tenacious of life... As I lay in bed (I) could hear the rumbling of the glacier and the roaring of the river...'

Alexander Turnbull Library.
As the Franz Josef Glacier region became more popular with tourists, Batson built a larger wooden hotel near Toi Toi House, in about 1910.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
are very tenacious of life." Mr. L. Lindon, headmaster of the Geelong Grammar School near Melbourne, stayed at Toi Toi House several times after crossing to Westland from the Hermitage, Mount Cook. He appreciated the comfortable lodgings and Batson's hospitality, and in 1910 spent a month at the hotel. Others, like W. Hill Chinn, were disparaging about the accommodation and Batson's tendency to regale guests 'with reminiscences of his career in the Punjab, tiger shooting and so on.'

Tourism was significant to Waiho by 1906, but Stones Directory entry of that year affirms that gold mining was still the lifeblood of the village, which had a population of 38 people, most of whom were miners.

What influenced the change of emphasis from gold to tourism at Waiho? The most obvious reason was that more tourists were coming to the glacier, prompting a need for more accommodation. This, together with the demise of the Waiho Sluicing Company, suggested a new direction for the village. Donne predicted that the Franz Josef Glacier would become one of the principal attractions on the West Coast and called for the establishment of a 30 bed accommodation house there. Batson, anticipating this growth, built a wooden hotel near to Toi Toi House in 1907.

Alec and Peter Graham, born to South Westland pioneers Isabella and David Graham at the Three Mile ferry near Okarito, were to become renowned guides and mountaineers, but it was gold which had brought them to the village, as they were both employed by the Waiho Sluicing Company from about 1900 onwards. Peter went on to guide at the Hermitage, Mount Cook, in 1903, and Alec and another brother, Jim Graham, bought Batson's Hotel in 1911, thus launching the family into a career which would span four decades and turn Franz Josef into a premier tourist resort. One of their first jobs was to move the 24 room hotel up onto a terrace above

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10 L.H. Lindon, 'Among the Mountains' Geelong Grammar School Quarterly No.3 October 1910 p.27.
12 'Waiho Gorge' Stones Directory Canterbury, Nelson, Marlborough and Westland April 1905 to April 1906.
Isabella Graham, the mother of guides Peter and Alec Graham, offered tourist accommodation in this cottage at Franz Josef around the time Batson established Toi Toi House. She and other South Westland women established a hospitality tradition for which the West Coast became famous, and did much to promote tourism in the region.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
the river, to ensure its safety from the floodwaters which had once swirled through Batsons' kitchen.\textsuperscript{17} It was an impressive achievement, given the steep grades and hand winching which was necessary to complete the job.\textsuperscript{18}

It was the Grahams who held the key to Franz Josef's transformation from a mining to tourist village. Alec and Peter Graham's mountain guiding achievements will be discussed elsewhere, and suffice it to say here that their knowledge of the Southern Alps added intangible depth to the quality of their hotel enterprise. Alec Graham, on a climbing trip to the Hermitage, Mount Cook in 1905, had been impressed by the family atmosphere created by gatherings of mountain lovers, and later sought to establish something similar on the West Coast.\textsuperscript{19} The comments of visitors emphasize the success of his goal: 'At this hotel, tourists may feel that they are visitors and friends, so kindly is their welcome, and so homelike and pleasant are the arrangements made for them,' wrote mountaineer Fanny Roberts.\textsuperscript{20} 'The place offers the very best in scenery and variety; the host and hostess give the utmost in hospitality and kindliness', wrote one tourist in 1919.\textsuperscript{21} A deputation from the Department of Industries and Commerce visited in 1923, and found the hotel 'first-class in every way, which must commend itself to tourists.'\textsuperscript{22} These comments are typical of many.

Despite the predominant role of Alec and Peter Graham in the development of the Franz Josef tourist resort, others, including some notable women, made significant contributions. Emily Batson was an intriguing figure. She wielded a spade during the beach brawl in 1894, was described with affection by her visitors and was renowned as an excellent cook, but was eventually forced out of the hotel business because of her alcoholism.\textsuperscript{23} Isabella Graham, who took in paying guests during the Batson era, was popular with tourists.\textsuperscript{24} Mountaineer Freda Du Faur enjoyed tea and cakes with

\textsuperscript{17} Greymouth Evening Star (Greymouth) 30 April 1901.
\textsuperscript{18} G. Fenwick, \textit{From East to West and West to East} Dunedin: Otago Daily Times and Witness Newspapers Co. Ltd. 1912 p.128.
\textsuperscript{19} Alec Graham \& Jim Wilson, \textit{Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef} p.53; Interview of Alec Graham's daughter, Dorothy Fletcher, with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 26 April 1998.
\textsuperscript{22} J.W. Collins, 'South Westland. The District With a Future' Report of the Secretary of the Department of Industries and Commerce: Wellington 1929 2,W 7.3 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
\textsuperscript{23} 'War in the South' West Coast Times (Hokitika) 24 February 1895; H.A. Chapman, comment in 'Visitors Book Batsons Franz Josef Glacier' 26 December 1910 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika; Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 26 April 1998.
\textsuperscript{24} Alec Graham \& Jim Wilson, \textit{Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef} pp.. 31-32.
The Glacier Hotel, was purchased from William Batson by Jim and Alec Graham in 1911, and extended to meet the growing tourist demand in subsequent years. A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Isabella, writing: ‘She is over eighty years of age, but still enjoys life, and dearly loves to meet people from the outside world...’ Farmers’ wives like Eleanor Green did much to assist tourism development, filling their houses to capacity and beyond with visitors bound for the glacier. Other local women left their families in the village and climbed the glacier to sew and stuff mattresses for the Defiance Hut, which was an important base for tourist mountaineering excursions. The greatest contribution was made by Rose Graham, who took West Coast hospitality traditions and adapted them into a successful tourism venture during her 36 year long career. Rose’s background in hotel management at the South Westland goldfields towns of Gillespies Beach and Okarito proved to be key to the success of the establishment of the Graham family hotel venture at Franz Josef. She was involved in every aspect of work in an expanding hotel, preparing up to 100 lunches a day, and finding time to select flowers for departing guests, many of whom became lifelong friends.

As the resort’s reputation grew, so too did the demand for accommodation, and in 1921 the Grahams commenced the construction of a new wing, which almost doubled the size of the hotel. By the late 1920s, the hotel could accommodate 120 guests. This confirmed the importance of tourism to the village economy, as the operation was now too big for the Grahams to manage alone, and jobs at the hotel helped supplement the incomes of the families of farmers and miners in the district.

By the late 1920s, tourism had replaced gold as Franz Josef’s main industry. Gold had provided a base upon which tourism could grow. It had brought Waiho’s first hotelier to the village, while the miners provided a customer base to mitigate the risk of building a tourist hotel. It seems symbolic of the change of emphasis in the character of the village that goldmining sluice pipes and tunnels later found new life as part of the hotel water system and hydro-electric scheme.

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26 Interview of Eleanor Green’s daughter, Jessie Chinn, with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 23 April 1997.
27 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 26 April 1998.
30 Notes on a meeting of Menrs Evans, County Clerk, Westland County Council and Peter and Alec Graham with Hon. G.W. Forbes, Minister in Charge of Scenery Preservation, Wellington July 1929. TO 1 581 Franz Josef Hotel Resors, Franz Josef Glacier and Hotel, National Archives, Wellington.
32 Ibid., pp. 136-137.
Tourism Development in the Glacier Valley

The hotel, although the focal point of village tourism, was only a starting point for the glacier tourism industry. A wider infrastructure was needed, and the development of huts, tracks and other facilities in the glacier valley was essential. The Grahams realised that tourists would need to be able to do a variety of guided excursions from the hotel, to enable them to experience the glacier environment to the full. This represented some significant challenges. Not only were there the frustrations of working in partnership with the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, but there were also major physical obstacles to overcome in building tourist tracks and huts in a glacier valley where the forces of nature were in the ascendant.

The problem of working with Department of Tourist and Health Resorts officials was essentially one of priority. The Grahams were practical men, committed to the development of a quality tourist resort at Franz Josef, while the Department had the whole of New Zealand to consider, and lacked first-hand knowledge of the difficulties of development in a volatile glacier valley. After Superintendent Thomas Donne’s visit in 1903, the Department paid for improvements to the tourist huts in both the Franz and Fox valleys.33 Donne also inspected a proposed track development up Roberts Point, in the Franz valley, which would give tourists access to the Grahams Saddle route to Mount Cook. The Department paid for the construction of this track.34 Ongoing funding of this nature was crucial to the development of the glaciers region.

Outwardly the partnership worked well. The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts and the Public Works Department allocated money for a network of tracks in the glacier valley, while the Public Works Department and the Grahams supplied the labour.35 By the mid 1920s tourists could do a round trip up the glacier, using tracks on either side of the valley, and bathe in hot springs on the way home, as well as making excursions to places like Peter’s Pool, named after the young 1890s tourist Peter Westland, or climb Alex Knob, for a panorama of glacier, mountains, forest,

33 Peter Graham, Peter Graham Mountain Guide p72; T.E. Donne, ‘South Island Tours’ p.xii.
34 T.E.Donne, ‘South Island Tours’ p. xii; L.H Lindon, ‘Across Grahams Saddle’ Geelong Grammar School Quarterly No.2 Vol XXXII July 1908 p.30. The Grahams Saddle was not named after the Graham family of Franz Josef, but for George Graham, one of the three who had made the first ascent of Mount Cook; Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef, p.40.
35 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 18 May 1998: Graham Sunday picnics usually involved a walk along one of the tracks so that maintenance work could be done.
This access gallery was destroyed by the Franz Josef Glacier advance of 1909, despite attempts by the guides to dynamite the ice out of its way. It was one of many instances of the supremacy of nature over the works of people in the glacier valley. A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
lakes and sea coast. This peak had won commendation from a Kew Gardens botanist, Dr A.W. Hill, as ‘worth coming out to New Zealand to see.’

The establishment of tracks was only the beginning of an ongoing battle for tourist access in the valley, however. The most dramatic force of nature was the glacier itself, advancing in 1909 to destroy a walkway attached to rock walls in the valley. Despite attempts to dynamite the ice out of the way, it rose some 61 metres to destroy this structure, then retreated, leaving a twisted mass of ironwork high on the valley wall. An average yearly rainfall of between 4345 mm and 5080 mm in the glacier valley has also had a major effect on tourism developments there. During the frequent floods the Waiho River would become a lethal torrent, sweeping away tracks, bridges and all other man-made structures in a matter of hours. While the Department worried about funding issues, the Grahams were left with the challenge of finding new routes to replace those that had been destroyed, no easy task in a confined valley where few places were beyond the reach of the Waiho River.

These problems often highlighted the differences in priority between the Grahams and the Department. While the Grahams sought money to restore flood damaged tracks, some Department officers expressed reluctance to waste money on ‘work that would be liable to destruction by storm.’ Some felt the Department had done enough in forming the tracks and that their maintenance should be the responsibility of the Westland County Council. There were no easy answers. By now the whole community of Waiho had recognised the importance of tourism to the local economy and wasted no opportunity to get their message across to government.

After a visit in 1924 by the Hon W. Nosworthy, Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts, 1000 pounds was granted for improving facilities at the glaciers. Local

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36 Peter Graham, ‘Quarterly Report, Graham Bros, Glacier Hotel, Waiho Gorge to General manager of Tourist and Health Resorts’ 31 January 1925 TO 1 581 Franz Josef Tourist Resorts, Franz Josef Glacier and Hotel National Archives, Wellington.
40 Correspondence between Alex and Peter Graham, Waiho Gorge, and B.N Wilson, general manager of Tourist and Health Resorts, Wellington 9 February 1915, 31 March 1915, 13 September 1915 TO 1 581 Franz Josef Tourist Resorts Franz Josef Glacier and Hotel National Archives, Wellington.
41 Ibid.
42 Hokitika Guardian (Hokitika) 1 September 1924.
people met with the Minister of Education, the Hon Harry Atmore, when he visited the village in 1929, petitioning for more money for tourist development in the valley.  

While the Department felt it was making a fair contribution to tourism in a region where it had no hotels or other property investment, the Westland County Council complained that ‘tourist votes in this district are greatly restricted in regard to comparative amounts provided for other centres’.  

A focus of tension between the Grahams and the Department was centred on the quarterly reports the Grahams were supposed to provide. The Grahams gave priority to getting the work done, neglecting at times to provide full written reports to the Department on their activities, and this eventually resulted in the withdrawal of their track caretakers’ grant. The Department claimed that as the Grahams had a hotel at Waiho, it was in their own interest to maintain the tracks, while the Grahams pointed out the major commitment involved in keeping open tracks which were being used by thousands of tourists, hundreds of whom were camping and not staying at the hotel. A reduced grant was reinstated, but it was an indication of growing tension between private and public enterprise in the valley.

Another conflict was centred on the bath house in glacier valley. One of the most important priorities of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts was the development of sanatoria at various New Zealand thermal resorts. Rotorua was the flagship of this operation, but the Department seemed reluctant to develop a health resort at Waiho, even after the Dominion Analyst found the waters curative to certain forms of rheumatism. In 1920 West Coast M.P., Tom Seddon, called for the development of the springs, saying that tourists disappointed in the Rotorua waters would be ‘charmed’ by those at Franz Josef. However the Waiho baths were derelict by 1921 when Bishop Julius of Christchurch visited, and it was only after

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43 Report on a Deputation of Residents of Waiho to the Hon Harry Atmore, Minister of Education, at Waiho 6 May 1929 TO 1 581 Franz Josef Tourist Resorts National Archives, Wellington.
44 S.J Evans, county clerk, Westland County Council, to general manager, Tourist Dept, Wellington 11 November 1931 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington.
45 Correspondence between Alex and Peter Graham, Waiho Gorge, and B.N Wilson and G.W. Clinkard, Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, Wellington, 10 June 1931, 15 June 1931, 7 July 1931, 23 September 1931, 28 October 1931, 31 October 1931 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington.
46 Letter from Hon Mr Nosworthy, Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts to Alex and Peter Graham 24 July 1924 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington.
47 Question to Minister in Charge of Tourist and Health Resorts, Hon Mr Nosworthy, from Tom Seddon, M.P. for Westland, Parliamentary Order Paper, House of representatives, 20 October 1920; Question to Minister in Charge of Tourist and Health Resorts, Hon Mr Nosworthy, from Tom Seddon, M.P. for Westland Supplementary Order Paper, House of Representatives, 14 July 1926.
The original Almer Bivvy, built in 1915 on a ridge above the Franz Josef Glacier, enabled the Grahams to extend their guided tourist excursions into the heart of the Southern Alps, but it was crushed by snow in 1919 and not replaced for several years.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
The Almer Hut, constructed in 1924, with money granted by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts. The Grahams and their guides carried the iron and timber high up the glacier to a site on a ridge overlooking the neve, a huge undertaking in the days before aircraft support.

Photograph: A. Bathate, A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
considerable public pressure that the Department allocated money to improve the facility.\textsuperscript{48}

The construction of mountain huts, vital to the extension of tourism into the Southern Alps, involved different problems. Again public and private enterprise had to work together, with similar problems to those outlined above, but the greatest difficulty was presented by nature. Building mountain huts in the Southern Alps was one of the biggest challenges undertaken by the tourist developers, in the days when there was no aircraft support and when every board or sheet of iron had to be carried up glaciers and across snowfields by the guides. In 1912, the Department had provided the funding for the Grahams to build a hut on Defiance Ridge, near the main icefall of the Franz Josef Glacier, opening up a range of mountaineering excursions to tourists.\textsuperscript{49} Another hut further up the glacier, Almer Bivvy, was opened in 1915, giving access to higher mountains of the Southern Alps, but it was crushed by snow in 1919. In 1924 the department granted a sum of 350 pounds to build a larger hut there.\textsuperscript{50} Plans were prepared by the Public Works Department, while the Grahams milled the timber for the hut, but it proved difficult to get labour for the job, as the hut builders had to be experienced mountaineers. An 11 kilometre climb up the glacier was required, and 10 men, including Peter Graham and some of his guides, were eventually employed to carry 157 18-kilogram loads to a site 1828 metres above sea level. Almer Hut was completed in June 1929.\textsuperscript{51} The hut was used by parties crossing the Grahams Saddle, and this route was vital to Franz Josef's tourism industry as it brought many mountaineers in from the Mount Cook resort. Almer Hut was also

\textsuperscript{48} New Zealand Herald (Auckland) 3 August 1921; Following letters from the Westland County Council and a tourist, Arthur Wilson, the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts advised that the Grahams‘ track grant should cover the cost of maintenance of the bath house, an unrealistic expectation given that only 50 pounds per annum was granted to the Grahams for work on the high maintenance glacier valley track system. However the department revisited this decision in 1928, when it granted 240 pounds for a new bath house. Correspondence 30 August 1921, 11 October 1923, 16 June 1928 TO I 581 National Archives, Wellington; Since the 1881 Thermal Springs District Act it had been government policy to open springs for curative purposes throughout New Zealand, though the Waiho springs received little attention compared with resorts like Rotorua and Hamner: Alan H. Grey, Aotearoa New Zealand A Historical Geography Christchurch: Canterbury University Press 1994 p.381.

\textsuperscript{49} Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef pp. 108, 141-142.

\textsuperscript{50} Correspondence between Alex Graham, Waiho Gorge, and B.Wilson, general manager of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts 1 April 1920, 17 September 1920, 16 June 1924 TO I 581 National Archives, Wellington; B.N.Wilson, Report of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1915, H-2 p.5.

\textsuperscript{51} Correspondence between the Public Works Department and Alex and Peter Graham, Waiho Gorge 8 October 1928, 11 October 1928, 24 October 1928, 13 December 1928, 26 April 1929, 16 May 1929, 6 June 1929 2F.J.G. 9.9a A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
expected to boost skiing and winter tourism in South Westland, although predictions made about the extent of this at the hut opening ceremony were to prove over-optimistic.\textsuperscript{52}

A boost to tourism at Franz Josef resulted from a development well south of the village, the construction of the Copland Pass track and hut system. This provided a direct link to the Mount Cook tourist resort. This, together with the Grahams Saddle route, enabled tourists to do a round trip across the Southern Alps, and proved very popular.\textsuperscript{53} Prior to the track’s construction, a few mountaineers had used the route, including a party of women in 1903, but it was too rugged for most tourists.\textsuperscript{54} The track became a viable alternative to travelling by road over Arthurs Pass and down to the glacier.\textsuperscript{55} In 1916 about 50 people arrived in Franz Josef over the Copland Pass, and the route grew in popularity in subsequent years.\textsuperscript{56} The Copland Track construction had proved somewhat easier than the Almer Hut building project had been, as the terrain was more benign, the workers did not have to be mountaineers to do the job, and pack horses could be used to transport materials over much of the route. Due to various bureaucratic delays and unavailability of labour, the Douglas Rock Hut, the final link in the chain, was not approved until 1929, however. Its construction took place soon after.\textsuperscript{57}

Roads, Rivers and Motor Transport

The first three decades of the twentieth century thus saw the growth of a tourist infrastructure which should have made Franz Josef into one of New Zealand’s leading tourist resorts. Those who visited were in no doubt that the Franz Josef

\textsuperscript{52} W.J Wilson, ‘Band of Mountaineers Make history High in the Southern Alps – New Almer Hut opens up Wonderful Skiing Possibilities – Franz Josef Glacier region should now become a popular Winter Resort’ \textit{Christchurch Star} (Christchurch) 24 August 1929.

\textsuperscript{53} B.E. Baughan, comment in ‘The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book’ 21 March 1912 p.4 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika: Blanche Baughan was one of many tourists who arrived at Franz Josef by way of the Copland Pass from Mount Cook. There are many other references in this Visitors’ Book, and in letters: see Dorothy Theomin’s letters Personal Papers MS 1164 Hocken Library, Dunedin.

\textsuperscript{54} T.E. Donne, ‘New Zealand Department of Tourist and Health Resorts Second Annual Report’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1903, H-2, p.xiv.


\textsuperscript{56} B.N. Wilson, ‘Annual Report of the Tourist and Health Resorts Department’ Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1915, H-2, p.4; Report of a Deputation of Waiho Residents to Minister of Education, the Hon. Harry Atmore, at Waiho 6 May 1929 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington; Report of P.H. Johnson, district engineer, Public Works Department, Greymouth to the Undersecretary of Public Works, Wellington 16 July 1929 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington

\textsuperscript{57} Letter from B.N. Wilson, general manager, Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, to engineer-in-chief, Public Works Department, Wellington 31 July 1929 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington.
Glacier could hold its place among renowned resorts worldwide. The problem was
that the area was still failing to attract large numbers of tourists. To discover the
reason for this it is necessary to consider whether the access to South Westland had
improved since the days when Janet Westland and other adventurous nineteenth
century tourists had visited.

In the numerous accounts of journeys to the glacier, written between 1900 and
1930, it is obvious that the route remained arduous and frequently dangerous. By
1900 the highway from Hokitika to Okarito had been widened from a bridle track to a
dray road, but this stopped about 13 kilometres from the glacier, and tourists had the
choice of riding over a narrow track to Franz Josef or following the Waiho River
inland from its mouth, both of which were difficult journeys. The Department of
Tourist and Health Resorts, while enthusiastic about the tourist potential of the
glaciers region, was well aware of the access problems. Superintendent Donne
described South Westland as 'a tourist route of marvellous value' following his visit
in 1903, but subsequent reports made frequent reference to the access problem,
concluding that South Westland tourists needed 'a spice of adventure' if they wanted
to see 'some of the grandest scenery in the colony', and that very few would continue
further south over the rough Haast Pass track. Tourists visiting Franz Josef Glacier
confirmed these views. Maud Moreland wrote that in 1907 the road 'was like few
others in the world... At times it was there; at times it was not. The swamps, or the
sea, or the rivers had taken it; then it would reappear, having left us for miles at a
time...' Although this refers to the road south of the glaciers, its condition impacted
on Franz Josef's tourism industry, as it added to the difficulties of the Copland route
as well as discouraging tourists from doing a round trip through Westland and into
Otago. The lack of a road over the Haast Pass was one of the key deterrents to

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58 Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef p.31; W.G. Murray,
'Appendix 3: Road Construction and Maintenance' in 'Department of Lands and Survey Report 1899 –
1900' Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1900, C-1, p.92.
59 T.E. Donne, 'South Island Tours' p.xii; C.R.C. Robieson, C.R.C. 'Appendix I: Westland' in
'Department of Tourist and Health Resorts Report', Appendices to the Journals of the House of
Representatives, 1904. H-2, p.12; T.E. Donne, 'Department of Tourist and Health Resorts Report',
60 A. Maud Moreland, Through South Westland p.17; Lindon made similar comments on roads leading
from 'nowhere to nowhere' as portions of well-made coach roads gave way to rough tracks.
Government roading votes tended to be expended in patches in South Westland rather than in a planned
continuation of the road from Okarito: L.H. Lindon, 'A Trip to Westland' Geelong Grammar School
Quarterly Vol XXXII No.2 July 1907 pp. 48-49.
61 'Over the Haast Track – An Account of a Journey by West Coast M.P. Tom Seddon and the Mayor
and Mayoress of Adelaide, Mr and Mrs Bruce' Otago Daily Times (Dunedin) 19 January 1906. By
Coaches and cars were often no match for Westland's unbridged rivers, which cut off access during floods and proved a major obstacle for tourism at a time when access to other New Zealand resorts was relatively easy.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
tourists, as all but the most adventurous had to retrace their steps after visiting
the glacier, travelling back to Canterbury or Nelson, rather than being able to continue
on through Otago.

The numerous rivers bisecting the narrow strip of land between mountains and
sea on the West Coast were also a major barrier to travel. In a report on his trip to
South Westland, Donne described the rivers as ‘torrential and running in many
channels over wide and shifting beds of shingle,’ commenting that this made them
difficult to bridge, and adding that, ‘To develop this route in a satisfactory manner,
acceptable to tourists from outside New Zealand, would involve an enormous
expenditure.’ Donne went on to commend the route to the glaciers to the ‘more
adventurous’ tourist.62 His comments are borne out by numerous travellers. Ross
minister, Henry Newton, wrote of a typical journey from Ross to Waiho in 1902,
when heavy rain made it impossible to take a buggy across the rivers, necessitating
the hire of boats, and enforced delays at ferry houses waiting for the rivers to go
down.63 As one mountaineer commented in 1907, everyone wanted up-to-date reports
on the changing channels and fords, ‘the state of the rivers being the most important
topic in Westland.’64 The glacier-fed Waiho River was one of the most dangerous,
and horses crossing were sometimes struck with blocks of ice, which could be a
frightening experience for their riders.65

As more tourists arrived at Waiho, the call for bridges intensified, led by the
Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, with Donne commenting in 1906 that three
large, unbridged rivers between Hokitika and the glaciers presented a serious obstacle

1906 it was obvious that the nineteenth century plans to link South Westland and Otago by rail would
not come into fruition, and a 1923 proposal to extend the railway from Ross to Waiho and a motor road
to Haast to facilitate the tourism and dairying industries was equally unsuccessful: W.T. Morpeth,
‘Appendix 1: Settlement of Crown Lands’ in Department of Lands and Survey Report 1922-23’,
Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1923, C-I, p.18.
62 T.E. Donne, ‘South Island Tours’ p. xii.
63 Henry E. Newton, ‘A Journey from Ross to Waiho in 1902’ In ‘A Trip to the Hills, 1902’ Photocopy
of Diary in A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
64 L.H. Lindon, ‘A Trip to Westland’ Geelong Grammar School Quarterly Vol XXXI No. 2 July 1907
p.46.
County Council after a Tour through South Westland 19 – 27 February 1919’ 2 W 6.9 A.C. Graham
Collection, Hokitika; Garnet Perry, Memories The Autobiography of Mr Garnet Perry Hokitika:
Richards and Meyer Ltd 1972 pp. 27-28; A. Maud Moreland, Through South Westland p.55. Although
there was a footbridge over the Waiho River, a traffic bridge was not built until 1926 and it was
anticipated that this would lead to a ‘great rush of tourists’ to the glacier: B.N. Wilson, ‘Annual
Report of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts’ Appendices to the Journals of the House of
A Reo Roadster, the first car to reach Franz Josef, outside the Glacier Hotel after an epic journey from Hokitika in 1911, during which it was towed through the rivers by horses and incurred many punctures.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
to travellers. Following plans to bridge one of these, the Wanganui, in 1910, the Department of Lands and Survey was over optimistic in its assertion that ‘communication for upwards of a hundred miles south of Hokitika will be uninterrupted in ordinary weather.’ This took no account of the rivers and creeks which were still unbridged and the frequent change from ordinary to flood conditions. Many people felt that the deficiencies of the South Westland highway were impeding the local tourism industry. The comment of one tourist in 1913 is typical of the opinion of the time: ‘(I) think if the Government would build bridges over five rivers (between Hokitika and Waiho) this would be the most popular motor trip in New Zealand.’ Newspapers also took up the call for bridges.

The problems of the South Westland highway were exacerbated by the changing forms of transportation. In the early years of the twentieth century, when horse-and-dray transport was common, the road did not have to be as good as it did after the advent of motor transport. There was another option for tourists. Cycling became popular from 1901 onwards, and it proved a good way of tackling the primitive conditions. A bicycle could be carried over rough sections of the road and across creeks and rivers, or loaded into a dray or ferry boat if the rivers were high. With more people driving cars, however, it was obvious to tourism developers that urgent work needed to be done on the South Westland road if the region was to benefit from the consequent upsurge of tourist travel. Tourists would be able to reach the glacier by car in a day trip from Hokitika, instead of spending several days on the journey. The first car, a Reo Roadster, arrived in Waiho in 1911, after a twelve hour journey from Hokitika, having been pulled through the rivers by horses and sustaining many punctures.

68 Jack Virgo, comment in ‘The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors Book’ 1 January 1913 p.9 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika: This comment is typical of many in the book written during the next decade.
69 ‘The Western Glaciers – A Great Climbing Centre – Improvements at Franz Josef Glacier’ Unattributed 1923 newspaper clipping 2 F.J.G. 9.3 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
71 ‘Bicycling to Franz Josef Glacier’ Mid Pacific Magazine Vol 17 (6) June 1919 pp. 580-585
71 ‘Back in 1911 A Drive to the Franz Josef Glacier was real Adventure’ Greymouth Evening Star (Greymouth) 18 July 1958.
Dunedin mountaineer, Dorothy Theomin, enjoyed the adventurous style of tourism at Franz Josef, often climbing over mountain passes from the Hermitage but, in this instance, travelling by Clements Service Car to the village in the 1920s.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Another important development for tourist travel in South Westland was the inauguration of scheduled car services to the glacier. Clements Motor Services and Newman Brothers Motor Service began regular runs to Waiho in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{72} Those pleased to see the horse-driven mail coach displaced by this new technology soon realised the cars were no match for the West Coast rivers.\textsuperscript{73} It was a point quickly appreciated by the Canterbury Automobile Association, which, from 1920 was calling for bridges in South Westland.\textsuperscript{74} Many comments were made on the delays caused, perhaps best expressed in a ballad written by Waiho miner John Schilling:

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ev'ry mailday you are waiting for the Royal Mail
\item in vain
\item But some creek or engine trouble will have her stuck again
\item And your language is uncivil
\item And the mailman you could tar
\item You wish Clements to the devil
\item Him and his old car.\textsuperscript{75}
\end{enumerate}

Tourists made frequent comments about the experience of lurching through the rivers in these cars.\textsuperscript{76} Roading developments continued, however, and by 1923, after considerable progress with roading and bridges, it was possible to reach Waiho from Hokitika in just seven hours.\textsuperscript{77} By 1930, all streams were bridged, and a large number of private cars were travelling to the glacier.\textsuperscript{78} However rain could still transform the new road into a quagmire in a matter of hours. One traveller recalled floods washing away bridge approaches in 1928, forcing tourists to 'cross the raging torrent (some thirty feet wide) over a single rickety plank', an unwanted and unsought after acrobatic performance.\textsuperscript{79}

The journey from Hokitika to South Westland was not the only obstacle for tourists. The Arthurs Pass route remained as hazardous as it had been in the nineteenth century, subject to closure during winter snowfalls and spring floods.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{72} Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, \textit{Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef} p.151; \textit{New Zealand Tours - Beautiful New Zealand} 1925 Andrews, Baty and Co Ltd p.305.
\textsuperscript{73} Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, \textit{Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef} p.151.
\textsuperscript{74} Clipping from New Zealand Times 25 February 1920 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington.
\textsuperscript{75} John Schilling Personal File II.P.A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
\textsuperscript{76} 'The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors' Book' 1911-1928, A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
\textsuperscript{77} J.W. Collins, 'South Westland - The District With a Future'.
\textsuperscript{78} B.N. Wilson, 'Report of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts' \textit{Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives}, 1930, H-2, p.10.
\textsuperscript{79} J.R. Young, 'To Franz Josef Glacier' \textit{New Zealand Railways Magazine} 1 June 1928 p.60.
\textsuperscript{80} A. Barron, 'Appendix 3: Roads' in 'Department of Lands and Survey Report', \textit{Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives}, 1901, C-1, p.103.
Despite these problems, its spectacular scenery had ensured it was 'one of the most famous tourist routes in the colony', according to a 1908 guidebook, while one tourist commented that the road was of such 'dizzying boldness' that it rendered mountain roads in the Himalayas and Europe 'tame and prosaic' by comparison. The opening of the Otira tunnel in 1923 represented a major development for South Westland tourism, as people were no longer restricted by closures of Arthurs Pass. Tourists frequently had their cars loaded on to the train at Springfield, collecting them on the West Coast side of the Alps, and driving on to the glacier.

The West Coast road thus continued to present serious obstacles to tourists during the first three decades of the twentieth century, and any advances made could be effortlessly eroded by rain. Rain undoubtedly had a detrimental effect on tourism. Many would not have chosen to holiday in a place famous for its heavy summer rainfalls, and the Glacier Hotel Visitors' Books are full of comments on trips being aborted because of the weather.

Another major disincentive to tourism was the lack of suitable accommodation on the route to the glaciers. Ferry houses had not been built with a growing tourism industry in mind, and were often taxed beyond capacity by travellers stranded by the weather. While some, like Maud Moreland, relished a meal of fried trout at one of the ferry houses, and enjoyed talking to West Coast characters along the way, those promoting tourism in the region felt the lack of suitable accommodation impeded its growth and discouraged overseas visitors used to comfortable hotels.

Perceptions on Promotion

Difficult access and the lack of suitable accommodation on the route to the glaciers were generally accepted as the reasons for the relatively slow development of tourism at Franz Josef, but did a lack of promotion also impede its growth? Many

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83 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 26 April 1998; A summer alternative was to have cars detained at Arthurs Pass so motorists could drive down the spectacular Otira Gorge: A Holiday in Westland Christchurch: Canterbury Progress League (undated); There was a regular Newmans car service from Otira to Hokitika and, in summer, from Arthurs Pass to Hokitika. Tourists would travel from Christchurch to Arthurs Pass by train, paying one pound, 15 shillings and sixpence to transport their cars there: Canterbury Automobile Association Yearbook 1927-28 Christchurch: 1928 p.69.
84 A. Maud Moreland, Through South Westland pp. 25,28; Letter from B.N. Wilson, Department of Tourist and Health Resorts to S.J. Collett, tourist agent, Christchurch 20 May 1916 TO 1 581 National
tourists thought so, as evidenced in their comments in the Glacier Hotel Visitors’ Book from 1911 onwards. Writer Blanche Baughan, who arrived at Waiho in 1912 commented: ‘This place should be far better known for the beauty of its scenery and the comfort of its accommodation.’ In 1913, a Napier tourist described the glacier as ‘the climax of a splendid tour’, calling for advertising of South Westland’s ‘magnificent and varied scenery’, while a Dunedin tourist commented: ‘Quite convinced that scenery is more than worthy of recommendation to all tourists in Dominion.’ A tourist who cycled to Franz Josef in 1919 commented that the area was ‘comparatively little known’, but, with improved communications, should rank with the Hermitage and Fiordland as one of the Dominion’s premier tourist resorts.

In 1920, a Wellington tourist wrote to the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, complaining that the trip to the glaciers was receiving insufficient publicity, while Rotorua and Mount Cook were ‘extensively advertised’.

Tourists were not the only ones voicing these opinions. West Coast M.P. Tom Seddon, urged the Minister of Tourism to visit South Westland, so he could see the importance of promoting tourist traffic there, commenting that both Rotorua and Mount Cook were ‘over advertised’ and attracting more tourists than they could cope with. A 1923 newspaper article supported Seddon’s view, claiming that ‘Under the old Liberal regime money was poured out like water at Rotorua, which does not in any way compare with the southern wonderland’, adding that some Scottish and American tourists had been ‘surprised and delighted’ with the West Coast, which they had discovered without being told about by the department. The same year,
following a Ministry of Industries and Commerce visit to South Westland, secretary J.W. Collins said no effort should be spared in advertising the region throughout New Zealand and overseas. In 1930 guide Peter Graham criticised the department for failing to inform VIP overseas tourists like Lord Craigvon, Dominion Secretary of State Leopold Amery, and the head of the Tourist Department of Honolulu, Mr Armitage, of South Westland. 

There is little doubt that other resorts, particularly Rotorua, were enjoying the bulk of the Department of Tourist and Health Resort’s efforts, as evidenced in the detailed descriptions of developments published in the Department’s annual reports. However not all tourists enjoyed its methods of advertising, as suggested by the irritated comments of one visitor in 1902, who spoke of tourist agents or persuading people to make excursions they would not have chosen to do. One tourist wrote, ‘At Rotorua this irrepressible individual is very often voted a most confounded bore. With the hide of a modern colonial politician, no amount of rebuffs can abash the ubiquitous being’. South Westland tourists suffered no such irritations, and the Department, in its New Zealand wide publicity initiatives did, in fact, include the West Coast. Department photographer Thomas Pringle visited in 1903 to obtain publicity photographs. The Department also published a booklet in 1906, ‘The Golden Coast’, a 51 page photographic essay, which, while laden with purple prose – ‘They (the glaciers) emerge like great icy tongues from deep mountain jaws’ is a typical example – was full of useful information for tourists to the West Coast. The publication, which took up Charles Douglas’s 1894 suggestion and described the view from the Okarito Spit as the ‘finest panorama of the Southern Alps’, included itineraries and a schedule of fares. The glaciers received coverage in other Department publications, such as its ‘New Zealand’ pictorial booklet, issued in about

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92 ‘South Westland – Tourist Development – Deputation to Hon W.A. Veitch’ Grey River Argus (Greymouth) 7 February 1930.
94 See p.5 of this thesis.
95 Peter Graham, Peter Graham Mountain Guide pp. 71-72
1907. \(^{97}\) Donne was promoting South Westland as an adventure holiday destination for cyclists. In 1903 he encouraged one cyclist, who he met in Hokitika, to continue on to Franz Josef, and in 1916 arranged for an account of a cycling trip to the Franz Josef Glacier to be distributed to all the Department’s New Zealand agencies. \(^{98}\) In 1920 the Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts, W. Nosworthy, defended the Department against claims that it was neglecting South Westland, saying that all its booking agents were expected to direct traffic to the glaciers. He made no apology for giving priority to resorts where it had direct interests, such as the Hermitage, Rotorua and the Milford Track. \(^{99}\)

Even if the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts’ promotion initiatives for the glaciers region were deficient, there were other avenues of publicity available. Peter Graham, whose mountain guiding career was launched by Donne, when he offered him a job at the Hermitage in 1903, worked in the department’s Wellington head office during the winter months, giving him the opportunity to make some useful contacts. He became a friend of Tom Seddon, who became M.P. for Westland, and an important ally in the promotion of tourism in South Westland. \(^{100}\) Franz Josef was also included on a list of places to visit kept at Government House for use by Governors General. \(^{101}\) The publicity attended by the visits of Governors General would have done much for the promotion cause.

From 1901, the *New Zealand Illustrated Magazine* carried a variety of features on the West Coast. These were wide in scope, ranging from a fictitious romance during a coach trip to Otira, kiwi hunting in South Westland, and wagon and cycle trips to Hokitika. \(^{102}\) It is unlikely that they were written for promotional purposes, but they would have had the effect of putting the region before readers all over New Zealand.

\(^{97}\) Anon *New Zealand Wellington: New Zealand Government Department of Tourist and Health Resorts.*


\(^{99}\) Letter from the Hon Mr W. Nosworthy, Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts, to R.W. Shallcrass, Wellington April 1920 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington.

\(^{100}\) Peter Graham, *Peter Graham Mountain Guide* pp. 72,152; Premier Richard John Seddon had regular social gatherings for people from his West Coast electorate living in Wellington: Interview of Peter Graham’s son, Gar Graham, with Trish McCormack, Okarito 3 May 1998.

\(^{101}\) Interview of Gar Graham with Trish McCormack, 3 May 1998.

Zealand. Other initiatives during this decade included a West Coast court at the Christchurch Exhibition in 1906, organised by Westland surveyor and tourism promoter George Roberts, while Hokitika and South Westland’s mountain scenery rated an enthusiastic description in a guidebook published in Dunedin in 1908. Both Roberts and Hokitika mountaineer, Ebenezer Teichelmann, did much to encourage visitors to Hokitika to go on to the glaciers region, while Teichelmann and track builder Peter Hende supplied scenic photographs of the region for various publications.

Large format pictorial magazines contained lavish illustrations of West Coast scenery, while its advertising and editorial content showed that by 1910 the people living in Westland were focussed on the development of tourism and prepared to promote it themselves where possible. William Batson, noted for his talent for publicity, took out a full page in one pictorial magazine, to advertise his hotel, guiding service, and Franz Josef’s mountain scenery. After the Grahams took over the hotel, they placed similar advertisements in such publications. A pamphlet on the Franz Josef Glacier, published in the 1920s, outlined fares and tariffs for travel, accommodation and guided excursions, and promoted the region as ‘one of the glacier wonders of the world’ mentioning that the glacier descended to within 700 feet of sea level, ‘lower than any outside the Arctic Circle’. This glacier-to-rainforest feature would be used repeatedly in advertising in subsequent years. Miscellaneous 1920s publications, such as an illustrated booklet by Franz Josef Glacier explorer Arthur Harper, promoting the region as the ‘Switzerland of the South’ and full of informed description of the Southern Alps, and a book of photographs of the Franz Josef Glacier by mountaineer G.E. Mannering would have boosted the region’s profile.

177-183; Ralph Austin, ‘A Cycle Trip to the West Coast’ New Zealand Illustrated Magazine December 1901 pp. 177-181.
104 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 3 November 1998.
105 Anon A Tour Through Westland – A Complete Resume of the Best Westland Scenery Hokitika: James King Bookseller and Stationer 1910; Anon Jubilee of Westland 1864 – 1914 Hokitika: Jas. King Stationer 1914: Dowells Motor Garage and Livery Stables and Pears Dominon Hotel both advertised tourist trips to the glaciers from Hokitika, while the publication also suggested tourist itineraries via the Buller Gorge or Arthurs Pass.
106 Anon A Tour Through Westland – A Complete Resume of the Best Westland Scenery; Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika 26 April 1998.
107 Anon Jubilee of Westland 1864 – 1914; Anon Beautiful Westland 1919 2 W 6.9a A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
108 Anon The Franz Josef Glacier Waiho Gorge South Westland (undated pamphlet - 1920s approx) Hocken Library, Dunedin.
throughout the country. A Holiday in Westland', issued by the Canterbury Progress League, claimed that Westland had not gained the reputation it deserved as one of the foremost alpine countries of the world. Interestingly, this does not blame a lack of promotion, but suggests that an 'air of failure, almost of despair' left in the wake of the gold rush was partly responsible. West Coasters and promoters from outside the region were striving to mitigate this by forging a new identity for Westland based on tourism.

Some of New Zealand's leading newspapers played a key role in promoting the Franz Josef Glacier. The Christmas 1911 pictorial magazine, issued by the The Press, contained a large colour photograph of the Franz Josef Glacier and black-and-white photographs of other West Coast scenery. Newspaper reporters often stayed at the Glacier Hotel, and their articles assisted the promotion cause. G.E. Fenwick wrote a series of West Coast articles for the Otago Daily Times and Witness in 1912, while E.E. Muir wrote a series on South Westland for the Evening Post in 1929, and both series were later published in booklet form. Muir's articles, like many other publications of the time, was full of over-descriptive prose, but contained useful details on excursions in the vicinity of Franz Josef, and was supplemented with Government Publicity photographs. Freelance journalist Elsie K. Morton was published widely in book and article form, and wrote extensively of South Westland. Franz Josef even had some overseas newspaper coverage, including a

109 A.P. Harper, An Alpine Paradise Written for the New Zealand Council of the British Empire Exhibition (undated) pp. 6-19, 22-23; G.E. Mannering, The Franz Josef Glacier New Zealand (undated): There are no publication details in this booklet but it must have been produced after 1926 as it contains a photograph of the Waiho traffic bridge which was not completed until that year.
110 Anon A Holiday in Westland, New Zealand Christchurch: Canterbury Progress League (undated but it must be post 1922 as it refers to Peter Graham who did not return from the Hermitage until that year).
111 Ibid.
113 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher by Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 26 April 1998.
115 E.E. Muir, Franz Josef Glacier South Westland New Zealand - the most Beautiful Thing in the World.
feature in the Honolulu Star Bulletin in 1925.117

Probably one of the greatest promoters of all was New Zealand Railways.118 With the completion of the Otira rail tunnel to the West Coast, the region acquired a new tourist attraction, a spectacular train journey across the Southern Alps and through a tunnel considered one of the rail wonders of the world. The New Zealand Railways Magazine published numerous illustrated features on South Westland and the glaciers from the late 1920s onwards.119 Its publicity branch produced booklets, such as 'Charm of Franz Josef, New Zealand', encouraging tourists to use the railways.120 Articles on motor car excursions throughout New Zealand were another useful means of promotion during this time.121

It is difficult to measure the effect of any of the various promotion initiatives, as there is little information available on how most tourists actually found out about the Franz Josef Glacier. It does seem reasonable to suggest, however, that there was more work being done on the promotion of South Westland than was commonly believed.

The Conservation-Tourism Relationship

It is evident that the development of a tourist infrastructure at Franz Josef, some improvements to the South Westland road, the increased use of motor transport and some wide ranging promotion initiatives had combined to open up the glaciers region during this period. There was another factor which influenced the subsequent growth of tourism in South Westland, a burgeoning nationwide conservation movement. In this era tourism and conservation interests had similar goals. It was in the interests of the tourist developer to encourage the formation of scenic reserves in the region with an obvious benefit for conservation.

117 Ray T. Baker, 'Islands of New Zealand – Agriculture Vies with Mining as an Industry' Honolulu Star-Bulletin 25 April 1925: This was one of a series of articles by photo-journalist Ray Baker and contained detailed illustrated coverage of Waiho and an excursion on the Franz Josef Glacier.

118 Department of Tourist and Publicity Historical Note TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington.

119 J.R. Young, 'To Franz Josef Glacier' New Zealand Railways Magazine August 1 1928 pp. 47-48: Young describes a climb of Mount Moltke, above the Franz Josef Glacier, and comments on the trip to the West Coast by train as one 'easily undertaken'; E.S. Dollimore, 'Glimpses of West Coast Scenery' New Zealand Railways Magazine November 1 1927 pp. 9-10.

120 Anon Charm of Franz Josef New Zealand The World’s Most Beautiful Glacier Wellington: Publicity Branch, New Zealand Railways (undated).

The creation of scenic reserves in South Westland involved a cooperative working relationship between conservation and tourism interests. Thomas Donne was making strong statements on the need for forest conservation at a time when the newly appointed Scenery Preservation Commission was reporting on land suitable for scenic reservation. Donne described the Westland forests as ‘probably the finest in New Zealand’ and called for their preservation, ‘especially in the vicinity of the track leading from the Waiho accommodation-house to the foot of the Franz Josef Glacier’. The Westland Commissioner of Crown Lands, George Roberts, was meanwhile working on a list of proposed reserves to ‘fully protect the many scenes of beauty in this district’. In 1907 he reported that 19,808 acres had been permanently gazetted as scenic and sanctuary reserves in Westland. Although the Franz Josef Glacier was recognised as one of the key attractions on the West Coast, it was not until 1915 that a scenic reserve of almost 50,000 acres was created there.

Tourism promoters were often conservationists, and no conflicts of interest were perceived. George Roberts, for example, was an enthusiastic advocate of both tourism and conservation. Ebenezer Teichelmann, a close friend of Alec and Peter Graham, had a major influence on the development of tourism at Franz Josef, and also became a strong voice for conservation in the region. The Grahams themselves played a key role in conservation at Franz Josef, protecting bird life in the glacier.

122 T.E. Donne, ‘South Island Tours’ p.xii.
125 G.H.M. McClure, ‘Appendix 1: Settlement of Crown Lands – Westland’ in ‘Reports of the Department of Lands 1910-11’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1911, C-1, p.16; J. MacKenzie, ‘Department of Lands and Survey Scenery Preservation Report’ in ‘Reports of the Department of Lands and Survey 1914-15’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1915, C-6, pp. 2.4; Other reserves were created along the tourist route to the glacier, such as one on the banks of the Waiho River in 1921: T.N. Brodrick, ‘Department of Lands and Survey Scenery Preservation Report’ in ‘Reports of the Department of Lands and Survey 1920-21’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1921, C-6, pp. 1.3.
valley from hunters, after they were appointed honorary rangers. Arthur Harper, following his exploration of the Franz Josef Glacier, did much to promote both tourism and conservation. There were dissenting voices, however. It is obvious from the writings of Charles Douglas that he was a reluctant tourism promoter, and his 1890s warnings about the dangers the industry posed to aesthetic values were ahead of their time.

Insights into the conservation movement can be gained by considering New Zealanders’ views of their physical environment during this period. At the turn of the century most settlers were engaged in an ongoing struggle to carve farmland out of a rugged environment. Although the theory that this led to them hating the forest is open to dispute, there is little doubt that the breaking in of land for farming was a battle which would have expended all of the settler’s energy. Where, then, was the impulse to preserve the New Zealand landscape born? In his thesis ‘From Acclimatisation to Preservation’ Paul Star credits Canterbury novelist Edith Searle Grossman with being the first person to try to analyse conservationism in New Zealand as an historical movement. Grossman’s article, ‘The People’s Parks and Playgrounds in New Zealand’, published in 1901, predates the formation of the Scenery Preservation Commission. She credited modern democracy with the idea of giving parks to the people as their inheritance, and suggested that those promoting reservations for tourism were, in fact, motivated as much by aesthetics as they were by economics. Grossman commented that ‘New Zealanders hardly know the

128 Letter and Quarterly Report from Alex Graham, Waiho Gorge, to the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts 5 October 1920 and 1 July 1921, Quarterly Report from Peter Graham to Department of Tourist and Health Resorts 25 June 1924 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington.
130 Pascoe, John Mr Explorer Douglas Wellington: A.H & A.W. Reed 1969 pp. 90-92, 133; Douglas’s concerns were that wilderness values would be compromised as tourists demanded hotels and other infrastructure in South Westland. He had a deep knowledge of South Westland birds, and observed their depletion in many valleys during his exploring years, correctly attributing this to the ‘dense ignorance’ of the acclimatisation movement in its introduction ferrets and rabbits to New Zealand. Further decimation to bird habitats through the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts-driven deer introduction programmes came after Douglas’s time, but would have vindicated his fears for South Westland’s wild places in the wake of tourism development.
132 Paul Star, ‘From Acclimatisation to Preservation’ pp. 219,245.
natural treasures they possess'. This view is supported by much of the literature of the time. A dominant theme of New Zealand poetry and prose regards the transformation of New Zealand's wild places into something more useful. While many writers of the early twentieth century were appalled by the ugliness of the burnt forests and desecrated lands, as Lawrence Jones suggests, they justified this by imagining future pasture lands where the bush had once been.

The development of a conservation movement in New Zealand is evidence that it takes only an enlightened few to lay the foundations for change. Tourism and its perceived economic value had much to do with this development, and, although it appeared that there was no conflict with conservation, foundations were being laid which would have profound future consequences. There is no evidence to suggest that Westland's early conservationists had any unease about Donne's enthusiasm for acclimatisation. In hindsight it is easy to agree with Star's view that Donne's appointment as Superintendent of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts 'well displayed the tenuous link between tourism and the protection of the indigenous environment.' Donne's enthusiasm for New Zealand's wild places is beyond dispute but like many European settlers, he believed exotic fauna would enhance this landscape. Unlike most, however, Donne was in the position to do something about this apparent deficiency in the New Zealand environment, mobilising the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts to become the greatest importer of deer to this country, justifying this move by suggesting it would attract tourist hunters from all over the world. In 1907 he encouraged Emperor Franz Josef of Austria to send chamois for release in the Southern Alps, and he also introduced thar to New Zealand, obtaining a

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135 Lawrence Jones, 'Versions of the Dream: Literature and the Search for Identity' in Identity and Culture in New Zealand ed David Novitz and Bill Wilmott: Wellington GP Books 1989 p.191; While William Satchell's Toll of the Bush (1906) is a grim story of the cost to settlers of taming the land, its ending symbolises victory for man over the environment. In Jane Mander's Story of a New Zealand River (1920) the author's strong identification with the bush is evident in her poetical description of the felling of trees, yet even in this novel the progress represented by Tom Roland's sawmill is not totally castigated. The realism of much New Zealand literature stands in contrast to the flowery prose being written by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts and others advertising New Zealand's scenic attractions to tourists.
137 Ibid., pp. 67, 201.
flock from the Duke of Bedford in Great Britain. \textsuperscript{139} At the time, there was no appreciation of the way in which deer would devastate forests and destroy bird and insect habitats. The chamois released near the Hermitage eventually made their way over the Southern Alps, where they were welcomed by Peter and Alec Graham, who reported to the Department in the mid 1920s that chamois had arrived in Westland. Herds of 50 to 70 animals were observed above the Franz Josef Glacier. \textsuperscript{140} By 1927 the problems caused by deer in scenic reserves were becoming obvious, and they were hunted as a pest. \textsuperscript{141} Today, the browsing of introduced mammals is considered a major cause of the disappearance of birds which were common in South Westland one hundred years ago. \textsuperscript{142}

Tourism, then, justified the introduction of mammals which endangered New Zealand’s forests and bird habitats, a problem which impacted severely on South Westland. Given the depth of enthusiasm for deer introduction to New Zealand, however, it seems reasonable to suggest they could have been brought here without the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts. Native birds faced greater dangers than the tourist. A case in point is that of the kiwi. There is no evidence to suggest a 1901 article on kiwi hunting in South Westland led to a new tourist sport. \textsuperscript{143} Far greater damage was done by Okarito based gold prospector, William Docherty, who hunted them for scientists to study and for kiwi skin muff manufacturers, and who claimed to have killed over 2000 kiwis. \textsuperscript{144}

Tourism, in fact, helped the preservation of some bird species. In settler New Zealand, the kea was reviled as a sheep killer and hunted in a manner later described as ‘the worst case of avicide in New Zealand’s history.’ \textsuperscript{145} However, the kea found an increasing number of supporters when tourists began venturing into the Southern Alps. Their clownish antics fascinated people, and tourism promoters began challenging the sheep-killer theory, calling for the protection of keas in tourist

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid., p.344.
\textsuperscript{140} Quarterly reports by Peter and Alex Graham, Waiho Gorge, to the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, Wellington, 25 June 1924 and 23 April 1925 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington; Peter Graham, Peter Graham Mountain Guide pp. 150-151.
\textsuperscript{141} J.B. Thompson, ‘Department of Lands and Survey Scenery Preservation Report’ in ‘Reports of the Department of Lands and Survey’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1927, C-6, p.1.
\textsuperscript{143} Tokati ‘Kiwi Hunting in Westland’ pp. 476-479.
\textsuperscript{144} Star, Paul ‘From Acclimatisation to Preservation’ pp. 142-143.
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid., pp. 203,207.
resorts.146 The Canterbury Automobile Association lamented the decline of native bird species, commenting that the kea had ‘no protection whatever’, and in 1928 urged its members to add their voices to the call for the protection of native species.147

As public interest in New Zealand’s scenic reserves increased, there was more support for conservation initiatives like these, but public involvement had its downside. During the nineteenth century, people expected to be able to use common land for stock grazing or the extraction of forest products; in the early decades of the twentieth century this was tempered with an awareness of the need for conservation. Nevertheless people still expected free access to the land, in this case New Zealand’s scenic reserves, and few believed activities like camping posed any environmental threats.148 The purpose of tourism was to create rather than limit access to scenic reserves.149 This philosophy was apparent in an unsuccessful attempt by the Mount Cook Company to build a tourist hostel on scenic reserve land in the Franz Josef Glacier valley in 1929.150 The Grahams had an obvious commercial interest in preventing this, while their concerns about the sanctity of scenic reserves found ready support from the Westland County Council, which joined them in opposing the Mount Cook Company’s proposal.151

In places like Franz Josef Glacier, there seems to have been little conflict of interest between tourism and conservation during the first three decades of the twentieth century, as human impact was limited by modest tourist numbers and the forces of nature. Yet in the 1920s there was one serious conflict between use and preservation interests. In 1906 Donne had called for the construction of a horse-and-
Artist Ethel Richardson, whose protests saved rata trees in the Franz Josef Glacier valley from the roadmakers in the late 1920s.
A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
trap road up the valley. This was not actioned, and the bush-framed views of glacier and mountains on the foot track up the valley became famous, so that there was a strong reaction from tourists and conservationists when the Public Works Department decided to build a vehicle road up the valley in the late 1920s, in response to representations on the difficulty of access for elderly people unable to walk to the glacier. Artist Ethel Richardson urged the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts to intervene to stop this act of ‘vandalism’, while journalist Elsie K. Morton, called for the valley to be kept free of ‘noisome motor-cycle and honking car’. Ebenezer Teichelmann mobilised the support of the Canterbury Progress League against the proposal, saying that it would be ‘like making a motor road through a conservatory’, and was supported in this by Tourist and Health Resorts General Manager, Ben Wilson. The opposition had the effect of delaying the development, but did not ultimately prevent it. Ethel Richardson then staged a protest in the valley, persuading the roadmakers to detour the road round some magnificent rata trees, which stand today as a memorial to her efforts.

Gold had brought the first settlers to the Franz Josef Glacier, and tourism gave the village a new direction when the gold prospect diminished. William Batson had laid the foundations for a glacier tourism industry, but this did not gain momentum until the Grahams took over his hotel. Alec and Peter Graham’s reputation as two of New Zealand’s leading mountain guides and Rose Graham’s role in establishing a distinctive West Coast hospitality tradition were pivotal to the upsurge of tourism at Franz Josef. The Grahams’ familiarity with the glacier environment was essential in the struggle to maintain tourist access in the valley, as were the financial grants for this work from the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts. Although there were often instances when different priorities caused tensions between the Grahams and the

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153 Letter from S.J. Evans, honorary secretary, Westland Acclimatisation Society, Hokitika, 13 September 1928 to the general manager, Tourist Department, Wellington 2 F.J.G. 10.1b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
154 Letter from Ethel Richardson, Waiho Gorge, to Mr Collett, Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, Wellington, 24 July 1926 TO I 581 National Archives, Wellington; Morton, Elsie K. ‘Down Westland Ways – Forest, Lake and Glacier’ Unattributed 1929 newspaper clipping 2 W 7.9b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
155 Letter from Honorary Secretary, Canterbury Progress League, to the Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts 13 July 1929 TO I 581 National Archives, Wellington; Letter from B.N. Wilson, Department of Tourist and Health Resorts Wellington to the engineer-in-chief, Public Works Department, Wellington 15 August 1929; Letter from District Engineer, Public Works Dept, Greymouth to Dr E. Teichelmann, Hokitika 30 July 1931.
156 Personal file, Ethel Richardson 11 P, A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Department, both factions had an important role to play in maintaining tourist access to the glacier. At the same time a burgeoning tourist trade was impeded by ongoing difficulties of access, which became more obvious when cars replaced horses as the preferred means of transport and proved no match for South Westland’s rivers and terrain. West Coast tourism promoters were vocal in their criticism of government neglect of the South Westland road, just as they castigated the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts for failing to promote the region. In fact, the Franz Josef Glacier region was benefiting from a wide range of promotion initiatives during this era. In a region dominated by the forces of nature, tourism and conservation interests worked together in relative harmony, apart from a dispute over the construction of the glacier road, which sparked a protest to save rata trees in the valley. By 1930 Franz Josef’s future as a leading tourist destination seemed assured, and developments in the village were complemented by the Grahams’ mountain guiding tradition, which had been gathering strength during the same period.
CHAPTER THREE
THE GUIDING TRADITION  1900 - 1930

I feel I owe the mountains a tremendous debt of gratitude, not only for the intense pleasure and interest they have provided, but perhaps most of all for the friends I have made due to their influence...

During his life at Franz Josef Glacier, Alec Graham never lost his love of the mountains or his interest in people. He and his brother, Peter Graham, translated these enthusiasms into a hospitality tradition which turned the West Coast into one of New Zealand's leading resorts, and a guiding tradition which enabled thousands of tourists to explore the Franz Josef Glacier and surrounding mountains. The guiding tradition owed something to the older Hermitage system, but developed a character which set it apart as an unique West Coast institution. To understand the nature of the West Coast guiding system, it is important to consider the pragmatic relationship which had evolved between West Coasters and the land they had settled. A lifetime in South Westland had given Alec and Peter Graham a profound respect for the wilderness, an important attitude in a glacier valley where tourist access was often challenged by nature. Their earlier mountaineering careers enabled them to make a major contribution to outdoor recreation in this country. Franz Josef had replaced the Hermitage as the premier guiding centre of the Southern Alps by the 1920s, and the nature of the Grahams' glacier guiding enterprise with its informal relationship between guides and clients, and enhanced mountaineering opportunities for women, provide some clues as to why this happened. The success of the enterprise can be measured by an analysis of tourist numbers at Franz Josef between 1900 and 1930 and the backgrounds from which these visitors came.

The Hermitage Guiding System

The Hermitage, a much more accessible climbing centre than Franz Josef Glacier, enjoyed earlier development as a tourist resort but its popularity highlighted its inadequacies, the most obvious being the lack of mountain guides. In the late nineteenth century, overseas mountaineers visiting the Southern Alps had to bring their own guides with them. Irish clergyman William Green, who attempted to climb Mount Cook in 1882, suggested that New Zealand should initiate an immigration scheme for Swiss shepherds, who would also work as mountain guides, prompting a newspaper attack on the idea of importing 'furriners... with ice-axes and hobnailed boots, to climb up glaciers and perform such like foolish feats for the amusement of idle gentlemen...'. Formed in 1892, the New Zealand Alpine Club noted the lack of guides in resorts like the Hermitage, and felt that its own role was to encourage tourists to go into the mountains. ‘It remains to be seen whether this want [of guides] or defect – if it be one – will be compensated for by the colonial training and the native independence of colonial youth’ commented New Zealand Alpine Journal editor, George Mannering, in 1892. By the turn of the century it seemed that this ‘native independence’ had come to the fore. During the 1900-1901 season, 111 people visited the Hermitage, participating in everything from glacier walking to mountain climbing. A daily motor service was instituted from the Fairlie to the Hermitage, and in 1907 mountaineer Henry Newton noted that visitor numbers to the resort had ‘increased enormously. While most of these tourists were content to do relatively minor excursions, others aimed for the summits of the high mountains of the Southern Alps. To do this they had to teach themselves to climb. As Franz Josef Glacier explorer and New Zealand Alpine Club founder, Arthur Harper, commented:

...unlike Switzerland, New Zealand has no mountain population from which to draw its

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2 A.G. Bagnall, ‘The Rev. W.S. Green in New Zealand’ New Zealand Alpine Journal Vol XVI No.43 June, 1956 p.503. This article incorporated an article ‘Swiss Shepherds for New Zealand’, originally printed in the Timaru Herald and reprinted in New Zealand Times 22 April 1882. Bagnall commented that the author of the article was Edward Wakefield, nephew of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who, ‘as Parliamentary representative for Geraldine, might consider that he had the true interests of the sheep industry at heart.’


guides. We who climbed in the late eighties and 
early nineties found no guides; we had to learn as 
we went along. The earlier guides developed from 
those who first accompanied us to help our 
porterage. They passed on their knowledge to 
others, and thus a class of guides grew up equal to 
any in the world.  

This style of homegrown New Zealand guiding, established at the Hermitage, 
was a model the West Coast would follow in the early twentieth century. Guide Jack 
Clarke spent a short season in the Swiss Alps where he received some guide training.  
However, the Hermitage management had required no such experience when they 
employed him. Clarke had joined their staff as a cowman and handyman. His guiding 
apprenticeship began when he worked as a porter for overseas mountaineers visiting 
the Hermitage, and in 1894 he was in a party of New Zealanders who made the first 
ascent of Mount Cook. The value of apprenticeship through porterage was widely 
recognised in the climbing fraternity. Hermitage guide Mick Bowie, referring to the 
early days of guiding, commented in 1948 that ‘No better training can be given a 
climber than acting as second to a good leader’.  

Although two different guiding systems were to evolve at the Hermitage and 
Franz Josef, there were important links between the two in the foundation days. In 
1903 Peter Graham was employed by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts 
as assistant guide to Jack Clarke at the Hermitage. He became the chief guide there in 
1908 when Clarke left to join the Geological Survey Office. As the New Zealand 
Alpine Club was later to note, the West Coast produced most of the Hermitage’s 
guides, a trend encouraged by Graham. The West Coasters brought a practical 
attitude to the task, and an absence of the elitism of the New Zealand Alpine Club, 
which required its members to be experienced mountaineers before they could join.  
Peter Graham did not use this criterion when he employed his guides, as evidenced in

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7 Anon, ‘The Guide Problem’ New Zealand Alpine Journal Vol III No.15 December, 1926 p 351. This 
article incorporates quotes from Arthur Harper.  
10 G.C.N. Johnson, ‘Club and General Notes’ New Zealand Alpine Journal Vol XII No.35 June, 1948 
12 L.K. Wilson, ‘New Zealand Climbing: Whence and Whither?’ New Zealand Alpine Journal Vol IX 
No.28 June, 1941 p. 6c; Peter Peter Graham, Graham Mountain Guide pp.137-138.  
13 Henry E. Newton, ‘Constitution of the New Zealand Alpine Club’ New Zealand Alpine Journal Vol 
South Westland born Peter and Alec Graham, the founders of a guiding tradition which made the Franz Josef Glacier resort famous all over the world. The brothers shared an enthusiasm for the mountains and an interest in people, which added depth and integrity to their tourist operation, and set a high standard for future generations of guides to follow.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
his comment when he asked South Westland bushman, Darby Thompson, to join the Hermitage staff in 1908: ‘He could turn his hand to most things and I was certain he would become a successful mountaineer.’

**The Origins of Mountaineering in the West**

There were thus some important links between Westland and the Hermitage guiding centre, but the evolution of guiding on the West Coast had a different impetus to that of the Hermitage. While overseas mountaineers had influenced the direction of the sport on the eastern side of the Southern Alps, it was the gold miners and surveyors who led the way in the west. As Alec Graham’s daughter, historian Dorothy Fletcher, comments, ‘The foundations and evolution of the two guiding systems was as different as the two sides of the Alps.’

The exploits of visiting overseas mountaineers at Mount Cook passed largely unnoticed on the West Coast, a region where people were focussed on survival in a harsh environment. Gold, not recreation, was the first lure to take West Coasters into the mountains. Stories of gold lying in crevices in the rocks inspired Peter Graham’s first mountaineering ventures into the Callery Valley near Franz Josef, where various expeditions were mounted in search of the apocryphal mother lode.

Surveying provided another practical reason for mountaineering in the west, and a source of employment for local men. George Roberts led the first survey party into the glacier and mountain regions of Westland. Like the guides, Roberts was self-taught, having ‘read up on the subject of mountaineering’ before his expedition. Roberts’ major project, the mapping of the mountains of Westland, also influenced the career of Alec Graham, as his requests for topographical information about different valleys and mountains determined some of Graham’s most famous expeditions. In 1903 Roberts gave Ebenezer Teichelmann a prismatic compass for observations at the head of the Fox Glacier, and the search for topographical information took him and Alec Graham into some remote South Westland valleys in

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15 Dorothy Fletcher, ‘Notes on the West Coast Guiding System’ 2FJG A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
18 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika 26 April 1998.
South Westland's pioneering climbing team, Henry Newton, Peter Graham, Ebenezer Teichelmann and Alec Graham whose wilderness philosophies and explorations of the mountain country surrounding the Franz Josef Glacier shaped the direction of tourist excursions in the region.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
subsequent years.\textsuperscript{19} During this decade Alec Graham joined James MacIntosh Bell’s Geological Survey, working with former Hermitage guide, Jack Clarke, in the Franz Josef Glacier region.\textsuperscript{20}

These gold mining and surveying expeditions honed the skills of Peter and Alec Graham, and it is clear from their autobiographies that they influenced them profoundly, as well as laying the foundations for a climbing tradition in the west which had roots in pragmatism, rather than recreation. However, as the Grahams expanded their activities into the heart of the Southern Alps, they were increasingly influenced by the recreational climbing fraternity whose presence made it possible for them to develop careers as guides.

While Peter Graham was taught the guiding craft by his mentor, Jack Clarke, Alec Graham’s greatest influence came from Teichelmann and Rev. Henry Newton. Teichelmann had come to New Zealand from Australia in 1897 to take up the position of medical superintendent at Westland Hospital in Hokitika.\textsuperscript{21} Newton arrived in New Zealand from England in 1901. Having asked Bishop Julius of Christchurch for a living near the mountains, he was given the parish of Ross and South Westland.\textsuperscript{22} Teichelmann and Newton formed a climbing partnership, employing first Peter then Alec Graham as porter and guide, and made many explorations and first ascents in Westland during the first decade of the twentieth century. Newton and Teichelmann were two very different personalities, and are well described by Alec Graham:

> Mr. Newton’s chuckle over any funny incident was good to hear. Mr Newton was a strong, well built man with boundless energy and an almost boyish keenness when out in the mountains. The Doctor was small of stature and slight, but extremely wiry and he had a wonderful spirit. It was a sight to behold when he was travelling ahead of you with his swag on, carrying supplies to our base; he looked like a big bundle with two thin legs attached, and one wondered if they would stand the strain on the rough going...\textsuperscript{23}


\textsuperscript{20} Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, \textit{Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef} p.92.


A Newton-Teichelmann-Graham photography session and camp on Pioneer Ridge, above the Fox Glacier. The Grahams became adept at establishing comfortable camps in the mountains, a fact often remarked upon by tourists, many of whom were on their first climbing trips. A.C. Graham Collection.
The close friendship between the two men did not prevent a good natured rivalry in the mountains. On one occasion, when Newton rushed ahead and almost fell down a cliff face, Teichelmann commented, 'I warned you, Alec, that Newton was impetuous sometimes'; while another time Newton's obvious impatience with the length of time it took Teichelmann to take a photograph earned the quip: 'The difference between you and me, Newton, is that you are a photographic climber and I am a climbing photographer!' 24

Newton, who had climbed in Switzerland before coming to New Zealand, and was a member of the English Alpine Club, passed on climbing techniques to the Grahams. 25 He brought overseas climbing traditions to South Westland, but his influence was not as great as that of the enthusiastic gold prospector turned mountaineer, Teichelmann. 26 While Newton was only in New Zealand for a few years, Teichelmann, with his interest in the whole of Westland, not just its mountains, had a lifelong influence on the Grahams and thus the development of guiding in the region, where expeditions to lakes and lagoons became an important complement to climbing and glacier walking. 27 His love of photography and enthusiasm for exploration took him away from the mountains near the Hermitage and into the more remote parts of the Southern Alps, where he found an enthusiastic partner in Alec Graham. 28

As a team, Teichelmann, Newton and Alec Graham earned an important place in New Zealand climbing history. From 1903, when they made their first expedition to the head of the Fox Glacier, they trekked into remote valleys in South Westland, and thence onto the summits of some of the highest mountains of the Southern Alps. Peter Graham’s work at the Hermitage meant he could not take part in many of these expeditions. While he was studying maps and mountaineering books, and following the example of Jack Clarke, as he learnt his trade at the Hermitage, Alec Graham, clad in sparingly-clinkered work boots, made the most of Newton’s tuition in mountaineering technique. 29 Alec’s appreciation of Teichelmann and Newton grew

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24 Ibid., pp. 52, 59.
26 Dorothy Fletcher, ‘Notes on the West Coast Guiding System’; Peter Graham, Peter Graham Mountain Guide p.42.
27 Dorothy Fletcher, ‘Notes on the West Coast Guiding System’.
28 Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef pp.81-82, 103.
29 Ibid., pp.42-45; Peter Graham, Peter Graham Mountain Guide pp. 76-78.
with each trip he did with them, and the depth of the friendship that developed between guide and clients is obvious in his biography. In 1905 he, Teichelmann and Newton ventured up the rugged Cook valley, south of Franz Josef Glacier, making the first crossing of Harpers Pass to the Hermitage. They returned to the Cook valley in 1906, making the first ascent of the 3048 metre Mount La Perouse. In 1907, Newton’s last season in New Zealand, he and his two companions established a camp on Pioneer Ridge high above the Fox Glacier and completed an impressive series of first ascents of the high mountains surrounding the Fox neve.

The development of mountaineering in South Westland was characterised by some epic struggles against the environment. The records of some of the Grahams’ guided climbs in Westland prove how remarkable their achievements were, given the substantial access difficulties. Not only were they guiding people on to mountains without any of the sophisticated equipment of the modern mountaineer, but they also faced formidable obstacles forcing their way through densely forested river valleys, carrying heavy loads of camping gear on their backs during the period when there were no huts or aircraft support. This was not as much of a problem at Mount Cook, because the mountains were much closer to the resort than they were at Franz Josef. The Hermitage was situated some 610 metres higher above sea level than the Glacier Hotel.

Henry Newton’s diary makes frequent reference to the arduous job of swagging equipment into the mountains. On a 1904 expedition, Alec Graham, despite knowing little of snow or rock climbing technique, had responsibility for establishing a base camp and helping to find a high camp in the neve of the Fox Glacier. The climbing challenge must have been formidable enough, without the difficulty of carrying huge loads of camping equipment over mountain terrain. Prior to the 1905 expedition up the Cook River valley in South Westland, Alec Graham spent about a week swagging equipment and cutting a track in the heavily gorged valley. The party had to do more swagging work after that, and some idea of the

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30 Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, *Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef* pp. 47.
31 Ibid., pp. 48-53.
32 Ibid., pp. 66-79.
33 Henry Newton, ‘South Trip 1904’ MS 1164 Hocken Library, Dunedin.
Peter and Alec Graham with their most famous client, Freda Du Faur. They earned an important place in New Zealand climbing history when they guided Du Faur onto the summit of Mount Cook in 1910, the first ascent by a woman.

Photograph: Mannering and Associates Ltd, A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika
difficulty can be appreciated by Newton’s comment that it took four and a half hours to traverse a four kilometre section of the track.\(^{35}\)

One of the most awkward loads was Teichelmann’s camera which, together with a set of glass plate negatives, stand and carrying case weighed about 20 kilograms.\(^{36}\) Alec Graham made frequent amused comments about the problems of catering for Teichelmann’s photographic interests in the mountains.\(^{37}\) Newton developed a hearty loathing for the whole-plate camera, while appreciating Teichelmann’s enthusiasm for his craft: ‘if we were caught in the rain and there was only shelter for himself or his camera, it was the camera that got the shelter, while he sat out in the rain quite cheerfully.’\(^{38}\) Apart from Teichelmann’s camera and Newton’s Bible, most of the loads swagged by these mountain men were practical ones. Newton’s personal swag for the 1905 Cook River expedition included an oiled sleeping bag, clothing, mosquito netting, rifle, nails, food, wire, compass and aneroid.\(^{39}\)

It was expeditions like these that provided a solid foundation for the South Westland guiding tradition. Peter and Alec Graham went on to build up an impressive list of major ascents. Peter Graham climbed Mount Cook 13 times during his guiding career.\(^{40}\) In 1909 Alec was the guide on the first ascent of Mount Aspiring.\(^{41}\) Peter and Alec made history when they guided the first woman, Australian mountaineer, Freda Du Faur, onto the summit of Mount Cook in 1910, and in 1912 the trio climbed New Zealand’s second-highest mountain, Mount Tasman.\(^{42}\) Then, in 1913 Peter Graham and Darby Thompson, guided Freda Du Faur on the first Grand Traverse of the three peaks of Mount Cook. This climb along the top of Mount Cook, sometimes referred to as New Zealand’s ‘highest mile’, won accolades for Du Faur and ensured her and the

\(^{35}\) Ibid., pp. 48-50; Henry Newton, ‘South Trip 1905’ 17 January MS 1164 pp. 17-18 Hocken Library, Dunedin.

\(^{36}\) Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef p.58.

\(^{37}\) Ibid., pp. 58-59, 84.


\(^{39}\) Henry Newton, ‘South Trip 1905’ p.34.


\(^{41}\) Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef pp. 97-99.

Grahams another entry in the mountain history books. The brothers enjoyed many other triumphs on the high mountains of the Southern Alps, and as historian Jim Wilson has commented, their achievements were made greater by the fact they were always working as guides on these climbs, and so had responsibility for their clients’ safety as well as their own.

A West Coast Guiding Tradition

The Grahams’ series of high climbs has earned them an undisputed reputation as one of the most successful partnerships in New Zealand climbing history, but arguably their greatest achievement lay in their commitment to introducing thousands of tourists to the mountains and glaciers. From the outset of their careers, their focus was on people, and their own great skills never tempted them to patronise their clients. It is a measure of Alec’s priorities that he made frequent mention of the people he had met in the mountains in his memoirs, yet did not bother to write up his first ascent of Mount Cook. The Grahams’ experiences among the high mountains of the Southern Alps influenced their later glacier guiding careers, their knowledge giving a depth and integrity to their tourist enterprise operation.

With Peter working at the Hermitage, the first stage of the Franz Josef guiding enterprise was developed by Alec. He turned his interests to tourism soon after his apprenticeship with Newton and Teichelmann. While his mountain guiding career owed much to the influence of these two men, it had another important foundation. Alec Graham had become a great mountaineer, but he was also a pioneer, with an intimate knowledge of the difficulties of survival in South Westland. New Zealanders are proud of their ‘orebears’ reputation for ingenuity, for making the most of available materials to create commonsense solutions to problems, and nowhere is this ability more evident than in the development of the guiding tradition in South Westland. Alec Graham was well aware that access difficulties and the seasonal nature of the New Zealand tourism industry would not allow any permanent living to be made from guiding clients onto the high mountains. He saw that glacier guiding would be the mainstay of the Franz Josef tourism industry, and drew on his

44 Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef p.111.
45 Dorothy Fletcher, ‘Notes on the West Coast Guiding System’.
Although advance and retreat could make glacier access difficult, there were times when it was easy to get onto the ice and early tourists often dressed formally, climbing high on the glacier, despite the restrictions created by their unsuitable clothing.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
knowledge of the whole Westland environment to develop a range of bush, river, lake and beach excursions, resulting in a broader focus than that of the mountain-based Hermitage resort.\textsuperscript{46}

The Grahams were not the first to offer glacier excursions at Franz Josef. The tradition was begun by William Batson, whose career as the village’s first tourist proprietor is discussed elsewhere. He took the Mayor of Adelaide on the glacier in 1906.\textsuperscript{47} There are few written records of excursions with Batson, although a Canterbury family wrote enthusiastically about a trip on the glacier with him in 1910.\textsuperscript{48} Judging by the various accounts of Batson’s one mountaineering excursion, however, it seems that his skills as a raconteur and host were better developed than those as a guide. He was on the first crossing from Franz Josef to the Hermitage over the Grahams Saddle in 1902, but proved an ill equipped and nervous climber.\textsuperscript{49}

Batson was soon superseded as a guide by the Grahams. Teichelmann was well aware of their skill, and encouraged the tourists he met in Hokitika to ask Peter Graham to take them on the glacier.\textsuperscript{50} After Peter’s departure for the Hermitage, Alec took over this role.\textsuperscript{51} Thus, by the time the Grahams took over Batson’s hotel, they were already experienced glacier guides. The success of their tourist excursions can be measured by the growing numbers of people who visited the village from 1910 onwards and the many enthusiastic references to their climbs on the glacier in the hotel visitors’ books.\textsuperscript{52}

The growing numbers of tourists presented the guides with some major challenges. The close proximity of the glacier to the village may have given the impression that it was easily accessible, but this was far from the truth. Conditions on the Franz Josef Glacier changed on a daily basis, influenced by weather, advance and retreat. As previously discussed, in 1907 the glacier advanced and smashed an access gallery in the Franz valley, forcing the guides to develop alternative routes. Alec

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.; Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from Waiho Gorge 14 March 1914, 24 March 1916, 19 March 1923, 22 March 1923, 4 February 1924, 7 March 1925 MS 1164 Hocken Library, Dunedin.
\textsuperscript{47} Henry Newton, ‘South Trip 1906’ Jan 15 MS 1164 Hocken Library, Dunedin.
\textsuperscript{48} William Thacker, comment in ‘Visitors Book, Batson’s, Franz Josef Glacier’ 25 November 1910 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
\textsuperscript{51} Peter Graham, Peter Graham Mountain Guide p.53.
\textsuperscript{52} Various comments in ‘The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book’ December 1911 – December 1928 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Graham wrote that the advancing ice was uprooting vegetation 15 metres above the previous level of the glacier in 1905, while huge boulders weighing hundreds of tons were rolling onto it. Despite the resulting hazards for glacier guiding, Alec found time to marvel at 'the working of this great ice stream'. Although the glacier provided frequent challenges to access, the guides never lost their affinity with the environment, and their skills in interpreting this to the general public are easily measured in the outpouring of enthusiasm for glacier and surrounding mountains expressed in the hotel visitors' books, articles and books.

Although the twentieth century has seen some significant glacier advances, the dominant pattern has been one of recession, such as in 1914, when the terminal face of the Franz Josef Glacier receded some 51 metres up the valley. By 1924 the glacier was advancing again. Dorothy Theomin, the daughter of a wealthy Dunedin businessman, who spent many climbing holidays at Franz Josef, wrote of the difficulties of climbing a 'tremendously broken' glacier. The speed of change can be measured by Peter Graham's comment that 'it [the glacier] had entirely altered its conditions in about a fortnight.' Harper recorded a further recession in 1926, while noting that a huge wave of ice high above the terminal heralded another significant advance. While scientists and mountaineers marvelled at the dramatic changes taking place on the Franz Josef Glacier, for the Grahams, the task of maintaining daily access onto the ice could be formidable, especially given their high standards of safety. Every day the route would be different. Crevasses would appear, the ice would shrink away from valley walls, rockfalls and avalanches would threaten, or rain would transform granular ice into a glass-like substance, making step-cutting difficult.

Glacier guides had to be alert, flexible, and ever-wary of danger. They were also committed to ensuring that their tourists had such a memorable experience that they would want to return. Glacier advances have always captured public imagination and probably boosted tourism. The Grahams developed a tradition of responsibility

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53 Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef p.65; Arthur P. Harper, 'Variations on the Franz Josef Glacier' New Zealand Alpine Journal Vol III No. 15 December 1926 pp. 345-346. Harper described this as a 'great advance' commenting that it reached its maximum extent in 1910, bringing the glacier terminal down-valley to the point where it was when he and Charles Douglas did their survey in 1894.
55 Dorothy Theomin, Letter to her family in Dunedin from Waiho Gorge, 4 February 1924 MS 1164 Hocken Library, Dunedin.
56 Ibid.
58 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 26 April 1998.
which made access seem easier than it really was, enabling thousands of people to explore the glacier. This achievement is arguably as impressive as their successes with clients like Freda Du Faur on the high mountains of the Southern Alps. The Grahams' safety tradition was as homegrown as their training in mountaineering, and their record is an eloquent testimony to its success. During their long careers neither Alec, Peter nor any of their clients had an accident.\(^{59}\)

It would be difficult to overestimate the value of the Grahams' contribution, through their guiding careers, to the development of outdoor recreation in this country. New Zealand's pioneers were forced to be innovators and tackle enormous hardship in their struggle to colonise a harsh environment. This probably left them with little energy or inclination to tackle new outdoor challenges. Just as the West Coast's first European settlers tended to ignore the mountains, New Zealanders generally showed little inclination to beat overseas climbers onto the summits of the Southern Alps. Freda Du Faur was critical of this, commenting that between 1900 and 1913, few New Zealanders were doing any climbing:

> When I think of the men who live in the South Island and read in their newspapers the accounts of climbs as they are accomplished, their want of energy and interest does seem rather appalling. It argues for one thing such lamentable lack of imagination.\(^{60}\)

This was a situation the Grahams did much to change, entering their guiding careers near the end of this undistinguished period in New Zealand mountaineering history, and transforming it by encouraging thousands of tourists to take an active interest in the mountains.

**Contrasting Guiding Styles in the East and West**

While developing later than the Hermitage, by the 1920s the Franz Josef guiding centre had a stable and experienced base lacking at the other resort. It had the advantage of being managed by the guides themselves, while the Hermitage guides worked under a series of managers from 1896, when the hotel was purchased by the

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\(^{60}\) J.A. Sim, 'Editorial' *New Zealand Alpine Journal* Vol V. No.20 June 1933 pp.129-130. This article includes the above comment from Freda Du Faur, which is endorsed as 'substantially true' by Sim.
government. The Hermitage was later run by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, then, in 1922, the government leased the resort to the Mount Cook Tourist Company. This latest move highlighted some different priorities, and reduced the Hermitage’s popularity as a climbing centre, as Arthur Harper commented:

The new management at the Hermitage provided an up-to-date social centre, necessitating many conventionalities which climbers did not want and could not pay for. In short, we wanted plain quarters, simple food and less boiled shirt... The result was that men with slender purses (we were nearly all of us in that category) were forced to look for their climbs in other districts. We simply could not afford the Hermitage.

Dorothy Theomin had been critical of the situation prior to the Mount Cook takeover, commenting in a letter to her family that it would be ‘a jolly good thing when the Tourist Department is done away with or, at any rate, made much more efficient.’ After the takeover, however, she noted that there were additional charges for everything from alpenstock hire to afternoon tea. She was especially annoyed with the structured dinner hours at the Hermitage, as she wanted to be free to be out climbing as late as she wished. The managers were not mountaineers and often did not understand the dynamic relationship between guides, their clients and the mountains. Mountain guiding has always defied rule books. The mountain environment is unpredictable and subject to frequent changes; those who work in it need to be flexible and alert to new ways of doing things. No two expeditions are ever the same. It was probable that a lack of understanding of these issues exacerbated tensions at the Hermitage, particularly given the various changes of management structure. Problems between the management and the guiding staff at the Hermitage prompted Peter Graham to resign in 1922 and return to Franz Josef to enter a guiding

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64 Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from the Hermitage, 11 February 1922, 14 February 1923, 18 February 1923, MS 1164, Hocken Library, Dunedin.
partnership with his brother, Alec Graham. His departure from the Hermitage severed the informal links that had bound the two resorts together and left a vacuum for mountaineers. Peter Graham’s return to Franz Josef revitalised high guiding in the west; since Alec Graham’s expeditions with Newton and Teichelmann, his priorities had centred on glacier guiding and management of the family’s hotel, leaving little time for mountaineering. Ironically the Hermitage, the resort closest to the high mountains of the Southern Alps, was characterised in the 1920s by a lack of skilled guides, a fact lamented by the New Zealand Alpine Club.

Meanwhile, the Franz Josef guiding centre was strong and focussed, shaped by the complementary roles of Alec and Peter Graham. Alec was a practical West Coaster, who was able to turn his hand to all aspects of the hotel operation such as the farm, sawmill and electricity scheme. He enjoyed a comfortable rapport with the wider community of Franz Josef, while Peter, who spent more time on the administrative details of the hotel management, did not have the same degree of contact with the locals. He had no natural skill at the practical tasks Alec was so good at and never learned to drive a car. Peter’s strength was in his warm personality and his confidence as a host. He enjoyed spending time talking to tourists in the hotel lounge and was a gifted raconteur. He had worked in Wellington for the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, which gave him valuable insights into the workings of the New Zealand tourism industry, and added to his confidence in dealing with people. Despite Alec’s great skills as a guide, he was shy and found public gatherings difficult. He enjoyed talking to tourists, but usually entertained them in his own home, where he would bring out his botany and climbing books for those interested in more detailed information on the glacier environment. Despite their

66 Peter Graham, Peter Graham Mountain Guide, p.230; From Our Special Reporter, ‘Most Wonderful Week – Mr Amery’s Crossing of the Southern Alps’ Unattributed newspaper clipping, File 2.F.J.G.
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid.
72 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 6 January 1999; Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef, p.29.
73 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 6 January 1999.
different personalities, Alec and Peter Graham were close and worked effectively as a team.\textsuperscript{74} This was particularly noticeable when they began the task of training a new generation of mountain guides. One of their basic criteria was that their high guides should be young and extremely fit, given the physical strength needed for the job in the era before aircraft support and mountain huts were available.\textsuperscript{75} They trained their staff as they had been trained themselves, employing glacier guides with all-round practical skills who were willing to work on the hotel farm and pack stores to the mountain huts, before they became experienced enough to lead clients onto the summits of mountains.\textsuperscript{76}

During this period there was some tension between the Franz Josef and Hermitage resorts. The British Cabinet Minister and Dominion Secretary of State, the Right Honourable Leopold Amery, a member of the English Alpine Club, requested Peter Graham’s guiding services for some climbs at Mount Cook. This did not impress the Hermitage management.\textsuperscript{77} Despite problems of this kind, however, there seemed to be little impact on tourists. Dorothy Theomin was a frequent visitor at both the Hermitage and Franz Josef and makes no mention in her letters to her family of any kind of rivalry between the two resorts, or attempts of one to draw custom away from the other.\textsuperscript{78} The friendship between the guides at both centres remained strong.\textsuperscript{79} The one exception was made by a controversial European guide Conrad Kain, who refused to share climbing techniques with other guides during his career at the Hermitage. The New Zealand Alpine Club later commented that: ‘In this he stood in strong and unhappy contrast to the whole guiding tradition.’\textsuperscript{80} Team work was a cornerstone of the guiding systems on both sides of the Alps. While it is probable that some rivalry existed between the guides, there is little evidence of this in any written records of the period. The guides in both centres made a major contribution to the development of adventure tourism in New Zealand and it is a tradition that survives in different forms to the present day.

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75} Dorothy Fletcher, ‘Notes on the West Coast Guiding System’.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.; Comments of guides in ‘Defiance Hut Book’ 1912-1930 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika
\textsuperscript{77} Peter Graham, \textit{Peter Graham Mountain Guide} p.233.
\textsuperscript{78} Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from Waiho Gorge 11 April 1921, 8 March 1923, 12 March 1923, 19 March 1923, 22 March 1923, 26 March 1923, 31 January 1924, 4 February 1924, 1 April 1926; Letters to her family from the Hermitage 19 February 1922, 14 February 1923, 18 February 1923, 15 April 1923, 22 January 1924, 22 March 1925.
\textsuperscript{79} Dorothy Fletcher, ‘Notes on the West Coast Guiding System’.
\textsuperscript{80} L.K. Wilson, ‘New Zealand Climbing: Whence and Whither?’ p.61.
Dorothy Theomin (left) of Olveston, Dunedin, was a regular visitor to Franz Josef and an enthusiastic mountaineer, using the Defiance Hut as a base for crossings of Grahams Saddle to the Hermitage with guide Alec Graham (centre) and his brother, Peter Graham. Eleanor Joachim (second from left), of Dunedin, printed a book on her holiday at Franz Josef.
A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Extending the West Coast Guiding System

As more tourists started visiting Franz Josef, the Grahams’ resources were stretched in catering for their differing needs. It was not always easy to balance demand from a few tourists for high guiding with that of the majority wanting to do glacier excursions. Glacier guiding was the Grahams’ mainstay, but they were quick to realise there was a compromise between simple excursions and high guiding which would encourage tourists with little climbing experience to visit the mountains. The peaks at the head of the Franz Josef Glacier, and the Copland Pass and Grahams Saddle routes between the Franz Josef and Hermitage served as mountaineering training grounds for many tourists. The Copland-Grahams Saddle trip was one of the most popular summer excursions offered by the Grahams, a six-day double crossing of the Southern Alps offering bush walking, rock and snow climbing experiences.81

Another popular activity was to climb to the Defiance Hut, above the Franz Josef Glacier and spend a few days climbing Mount Moltke and other peaks in the area, as well as visiting alpine pastures and the battlement-like formations of the Castle Rocks above the hut.82 Defiance Hut was also used as the first stage of the Grahams Saddle crossing. Between 1912 and 1930 over 1700 people stayed in this hut.83 The large majority of these were New Zealanders, though there were a few visitors from Great Britain, Australia, United States, Norway, India, France and other countries.84 One of the most distinguished overseas visitors was Leopold Amery, who crossed into Westland over Grahams Saddle in 1927, having expressed the desire ‘to

82 Elsie K. Morton, A Tramper in South Westland (Illustrated Booklet with no publication details) pp. 16-22; Defiance Hut Book. A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika; Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from Waiho Gorge 14 March 1914, 1 January 1916, 4 February 1924, 14 March 1925, 1 April 1926 MS 1164 Hocken Library, Dunedin; Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef pp. 141-142.
83 Defiance Hut Book.
84 Ibid.
get right away from civilisation'.

His party arrived at Defiance Hut and lit a flare, a sheet of newspaper held aloft, to indicate their safe arrival to the people watching down below in the Franz Josef village. Amery also stayed at the Glacier Hotel. He later commented that he had seen many glaciers in the Rocky Mountains and Switzerland but could recall none more beautiful than the Franz Josef Glacier—‘both as an actual glacier and for its setting of almost tropical bush, tree ferns and fuchsias growing alongside the ice.’

From 1922 Alec and Peter Graham were busy catering for tourist demand for everything from glacier excursions to subalpine pass crossings and mountain expeditions. The Grahams’ interest in their clients, and emphasis on safety, brought accolades from first-time glacier walkers and experienced mountaineers alike. The visitors’ books kept in their hotel and in the Defiance Hut, provide eloquent testimony of the success of the South Westland guiding system.

Alec Graham’s biographer, Jim Wilson, wrote of Alec’s ‘unusual ability to inspire confidence in the inexperienced when on more difficult terrain’, while mountain historian John Pascoe commented on Peter Graham’s ‘great sympathy for people who could manage only minor climbs’.

One of their most enthusiastic clients was Dorothy Theomin, who first visited Waiho in 1914 and was still returning to climb with the Grahams in the 1930s. In her letters to her family she makes frequent references to the Grahams’ guiding skills and their enthusiasm for the climbing successes of their clients. Her letters also give a good sense of the demands placed on the Grahams by the resort’s increasing popularity as she often had long waits before they were available to take her climbing. Leopold Amery commented that Peter Graham had skills equivalent to

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86 Arthur P. Harper, ‘With Mr Amery in the Southern Alps’ p.41; The tradition of sending up flares at Defiance Hut to advise Franz Josef residents of the safe arrival of climbing parties was popular and often remarked upon by tourists: Dorothy Theomin, Letter to her family from Waiho Gorge, 4 February 1924; Various comments in Defiance Hut Book.
88 From Our Special Reporter, ‘Most Wonderful Week – Mr Amery’s Crossing of the Southern Alps’
89 The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book; Defiance Hut Book.
91 Dorothy Theomin, comment in ‘The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book’ 21 March 1914; Letters to her family from Waiho Gorge and the Hermitage 6 February 1915, 14 February 1915, 19 February 1922, 14 March 1925, 14 March 1925.
92 Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from Waiho Gorge 2 March 1925, 14 March 1925.
the leading guides in Europe.\textsuperscript{93} One of the Grahams' most famous clients, Freda Du Faur, described them as 'the two finest guides in the mountains' and attributed many of her successes to their skill and encouragement.\textsuperscript{94}

**Opportunities for Women at Franz Josef**

During this time many women visited the resort and explored the glacier and surrounding mountains. The access difficulties in the Franz Josef Glacier valley and to South Westland generally created advantages for women mountaineers. In an environment where the dominance of nature over the efforts of human beings was frequently on display, the kind of moral and societal mores evident at the Hermitage seemed to have less relevance. It certainly is true that women staying at Franz Josef had opportunities which would have been considered scandalous at the Hermitage. Freda Du Faur had sparked outrage and warnings that she would lose her reputation when her fellow guests at the Hermitage discovered that she intended climbing alone with a guide.\textsuperscript{95} Meanwhile, women tourists Fanny Roberts and Pamela Marsden, a niece of missionary Samuel Marsden, were climbing alone with Alec Graham with none of the attendant moral censure suffered by Freda Du Faur.\textsuperscript{96} From 1914 to the 1930s, Dorothy Theomin made many climbs in the vicinity of the Franz Josef Glacier, some of them alone with a guide.\textsuperscript{97} Her letters are full of enthusiasm for the mountains and accepting of the somewhat primitive shelters she had to sleep in during her expeditions. 'Almer [Hut] felt like home though rather a poor substitute for Olveston', she wrote in 1920.\textsuperscript{98}

In the final analysis, it is probably the Grahams who had the greatest influence in encouraging women tourists to become mountaineers, judging them by their real abilities and helping them develop greater skills.\textsuperscript{99} Their encouragement did not

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  \item \textsuperscript{93} From Our Special Reporter, 'Most Wonderful Week – Mr Amery’s Crossing of the Southern Alps'.
  \item \textsuperscript{94} Freda Du Faur, *The Conquest of Mount Cook* pp.107, 111, 130, 173, 192.
  \item \textsuperscript{95} Ibid., pp. 36-37, 40, 43; Peter Graham, *Peter Graham Mountain Guide* p.189.
  \item \textsuperscript{97} Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from Waiho Gorge 4 February 1924, 14 March 1925.
  \item \textsuperscript{98} Dorothy Theomin, Letter to her family from Waiho Gorge 1 April 1926.
  \item \textsuperscript{99} Trish McCormack Ross, ‘From Glacier Valley to Mountain Summit’ pp. 22-27; Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from Waiho and the Hermitage 14 February 1915, 1 January 1916, 11 April 1921.
\end{itemize}
extend to them expecting women clients to carry their share of the swags, however. Fanny Roberts, wrote of the huge amount the guides had to carry on mountaineering expeditions, adding: ‘as my guide considered that I had enough to do to carry myself, my only share was my own small camera.’

Dorothy Theomin, describing an expedition with Alec Graham to the head of the Fox Glacier, wrote: ‘The men carried a tent and fly, three blankets and masses of food – to give you an indication of how much, the bread supply was three and a half whole loaves! 18 eggs, 2 pounds prunes, tea unlimited and sugar...’

Opportunities for women tourists climbing in the west were part of a relaxed guide-client relationship which set the Franz Josef climbing centre apart from that of the Hermitage in the early decades of the twentieth century. The Franz Josef centre had a more egalitarian style than the Hermitage. Teichelmann had set the tone early, as evidenced by his comment during a Franz Josef Glacier excursion with Alec Graham in about 1901. An overseas tourist kept addressing Alec as ‘Guide’, until Teichelmann said: ‘Don’t call him Guide, call him Alec, we treat him as one of ourselves.’ This comment encapsulates the nature of the guiding tradition in South Westland, remote as it was from the class structures inherent in the English and European alpine club traditions which decreed that guides should be treated as servants rather than equals. This was never a feature of the West Coast guiding tradition, although it is doubtful if this was the result of a conscious effort on the part of the Grahams. It would have been impractical for clients like Newton and Teichelmann to let their guides do all the work, as many of their climbing excursions necessitated track clearing and long distance treks with swags of camping equipment. Time was important in all of these trips, and the more people working, the quicker the result was achieved. It is obvious from reading Newton’s diaries of his mountaineering trips with Teichelmann and Peter and Alec Graham that there was no

24 January 1922, 8 March 1923, 15 April 1923, 4 February 1924, 14 March 1925, 1 April 1926; The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book; Defiance Hut Book.
100 F.A. Roberts, By Forest Ways in New Zealand p.145.
101 Dorothy Theomin, Letter to her family from Waiho Gorge 1 April 1926.
differentiation in the work of guide and client. They worked as a team for a common goal in a way that is difficult to imagine taking place at the Hermitage, especially on trips with visiting overseas mountaineers, who were used to buying an exemption from the hard labour attending any climbing excursion.

Dorothy Theomin obviously considered the Grahams as friends rather than employees, as evidenced by many comments in her letters. She attended their children’s birthday parties, helped prepare meals in their homes, and participated in musical evenings and other family events during her holidays at Waiho. She also entertained members of the Graham family at her Dunedin home, Olveston. Interestingly, Freda Du Faur, whose main activities were centred on the Hermitage, is more formal in her comments about the Grahams. Dorothy Theomin referred to them as ‘Peter’ and ‘Alex’, while Freda Du Faur referred to them as ‘Graham’. It is, perhaps, a small distinction, but serves as an illustration of the different systems which had emerged at the Hermitage and Waiho.

Increasing Tourist Numbers

The success of the Graham guiding tradition can be measured by the upsurge in visitor numbers from the time they took over the hotel in 1911. During the 1910s, annual visitor numbers rarely exceeded 100. By the mid 1920s, annual visitor numbers had increased to between 200 and 480, and in 1925 1047 people signed the visitors’ book. In 1927 Peter Graham commented on the yearly increases of visitor numbers, attributing this to the glacier region becoming better known. ‘A great number of alpine excursions and minor ascents have been made. Several high ascents have also been accomplished,’ he wrote. Numbers rose steadily over the remainder of the decade, to a peak of 2368 in 1929.

The majority of visitors who stayed at the Glacier Hotel between 1911 and 1920 came from the West Coast, though this trend changed during the 1920s when

103 Henry Newton, ‘South Trip 1904’, ‘South Trip 1905’, ‘South Trip 1906’.
104 Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from Waiho Gorge 31 January 1924, 14 February 1925, 5 March 1925; Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika 26 April 1998.
105 Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from Waiho Gorge and the Hermitage; Freda Du Faur, The Conquest of Mount Cook pp.151, 153.
107 Ibid.
West Coast visitor numbers fell to less than a quarter of the annual totals, and the majority of people came from other parts of New Zealand.\textsuperscript{110}

The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts had worked hard to lure overseas visitors to New Zealand, but the West Coast enjoyed little benefit from its promotion, while is impact was limited in other parts of the country as well.\textsuperscript{111} Ironically, the department was being criticised for catering for wealthy overseas visitors and neglecting New Zealanders at a time when an estimated three quarters of visitors to the country’s scenic and thermal resorts were New Zealanders.\textsuperscript{112}

At Franz Josef, overseas visitor numbers were even lower. When the Grahams took over the Glacier Hostel in 1911, overseas tourists were rare, although those who did visit came from a wide range of countries.\textsuperscript{113} Between 1911 and 1920, 58 overseas tourists registered at the hotel. The majority were from Australia and Great Britain, while others came from the United States, South Africa, Burma, Java, Dutch East Indies, Fiji and India.\textsuperscript{114} Franz Josef’s annual overseas visitor numbers increased from 35 in 1921 to 553 in 1929.\textsuperscript{115} Most of them came from Australia and Great Britain.

The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts noted that the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers, and the scenery on the South Westland highway, appealed strongly to overseas visitors.\textsuperscript{116} However it is obvious from the visitors’ books that this was a somewhat over-optimistic assessment, given the modest numbers of overseas visitors.

The figures for the Glacier Hotel, while suggesting some interesting trends, cannot be taken as an exact measure of the number of people who visited Franz Josef between 1911 and 1930. It was not compulsory for hotel guests to sign the visitors’ books.\textsuperscript{117} Not all tourists stayed at the hotel. By Peter Graham’s estimate, hundreds of tourists were coming to Franz Josef on camping holidays by 1931.\textsuperscript{118} The Department

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  \item \textsuperscript{110} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{112} Thomas Mackenzie, ‘Department of Tourist and Health Resorts Eighth Annual Report’, \textit{Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives}, 1909, H-2, p.1.
  \item \textsuperscript{113} The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book, 1911 - 1928.
  \item \textsuperscript{114} Ibid.; The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book, 1927 – 1932.
  \item \textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{116} B.N. Wilson, ‘Department of Tourist and Health Resorts Annual Report’, \textit{Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives}, 1929, H-2, p.10.
  \item \textsuperscript{117} Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika 26 April 1998.
  \item \textsuperscript{118} Peter Graham, Letter to B.N. Wilson, General Manager, Department of Tourist and Health Resorts 15 June 1931 TO 1 581 National Archives, Wellington.
\end{itemize}
of Tourist and Health Resorts had no place under their control at Franz Josef so did not keep statistics on visitor numbers as they did at other resorts. However the Department did organise bookings for motor tours to Franz Josef, reporting in 1927 that these were ‘well up to standard’. It is also difficult to make any authoritative statements on the socio-economic groups from which Franz Josef’s tourists were drawn. Unfortunately the Glacier Hotel visitors’ books, unlike those used in some other tourist resorts, did not have a section for tourists’ occupations so it is difficult to form conclusions about their backgrounds.

Taking into account the time needed for a trip to Franz Josef and the costs of hotel accommodation and guiding fees, however, it is reasonable to assume that the bulk of the tourists came from more leisured sectors of society. The journey to the glacier took several days each way, even in ideal weather conditions, and people would only make the effort if they had enough time to participate in all the tourist activities centred on Franz Josef. The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts was advising people to spend at least a week at the resort. Those wanting to do pass crossings or even glacier excursions were often delayed by bad weather or a lack of available guides. Dorothy Theomin’s letters to her family contain frequent references to such delays. While it was possible for people of independent means like Dorothy Theomin to wait at the hotel for ideal conditions, this would have been a luxury people with limited leisure time would not have been able to afford.

Although it is difficult to make any definitive statements about the composition of the Glacier Hotel guest lists, some trends can be measured by looking at the background of the people who left more comprehensive records of their stay than a signature in the Visitors’ Book. Some of those who wrote of their holidays at

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121 The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book; In a dissertation on tourism at Lake Wakatipu, David McFarlane is able to analyse the socio-economic groups from which the tourists were drawn, as the hotel visitors’ books contain a section for visitors’ occupations: David McFarlane, ‘The Development of Tourism at the Head of Lake Wakatipu’, B.A. (Honours) in History dissertation, University of Otago, 1994.
123 Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from the Hermitage and Waiho Gorge 24 March 1916, 1 April 1916, 31 January 1924, 14 February 1924, 19 February 1925, 2 March 1925.
Franz Josef were people of means like Dorothy Theomin and her Dunedin friend, Eleanor Joachim. There seemed to be an informal network linking many of the guests, suggesting that they came from similar places in New Zealand’s social strata. Dorothy Theomin often mentioned in her letters to her family that friends and acquaintances had arrived at the Glacier Hotel while she was there. It seems reasonable to suggest that the majority of tourists who visited Franz Josef between 1900 and 1930 had either independent means or careers which enabled them to have long holidays.

This was certainly true of Maud Moreland who immigrated from England in 1904 to join her brother, Christopher Moreland, the headmaster of Christ’s College, a private Anglican boys’ school in Christchurch. In 1906 they did a horse trek from Christchurch to Franz Josef and on to Otago over the Haast Pass track. Conservationist and mountaineer, Ethel Richardson worked as a draughtswoman with the Department of Lands and Survey, but after numerous visits to the Glacier Hotel, abandoned this career and moved to Franz Josef, where she worked as a landscape artist. Margaret Lorimer, the Lady Principal of Nelson Girls’ College, spent many of her summer vacations at Franz Josef from 1912 onwards, and became an enthusiastic mountaineer. Journalists like Elsie K. Morton could combine their work with their holidays, and judging by the number of articles written about Franz Josef Glacier, it was a popular assignment.

Another factor suggesting that Franz Josef’s tourists came from more privileged strata of New Zealand society was the limited effect of World War One on the Grahams’ tourist operation. Annual visitor numbers fell from 141 in 1913 to 80 in 1914 but rose to 119 in 1918. People were still travelling to Franz Josef from all over New Zealand at a time when the war would have limited the options of many. This trend seemed to be true of the Hermitage, which reported returns which were

125 Dorothy Theomin, Letters to her family from the Hermitage and Waiho Gorge 29 March 1914, 22 March 1923, 26 March 1923, 25 February 1925.
‘easily the best to date’ in 1916.\textsuperscript{131} The war curtailed the activities of young New Zealand mountaineers.\textsuperscript{132} The Franz Josef tourist resort had never been dependant on young mountaineers for its survival, however. Tourists like Dorothy Theomin were still holidaying at Franz Josef and the Hermitage. Her letters contain no reference to any problems brought about by the war.

Probably the biggest effect of the war was the impact on the guides themselves. Alec Graham enlisted in 1916, embarking overseas with the 22\textsuperscript{nd} Reinforcements in early 1917.\textsuperscript{133} He worked as a stretcher-bearer with the First Battalion, Canterbury Infantry Regiment and was mentioned in dispatches: ‘A former guide at Mount Cook was among the bearers, and his courage and endurance saved many lives.’ He was awarded the Military Medal in 1918.\textsuperscript{134} Meanwhile, the Grahams had employed a South Westlander, Bobby Williams, to take over Alec’s guiding work at Franz Josef, and judging by the comments in the visitors’ book he was popular with the tourists.\textsuperscript{135} Some of the Hermitage guides also enlisted for war, and one of them, William Brass, was killed in the Dardanelles.\textsuperscript{136}

Overseas mountaineers influenced the development of the Hermitage tourist resort, but the West Coast guiding tradition had its roots in pragmatism rather than recreation, the first mountaineering expeditions in the region being undertaken by gold seekers and surveyors. This encouraged an egalitarian relationship to develop between guides and clients which was one of the key characteristics of the West Coast guiding system. The Hermitage and Franz Josef guiding centres shared a common heritage, but different management styles and environmental conditions contributed to the evolution of two separate traditions. In the course of the varied excursions from their Franz Josef Glacier base, the Grahams encouraged women to extend their mountaineering skills, an attitude which contrasted with prevalent mores at the Hermitage where Freda Du Faur was criticised for climbing alone with her guide and thus risking her reputation. The success of the Grahams’ tourism operation can be measured in the increase of visitors between 1911 and 1930, which, while modest

\textsuperscript{131} B.N. Wilson, ‘Department of Tourist and Health Resorts Annual Report’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1916, H-2, p.4.
\textsuperscript{133} Alec Graham & Jim Wilson, Uncle Alec and the Grahams of Franz Josef p.143.
\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., p.144.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., p.147, ‘The Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book 1911 - 1928’.
\textsuperscript{136} B.N Wilson, ‘Department of Tourist and Health Resorts Annual Report’, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1916, H-2, p.5.
compared with other New Zealand resorts, represented a significant development for the glaciers region. During this period, the composition of Franz Josef's tourist population changed from a solid West Coast base to encompass increasing numbers from other parts New Zealand and overseas. Although no systematic records were kept in Franz Josef on the occupations of tourists, various factors suggest that most came from leisured and affluent sectors of society. The period from 1900 to 1930 was a relatively uncomplicated period for the West Coast guiding establishment, a time of evolution with little demand for the regulation of mountain guides, a situation which would change in the next decade. Peter and Alec Graham's enthusiasm for the glacier environment encouraged thousands of New Zealand tourists into the mountains, and contributed to the development of outdoor recreation in this country, an achievement arguably greater than their first ascents and other triumphs on the high mountains of the Southern Alps.
By 1935 the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel was attracting over 2000 tourists each year and substantial extensions had been made to the original building, which, with its post office and store was the centre of the village for tourists and locals alike.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
CHAPTER FOUR
GLACIER DIVERSITY 1930-1947

It is now possible for a tourist to travel by air for the length of Westland in one day. In less that eight hours flying he can see from coast to mountain chain, for its whole width, a stretch of New Zealand for which variety of scenery, industrial development and historic interest is probably unrivalled.1

The inauguration of a Hokitika-based South Westland air service in 1934 provided Franz Josef with a major new tourist attraction, and was a key factor in the remarkable increase in visitor numbers at the resort. This growth was to challenge the village’s tourism infrastructure and guiding system, as well as fuelling the debate over the need for the regulation of mountain guiding. The establishment of tourist flights and a proposed funicular railway had the potential to cause conflicts with conservation interests at Franz Josef, but this period seems to have been remarkably free of such problems. To understand this it is useful to look at contemporary attitudes towards the developments. The changing composition of Franz Josef’s tourist population can be understood to some extent by the impact of the 1930s Depression and Word War Two. The overall growth of tourism was to have a major impact on the character of the resort, as it made it impractical to continue the intimate family management style which had characterised the Franz Josef Glacier hotel for nearly four decades. This period was one of great diversity for the village’s tourist industry, the impact of which was felt on a variety of levels, prompting some major changes in the resort’s direction.

Extending the Tourist Infrastructure and Guiding System

Between 1930 and 1947 annual visitor numbers at Franz Josef increased from an average of under 2000 to 5000.2 As the majority of tourists visited during the summer months, the capacity of the accommodation at the Glacier Hotel was

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The lake, which formed during the 1930s glacier retreat, presented guides with the task of rowing thousands of tourists to the glacier terminal, but after an iceberg nearly submerged the boat, an alternative route was created with the construction of a high level access track along one of the valley walls.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
stretched. In the late 1930s, to cater for this increased demand, the Grahams milled
their own timber to build an annexe beside the hotel. They designed a hydro-electric
scheme to provide power for the hotel, utilising the intake tunnels of the defunct
Waiho Sluicing Company goldmining scheme. Just as they had evolved their own
guiding system, the Grahams did most of design of the hydro-electric scheme
themselves, with the help of their electrician nephew, Davey Graham, other family
members and Franz Josef residents. They let a contract to a Wellington engineering
firm to supply and install a 250 horsepower water turbine, and the station was
commissioned in July 1938.

These developments involved hard physical work and large financial
commitments, but arguably the greatest challenge of all lay in ensuring the
continuance of quality glacier and mountain expeditions for the growing number of
tourists. This was frequently made difficult by unpredictable and changing glacier
conditions and adverse weather. If tourism could have been spread more evenly
throughout the year, it would have been easier to cater for demand, especially given
the predominance of fine weather on the West Coast in winter, but the large majority
of tourists visited during the summer. In the 1930s the Grahams instituted a seasonal
guiding system, employing university students to work on the glacier. Few of these
students had any mountaineering background, but learned on the job as the Grahams
had done before them. They would arrive at the beginning of the summer season and
pack loads of kerosene and other stores to the mountain huts before beginning their
work on the glacier with tourists. Given the seasonal nature of tourism at Franz Josef,
it would have been uneconomic for the Grahams to employ guides all year round,
even with the increased tourist numbers during the 1930s, so the student guiding
scheme proved useful.

On of the key aspects of their training was for the student guides to become
familiar with the mountain environment and the Grahams encouraged this by allowing
them time to do a climb after a packing expedition. The skills thus learned proved

4 Ibid., p.189.
5 Ibid., pp.189-190.
6 Ibid., pp.167-168.
7 Ibid., p.168.
8 Ibid.
9 Dorothy Fletcher, ‘Notes on the West Coast Guiding System’, A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
One of the boosts to tourism in the 1930s was the establishment of regular bus tours to Franz Josef, during which large excursion parties were taken on the glacier.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
crucial when guiding tourists in the volatile environment of the Franz Josef Glacier. In charting the various advances and retreats of the glacier since 1893, mountaineer Arthur Harper commented that 'No other glacier in our Alps has shown such variations.' Between 1934 and 1946, the glacier receded almost a kilometre up the valley, causing various access difficulties, especially after a lake formed at the terminal face and thousands of tourists had to be ferried to the ice by boat. This system was eventually discarded as too dangerous, after an iceberg shot up from the depths and nearly swamped the tourist boat, and the Public Works Department built a high level access track over the top of a waterfall to the glacier. The 1930s retreat also had a serious impact on one of Franz Josef's tourism mainstays, the Defiance Hut. In 1936 the spur upon which the hut was built began to break up as the retreat of the glacier had removed its supporting ice wall. The hut had to be relocated further up the ridge before it, too, collapsed. Some of the effects of the changing glacier conditions were spectacular, creating new tourist attractions, such as a giant ice cavern which formed at the terminal of the glacier in 1940. The challenge of providing daily access onto the ice for people inexperienced in any form of glacier walking could be formidable, however. The diaries of student guide Pers Prins give a good insight into the difficulties. He makes frequent references to adverse weather, slippery ice conditions, and nervous tourists. Floods were one of the greatest problems, sweeping away tracks and impeding access.

\[12\] Trish McCormack Ross, 'Access to the Franz Josef Glacier – 100 Years of Ingenuity' West Coast Times (Hokitika) 15 December 1992, 3; Peter McCormack, 'Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier' Tape One, recorded at Lake Kaniere, July 1997.
\[13\] Telegram from Public Works Department to Government Buildings 11 November 1936 & Memo from Public Works Department, Weheka, re Defiance Hut to District Engineer, Greyouth 12 November 1936: 'Tourist Department Tourist Resorts, Huts, Tracks and General Correspondence 1934-45' 9/19 National Archives, Christchurch.
\[14\] H.C. Prins, 'Diary' 10 February 1939 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika; 'Giant Cavern Forms at End of Glacier: River Changes' Unattributed newspaper clipping 19 March 1940 2F.J.G.11.0 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
\[16\] Peter McCormack, 'Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier' Tape One, recorded at Lake Kaniere, July 1997.
Initiatives for the Regulation of Guiding

The issue of difficult glacier access was exacerbated by the need to cater for larger excursion parties, including many tour groups brought to the glacier by Newman Brothers and other companies. The increasing numbers of tourists visiting the alpine resorts of Franz Josef, Fox Glacier and the Hermitage probably influenced the calls for some form of safety regulations for mountain guides. As early as 1922 Arthur Harper had begun a campaign for a classification scheme for mountain guides, spurred on by the government’s decision to lease out the Hermitage resort to a private company. He commented that: ‘Guides should be highly skilled specialists, for they hold men’s lives in their hands.’ While this remark was made in relation to high guiding, it had obvious relevance at Franz Josef, where guides were working on a changeable and often dangerous glacier, with increasing numbers of tourists in their care. Harper wanted to classify all peaks, passes and other expeditions according to degrees of difficulty, and to issue graded certificates to guides according to their ability. However, the Minister of Tourism, the Hon. W. Nosworthy, told Harper there was no necessity for such a scheme, using the dubious argument that Ben Wilson, the head of the Tourist Department, ‘knows all about alpine work’, an assertion disputed by Harper, despite his close friendship with Wilson. Harper castigated the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts for its ‘dilatoriness... and its unsympathetic receptions of proposals made to it.’ After increasing pressure from Harper, and support for the scheme from Governor General Lord Bledisloe, the Minister of Tourism, the Hon. P.A. de la Perelle convened a conference in 1930 to discuss the issue, and this was attended by Department representatives, Harper, the Grahams and other guides and tourist operators. Peter and Alec Graham supported the proposed licensing system for guides, agreeing that the career brought with it grave responsibilities. Peter Graham suggested that the guides at the Hermitage and

19 Ibid., pp.352-353.
20 Arthur P. Harper, ‘Fifty Years in Retrospect’ p.50.
Franz Josef could provide practical support for the proposal by devising a guide training scheme. The meeting agreed that a Board should be set up for the licensing of guides, consisting of representatives from the Tourist Department, New Zealand Alpine Club, Federation of Mountain Clubs and the guiding fraternity. The Mountain Guides Act was passed in 1931 to enable the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts to administer the grading and licensing of guides but no regulations were ever drafted. This unsatisfactory situation continued as changes of Government, the Depression and World War Two intervened to take attention away from the Act despite ongoing pressure from Harper and other interested parties. As more overseas tourists started coming to Franz Josef and other resorts in the 1930s, the need for the regulation of guides attained a sharper focus. The Federated Mountain Club said in 1945 that such regulation was essential if New Zealand wanted to attract tourists to its mountain resorts, as such practice was mandatory in Switzerland and other European countries. As club secretary, A.E. Galletly, commented:

In the event of their visiting our resorts and finding New Zealand lacking in these matters, much of our publicity overseas will be counteracted. Even if tourists are merely conducted over glaciers, ice-falls and to well known saddles, it is essential that they be in the hands of competent guides...

Although the Mountain Guides Act failed to establish a code of regulations, the problem was mitigated to a large extent by the excellent, if informal, guide training organised by Alec and Peter Graham in Franz Josef, and the opening of a guide training school at the Hermitage in 1947 under the supervision of Chief Guide,

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24 Ibid., p.239.
25 Ibid., p.240.
29 Ibid., p.82.
Air Travel (NZ) Ltd, formed in 1934 by Captain Bert Mercer, gave Franz Josef a major tourist attraction. People from all over the world flew over the mountains and glaciers, and, as aviation historian, Leo White comments: 'Many Americans who had never flown before signed the visitor's books, bearing eloquent testimony to the fact that they had enjoyed their first flight away down in the far South Westland with Air Travel.'
Mick Bowie. At Franz Josef, some talented new guides were adding their individual strengths to the guiding tradition founded by Alec and Peter Graham. Mark Lysons had begun his career as a student guide while studying theology in Christchurch. He later joined the permanent guiding staff at Franz Josef, and made an important contribution to mountain history with his photographic record of glacier and mountain guiding in South Westland during the 1930s. The Grahams' mountaineering reputation attracted guides of high calibre, such as Jack Cox, to Franz Josef. Cox, one of New Zealand's most colourful guiding personalities, was referred to by mountain historian, Jim Wilson, as someone whose 'dazzling and carefree climbing is still spoken of with awe by those who saw it.' Joe Fluerty, the great-grandson of Tutoko, one of the five founding chiefs of Poutini Ngai Tahu, was popular with tourists for his mischievous sense of humour, and legendary for his ability to sense his way in the mountains when caught in whiteout conditions. Joe Fluerty was on the first ascent of Mount Tasman from the west and was acknowledged by his contemporaries as a master of ice step cutting. Harry Ayres, who would become famous as the guide who taught Sir Edmund Hillary to climb, worked at Franz Josef during part of his mountain guiding career.

**Aviation and the Creation of a Unique Glacier Attraction**

Despite the problems over the regulation of guiding and ongoing glacier access difficulties, the new generation of guides was establishing its place, and the mood of tourism at Franz Josef in the 1930s was buoyant. More people were visiting than ever before, despite the fact that the country was suffering a major Depression. The Grahams had invested a large sum of capital into their hotel business and were naturally keen to look at new ways of attracting tourists to the resort. Neither they nor

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32 Peter McCormack, "Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier" Tape One, recorded at Lake Kaniere July 1997.
Jim Hewett (left) and Bert Mercer (right) in front of two De Havilland DH 83 Fox Moths, ZK-ADI (front) and ZK-AEK. ZK-AEK was known as the Royal Fox Moth as it had previously been owned by the Prince of Wales, Edward VIII.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Although the majority of tourist flying at Franz Josef was done by Air Travel (NZ) Ltd, from the mid 1930s, increasing numbers of private planes visited the village, including this Lockheed L10 Electra, at the time the biggest plane to have ever landed there. It was chartered to take a group of American tourists on a tour of the South Island, and spent a few hours at Franz Josef, where its passengers had afternoon tea at the Glacier Hotel, giving locals the opportunity to look at the plane.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
their guides were in any doubt about the superb alpine qualities of the Franz Josef Glacier region, but they were well aware that access difficulties would deter many from experiencing them. South Island tourism operators had some major disadvantages to overcome in order to attract a more equitable share of the country’s tourist revenue. The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts was often blamed for failing to publicise the South Island, but its General Manager, G. Clinkard, disputed this criticism. He suggested that the reason fewer overseas tourists visited the South Island was that their steamer connections took them to Wellington or Auckland, while their schedules left them with insufficient time to go to the South Island. He went on to comment that:

This tendency is reinforced by the fact that the thermal activity of New Zealand makes a particular appeal, especially in its association with the Native life of the country. American visitors, in particular, prefer to omit the mountain and lake scenery of the South in favour of the type of attraction which cannot be seen elsewhere.

It was obvious that resorts like Franz Josef needed something sufficiently unusual to attract more tourists. The West Coast was hampered by its comparative isolation. The road stopped at Paringa, south of Fox Glacier, and the region’s famous floods often isolated those settlements that did have a road passing through them. There was no road over the Haast Pass to Otago. Aviation ended the isolation overnight, with the inauguration, in 1934, of Captain Bert Mercer’s Hokitika-based Air Travel (NZ) Ltd., New Zealand’s first licensed scheduled air service. Mercer had previously worked as a pilot instructor for the Canterbury Aviation Club, and made his first crossing of the Southern Alps in 1933, when he flew an aero club Gipsy Moth to Franz Josef Glacier. He returned to Franz Josef with his family at

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38 Ibid., p.3.
40 Ibid., pp.14-15: The tourism focus of the airline is evident in its original name, ‘Tourist Air Travel and Transport Services Ltd’. Company shareholders included Hokitika businessman Paul Renton (who had taken the first car to Franz Josef in 1911), Cook Strait Airways, the Christchurch Press Company and some of South Westland’s pioneer families, whose isolated lives were transformed by the inauguration of the airline.
41 Richard Waugh, When the Coast is Clear, pp. 11-12. Mercer was not the first aviator to land at Franz Josef, as two Hokitika men, flying in a Spartan biplane, had landed there in 1932, delivering the
Christmas, staying in the hotel, and spending January 1934 taking tourists for joy rides in the Gypsy Moth. Later that year he moved to Hokitika, having bought a De Havilland Fox Moth for his new airline. It was a hugely successful business. By May 1935, Mercer had completed 500 hours of flying in his Fox Moth and carried over 700 passengers. It is easy to understand Mercer’s enthusiasm for his new enterprise. He loved flying, and the South Westland operation offered him one of the most scenic routes in the country. Tourist flights became an important supplement to his business, and the spectacular mountain and glacier country around Franz Josef, described by various mountaineers as some of the best in the world, was thus opened up to the ordinary tourist.

Scenic flights quickly became a major tourist attraction, as is clear from the many comments in the Glacier Hotel visitors’ books. While the majority of tourists flew with Mercer, many private flights were made to Franz Josef from the early 1930s onwards. On one occasion there were five planes parked at the Franz Josef aerodrome. Mercer’s air service became so popular that, in 1935, he bought another Fox Moth and employed a second pilot, Captain James Hewett.

While many tourists travelled to Franz Josef by road and did short excursion flights from there, others travelled from all over New Zealand by air. A Wellington woman tourist flew with Mercer from Hokitika to Franz Josef, and later described the flight, in an interview with the Dominion newspaper: ‘We saw Mount Cook and the range of the Southern Alps as we neared Waiho, but the greatest thrill was flying straight up the Franz Josef Glacier...’ The Press praised the innovation of Mercer in developing the tourist air service in South Westland, commenting that:

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village’s first airmail and stopping for afternoon tea at the hotel: Richard Waugh, When the Coast is Clear, p.10; J. Renton & A. Nancekivell, comment in ‘The Glacier Hostel Waiho Gorge Visitors’ Book’ 29 September 1923, A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.

42 Richard Waugh, When the Coast is Clear p.13.
45 Comments include those made in The Glacier Hostel Waiho Gorge Visitors’ Book, 14 September 1933, 9 November 1933, 30 December 1933, 26 May 1936 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
46 Ibid., 17 March 1934.
47 ‘An Interesting Machine – Used by Prince of Wales – Bought for Service on the Coast’ Christchurch Star Sun (Christchurch) 14 September 1935; ‘West Coast Service – Second Pilot Appointed – Mr J.D. Hewett to Assist Mr Mercer’ The Press (Christchurch) 14 November 1935, 12; Richard Waugh, When the Coast is Clear pp. 19,23: The Royal Fox Moth was formerly owned by the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII, who abdicated to marry divorcee Wallis Simpson.
48 ‘Seeing to the Full – Aerial Impressions of Southern Scenery – The Valley of Delight’ The Dominion (Wellington) 24 April 1936.
The site of the crash of the Royal Fox Moth (marked with X on photo above) in 1943, and the picture the passengers, members of the Women’s Auxiliary Air Force, and their pilot took of themselves to prove to rescuers that they had survived the crash, in the event of them dying of exposure before help arrived.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
It was initially thought that it would be impossible to salvage the Royal Fox Moth, but its history and value to the company, and the fact that it would be almost impossible to replace in wartime, influenced the decision to carry the wreckage from almost the head of the glacier down to the road. Air Travel (NZ) Ltd organised the salvage, and Captain Mercer later sought help from the Royal New Zealand Air Force, as more people were needed to carry the heavy fuselage of the plane.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
There is no better and more comfortable way of seeing mountain scenery than from an aeroplane, and on the West Coast there is better mountain scenery than anywhere else in New Zealand - quite as good as that of Switzerland, some tourists say.49

Landscape artist, K. Airini Vane, described the aeroplane excursion from Franz Josef as one of the loveliest in the world, adding that a flight in the region would help people understand modern art: ‘It shows the landscape from unusual and different angles and indicates how the artist must approach his job.’50 She went on to comment that New Zealand mountain scenery compared favourably with mountain scenery in the United States.51

As well as offering unique tourist flight excursions which attracted people from all over New Zealand and overseas, Air Travel (NZ) Ltd allowed a major reduction in the time needed for the journey to South Westland, a fact often commented on in the news media during the 1930s.52 A reporter, travelling with Mercer in 1935, wrote that a journey from Hokitika to Franz Josef, which had once taken a full day, could now be accomplished in an hour.53 The South Westland service was boosted by the inauguration of Cook Strait Airways' Wellington to Hokitika flight service in 1937, enabling Franz Josef to be reached from Wellington in three hours.54 Another popular service with tourists was the combined train and plane flight from Christchurch. Passengers would detrain at Inchbonnie on the Christchurch to Greymouth line, and fly by Fox Moth to Franz Josef.55 Hokitika hoteliers did not like this new service, as it caused them to miss out on some of the glaciers tourist traffic,
but most West Coast tourist promoters were enthusiastic about the new opportunities it offered.\textsuperscript{56}

The radical changes in transportation provided by Mercer’s airline probably help explain the great upsurge of tourism at Franz Josef from the mid 1930s onwards. Interestingly, at a time when the issue of tourist safety was becoming an increasing concern to the guiding fraternity, no one seems to have been particularly worried about the risks of aviation. Westland County Council chairman T.R. Chesterman commented in 1935 that flying was just as safe as travelling by road and ‘floundering through the rivers’.\textsuperscript{57} Yet accidents did happen. That same year a Hokitika woman died in the fiery crash of a West Coast Aero Club Gypsy Moth at Franz Josef; the accident was probably caused by a bundle of newspapers blocking the rudder bar of the plane.\textsuperscript{58} In 1943 the Royal Fox Moth crashed high on the Franz Josef Glacier.\textsuperscript{59} Its pilot, and his four passengers, all of whom were members of the Women’s Auxiliary Air Force, were uninjured, but, realising the likelihood that they would die of exposure before they could be rescued, they took a photograph of themselves to prove they had at least survived the crash.\textsuperscript{60} However, they managed to get off the ice to an improvised camp site, where they were joined by guides from Franz Josef that night, and helped down the glacier next day.\textsuperscript{61} The salvage of the aircraft was initially considered impossible, but Mercer decided his company could not afford to lose it, as it would be difficult to replace during the War. An ambitious salvage mission was launched, supported in its final stages by the Royal New Zealand Air Force.\textsuperscript{62} The broken fuselage and other parts of the plane were manoeuvred down steep ice slopes

\textsuperscript{56} Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One recorded at Lake Kaniere, July 1997.
\textsuperscript{57} Hokitika Guardian (Hokitika) 8 January 1935.
\textsuperscript{60} Richard Waugh, When the Coast is Clear p.41.
\textsuperscript{61} ‘Landing on Glacier...’ The Press (Christchurch) 1 November 1943, 4; Richard Waugh, When the Coast is Clear pp.44-45.
\textsuperscript{62} Letter from Squadron leader, Commanding Maintenance Wing, Wigram, ordering salvage party to report to Franz Josef to assist with the salvage of the Fox Moth, 13 November 1943 2F.IG 11.3b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika; T.N. Beckett, ‘The Salvage Trip’ in ‘Club Notes’ The Canterbury Mountaineer No.13 August 1944 pp.46-47.
and over crevasses, and finally rowed across the glacier lake and trucked back to the De Havilland factory for repair.63

The Funicular Railway Proposal

Captain Bert Mercer's pioneering aviation service had given something unique to tourism at the glacier region. Then, in 1936, the Grahams instigated an ambitious scheme to build an aerial ropeway for a funicular railway into the mountains near the head of the Franz Josef Glacier, thus opening up a summer skifield. It was investigated by the Public Works Department, which estimated in 1936 that a fare of 10 shillings per passenger would be the maximum that could be charged, rendering the scheme unlikely to be a payable one.64 The Department suggested that the ropeway would provide a tremendous attraction and could boost tourist numbers to between 5000 and 7500 per annum.65 In 1937 it conducted an engineering survey of the proposed ropeway route to a spur above the Franz Josef Glacier some 1584 metres above sea level.66 A Department engineer commented that the proposed ropeway would give easy access to the Carrell Glacier, 'an ideal skiing and tobogganing ground for those new to the sport', as well as offering outstanding views from the mountains to the sea, which would encourage tourists not interested in skiing to use the facility.67 The Public Works Department estimated that the railway would cost 88,000 pounds to build and 15,000 pounds to operate, while a mountain accommodation house at its head would cost a further 8000 pounds, and commented that:

Though the proposition does not particularly attract financially in itself, the effect of such an installation on the tourist business of the Dominion and making accessible wonderful all year round skiing grounds should be considered in the national interest...68

The Westland County Council wrote a letter urging the Minister of Tourism to support a proposal which would produce 'an outstanding attraction for the Dominion',

63 Ibid.; Richard Waugh, *When the Coast is Clear*, p.45.
64 'Tourist Department Tourist Resorts, Huts Tracks and General Correspondence 1934-45' File 9/19 National Archives, Christchurch.
65 Ibid.; 'Aerial Ropeway to Franz Josef Glacier' File 9/5 Vol 2 National Archives, Christchurch
66 Ibid.
67 'Aerial Ropeway to Franz Josef Glacier' File 9/5 Vol 2 National Archives, Christchurch.
68 Ibid.
while Peter Graham visited Switzerland and inspected various aerial ropeways, but the outbreak of Word War Two caused the project to be shelved.

Tourism and Conservation

When proposals to build a glacier road had been made public in the late 1920s there had been considerable opposition to a project which many felt would desecrate the scenic values of the Franz Josef scenic reserve. Yet neither tourist flights nor the aerial ropeway proposal engendered much, if any, opposition. While the glacier road had created a scar through the bush in the glacier valley, tourist flights required no permanent structures in the valley. The Fox Moths were small and relatively quiet, compared with modern tourist aircraft. Another probable reason for them not being considered a threat to conservation values was their novelty. In the 1930s most people were fascinated by aircraft, and the ease by which they could transport tourists into the most remote wilderness country, a preserve formerly seen only by the physically fit mountaineer. The funicular railway would have necessitated some permanent structures in the Franz Josef valley, including a road to its terminus, pylons and ropes up the ridge on one side of the glacier, and an accommodation house at the top. If this plan had come to fruition, it is likely there would have been some public opposition, and indeed concerns were expressed over the destruction of bush that would be necessary for the construction of the road to its terminus.

During this time, the Department of Lands and Survey was beginning to realise that increased public interest in New Zealand’s scenic reserves and national parks was causing problems, such as unrestricted camping and vandalism. From the late 1920s, the Department had started voicing concern about current perceptions that scenic reserves should be ‘thrown open to public use without any restrictions whatever’. It noted, though, that members of the public were compensating for this to a large extent by their growing awareness of the need to protect New Zealand’s...
Franz Josef did not seem to exhibit the same problems of increasing use during this time, despite a noticeable increase in tourist numbers there. Part of this was undoubtedly because tourists were still not visiting in the numbers that were besieging the North Island resorts. In many instances, tourism helped further conservation interests on the West Coast in the 1930s. After a holiday at Franz Josef in 1933, novelist Rosemary Rees wrote of the blackened rimu and kahikatea stumps along the roadside between Hokitika and Franz Josef, and the way in which the area was being replanted in pine trees:

> If it weren’t so tragic, it might be comic to think of men destroying all the wealth and beauty of the native bush; and then replacing the disfigured landscape with common trees. It is just as though one pulled down a grand old Tudor mansion and finding that, after all, a house was needed, set up in its stead a suburban villa.

Rees commented appreciatively on the remaining native bush, and her views were obviously shared by others, as the Department of Lands and Survey was actively pursuing a policy of extending scenic reserves in Westland so that bush visible from the main south road was protected from destruction.

**Depression, Recovery and War**

Although more tourists were visiting Franz Josef in the 1930s than ever before, their numbers were still insufficient to conflict with conservation values in the

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72 Ibid., p.3.
A less popular VIP guest was the Duke of Gloucester (second from left in front), who visited Franz Josef in 1935. Unlike Lord Bledisloe, whose friendly manner is still remembered by residents, the Duke showed no interest in the group of children who had congregated to meet him. He walked on the glacier, while two of the guides were disappointed to be left at the lunch hut to look after his dogs.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Lord and Lady Bledisloe, who visited Franz Josef twice during his term as Governor-General, on Lake Mapourika with Alec Graham (above). Lord Bledisloe, who had travelled extensively throughout the world, did much to promote New Zealand's scenery. After their return to England, Lord and Lady Bledisloe donated this stained glass window of the Franz Josef Glacier to their parish church in Lydney, Gloucestershire.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
glacier valley. These numbers and thus the potential for conflicts between tourism and conservation, could have been greater had it not been for the Depression. In 1930, 1921 tourists had signed their names in the Glacier Hostel Visitors’ Book, while numbers declined slightly in to 1819 in 1932. This trend was felt throughout the country, with a general decline in both overseas and internal visitor numbers recorded in 1932 and 1933. However many of Franz Josef’s tourists were affluent enough to withstand the effects of the Depression. The Governor General, Lord Bledisloe, an enthusiastic tourism campaigner, believed that there was another reason for the stagnation of the industry in the early 1930s. He suggested that the country’s potential as a major tourist destination was impeded by the lack of imagination of many ordinary New Zealanders. In 1934, he challenged the Auckland Travel Club to try and change people’s attitudes and nurture tourism, commenting that:

New Zealand can claim, without fear of contradiction, to possess a greater diversity of outstanding scenic attractiveness than any territory of similar area to be found anywhere in this world. What is a little disconcerting is to find that most New Zealanders – even those of means who can afford to travel – know relatively little of their own country.

The well-travelled Lord Bledisloe went on to describe the Franz Josef Glacier as the most beautiful in the world, the mountains of the Mount Cook range as ‘lovelier than those of Switzerland’ and New Zealand’s thermal resorts as comparable with those of Yellowstone National Park in America. He commented that local apathy towards such features was not peculiar to New Zealand, but a phenomenon he had noticed overseas, saying that lack of means was often not the cause of this but ‘the dangerous habit of human immobility.’

Lord Bledisloe would have been pleased with the spectacular growth of the

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80 Ibid., p.9.
81 Ibid., p.9.
82 Ibid., p.10.
Members of the Springbok Rugby team on the Franz Josef Glacier in 1937 with Maori guide Joe Fluerty (left).
A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
This copy of a colour poster produced by New Zealand Railways featured graphic information about tourist tracks, huts and excursions. While primarily intended as an advertisement for New Zealand Railways, it probably helped to promote Franz Josef Glacier as well.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Franz Josef tourist resort from the mid 1930s onwards. By 1937, annual visitor averages exceeded 3500. Part of this trend was the growth in the numbers of overseas tourists, most of whom came from Australia and the British Isles. Australia was considered of outstanding importance to the New Zealand tourism industry generally, and in 1935 the North Island benefited from the arrival of five large cruise ships from Australia, carrying 4500 passengers. Overseas visitor numbers were comparatively modest in resorts like Franz Josef, but some growth did occur. Between 1930 and 1933, annual overseas visitor numbers increased from 360 to 480, and between 1934 and 1939 they increased from 660 to 1280.

Franz Josef gained some welcome publicity from the arrival of some famous tourists during the 1930s. The Duke of Gloucester and his entourage stayed in the Glacier Hostel in 1935, and he spent a morning climbing and photographing the glacier. The Duke was less interested in the local people than he was in the glacier, spraying a delegation of children with dust as he galloped past on his horse. A more popular distinguished guest was Lord Bledisloe, who had first visited to lay the foundation stone at the St James Church in the village in 1931. Lord Bledisloe later provided his own memorial to this church in the mountains. In 1941, following his return to England, he donated a stained glass window depicting the Franz Josef Glacier to his parish church in Lydney in Gloucestershire. Lord Bledisloe had welcomed the Duke of Gloucester’s visit, using the occasion to reaffirm his enthusiasm for New Zealand’s scenery, with specific reference to the attractions of the Franz Josef Glacier. Aviator Jean Batten stayed at Franz Josef in November 1936.

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84 Ibid.
87 ‘The Duke’s Visit’ Unattributed newspaper clipping 2.W.8.5 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika;
1936, just after her solo flight from England to New Zealand. However her visit did not generate the kind of publicity which might have been expected, as she was exhausted and seeking a total rest, thus maintaining a very low profile while in Franz Josef, spending days alone, horse riding. More publicity resulted when members of the Springbok rugby team visited Franz Josef in 1937, and Alec Graham took the opportunity to register a quiet protest against racism, sending the group on the glacier with the popular Maori guide, Joe Fluerty. Visits by Pamela Bourne and Rosemary Rees, both of whom wrote books on their South Westland holidays in the mid 1930s, may have also played a part in encouraging more people to visit the Franz Josef Glacier. Franz Josef’s growth was part of a nation-wide trend, attributed by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts to improvements in transport, notably the more comfortable facilities offered by railway and steamship companies, the development of air and motor services, and improved road conditions throughout the country. The Department had boosted winter tourism by organising ‘snow train’ excursions to Mount Ruapehu and excursions to the glaciers and other parts of the South Island. New Zealand Railways was meanwhile actively promoting tourist travel; one of its initiatives was to publish a detailed colour poster of the Franz Josef Glacier and its key tourist excursions in 1937.

The growth trend was halted by the outbreak of World War Two. Christmas 1939 was a financial disaster for the Grahams, who were relying on a good season to offset the cost of the extension of their hotel. They had 150 guests booked into the hotel, but most cancelled when war was declared. Tourism did continue at Franz Josef during the war years, but with annual visitor numbers declining to an average of 2300, and a record low in 1942 of 879. The glaciers region received some welcome publicity in 1942 when members of the Netherlands Delegation, here to mark the

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93 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 25 August 1998.
94 Ibid.
The depiction of the view of the Franz Josef Glacier from the St James Church altar window, on one of the peace stamps issued to commemorate the end of World War Two, helped publicise the resort at a time when the village was attracting about 5000 tourists each year. P. and E. McCormack Collection, Christchurch.
tercentenary of Abel Tasman’s discovery of New Zealand, flew to Franz Josef with the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Hon W.E. Parry and Minister of Labour, the Hon. P. Webb, and went for a walk on the glacier. Much media attention surrounded this visit.

The hotel visitors’ books contain the only systematic record of Franz Josef’s tourism trends during World War Two. The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts kept statistics on some places, reporting in 1942 that resorts like Milford Sound had experienced disappointing seasons due largely to petrol and travel restrictions within New Zealand. Tourist traffic did increase in subsequent years, but many resorts found it difficult to cope with demand because of the difficulty of securing staff during the war.

The outbreak of war had led to the immediate cessation of tourist traffic from the United Kingdom, though the effect was mitigated somewhat when New Zealanders, prevented from travelling overseas, visited local resorts instead. The effect of war was soon felt at Franz Josef, where overseas tourist numbers fell substantially, but the hotel was boosted in 1940 and 1941 by an influx of visitors from India, the Malay states and Dutch East Indies. These were servicemen and their families who were prevented by the war from returning to the United Kingdom for their holidays. The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts capitalised on this, instituting a New Zealand advertising campaign in these countries. Franz Josef was one of the resorts to benefit from this campaign. This boost to tourism ended when the war entered the Pacific, and from then on the Department of Tourist and Health

100 'Common Ideals – New Zealand and Holland – Civic Welcome to Visitors' The Press (Christchurch) 11 December 1942, 4; 'Tercentenary of Tasman is Marked Today' The Christchurch Star-Sun (Christchurch) 12 December 1942; Unattributed newspaper clippings, 2.W. 9.2 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Guide Peter McCormack leads his first excursion party onto the Franz Josef Glacier, Easter 1946.

P. and E. McCormack Collection, Christchurch.
Resorts shelved its tourist promotional role and turned its attention to the production of propaganda films and other war work.\(^{106}\)

Another wartime boost for Franz Josef came in 1943 when about 90 United States servicemen stayed at the hotel, having been sent there to recuperate by an American services hospital in Auckland.\(^{107}\) Overseas servicemen made the most of the opportunity to visit Franz Josef and other New Zealand resorts during the war, and the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts subsequently received many letters of inquiry from servicemen keen to holiday in this country.\(^{108}\) The Department was optimistic about the trend, and commented in 1944 that advances in aviation would benefit countries like New Zealand, previously disadvantaged by the long journey tourists had to make by sea to get here.\(^{109}\)

Word War Two had checked the tourism growth of the 1930s at Franz Josef, but postwar recovery was rapid, with visitor numbers rapidly exceeding the peaks of the late 1930s.\(^{110}\) This was part of a nationwide trend, starting in 1945, when 3840 tourists registered at the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel.\(^{111}\) The same year the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts commented on the considerable volume of internal tourist traffic to most New Zealand resorts.\(^{112}\) Franz Josef’s profile was undoubtedly lifted by the depiction of the view of the glacier from the St James Church altar window on one of the peace stamps issued to commemorate the end of Word War Two. 1946 and 1947 were the busiest years ever experienced at Franz Josef with annual visitor averages of 5000 people.\(^{113}\) However the resort did not recover the high

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\(^{111}\) The Franz Josef Glacier Hotel Visitors’ Book 1943 – 1946’.


overseas tourists numbers recorded before the War. Only 258 overseas visitors stayed at the hotel in 1946 and 564 in 1947.\textsuperscript{114}

The hotel visitors’ books demonstrate that Franz Josef’s development as a premier New Zealand tourist resort continued despite the war, and one can only speculate as to how much greater this growth might have been without it. The war, while not seeming to seriously affect tourist numbers, did have a major effect on the guiding establishment. Most of the guides enlisted, and only one of them, Harry Ayres came back to Franz Josef, having been invalided home in 1944, seriously ill with malaria.\textsuperscript{115} With their guiding staff depleted, the Grahams had full responsibility for tourist excursions at a time when they should have been able to leave most of this work to the younger generation of guides.\textsuperscript{116} The war had a serious effect on their resilience. Guide Mark Lysons, Rose Graham’s son-in-law and a close friend of Alec Graham, had been killed at Cassino in 1944, while Peter Graham’s son, Keith, was killed at Guadalcanal in 1945.\textsuperscript{117} After the war, the popularity of the Franz Josef tourist resort was more of a problem than a benefit because of staff shortages.\textsuperscript{118} Family members and local people found it difficult to cope with demand. Rose, Alec and Peter Graham were all approaching retirement age, but they had no chance of respite in the postwar years, and the pressure they were under probably influenced their decision to sell their business.\textsuperscript{119} Alec Graham remarked that, in the early days of their enterprise, the staff were hand picked and well known, but, with the growth of tourism, this was no longer possible and there were often problems when ‘some very questionable types’ joined the staff.\textsuperscript{120} As Alec Graham’s biographer, Jim Wilson, comments: ‘The business was, finally, just too big to run in the intimate family way that had been its hallmark for so long.’\textsuperscript{121}

The End of the Graham Era

The Grahams were convinced that the government was the only organisation with sufficient resources to ensure the continued development of the Franz Josef
tourism industry, and accordingly offered their business to the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts. The Department purchased the hotel in June 1946, and the takeover date was arranged for 1 August 1946. However, in July that year a fire burned the hotel annexe to the ground; four women died in the blaze. Although the inquest found that the fire was no fault of the hotel owners, this was of little comfort to the Grahams who felt responsible for the fact that people had died while staying in Franz Josef as their guests. The tragedy also delayed the sale of the hotel, and the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts did not take over the premises until December 1947.

The growth of tourism was clearly not the only reason for the passing of the hotel from private enterprise to the government, as the pioneers of mountain guiding, Alec and Peter Graham, had reached retirement age and would have ended their long tenure as hosts at the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel about this time, irrespective of visitor numbers. The sale of the hotel did end something unique in Franz Josef. One of the resort's greatest strengths had been the fact that its managers had an intimate knowledge of the environment they were promoting. The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, while having far greater financial resources than the Grahams, lacked their empathy with the glacier and mountain wilderness of the Franz Josef Glacier region. It was this factor that had set Franz Josef apart from resorts like the Hermitage, giving its tourists an unique insight into an environment which could only be provided by people who had climbed its mountains, explored its lakes, glaciers and forests and lived in its wild places. The retirement of the Grahams ended a long era when Franz Josef's hotel management staff management had a true understanding of the wilderness.

The period from 1930 to 1947 was one of great diversity at Franz Josef Glacier, both in terms of new tourism opportunities and the places from which the resort's visitors came. During 17 years tourist numbers more than doubled at Franz

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123 Memo from District Chief Clerk, Public Works Department, Christchurch to District Storekeeper, Public Works Department Greymouth 25 June 1947 in ‘Tourist Resorts Franz Josef Hotel May 1945 to December 1949’ File 9/15 National Archives, Christchurch.
126 Ibid., p.207.
Josef, despite the effects of the Depression and World War Two. The increasing tourist numbers stretched the resources of the existing tourism infrastructure, intensified the calls for the regulation of guiding and ultimately dictated that the resort could no longer be run as a family business. The period was one of great innovation for South Westland, with the inauguration of the New Zealand’s first licensed, scheduled air service there, and ambitious plans for a funicular railway to a summer skifield above the Franz Josef Glacier. The publicity from this, and from the visits of famous tourists like the Duke of Gloucester, Lord Bledisloe and the Springbok rugby team probably boosted tourism numbers, though it was the fame of the Grahams which was the main ingredient in this increase. Despite the growth of tourism, there was surprisingly little conflict between conservation and tourism interests between 1930 to 1947 because of the relatively low impact of tourist infrastructures in the village and valley. It is also probable that conflict was reduced by virtue of the fact that the resort was still being managed by Grahams, with their understanding of the relationship between tourism and conservation. These insights, built on a lifetime of experience of the South Westland wilderness, would be essentially lost after the government takeover of the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel. After 1947, Franz Josef’s tourism industry was increasingly influenced by government policy, signalling a change from the West Coast style of management which had set the resort apart from others for over four decades.
The Franz Josef Glacier Hotel, after the construction of a new wing by the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts in 1954. It was considered to offer superior accommodation to that available in many other tourist resorts at the time, and attracted visitors from all over the world.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
CHAPTER FIVE
BUREAUCRACY, FIRE AND NATURE 1948-1965

The glacier job has never been easy. Rocks, rivers – you were fighting the elements all the time. People just don’t realise the risks we’ve run, but to make it completely safe – well, we wouldn’t be there at all, and what a country we’d be.¹

An unpredictable wilderness environment has always been central to Franz Josef’s tourism industry, the difficulties of access mitigated by the adventurous character of the glacier excursions. As changeable as it was, it is the glacier valley which seems to have been the constant in a time of upheaval for tourism in South Westland; Franz Josef’s guiding tradition bridged changing styles of management and ultimately enabled the continuation of tourism in the village at a time when there was virtually no supporting infrastructure in place. The first years of the Government takeover of the Franz Josef Hotel were characterised by a flourishing tourism industry and a sense of optimism in the village. The new management lacked the empathy with the South Westland wilderness of the Grahams, but did have a sound knowledge of New Zealand’s tourism industry as a whole, the resources for new developments, and the expertise for some effective promotion initiatives. In this they were supported by a growing number of West Coast people involved in tourism. A promising new partnership between local people and bureaucracy came to an end with the destruction by fire of the Franz Josef Hotel on 15 August 1954, and a vacuum for tourism resulted. Initially local people and officers of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts were united in their desire for a new hotel, but ensuing delays caused an increasingly bitter conflict between the two factions. This dominated the news media and obscured the fact that Franz Josef’s glacier guiding industry was growing in strength, attracting visitors from all over the world despite the lack of accommodation in the village. This was complemented by an expanding range of tourist flight excursions and the introduction of skiplanes to the glaciers, and by the 1960 gazetting of the Westland National Park, which resulted in an upsurge of tourists to Franz Josef, a trend further boosted in 1965 by the completion of a new tourist hotel in the village and the opening of the Haast Pass linking the West Coast with Otago. A major

¹ Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One, recorded at Lake Kaniere, July, 1997.
Brian Brake introduces the movie camera to the mountains above the Franz Josef Glacier, while on assignment to produce a documentary film for the National Publicity Studios.
P. and E. McCormack Collection, Christchurch.
glacier advance resulted in much publicity and provided a natural wonder for tourists to visit.

**Government Tourism Initiatives at Franz Josef**

When the Graham family sold their hotel to the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts in 1947, they were asked to help provide continuity between the old and new systems by remaining as advisors to the new management. It could have been a model of cooperation, but Alec Graham was soon made aware that his advice was not wanted by his successors.² Franz Josef Glacier Hotel manager, Dick Brookes, had his own ideas as to how the operation should be run. The resort was now backed with Government money and, as the Grahams had predicted, this was a key ingredient to future development in the village. Not everyone liked the changes, but improvements were taking place at the resort. The hotel was the first target for attention. Alec Graham had remained firm in his belief that, although the hotel had become run down during the war, any deficiencies were made up for by the overall integrity of his family’s tourist operation.³ The truth of this view was confirmed by the great upsurge of tourists to the resort after the war.⁴ The new management had the resources to improve the hotel, and a substantial renovation project, which included a budget of 27,000 pounds for a new 42-bed wing for the hotel, was completed in 1952.⁵ The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts did not have a policy of providing luxury accommodation in its hotels, but excelled itself in Franz Josef, and it was considered that the new wing offered accommodation which was as good as that found in New Zealand’s best city hotels.⁶ The Department reported that the hotel had accommodated a record numbers of tourists, with an average of 72 people staying every night in March 1954.⁷

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² Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 3 November 1998.
³ Ibid.
⁴ 'Franz Josef Glacier Hotel Visitors Book' 1943 - 1946 and 1946 - 1947 A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
⁶ Peter McCormack, 'Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier' Tape One.
The improvement in accommodation in Franz Josef was complemented by the increased popularity of bus tours. Some of these tours capitalised on the fine winter weather on the West Coast, while mid-week tours brought tourists by train from Christchurch to Hokitika and on to Franz Josef by bus, where they would spend several days. This scheme was enhanced by the enlistment of radio personality Aunt Daisy, (Daisy Basham) who promoted the glacier during her commercial radio broadcasts, following a request from West Coast tourism developers. The effect was immediate. After she began promoting Franz Josef, bus tours to the glacier doubled, and the hotel enjoyed full occupancy during week nights. The tourists benefited from the enthusiasm of the Hokitika bus drivers, most of whom were new to tour driving but natural advocates of the West Coast. As guide Peter McCormack commented, ‘They had a great love of the Coast, and they put their hearts and souls into making people happy. Nothing was too much trouble, they’d stop anywhere and do anything for them.’

The combination of West Coast hospitality and the resources available to a Government-owned tourist hotel proved a winning combination during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Franz Josef benefited from the Department of Tourist and Publicity’s contacts and nation-wide promotion initiatives, such as a BBC Royal Tour assignment in 1954. BBC commentator Wynford Vaughan Thomas visited the South Westland to record programmes on the Franz Josef Glacier and the flight down the West Coast. These were some of several commentaries prepared at various New Zealand tourist resorts to set the scene for Royal Tour broadcasts, giving Franz Josef international publicity. Films made by The Department’s National Publicity Studio by played a valuable promotion role as well.

Other Department initiatives included the transfer of the launch Kahurangi from Lake Tarawera near Rotorua to Lake Mapourika near Franz Josef, in an effort to encourage a greater range of excursions from the Glacier Hotel. One of the Department’s biggest projects was the building of a replacement hut on Almer Ridge.

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8 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
10 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
11 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Interview of Peter McCormack with Trish McCormack, Christchurch 15 October 1998.
The smoking remains of the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel on the morning of 15 August 1954. The loss of the hotel had a devastating effect on the West Coast tourist industry, as well as severing the link with the Graham family who had, over previous decades built an enterprise which had become the focal point of the village for tourists and locals alike.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
above the Franz Josef Glacier in the early 1950s. As the Ministry of Works architect commented in 1951, the hut was of great importance to the glaciers region, as many overseas tourists planned their climbing itineraries on the assumption that it would be available.

The Almer Hut project was a pioneer initiative, because it was the first time that aircraft were used to transport hut materials to a mountain site in the glaciers region. The contract to provide aircraft support for the hut building project attracted considerable interest from aviation firms, with RNZAF Dakota and privately owned Miles Aerovan and Auster aircraft being considered for the job. While the Miles Aerovan, with its short fuselage and rear doors for load drops, was initially considered the best option, it was later decided that a RNZAF Dakota would be more suitable.

As the RNZAF was not available for the hut drop until late March 1952, the contract was awarded to the Southland Aerial Fertiliser Company, which used a Miles Aerovan to do the job. It was completed on 7 March 1952, not without problems, as several bundles were destroyed or damaged when their parachutes failed to open.

The Almer Hut was completed in 1952. It still provides an important base for climbers.

The Effect of the Hotel Fire

The period from 1948 to 1954 was thus one of great expansion for tourism at Franz Josef, and the village seemed to have a secure future, but the industry collapsed overnight when the hotel burned down in the early hours of 15 August 1954. There

20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
was no chance of saving the old wooden building. The flames were fanned by an
easterly storm, which brought down leaves and debris, blocking the water supply and
making it impossible to contain the blaze.\textsuperscript{25} The fire fighters were endangered by
wind-borne sheets of corrugated iron, while blazing timbers dropped sparks, igniting
the surrounding trees.\textsuperscript{26} Peter Graham later described the gale as one of the worst he
had ever experienced in Franz Josef.\textsuperscript{27} The new wing had been equipped with
fireproof walls between it and the old hotel, but these did not extend into the roof, so
the flames spread rapidly and engulfed the whole building.\textsuperscript{28} Only 12 guests were
staying at the hotel at the time, and all escaped without injury.\textsuperscript{29} The fire was thought
to have been started when clothing blew onto an electric fire in an unoccupied
bedroom in the hotel.\textsuperscript{30}

The devastation to a village heavily reliant on tourism is difficult to overstate.
The Department of Tourist and Health Resorts management staff were transferred to
other resorts, leaving an employment vacuum behind them in Franz Josef, with the
loss of about 45 jobs.\textsuperscript{31} As the Town and Country Planning Branch of the Ministry of
Works wrote in 1959, motor camps in Franz Josef and other parts of the West Coast
were not enough to lure the big tourist numbers which had been recorded before the
fire.\textsuperscript{32} In the years after the fire, the whole of Westland suffered from the sudden loss
of the region's key tourism establishment.\textsuperscript{33}

\textbf{The Politics of Rebuilding}

The politics of rebuilding the hotel provide a fascinating insight into
Government procrastination and failure to work effectively with the Franz Josef
community, as well as compelling evidence of the long-held local contention that the
needs of the West Coast were given low priority by the Department of Tourist and
Health Resorts. Although the Cabinet immediately approved the replacement of the

\textsuperscript{25} Our Own Reporter, 'Tourist Hotel Razed...'; Peter McCormack, 'Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier'
Tape Three recorded in Christchurch, August 1997 .
\textsuperscript{26} Peter McCormack, 'Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier', Tape Three.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{30} General Correspondence in 'Franz Josef Glacier Hostel General' File 10 5 Part 2 National Archives,
Christchurch.
\textsuperscript{31} Anon, 'Tourist Industry' New Zealand Town and Country Planning Branch National Resources
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., p.161.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p.159.
hotel, the Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts soon backed away from this commitment. In 1955 the Westland Progress League, which had been formed to promote tourism and other developments in the region, was horrified to learn that the new hotel might not be built for another five years.

It soon became apparent that the delay in replacing the hotel could have much wider ramifications for development on the West Coast generally, namely on the completion of the Haast Pass highway project. This had long been regarded as central to the expansion of the West Coast tourism industry because it would enable tourists to travel through the region to Otago. In 1956 the Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts stated that the Haast Pass highway was not really of great importance until the new Franz Josef hotel is finished. An editorial in the Greymouth Evening Star commented that it seemed obvious that the Government was not treating the Haast highway as a project of major interest, concluding: ‘It is a safe bet that, were the location of these works in some other district – in Auckland for instance – they would not be viewed with quite the same apathy.’ The Hokitika Guardian agreed, commenting that:

After years of Government neglect, the West Coast thought that with the prompt construction of a new Franz Josef hostel and the completion of the long-needed South Westland highway, it was last receiving a measure of recognition. Now it appears that these projects will have to be fought for all over again.

The Westland County Council later made representations to the Minister of Tourism, Dean Eyre, on the necessity of a West Coast-Otago link via the Haast Pass, emphasising its value to tourism, but was told that the project would not be completed for at least five years.

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34 ‘Franz Josef Hotel – Cabinet Approves Rebuilding’ Unattributed newspaper clipping, August 1954 2W 10.4a A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika; ‘Franz Josef Hotel – No Target Date for Rebuilding’ Unattributed newspaper clipping 2W 10.5a A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
35 ‘Deadline for New Hostel Plan is Next March’ Unattributed 1955 newspaper clipping 2W 10.5a A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
36 ‘Road and Hostel’, Unattributed 1956 newspaper clipping, 2W 10.6a, A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
39 ‘Minister in Tree to Get Glacier View’, Hokitika Guardian (Hokitika) 18 July 1956, 1.
The temporary bar and equipment room opened the morning after the fire in an old hotel store room and was to remain in business for 11 years, while local residents fought an increasingly bitter battle with bureaucracy for a new hotel in Franz Josef.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
The media took up this cause, as well as continuing to agitate for some kind of commitment to the Franz Josef hotel project. A site was cleared for the new hotel, but was abandoned when it was discovered that an earthquake faultline ran through it. The West Coast media was quick to criticise the Department for spending over 2000 pounds of public money on a site which had not been investigated adequately. The *Greymouth Evening Star* exposed the fact that the site of the fault line had been known to the Geological Survey for some time, thus revealing 'a lamentable lack of liaison between Government departments'. Meanwhile Alec and Peter Graham and other Franz Josef residents were contesting the accuracy of the geologist's findings regarding the instability of the proposed hotel site. Alec Graham commented that he had lived at Franz Josef for 60 years and had seen no evidence of earth disturbance, a view which was supported by a qualified geologist. Graham added that the Government had no qualms about spending millions of pounds in earthquake-prone and volcanic areas of the North Island.

The ensuing search for an alternative site for the hotel embraced the village itself, the glacier valley, and an area at the end of the Franz Josef aerodrome north of the village. The local community opposed from the outset the aerodrome site preferred by the Department, which was situated on an old Waiho River floodplain, suggesting an alternative site in the village near to the original hotel, with a good view of the Franz Josef Glacier. There was considerable criticism of the Department for going against the views of its own Minister regarding this site. Dean Eyre had visited Franz Josef the previous year, and had expressed his preference for the village site.

The Minister of Tourism tried to pass any blame for future delays on to the West Coast community, commenting that the hotel would be built when the local people decided where they wanted it, a misleading statement considering that they

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41 'Road and Hostel' Unattributed 1956 newspaper clipping 2W 10.6a A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika; 'Franz Josef Muddle' *Hokitika Guardian* (Hokitika) 28 January 1956.
42 'The Franz Josef Project' *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 28 January 1956, 4.
43 'Request for More Information - Strong Criticism of Franz Josef Hostel Delay: Ministerial Action South' *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 26 January 1956,5; Unattributed 1956 newspaper clipping 2W 10.6a A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
44 Peter McCormack, 'Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier' Tape One.
45 'Minister Asked to Confirm Earlier Statement' *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 3 April 1957, 3; 'Franz Josef Hotel Site Question' *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 6 April 1957, 4.
46 'Minister in Tree to Get Glacier View' *Hokitika Guardian* (Hokitika) 18 July 1956, 1.
had already decided on the village site. The Department meanwhile admitted in 1957 that the new hotel would not be finished for another two years, while adding that Franz Josef was a premier New Zealand tourist resort with an international reputation, and that the lack of a hotel there was adversely affecting New Zealand's tourism industry.

Since Eyre's endorsement of the village site chosen by the Franz Josef community, the Department's hotels had been taken over by the newly established Tourist Hotel Corporation. Although it was not until October 1956 that the Corporation took official responsibility for the temporary bar, equipment room and farm – all that remained of the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel - it had been involved in a semi-official capacity since earlier in the year with its officers making public statements on the advantages of the aerodrome site.

In May 1957, a community group, The Franz Josef Residents' Association, met to refine its opposition to the aerodrome site. This was centred on the volatility of the Waiho River and consequent flood protection issues, and also on the economic effect for the village if the hotel was to be sited away from it. By now the community was sure that the Government had decided in favour of the aerodrome site, although no definite public statement had been released to that effect. An editorial in the *Hokitika Guardian* commented:

> It seems that The Departmental officers, who exercise much of the real powers of Government in these days of an inflated Public Service, were not prepared to abandon their own ideas, no matter what cogent evidence local people with years of experience of district conditions could produce in rebuttal of them.

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47 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef’, Tape One.
48 ‘Departmental Officers Reported to Adhere to Original Choice – Franz Site Selected at Weekend’ *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 18 March 1957, 4.
50 ‘Departmental Officers reported to Adhere to Original Choice – Franz Josef Hotel Site Selected at Weekend’ *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 18 March 1957, 4.
51 ‘Minister Silent But Has Preliminary Work Been Started? – Franz Josef Opposition to No.1 Hotel Site’ *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 24 May 1957, 4; ‘Decision Still Awaited’ Unattributed newspaper clipping 2W 10.7b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
52 ‘Suspisions of Govt Intentions on Franz Josef Hotel – Use of Aerodrome Site’ *Hokitika Guardian* (Hokitika) 25 May 1957, 4.
The Franz Josef Residents' Association was supported in its campaign by the Westland Progress League, but their combined efforts to get a commitment from Eyre were unsuccessful. Indeed, the only response to the concerns about Waiho River's possible erosion of the aerodrome site had come from the former Minister of Tourism, Mr Halstead, who had frivolously advised the locals that they 'could always dig a drain'.\textsuperscript{54} Peter Graham, with his wealth of experience of the Waiho River conditions, was laughed at by the Department when he told them it could easily change its present course and threaten the hotel site.\textsuperscript{55} This attitude underscores the point made repeatedly in the local media during the late 1950s, that the government was uninterested in local opinion, despite its weight of practical experience. Another concern centred on the substantial reduction of the budget for the hotel project. The Minister had originally announced that 600,000 pounds would be spent on the new hotel, but by May 1957 the figure had been reduced to 250,000 pounds.\textsuperscript{56}

In June 1957 Eyre announced to the media that, after discussions with the Tourist Hotel Corporation, it had been decided that the new 142-bed Franz Josef Hotel would be built on the aerodrome site.\textsuperscript{57} Franz Josef residents were shocked by the announcement, as they had been told no decision would be made until they had had the chance to make a case for the village site at a meeting with the Tourist Hotel Corporation in Wellington.\textsuperscript{58} Their indignation was shared by the \textit{Hokitika Guardian}, which published a strongly worded editorial regarding the 'cavalier treatment' of the issue by the Minister, and criticising the way in which he had been forced to change his mind by a 'horde of bureaucrats'.\textsuperscript{59} The \textit{Greymouth Evening Star}, while deploring the Corporation's inflexible attitude to the site of the hotel, welcomed the news that the hotel was to be built, commenting that in the three years since the fire 'it cannot be said that the Government has shown the vigour in approaching the question of the

\textsuperscript{54} "'Bumbling" Methods Criticised by Residents - Franz Josef Hotel Site' \textit{Hokitika Guardian} (Hokitika) 28 May 1957, 4; Peter McCormack. 'Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier' Tape One.
\textsuperscript{55} Interview of Gar Graham with Trish McConnack, Okarito, 3 May 1998.
\textsuperscript{56} 'Decision Still Awaited' Unattributed newspaper clipping 2W 10.7b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
\textsuperscript{57} 'Minister Announces Choice - Aerodrome Site for Franz Josef Hotel' \textit{Greymouth Evening Star} (Greymouth) 11 June 1957, 4; 'Residents Shocked at Site Decision' Unattributed newspaper clipping 2W 10.7b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika; 'Site for Franz Josef Hotel' \textit{Greymouth Evening Star} (Greymouth) 12 June 1957, 6.
\textsuperscript{58} 'Shock and Indignation at Franz Josef' \textit{Greymouth Evening Star} (Greymouth) 12 June 1957, 6; 'Caustic Reception Given Franz Josef Decision' \textit{Hokitika Guardian} (Hokitika) 12 June 1957, 1.
\textsuperscript{59} 'Minister's Change of Views on Franz Josef Site' \textit{Hokitika Guardian} (Hokitika) 12 June 1957, 4.
hotel's replacement, as promised by the then Minister in charge of Tourist and Health Resorts.\footnote{60}

The irritation of the West Coast community must have had some effect on the policy makers in Wellington, as in June 1957 they agreed to a belated meeting with the Franz Josef Residents’ Association to hear the case for the village site.\footnote{61} Franz Josef photographer and tourism promoter, Ralph Warburton, presented a detailed report to the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, which included an in-depth study of the nature of the Waiho River, and a clear recommendation to abandon the proposal to build the new hotel on the aerodrome site.\footnote{62} The Department’s response was to move bulldozers onto the site, having obviously ignored these representations, only belatedly informing the Franz Josef Residents’ Association of its decision.\footnote{63}

The West Coast people had waited three years for a decision on a new hotel at Franz Josef, and the way in which the issue was handled provided clear evidence that the resort was not a high priority for the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts. This was underscored by the Department’s response to a fire which destroyed the Mount Cook Hermitage in September 1957. Eyre announced immediately that the replacement of the Hermitage would take priority over the Franz Josef project.\footnote{64} The \textit{Greymouth Evening Star} commented that the Department, in its handling of the Franz Josef issue, had displayed ‘a fumbling ineptitude and procrastination which would doubtlessly be difficult to parallel’.\footnote{65} It added:

> There have in the past been similar complaints in respect to the seeming reluctance of the Tourist Department to “sell” West Coast tours. The treatment of this province in relation to the Franz Josef replacement gives further proof, if it is really required, of just how well based these complaints have been.\footnote{66}

\footnote{60}‘Site for Franz Josef Hotel’ \textit{Greymouth Evening Star} (Greymouth) 12 June 1957, 6.
\footnote{61}‘Corporation to have Further Review of Franz Josef Site’ \textit{Hokitika Guardian} (Hokitika) 21 June 1957, 1.
\footnote{62}‘Representations on Franz Josef Hotel Site – Residents Congratulated’ \textit{Hokitika Guardian} (Hokitika) 26 June 1957, 5; ‘Siting of the Franz Josef Hotel and the Waiho River, 1957’ Report by the Franz Josef Residents to the Tourist Hotel Corporation, June 1957 2W 10.7b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
\footnote{63}‘Start Made Before Franz Josef Hotel Site Decision’ Unattributed newspaper clipping 2W 10.7b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
\footnote{64}‘The Franz Josef Project’ \textit{Greymouth Evening Star} (Greymouth) 14 October 1957, 4.
\footnote{65}Ibid.
\footnote{66}Ibid.
The Department further irritated West Coasters by announcing that the Franz Josef hotel would now be built on 'more modest lines' and to a lower standard to that planned for the Hermitage, prompting the Westland Progress League to send a telegram of protest to the Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts, and a request for a hearing from the Prime Minister, Keith Holyoake.\(^67\) This request was refused.\(^68\)

In that year, however, the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts finally admitted what many had suspected all along, namely that it could not afford to build the new hotel.\(^69\) The Department reported that the Tourist Hotel Corporation had lost 100,000 pounds in its first year of operations and could not afford capital works, which would have included the new hotel at Franz Josef.\(^70\) West Coast organisations kept up the pressure, but had difficulty obtaining information from the Government on its plans for Franz Josef.\(^71\) It was obvious that the hotel would not be built at the end of the year as had been promised in January 1957, and the Department confirmed this by announcing in September that the hotel should be built to coincide with the opening of the Haast Pass highway, effectively delaying it for at least another five years.\(^72\)

Parochialism operated at local levels as well. While it seems obvious that Wellington-based bureaucrats had limited interest in the Franz Josef tourist resort, and even less interest in working effectively with the West Coast community, there was another struggle going on between the Franz Josef and Fox Glacier communities, which may well have influenced the long delay in rebuilding the hotel. The Fox Glacier tourist resort had developed much later than that of Franz Josef, having been handicapped by its more southern location and the delays in building a road over three bush-clad hills which separated it from Franz Josef. However, a tourist hostel had been built there in the late 1920s, and the unexpected removal of its rival

\(^{67}\) "Modification of Glacier Hotel Plans", 'Decision to Modify Hotel Plan', 'Glacier Hotel Will be Built on "More Modest Lines"', 'League Sends Telegram to Prime Minister' Unattributed newspaper clippings 2W 10.7b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika; 'Franz Josef Hotel: Premier to be Asked to Hear Deputation' *Grey River Argus* (Greymouth) 24 October 1957.

\(^{68}\) 'Hotel at Franz Josef - Deputation Request to Mr Holyoake' *The Press* (Christchurch) 30 October 1957.

\(^{69}\) 'Country Cannot Afford to Rebuild Hotels' *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 11 July 1958, 3; Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 3 November 1998.

\(^{70}\) 'Country Cannot Afford to Rebuild Hotels' *Greymouth Evening Star*.

\(^{71}\) General Correspondence and newspaper clippings 'New Franz Josef Glacier Hotel General' 9/6 National Archives, Christchurch.

\(^{72}\) Ibid.; 'Ready for the 1958-59 Summer Season - New Hotel Plan for Franz Josef', *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 1 January 1957, 4.
establishment in Franz Josef proved a boon that the village was in no hurry to lose. Some hint of this attitude was expressed by Councillor Mick Sullivan at a Westland County Council meeting in Hokitika in 1957. Sullivan, whose family had built the first hotel at Fox Glacier, condemned the local media for their ‘insulting remarks’ about the Government in relation to the slow progress of the Franz Josef hotel and the Haast highway. It was suspected by some in Franz Josef that the Sullivans had persuaded West Coast M.P. Paddy Blanchfield not to push for the construction of the Franz Josef hotel. It was not until the Franz Josef residents arranged a site tour for Blanchfield in 1961, during which time they presented a strong case for the new hotel, that he began to pressure the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts for action on the issue.

A Revitalised Guiding Tradition

The struggle to rebuild the Franz Josef hotel dominated the media during this time, and tends to obscure the fact that other aspects of the glacier tourism industry were flourishing. The guiding establishment had faced earlier disruptions. World War Two had drawn away most of the guides, while the retirement of the Peter and Alec Graham threatened to end a tradition which had lasted nearly forty years. However the remaining links with the old system proved sufficiently strong to revitalise the Franz Josef guiding tradition. Harry Ayres, who had worked for the Grahams, was based at Franz Josef during the early 1950s. He had recovered from malaria and was at the height of his career, having led two ascents on Mount Tasman, guided on the first ascent of the south ridge of Mount Cook, and played a leading role in the Ruth Adams rescue on Mount La Perouse in 1948. This was one of the most epic search and rescue missions in the history of the Southern Alps, and involved carrying Adams, who had broken her leg, from near the summit of the mountain down through the dense bush and gorges of the Cook River valley to the Westland highway south of

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73 'Councillor Critical of Editorials on Franz Josef Site - “Do Westland No Good”' Unattributed newspaper clipping 2W 10.7b A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
74 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
75 Ibid; ‘Mr Blanchfield’s Question About Franz Josef Hotel’ Grey River Argus (Greymouth) 20 September 1961.
76 Interview of Dorothy Fletcher with Trish McCormack, Hokitika, 3 November 1998.
78 Ibid., pp. 73 & 81.
Before the hotel fire, increasing numbers of tourists were visiting Franz Josef, and large glacier excursion parties like this were common. The trend continued after the fire, as with improved roading in South Westland, people could stay in Hokitika or Fox Glacier and still visit Franz Josef for a glacier walk.

Photograph: Ralph Warburton, P. and E. McCormack Collection, Christchurch.
Franz Josef. A quietly spoken perfectionist, noted for his quick reactions to potentially hazardous mountain situations, Ayres is today remembered as one of this country’s leading mountaineers and guides. As his biographer Michael Mahoney commented, by the late 1940s Ayres was in his prime as a guide, with a wealth of experience behind him, and a decade of achievement in front of him.

The Franz Josef guiding centre benefited from Ayres’ mountain knowledge, as he helped to train a new generation of guides there. They included Peter McCormack, who began his guiding career in 1946. Like the Grahams, he was born and bred in South Westland, and realised as a young man that glacier guiding would provide him with a more interesting lifestyle than farming. Peter Graham’s sons, Gar and Stephen Graham were also employed as guides during this era. As the Grahams had done before them, the new generation of guides learned from the example of older and experienced guides, honing their mountaineering skills while packing supplies to the Alner and Defiance huts up the Franz Josef Glacier. Training was informal, and there were no specific instruction courses on mountaineering and first aid as there are today. Like the Grahams, Peter McCormack, who was to guide at Franz Josef for 36 years, considered it a privilege to be able to work in the mountains, and he had a natural ability to transmit his enthusiasm to the thousands of tourists he took on the glacier. There was a general sense of optimism in the village during this time, probably influenced to some extent by the advance of the Franz Josef Glacier which began in mid 1947, after 16 years of retreat; the terminal moved rapidly forward until 1950, during which time the peak growth was 6.4 metres in seven days.

The hotel fire was not as catastrophic to the glacier guiding establishment as might have been expected. Before the fire, an average of 47 tourists were being taken on the glacier each day. These numbers fell sharply immediately after the fire; most of the guides transferred to the Hermitage, and Harry Ayres left for the Antarctic, leaving only Peter McCormack and Gar Graham to double as guides and managers of the hotel.

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79 Ibid., pp. 74-81.
80 Ibid., p.109.
81 Ibid., p.98.
82 Ibid., p.108.
83 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
84 Ibid.
The Miles Aerovan plane used to transport the materials for the new Almer Hut. P. and E. McCormack Collection, Christchurch.

Franz Josef's tourist aviation mainstays from the mid 1950s onwards were Southern Scenic Airways De Havilland DH 89 Dominie ZK-AHS (front) and a Mount Cook Air Services Cessna 185 Ski Plane. P. and E. McCormack Collection, Christchurch.
the temporary bar which had replaced the hotel. The next few years, however, saw a substantial recovery of tourist numbers, a fact used to justify the demand for a new hotel at Franz Josef. Between Christmas 1958 and Easter 1959, an estimated 10,000 tourists visited Franz Josef, 1600 of whom did guided trips on the glacier. These tourists camped in the village, or visited on day trips from other parts of the West Coast. While Fox Glacier had a hotel, its guiding system during the 1950s was often erratic, so the continuity of Franz Josef’s guiding system was vital to tourism in South Westland.

As well as the daily glacier excursions, there was a steady demand for trips over the Copland Pass and Grahams Saddle, and the small guiding staff was always aware that there was an inherent risk in this operation, as once they and their parties were in the mountains, they were on their own. There was no core of mountaineers based in Franz Josef available for search and rescue missions, so the guides learned to minimise the chance of accidents, as the Grahams had done before them.

From Fox Moth to Skiplane

Franz Josef’s glacier guiding establishment was central to the continuity of tourism after the hotel fire, while scenic flights offered another important tourist attraction. In 1945 the Labour Government had passed the New Zealand National Airways Act to formalise a new policy of state owned and operated airlines, and Captain Bert Mercer’s pioneer airline, Air Travel (NZ) Ltd., was taken over two years later. The National Airways Corporation (NAC) continued the South Westland passenger, mail and freight service, and offered scenic flights in the glaciers region and as far afield as Milford Sound, using Fox Moth aircraft. However, the company had phased out scenic flights by 1951, and the Queenstown-based Southern Scenic Air Services moved in to develop tourist flights at the glaciers; in 1956 it bought the

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86 ‘Marked Changes in Recent Years – Franz Josef Glacier is on the Retreat’ Greymouth Evening Star (Greymouth) 23 April 1957; Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
87 ‘Near Record Number of Tourists Visit Franz Josef Glacier’ Hokitika Guardian (Hokitika) 3 April 1959, 4.
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
90 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
91 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape Two recorded at Lake Kaniere, July 1997.
92 Ibid.
94 Ibid., p.54.
South Westland air service from NAC, trading as West Coast Airways. De Havilland Dominie aircraft were used for tourist flights in South Westland and the success of the operation can be measured in the increasing tourist flights of the late 1950s. One of West Coast Airways’ pilots, Paul Beauchamp Legg, took 188 passengers on scenic flights in January 1957; in January 1960, the numbers increased to 353. While NAC was restricted by Civil Aviation regulations, the colourful West Coast Airways operated, according to Legg, ‘in weather that even the seagulls considered too thick to fly’. Encouraged by an enthusiastic Franz Josef tourism entrepreneur, Wally Worthington, the company began running wet-weather flights to the white heron colony at Waitangiroto near Okarito, an activity which would be illegal today. It also catered for excursions much further afield. On one occasion a Franz Josef pilot took three excursions to Milford Sound in one day, clocking up 13 hours of flying time in so doing.

West Coast Airways faced a new form of competition after Harry Wigley, of Mount Cook Air Services, pioneered skiplane landing on the Tasman Glacier in 1955, and subsequently began ski landings on other snowfields in the Mount Cook and Westland regions. As West Coast Airways pilot Brian Waugh later commented, skiplanes were serious competition for his company as they offered tourists the opportunity to explore the snowfields of the Southern Alps rather than just fly above them. By the early 1960s, Mount Cook Air Services had a skiplane based at Fox Glacier, and this, together with the completion of the Haast Pass highway and subsequent withdrawal of mail and freight contracts led to the demise of West Coast Airways. Skiplane excursions became a major attraction, as indicated in 1964, when Mount Cook Air Services flew 8000 people to snowfields in the Mount Cook and Westland National Parks.

95 Ibid., pp.56-58.
96 Ibid., p.65.
97 Ibid., p.62.
98 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’, Tape One.
99 Ibid.
102 Richard Waugh, When the Coast is Clear, pp. 69-70.
103 Harry Wigley, Ski-Plane Adventure, p.209.
Glacier Promotion

The glacier guiding establishment at Franz Josef and tourist flights in the region were undoubtedly the two main factors in the continuation of the tourism industry in the years after the hotel fire, while other initiatives played their part. Wally Worthington's 40-bed extension to his motor camp filled an important need for accommodation in the village, despite being criticised by some for its stable-like appearance.\(^{104}\) Although there were fewer tourists visiting Franz Josef during the late 1950s, those who did go there usually stayed for about a week, using the village as a base for excursions up the glacier, to Fox Glacier, Lake Matheson, Gillespies Beach and Okarito.\(^{105}\) Advertising initiatives were also important. Ralph Warburton, one of the leaders in the campaign for the new hotel, used his photographic business to good effect in promoting the region.\(^{106}\) An opportunity to exploit the high number of sunshine hours on the West Coast in winter came in 1962 when the Department of Tourist and Publicity announced a New Zealand wide initiative to encourage off-season tourist traffic to the West Coast.\(^{107}\) Three different excursions were planned, the most important to Franz Josef being the ‘Winter Wonderland’ tour, during which tourists used the hotel in Hari Hari as a base, and did a day trip to Franz Josef and a walk on the glacier.\(^{108}\)

Tourism and a new National Park

While glacier guiding and scenic flights involved the continuation of much earlier traditions, the establishment of Westland National Park in 1960 represented a new direction for Franz Josef and the South Westland tourism industry generally. This followed various calls for national park status to be conferred on the glaciers region, including a proposal in 1953 by Southern Alps explorer and New Zealand Alpine Club member, Arthur Harper, that a Mount Cook National Park should be established, encompassing the Hermitage region and the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers.\(^{109}\) Harper was aware that ‘the character of the country on the west is very different from the

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\(^{104}\) Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.

\(^{105}\) Ibid.

\(^{106}\) 2 F.J.G. Photographic Files, A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika; Interview of Peter McCormack with Trish McCormack, Christchurch, 15 October 1998.

\(^{107}\) ‘Off-Season Tours to West Coast Planned’ The Press (Christchurch) 30 March 1962 p.7

\(^{108}\) Ibid.

The Franz Josef Glacier, impressive after a period of advance, in 1954. In the foreground is the lunch hut used by glacier excursion parties, which later became the information centre for the Westland National Park, which was constituted in 1960.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
Canterbury side’, commenting that this highlighted the need for special local knowledge.\textsuperscript{110} For this reason he was undecided as to whether the area should be split into two separate national parks, or at least have two separate park boards. His uncertainty was shared by the National Parks Authority, which accordingly gazetted Mount Cook National Park in October 1953, deferring a decision on what should happen to the glacier reserves in the west.\textsuperscript{111}

The idea of a national park was not universally welcomed in Westland. While there were some, like tourism developers Ralph Warburton and Mick Sullivan, who supported the formation of a national park, many West Coasters were uneasy about possible clashes between conservation and development. There was little local enthusiasm for upgrading the glaciers region’s scenic reserve status to a national park.\textsuperscript{112} Meanwhile the Mount Cook National Park Board was interested in expanding the park to include the West Coast glaciers, and in July 1958 the Director General of Lands decided it was time to settle the matter.\textsuperscript{113} While he thought that there would be no major problems in managing both sides of the Alps as one park, he believed the feelings of the local people should be taken into account.\textsuperscript{114}

Parochialism played a key role in the events that followed. West Coasters may have been lukewarm about the formation of a national park in the region, but they were even less keen on the idea of the glaciers region being administered from Mount Cook.\textsuperscript{115} At meeting of the Westland Progress League in August 1958, a resolution was passed to send the National Parks Authority the clear message that the glaciers’ inclusion in Mount Cook National Park would not be tolerated, and that a ‘Westland Glaciers National Park’ should be formed instead.\textsuperscript{116} The meeting agreed that if Westland was included in Mount Cook National Park, tourists would stay on the Mount Cook side of the Southern Alps and would not see ‘the best half’ of the park.\textsuperscript{117} The League was supported in its resolution by the Westland County Council and the West Coast branch of the Automobile Association.\textsuperscript{118} About 40 people who attended a public meeting at Fox Glacier in April 1959 agreed unanimously that a

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., p.207.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., p.207.
\textsuperscript{112} Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
\textsuperscript{113} Harris p.209.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., p.209.
\textsuperscript{115} Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
\textsuperscript{116} ‘Glacier Park a West Coast Affair?’ *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) 6 August 1958, 3.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{118} Harris, p.212.
park should be formed.\textsuperscript{119} Many of the tracks and bridges in the glacier valley had fallen into a state of disrepair, as the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts had failed to maintain them in the years after the hotel fire, and Ralph Warburton used this as part of his argument for the need for the formation of a national park in the area.\textsuperscript{120}

Later that year, the National Parks Authority announced plans to consider the case for a national park at the glaciers region.\textsuperscript{121} The Department of Lands and Survey met with the Westland Progress League in August that year to assess local interest in a national park in South Westland.\textsuperscript{122} At the meeting in Hokitika, attended by 56 representatives from institutions all over the West Coast, it was unanimously agreed ‘to make an application to have a 200,000 acre area set aside as Park’.\textsuperscript{123} The meeting also agreed that it should be called Westland National Park, to emphasise the involvement of the whole region in its development.\textsuperscript{124} The Department explained that the park would attract a Government subsidy of two pounds for every pound donated, which would provide a means of bringing the tracks at Franz Josef up to the standard expected by tourists.\textsuperscript{125} The Westland County Council agreed to make a 60 pound donation, the Grey Borough mentioned a figure of 70 pounds, while Mick Sullivan promised to donate an amount equivalent to the largest amount offered by any local body.\textsuperscript{126}

In 1960, New Zealand’s ninth national park, the Westland National Park, was constituted, to coincide with the centennial of Westland.\textsuperscript{127} Repair work was done on the tracks and bridges in the glaciers region, following the appointment of a national park ranger the following year, and an information hut was established in the valley.\textsuperscript{128} The Department of Lands and Survey reported that there had been ‘a great

\textsuperscript{120} ‘Poor Condition of Tracks and Bridges in Glacier Region National Park Suggestion’ \textit{Hokitika Guardian} (Hokitika) 3 June 1959, 4; ‘Tourist Department Tourist Resorts, Huts, Tracks, General Vol II’ File 9/1 National Archives, Christchurch.
\textsuperscript{121} D.N.R. Webb, ‘Reports of The Department of Lands and Survey New Zealand’, \textit{Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives}, 1959, C-1, p.36.
\textsuperscript{122} ‘Proposed National Park – Local Financial Support Important Commissioner Says’ \textit{Grey River Argus} (Greymouth) 5 August 1959.
\textsuperscript{123} Harris, p.220.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., p.220.
\textsuperscript{125} ‘Proposed National Park – Local Financial Support Important Commissioner Says’ \textit{Grey River Argus}.
\textsuperscript{126} Harris, p.221.
\textsuperscript{127} D.N.R. Webb, ‘Reports of The Department of Lands and Survey’, \textit{Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives}, 1960, C-1, pp.32, 39.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p.39; Interview of Peter McCormack with Trish McCormack, Christchurch, 15 October 1998.
influx' of visitors to the new park. In 1962 the first Westland National Park Board was appointed, and was instructed by the National Parks Authority that its role was to ensure that the Park was used by the public, while being preserved as a living example of natural New Zealand. National Park Boards were entrusted with local control issues, giving them considerable powers over their individual parks, and the opportunity for local knowledge to be used effectively for their general good. While Maree Baker, who has written a dissertation on the Abel Tasman National Park, is right to describe the 1952 National Parks Act as 'the fresh start that it [New Zealand's conservation estate] so desperately needed', decentralisation was also important. The act had some deficiencies. In a dissertation on the Fiordland tramping industry Lewis Patterson comments that as well as failing to end the debate between conservation and pro-development interests, the act also failed to provide areas 'free from development but open to the public for recreational purposes.' This made the balance provided by local expertise all the more important in places like Westland. The value placed on local knowledge allowed the Westland National Park to gain respect from a pioneering population which had been conditioned through several generations to regarding the land through a narrow economic focus. Aesthetic appreciation of landscape was not familiar fare in South Westland in the early 1960s, but the local composition of the Westland National Park Board allowed a supportive relationship to develop between the potentially conflicting fields of conservation and tourism. One of the Board's original members, Peter McCormack, recalled that it had the authority to appoint its rangers, who were chosen for their practical skills to implement track and hut development and pest control in the park. Another important role for the rangers was to give regular public lectures on the park, and their enthusiasm for this work ensured they were a great success, with hundreds of people attending each session.

131 D.M. Greig, 'Annual Report of The Department of Lands and Survey', Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1953, C-10, p.15.
134 Peter McCormack, 'Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier' Tape One.
135 Ibid.
The Tourist Hotel Corporation hotel at Franz Josef Glacier, opened on 4 November 1965, 11 years after the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel was burned down.

P. and E. McCormack Collection, Christchurch.
There was no doubt in anyone’s mind that the increased status and profile given to the glaciers region by the formation of the Westland National Park was a huge asset to the local tourist industry. Visitor numbers to New Zealand’s national parks generally had risen from 345,000 in 1962-63 to 445,000 in 1963-64. Although the Department of Lands and Survey published no specific figures, it reported that the Westland National Park showed greater visitor increases than any other park during this period. National parks also attracted many overseas tourists with a total of 23,500 staying in Tourist Hotel Corporation hotels in three national parks during the year. In the early years there were few of the conflicts between the park management and the local community that were to create major problems in subsequent decades. The local residents of Franz Josef were used to finding practical solutions to access problems, and the early rangers and board members were usually supportive of this. On one occasion the guides hired a local contractor to bulldoze a road right up to the face of the glacier, without bothering to seek any kind of approval from the Westland National Park Board, and they were congratulated for their initiative. A hint of future loss of such freedom came when the local people built a road through the park to the village water supply, only to be reprimanded by the Commissioner of Crown Lands for not seeking permission.

The formation of the Westland National Park and subsequent appointment of rangers committed to improving tourist facilities in the Franz Josef Glacier region provided valuable support to the guides, who were struggling with some of the worst access conditions in decades during a major recession of the Franz Josef Glacier. The recession had begun in 1950, and accelerated from 1956. In the summer of 1958 the problems were compounded by a series of floods and much slumping of ice at the terminal face of the glacier. By the early 1960s the glacier looked shrunken and was disfigured by a coating of moraine near the terminal. As the glacier retreated, rock walls on both sides lost their ice support and began to crumble. The resulting rockfalls often fanned across the entire width of the glacier, creating great hazards for

137 Ibid., p.13.
138 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
139 Ibid.
141 Ibid., p.774.
The Franz Josef Glacier during the 1960s advance, featuring spectacular pinnacles at the terminal and difficult tourist access. Advances of up to 1.6 metres per day were recorded, while the terminal face rose by 120 metres.

A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
tourist parties.\textsuperscript{142} An access problem was created when the glacier retreated behind a huge mass of smooth rock, and steps and rails had to be constructed so people could get over it. The rangers and guides worked together, blending an unusual mixture of cement and Norton’s Egg Preserver, to create steps which were to be resilient enough to stay in place for three decades.\textsuperscript{143}

The glacier road was a constant source of trouble, with frequent floods and washouts, and it was here that some clashes developed between local initiative and government. As Peter McCormack comments:

\begin{quote}
In the early days when the road got washed out they fixed it. But in modern times, they would have to get money granted for it, and you'd have to get the politicians down and talk and talk to get the money to fix the road again.\textsuperscript{144}
\end{quote}

Delays of this kind did nothing to enhance the relationship between the Franz Josef community and government. It was a community already wary of government procrastination after the saga of the new hotel for Franz Josef and the delay in completing the Haast highway, though by this time these projects were finally coming to fruition.

\textbf{The Franz Josef Hotel and the Haast Highway}

Work began on the Franz Josef hotel in June 1963 and, despite the fact that it was built on the aerodrome site, the Franz Josef residents were so relieved to see it actually happening that they did not object to the village site being rejected.\textsuperscript{145} Two days after the hotel was opened by the Minister of Tourism, the Hon. Dean Eyre, on 4 November 1965, another milestone was achieved: the opening of the Haast highway, a direct road link between the West Coast and Otago. Prime Minister Keith Holyoake unveiled a plaque at Knights Point on the highway on 6 November 1965, while local M.P. Paddy Blanchfield read a poem he had written for the occasion:

\begin{quote}
These lovely lakes set in like gems
Where lofty Cook and Tasman tower
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{142} Interview of Peter McCormack with Trish McCormack, Christchurch, 15 October 1998.
\textsuperscript{143} Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One. These steps have only recently disappeared, having been covered in the mid 1990s during the present advance of the Franz Josef Glacier.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{145} ‘Franz Josef Hotel’ 2W 11.5a A.C. Graham Collection, Hokiūka.
The crowd who had gathered for the opening stood in torrential rain listening to this poem, but, despite the weather no one doubted the truth of Blanchfield’s words, even when a massive rockfall came down and closed the new road only hours after it had opened.\textsuperscript{147}

After 11 years of delay, the Tourist Hotel Corporation had finally provided Franz Josef with a new hotel, designed by the Struciton Group Architects of Wellington, with feature walls of Waiho riverbed stone, and plate glass windows looking out onto the mountains.\textsuperscript{148} The region now also had a direct road link with Otago, a huge boon to tourism as people could now visit the glaciers \textit{en route} for southern New Zealand instead of having to retrace their journey through Canterbury. The effect was immediate. Tranz Tours established regular bus tours through the glaciers region, and although this company did not actually stay at Franz Josef, they brought large parties of tourists to the village for glacier excursions.\textsuperscript{149} Soon after the Haast highway was opened, 20,000 people were guided onto the Franz Josef Glacier during a 12 month period, a record which would not be broken for many years.\textsuperscript{150}

\textbf{Glacier Advance}

South Westland was thus benefiting from two major tourism developments, the new Haast highway and the new Franz Josef Hotel, while the Westland National Park enhanced the region’s reputation and was also proving a considerable asset to tourism. The only problem during this halcyon period was caused by nature. The Franz Josef Glacier was undergoing its most spectacular advance in decades, pushing up a huge face of ice at its terminal, creating very different access problems to those caused by glacier retreat.\textsuperscript{151} The 21 metre terminal face was subject to frequent ice

\textsuperscript{146} ‘Mr Blanchfield and Our “Finest Hour”’ \textit{Greymouth Evening Star} (Greymouth) 6 November 1965, 1.
\textsuperscript{147} ‘The Road Opens as Camera-Carrying Hundreds Converge on Knights Point’ \textit{Greymouth Evening Star} (Greymouth) 6 November 1965, 1; ‘Narrow Escape for P.M. and Ministers’ \textit{Greymouth Evening Star} (Greymouth) 8 November 1965, 1.
\textsuperscript{148} Franz Josef Hotel 2W 11.5a A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
\textsuperscript{149} Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibid.
avalanches as a wave of advancing ice pushed over the top of the old terminal, while the steep face made access virtually impossible. Rockfalls and flash floods in the valley did nothing to help the situation. On one occasion, a glacier party was caught on the ice in a hailstorm and the guides’ attempts to cut steps for them to walk in were thwarted by the water sluicing the glacier. On another occasion, the Waiho River changed course, trapping the guides and their tourist party up the glacier valley; a Ministry of Works employee happened to be in the area and rescued them, carrying out 10 tourists at a time in the bucket of his bulldozer. Glacier excursions were adventurous; Franz Josef’s tourists did not need the technology for which the Queenstown region is famous to supply an adrenaline rush. The increasing number of tourists visiting Franz Josef in 1965 were experiencing nature tourism at its most spectacular and unpredictable, although in the end the access became so difficult that people could no longer walk on the glacier. This prompted an unsuccessful effort to reactivate the funicular railway proposal of the 1930s, but the campaign was abandoned when glacier access conditions improved.

The integrity of Franz Josef’s guiding system provided important stability during a period of great change in the village’s tourism industry between 1948 and 1965. As the early optimism engendered by Department of Tourism and Health Resorts innovations at Franz Josef gave way to acrimony and disappointment in the battle to rebuild after the hotel burned down in 1954, it was not always obvious that the heart of the village’s tourism resource was as strong as ever. Alec and Peter Graham had developed a rich guiding tradition which was passed on to a strong new generation, and its importance can be measured by the thousands of tourists who continued to visit the glacier, despite the lack of hotel accommodation in Franz Josef. The guiding system was enhanced by the expansion of scenic flight excursions and the status accorded the region by the gazetting of Westland National Park in 1960. The following years are notable for achievements made possible by the effective

153 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One.
154 Ibid.
155 Michael N.R. Brown, ‘On the Edge A History of Adventure Sports and Adventure Tourism in Queenstown’, M.A. thesis, University of Otago, 1997, p.144. Although the technology for the more extreme sports like bungy jumping was not developed until the 1980s and is thus outside the period of this thesis, Franz Josef today does not exhibit the same characteristics as Queenstown. Natural features provide enough adventure for tourists and there is not the same need to enhance these with technology.
156 Ibid.
157 Ibid.; General Correspondence ‘Aerial Ropeway to Franz Josef Glacier’ Vol II File 9/5, National Archives, Christchurch.
working relationship between the National Parks Authority, the locally appointed Westland National Park Board, guides, rangers and others involved in tourism in Franz Josef. However, it is the glacier valley itself which provided the indefinable edge that made Franz Josef special to people from all over the world. In its wild nature and its infinite variety of conditions, during rockfalls and floods, advance and retreat, the Franz Josef Glacier challenged guides and tourists alike and taught thousands of people something of the true nature of wilderness.
CONCLUSION

A century of tourist development brought little change to the Franz Josef Glacier valley, an environment which has retained its wilderness qualities despite the presence of thousands of visitors each year. Wilderness tourism has become an effective marketing slogan in the conservation-conscious New Zealand of the 1990s. It is a term loosely applied to everything from a guided climb of Mount Cook to a walk along a remote South Westland beach to a penguin colony. Wilderness tourism has given New Zealand an important place in the world tourism industry; the concept evokes a strong sense of national pride. To understand the true nature of wilderness tourism, it is important to consider the first encounters between tourists and nature; nowhere are these more dynamic than in the wilderness of the Franz Josef Glacier region, a place where nature has always dominated human beings.

Between 1865 and 1965, as tourism gained various footholds in the glaciers region, the changes effected by people were minimal compared to those caused by nature. South Westland, a narrow strip of rainforest-clad land, bounded on one side by the Tasman Sea and on the other by the Southern Alps is often described today as New Zealand's last frontier of tourism development. While resorts like Rotorua, Mount Cook and Milford Sound were well established by the late nineteenth century, only a few adventurous tourists had visited the Franz Josef Glacier. Access to South Westland was difficult, and there were few comforts for those intrepid enough to undertake journeys there. Gold prospectors, explorers and surveyors were the first to reach the Franz Josef Glacier, and some wrote of the difficulties of travel, while the Hokitika goldfields newspaper, the *West Coast Times*, devoted much column space to the perils of the journey along South Westland’s first highway, the sea coast. It was a place where a horse could become trapped in rocks and drown on the high tide, where travellers could be washed off their horses and out to sea, and where graves were a feature of most river banks.¹ Those venturing along this route had already survived the adventure of travelling into the region, risking shipwreck on a river bar or a coach ride down the hazardous Arthurs Pass.

In the nineteenth century few people visited South Westland unless there was a compelling reason for so doing. Few holiday makers wanted to risk their lives to see

a glacier. Westland explorer Charles Douglas was one who found much to marvel at in the wilderness of South Westland, and his writing reflects his belief that those wanting to absorb its essence needed to be prepared to live at one with it, something which was a necessity, not a choice, in a region where travel was difficult and accommodation spartan. Westland’s first tourists, who had to be hardy and adventurous to visit the Franz Josef Glacier, may well have agreed with Douglas’s philosophy.

In considering tourism over a one hundred year period, it is the dominance of wilderness which leaves the strongest impression. Tourism promoters and guides showed flair, ingenuity and endurance in making the Franz Josef Glacier accessible to tourists from all over the world, yet their work was often destroyed by the forces of nature in the valley, or in the wider environment of South Westland generally. The heavy forest cover and frequent precipitation made the construction of the region’s first highway difficult. The South Westland road was gradually upgraded, but the many rivers were not bridged for decades, and floods often turned them into impassable barriers.

Travelling to Franz Josef was usually an unforgettable experience, and New Zealand’s first Superintendent of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, Thomas Donne, commented that those contemplating it needed to be adventurous. They also needed a lot of luck, given the notorious West Coast rainfall, and the resulting delays enforced by flooded rivers. Early tourists had to travel by foot, horseback, or dray, as the rough state of the road made it inaccessible to motor traffic until 1911, when the first car reached Franz Josef after an epic 12 hour journey from Hokitika.

As the road improved, more tourists visited Franz Josef, but the wilderness challenges remained. The glacier valley itself proved obdurate to human approaches. During floods, the glacier-fed Waiho River destroyed tracks and cut off access to the ice; during an advance in 1909, the glacier destroyed a high access gallery, despite attempts to dynamite the ice out of its path. After a retreat in the 1930s, a lake

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4 Anon, ‘Back in 1911 A Drive to the Franz Josef Glacier was a Real Adventure’, *Greymouth Evening Star* (Greymouth) Undated clipping. A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
formed in front of the glacier, and a boat had to be used to ferry tourists to the glacier, until the presence of icebergs made this too dangerous. In the 1950s there was another retreat, and the consequent removal of ice support caused the valley walls to crumble and rockfalls to sweep across the lower reaches of the glacier. Then in 1965 a spectacular advance pushed up a high terminal face and caused numerous ice avalanches, making access dangerous and often impossible.

Between 1865 and 1965 the Franz Josef Glacier environment presented many obstacles to the guides, and offered wilderness tourism at its most exhilarating and unpredictable. Any progress made during this period was qualified by the limits set by nature. The guides seized opportunities for access, and, while they thus offered thousands of people the chance to walk on the glacier, they were well aware that the tracks and bridges they built would never be permanent.

Human attitudes to the glacier and South Westland generally can be understood to a large extent by the dominance of that wilderness. If New Zealand’s settlers viewed their country as a place valuable only when converted to farm land, it is not surprising that little attention was paid to such an inhospitable region as the West Coast. It is, perhaps, more surprising that the settlers seemed largely indifferent to the grandeur of the glacier and mountain scenery clearly visible from their farms. However, the few records preserved from this era and attitudes passed down through the generations suggest that this was so.

Franz Josef Glacier’s difficult access was the key reason why tourist numbers were counted in the tens, while in other New Zealand resorts they were counted in the hundreds and even thousands during the final decades of the nineteenth century. However, there were other factors involved, such as the fact that the glaciers region lacked a local tourism promoter. The glacier valley was well known to Westland’s settlers, but its value to them was practical rather than aesthetic. They shot birds and grazed cattle in the valley, bathed in the hot springs near the glacier, and used crevasses to refrigerate meat, but few settlers gave much consideration to Franz Josef’s tourism potential in the nineteenth century. In such a harsh environment as Westland, their survival depended on their skill at adapting nature to their needs, and this encouraged the average West Coaster to become familiar with the wilderness.

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6 Peter McCormack, ‘Tourism at Franz Josef Glacier’ Tape One, recorded at Lake Kaniere, July 1997.
7 Interview of Peter McCormack with Trish McCormack, Christchurch, 15 October 1998.
8 Ibid.
The diaries of a South Westland woman, Catherine Adamson, underscore this point, just as they highlight an indifference to the mountain scenery of the region. It was an attitude apparently shared by many West Coasters of the era, as evidenced by the fact that few ventured into the mountains except for pragmatic reasons such as gold prospecting, surveying, and hunting. It was not until the economic advantages of tourism were recognised in the early years of the twentieth century that West Coasters began turning appreciative eyes to the mountains.

There were some notable exceptions to this attitude, however, people whose empathy with the South Westland environment bred a love and respect for the wilderness which had nothing to do with financial advantages. Surveyor George Roberts refused promotion to stay in Hokitika within sight of the mountains, Charles Douglas spent his life exploring Westland’s wild places, and Hokitika doctor, Ebenezer Teichelmann, went into the mountains in search of gold and emerged with a love of climbing which would last a lifetime. All of these men made lasting contributions to the development of tourism in Westland.

If nature had a strong influence in the development of tourism at Franz Josef Glacier, the character of the settlers had an important place in the tradition as well. West Coast hospitality and the idiosyncratic style of early tourism in the region was translated into a legend which would persist long after such attitudes had vanished, acting as a powerful magnet to tourists. In the nineteenth century few West Coasters had established tourist hotels and accommodation house, but the spectacular nature of the glaciers region decreed that people would visit despite this deficiency. The settlers of South Westland may have been largely indifferent to the mountains, but most were hospitable and had a keen interest in people; travellers were always assured of a welcome in their homes. This gave them the opportunity to get to know the local people, and accounts written by tourists suggest that such informal hospitality was highly valued, even if some aspects were unorthodox. Mildred Westland, who travelled to Franz Josef Glacier with her mother and siblings in 1894, wrote of being plunged into the excitement of horse mustering, being kept awake all night by a rowdy gold miner’s wake, and waiting for days in Hokitika to be taken south by the mailman, because his horse was scheduled to enter a race in Greymouth.

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Moreland made frequent reference to West Coast hospitality in her account of a trip through South Westland in 1907. It is obvious from such accounts that there was no artificial separation between tourists and the local community during these decades.

Traditions of the character of West Coast people were enhanced when Franz Josef’s first hotel was established by gold prospector William Batson, a former Indian army officer, and enthusiastic raconteur, who regaled his guests with tales of tiger shooting, accompanied them on the glacier despite his fear of the mountains, and ran a successful sly-grogging operation in the village. The colour provided by Batson was little more than a prelude to the real impetus of tourism at Franz Josef however. The role of the Graham family in the development of guiding and hospitality traditions at Franz Josef was of enormous significance to the whole of Westland during a period which spanned four decades. In 1911 Batson sold his business to Alec and Jim Graham, the sons of goldfields settlers David and Isabella Graham. Jim Graham’s wife, Rose McBride, took the hospitality traditions of the typical West Coast household and adapted them to meet the needs of a busy tourist hotel, catering on a large scale, while still finding time for individual attention to visitors. Judging by the many comments in the hotel visitors’ books, this hospitality proved as important to tourists as the scenery they travelled to see. It was a tradition which found new expression in subsequent generations, as more West Coast people became involved in tourism, from the Hokitika bus drivers who took tourists to Franz Josef, to the guides who took them on the glacier.

The Grahams, as well as pioneering the West Coast guiding tradition, had a strong influence on the development of the Hermitage guiding system. Peter Graham guided at the Hermitage for almost 20 years, before returning to Franz Josef to join his family’s hotel and guiding business in 1922. The Hermitage and Franz Josef guiding centres evolved some different characteristics. The Hermitage resort, surrounded by high mountains, attracted recreational mountaineers from all over the

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11 Maud Moreland, *Through South Westland*.
world, while mountaineering in the west had very different origins in the pragmatic pursuits of gold prospecting and surveying. Westland’s rugged environment decreed that any successful mountaineering expedition would involve guide and client working together as a team. This left little room for the artificial separation of guides and clients encouraged by the English Alpine Club tradition, which was adopted to some extent at the Hermitage. The effect of this was mitigated by the fact that most of the Hermitage guides were West Coasters. They brought a practicality and egalitarian style to a sport bound by traditions as rigid as the English class system of the time.

The West Coast guiding centre at Franz Josef was characterised by an even greater informality which, among other things, provided opportunities for women to learn to climb without any of the attendant moral censure which restricted the efforts of women mountaineers at the Hermitage. It had a style which encouraged friendships to develop between tourists and guides, and determined that many people would return regularly to the Glacier Hotel, fostering the development of the family atmosphere which was one of the most notable characteristics of the resort.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the Franz Josef tourist resort was that it was run by born-and-bred West Coasters, ingrained in the hospitality traditions outlined above, while also having the kind of knowledge of the glacier landscape which could only come from a lifetime of involvement with the environment. By the time the Graham family bought the Glacier Hotel, Alec and Peter Graham were two of New Zealand’s most experienced mountaineers and guides. In establishing a resort which became world famous at Franz Josef, they drew on their affinity for the whole Westland environment to give depth and integrity to their tourism enterprise, the success of which can be measured in the enthusiasm expressed by those who visited the resort. The Grahams, in encouraging thousands of people to climb the glacier and surrounding mountains, made a major contribution to the development of adventure tourism in this country at a time when, according to Freda Du Faur, most New Zealanders were apathetic about the mountains. West Coasters, it seems, were not alone in their indifference to wilderness. The Grahams passed on a valuable inheritance to a new generation of guides, ensuring the continuity of a homegrown guiding tradition with a depth made possible by an intimate knowledge of the

16 Dorothy Fletcher, ‘Notes on the West Coast Guiding System’, File 2 F.J.G., A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
dynamics of the glacier valley and surrounding mountains. The strength of this
tradition bridged the gap caused by the loss of the hotel to fire and was pivotal to
Franz Josef’s growing fame as one of New Zealand’s key tourist resorts. Pioneering
tourist aircraft excursions also played an important role from the mid 1930s onwards.

These factors contributed to a great increase in the number of tourists who
visited the Franz Josef Glacier. In the 1890s only a few adventurous people made the
trip to the glacier each year, while by the mid 1940s, the resort was attracting some
5000 visitors each year. This included a growing circle of regular clientele, many of
them people of means, like Dorothy Theomin of Olveston in Dunedin, who could
afford the time needed to visit Franz Josef as well as the cost of hotel and guiding fees
while staying there. The changing demographics of the tourist population is perhaps
the greatest proof of the fame of the Grahams’ tourist enterprise. Between 1911 and
1920, the majority of visitors to the Glacier Hotel came from the West Coast, but by
the 1920s only a quarter of the visitors were West Coasters, the other three-quarters
coming from other parts of New Zealand and overseas. There was a significant
increase in the number of overseas visitors from a total of 58 between 1911 and 1920,
to a peak of over 1000 per annum in the late 1930s.

Local knowledge was a key ingredient in the success of the Franz Josef tourist
establishment, but the role played over the years by the Department of Tourist and
Health Resorts was also important, even if the relationship between the Wellington-
based bureaucracy and the local tourism developers was often a troubled one. The
ensuing conflicts tended to be obscured by the more dramatic conflicts between
people and nature, but an understanding of the relationship between the department
and the locals is crucial to understanding the dynamics of tourism development at
Franz Josef Glacier. It is perhaps inevitable that the relationship should have been
difficult. Just as West Coasters were beginning to recognise the value of the glacier,
bureaucrats in Wellington were seen to have an increasing and sometimes unpopular
role in its administration. In the late nineteenth century, the tourist tracks and huts in
the glaciers region had been the responsibility of the Department of Lands and

18 Glacier Hostel Waiho Visitors’ Book 1911-1928, Glacier Hostel Waiho Gorge Visitors’ Book 1927–
A.C. Graham Collection, Hokitika.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
Survey, and administered from its Hokitika office.\textsuperscript{21} With the formation in 1902 of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts, the administration shifted to Wellington.\textsuperscript{22} The transition from a system managed almost exclusively on the West Coast to a partnership between Wellington bureaucrats and Franz Josef tourist developers was an uneasy one. The Grahams were practical men with an intimate understanding of the Franz Josef Glacier valley, and a commitment to sharing it with all who went there, while the Department officers had a broad responsibility for resorts all over the country, but no practical understanding of the glacier environment. It is hardly surprising if their priorities were different. To the Franz Josef tourism developers, reinstatement of tracks after floods was vital; to the Department it often seemed an investment of dubious financial value, given the likelihood of further flood destruction in the valley. Yet the two parties did work together, albeit uneasily at times, and both played a vital role in maintaining the resort, the Department with its grants of money, and the Grahams with their practical commitment to the maintenance of tracks and huts in the glacier valley.

An apparent reluctance to spend money on track maintenance was probably taken by some West Coasters as proof of a more generalised complaint, that the Department had little interest in promoting tourism on the West Coast. This perceived grievance surfaced frequently and was always denied by the Department, which made the valid point that, as it had no commercial property at the glaciers, it could not be expected to play as active a role as it did at resorts where it owned hotels. The West Coast, like other South Island resorts, suffered from the fact that the majority of overseas tourists arrived at North Island ports, and it had the added disadvantage of difficult access. There is, in fact, some evidence to suggest the Department was endeavouring to promote the glaciers region as an adventure holiday destination. The Department published an illustrated guidebook to the West Coast in 1906, and Superintendent Thomas Donne promoted the concept of cycle holidays to the glaciers. However, at a time when the development of thermal springs as health resorts was one of the central roles of the Department, its neglect of the hot springs in the Franz Josef Glacier valley was viewed by some as evidence of its lack of interest in the

\textsuperscript{21} W.G Murray, \textquote{Appendix 3: Road Construction and Maintenance}, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives C-1, 1897, p.80; 1898, p.38.
\textsuperscript{22} T.E. Donne, \textquote{First Annual Report of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts}, Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1902, H-2, pp. 1-21.
glaciers region. In the 1920s West Coast M.P. Tom Seddon used the issue to support his contention that the region was neglected, calling it the ‘Cinderella of New Zealand.’ West Coasters consistently criticised the Department for failing to inform VIP tourists of the Franz Josef Glacier region, a charge also taken up from time to time by the local media.

The situation improved when the Department bought the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel from the Grahams in 1947 and initiated a substantial renovation and promotion programme. The improvements were shortlived. The most compelling evidence that the Department was uninterested in the West Coast came in the wake of the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel fire in 1954. The catalogue of broken promises and procrastination, which resulted in an 11 year delay before a replacement hotel was built, was seized on by the local media and tourism promoters as proof of the long-held contentions of government neglect of, and indifference to, the West Coast.

The Franz Josef Glacier tourism establishment was not solely reliant on the Department for promotion, however. The West Coast had established its own promotion association in the 1890s, and various local enterprises had produced pamphlets and tourism publications, while the New Zealand Illustrated Magazine, New Zealand Railways Magazine, and various newspapers produced frequent articles and features which helped to publicise the glaciers region. As demonstrated above, the resort’s reputation was attracting growing numbers of tourists from all over the world by the mid twentieth century, and while the above initiatives undoubtedly facilitated this, the time-honoured tradition of word-of-mouth advertising probably also played an important part. The reputation of the Grahams in the development of high quality guiding and hospitality traditions was a key to the growing fame of the resort, and this was probably more valuable than any promotion initiatives.

The relationship between tourism and conservation was as crucial to the development of Franz Josef as were the relationships between people and the environment, and locals and bureaucracy. In the early years of tourism development in the glaciers region the interaction between these interests was supportive and interdependent. The West Coast’s first tourism promoters were also keen conservationists and saw no conflict in the two roles. Given the dominance of nature in the glacier environment, conflict between use and preservation was not an issue in

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23 Tom Seddon, New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, No.35 21 October 1920 - 26 October 1920.
the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The conservation movement needed tourism to provide an economic imperative for scenery preservation. From about 1907, however, tourism was the instrument of one of the most serious threats to the New Zealand conservation estate. Donne used the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts as a vehicle to further his enthusiasm for acclimatisation, arguing that game hunting would become a major New Zealand tourist attraction. In 1907 he arranged for a release of chamois into the Southern Alps, which subsequently became a threat to South Westland’s forest ecosystem. By 1927 the folly of deer releases was fully realised, and they were being hunted as pests by the Department of Lands and Survey.

The link between tourism and forest destruction is a tenuous one, however. Given the general enthusiasm for introducing exotic species to New Zealand in the late nineteenth century, it seems likely that deer would have eventually been brought into New Zealand without the efforts of Department of Tourist and Health Resorts. Some of the worst disasters of acclimatisation had been the result of animals introduced at the behest of settlers, such as rabbits and ferrets, which had a profound and much earlier effect than the chamois and deer introduced in the interests of tourism. Charles Douglas, with his detailed knowledge of South Westland’s river valleys, had observed the devastation caused by rabbits, and in 1891 castigated the ‘dense ignorance’ of the acclimatisators, suggesting that rabbits could eventually ‘exterminate the Westland Bush’. Tourism, by contrast, actually helped some beleaguered native species, notably the kea, which had been hunted ruthlessly as a sheep killer; tourism interests protested against this slaughter, helping turn the tide in favour of the kea’s protection.

The similar aspirations of tourism and conservation resulted in close cooperation between the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts and the Scenery Preservation Commission, formed in 1902 and 1903 respectively. However public

25 Ibid., p.344.
27 John Pascoe, Mr Explorer Douglas, p.133.
sympathy for conservation pre-dates the government policy of the early twentieth century. Writer Edith Searle Grossman pre-empted the Scenery Preservation Commission, in articles published in 1901, in which she put forward the concept that the nation’s parks and wild places were the inheritance of the people. Such opinions did not come out of a vacuum. Although public perceptions are difficult to quantify, there is enough evidence to suggest that at least some people in South Westland looked beyond the pragmatic values of tourism in their enthusiasm for the conservation of the region’s glaciers and other wild places.

The most obvious conflict between tourism and conservation in the early decades of the twentieth century was in the arena of use and preservation, and there were some examples at Franz Josef, notably in an unsuccessful bid of the Mount Cook Tourist Company to build a hotel on scenic reserve land at Franz Josef, and a conflict over the construction of a tourist road up the glacier valley. The glacier road involved some modification of the glacier valley environment, the most major development to the present day, in fact. The subsequent moves to build funicular railways or gondolas to the glacier did not reach fruition, while early tourist aircraft produced relatively little noise pollution and required no permanent structures in the valley. Human impact on national parks and reserves in other parts of New Zealand has been far greater than anything possible in the Franz Josef Glacier valley, dominated as it is by the power of nature.

This natural ascendancy provides one of the clues as to why there was no serious opposition to the formation of the Westland National Park in 1960. Although the local community had good reason to distrust government bureaucracies after the Franz Josef Hotel replacement saga, it had no reason to suppose that the formation of a national park over the glacial and mountain estate of South Westland would cause any disadvantages to the local community. Instead, there was much to be gained from the enhanced status which would be bestowed on the Franz Josef and Fox Glaciers if they were declared a national park, and most tourist developers were aware that this could only help the industry. There is little to suggest that anyone was worrying about

30 Notes on a meeting between the Westland County Council, the Minister in Charge of Scenery Preservation and Peter and Alec Graham of Franz Josef in Wellington, July 1929 and Letter from the honorary secretary, Canterbury Progress League, to the Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts, 13 July
future conflicts between use and preservation when the Westland National Park was formed; its local administration mitigated against conflict. The key reason for the harmony between tourist and conservation interests in Franz Josef until the end of the study period in 1965 was the mutual respect between the conservationists and the tourism developers, most of whom were locals with a sound understanding of the relationship between people and nature in South Westland. If there were hints of the loss of future freedom, of a time when national parks would be administered with rigid attention to the letter of their laws, they were ignored in the heady days of the early 1960s, when tourists from all over the world were coming to Franz Josef Glacier to see the country’s newest national park. It was a time when practicality provided a useful balance to philosophy, and when any differences between tourism and conservation interests could usually be resolved. The Franz Josef example must have seemed like a model of cooperation between tourism and conservation, just as it must have been impossible in the 1960s to imagine the controversy of the 1980s when ongoing access difficulties and the call for the use of helicopters in the valley would pit the Franz Josef community against the Westland National Park authorities, creating lasting mistrust and grievance.

The Franz Josef Glacier is an environment of high value to both tourism and conservation interests; conflicts over the competing requirements of use and preservation would have seemed inevitable. An examination of tourism development in the region suggests, however, that such conflicts were minor. The glacier road controversy of the late 1920s appeared to signal a new era of acrimony between tourism and conservation interests, but very little followed this development. Tracks, huts and other structures built in the valley were always liable to destruction by floods, rockfalls and glacier advance or retreat. Human impact on the glacier valley has always been minimal. The Franz Josef Glacier is confined in a narrow river valley, and its wilderness aspects have been compromised to some extent by the presence of hundreds of tourists walking to the glacier or flying overhead in skiplanes. Floods occur frequently, however, obliterating all trace of people, and leaving the glacier environment as pristine as it was in the nineteenth century. Conservation and tourism interests worked together and in opposition to one another at various times between 1865 and 1965, but their impact was minor compared to the power of natural

forces at Franz Josef Glacier. It is an unique and rugged wilderness which was essentially unchanged by a hundred years of tourist development, a situation which remains to the present day. The dominance of the glacier environment was the main reason for this situation, but the relatively small tourist numbers compared with those visiting more accessible New Zealand resorts also played its part.

In 1965 tourist numbers were still manageable at Franz Josef; today there are various concessionaires with a stake in the glacier valley. Conflict between commercial enterprises and between tourism and conservation interests is increasingly volatile. There have been some major changes in the ways in which Westland National Park is administered, with more central government control and less interest in local knowledge. This has often resulted in an adversarial relationship between tourism and conservation interests at Franz Josef. Increasing tourist numbers have undoubtedly played a major part in this, but so too has the fact that the conservation administrators of today often lack the intimate knowledge of the West Coast exemplified by the Grahams and passed down to a new generation of guides and tourist developers in the 1950s. This knowledge gave authority to their decisions and enabled a high level of cooperation between tourism and conservation interests, a situation which seems enviable in today’s world of complex interactions between the two factions. Franz Josef’s guides and tourism developers were individualists, their philosophies were shaped by an intimate knowledge of the glacier environment. They evolved an unique style which was complemented by the rugged nature of the glacier environment. The Franz Josef Glacier will always be an unpredictable wilderness. It leaves much to the imagination, while all who visit remain in no doubt that it is a place where the state of nature will never be compromised. Charles Douglas would have approved.
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Abbreviations

AJHR = Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives, Wellington.
CM = Canterbury Mountaineer, Christchurch.
GGSQ = Geelong Grammar School Quarterly, Melbourne, Australia.
MPM = Mid Pacific Magazine.
NZAJ = New Zealand Alpine Journal, Wellington.
NZIM = New Zealand Illustrated Magazine.
NZJGG = New Zealand Journal of Geology and Geophysics.
NZJH = New Zealand Journal of History, Auckland.
NZPD = New Zealand Parliamentary Debates, Wellington.
NZJST = New Zealand Journal of Science and Technology.
NZRM = New Zealand Railways Magazine.

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### III. Published Works: Articles


## APPENDIX 1

Visitors Numbers at the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel, 1911-1947

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