

Box 5: THE TOWNSHIP OF BANNOCKBURN

The first settlement to be called Bannockburn began at the end of 1862 near the junction of the Bannockburn and Shepherds Creeks, about half a mile from the Kawarau River. The area was originally a scrub-covered alluvial river flat and is now drowned under the Bannockburn Arm of Lake Dunstan. It was likely to have been predominantly a tent settlement. Timber was scarce, but the fortuitous discovery of coal outcrops in the vicinity would have provided a local supply of fuel. A hotel and store were established to service the growing population. The warden of the district estimated some 300 miners at Bannockburn and some 750 on the Bannockburn Creek by mid 1863 (Parcell 1976: 23).

The settlement of Bannockburn did not remain stationary, possibly because the alluvial ground under its original location was found to contain gold, and because gold finds were being made further away from the river. By May 1867, the centre of activity at Bannockburn was moving south-west. John Richards shifted his hotel to Doctors Flat, now the approximate site of the Bannockburn Hotel. Some buildings were established along the Bannockburn-Nevis Road (Parcell 1976:104-105) and others clustered wherever mining was occurring. The settlements were likely to have looked like most others in Central Otago: 'small blue villages of corrugated iron, or the flimsiest wooden buildings...most of fleeting and temporary character' (Hearn 1981:47).

A town site for Bannockburn was surveyed in 1878 (SO 14102). The rectangle grid of the town was superimposed upon the barren and scarred ground of a well worked mining area. The plan showed town sections cut through by water races, dams and other mine workings, with no reference to the contour of the land. Sod walls appeared to edge mining areas in a couple of places, but again the layout imposed on the land by the surveyors paid no heed to these nominal boundaries. There was only one house in the 'town', and two sheds. The Campion's Hotel was just south of the surveyed township.

The first detailed map of the area, also drawn in 1878, shows that at this time the main settlement was a cluster of 22 buildings (including Angels Hotel) in the vicinity of what is now called Miners Terrace. Andy Ridland's 1890 map (Frontispiece) shows a similar clustering of houses in the Miners Terrace area as well as another cluster of about 20 buildings at the end of Domain Rd. But even at this stage there were still only four or five buildings within the surveyed 'Town' – a few houses, the store (Fig. 13), and the hotel along the main Bannockburn-Nevis road.

It is uncertain why the 'Town' was not built on, although photos from the turn of the century show that at least some of the area was still a mass of sluiced shingle (Fig. 14). According to Parcell, the town sections were available for sale in 1880, but were not taken up because it was easier and cheaper to take up a residence site under the Mining Act (Parcell 1976: 111). This may account for the location of the school, hall and Presbyterian Church all well away from the surveyed 'Town'. Anecdotal evidence suggests that these were located so as to be accessible to the various centres of population including those who lived in Quartzville and Carricktown. Certainly, the hall/church cluster is half way between the surveyed 'Town' and Miners Terrace, and the school lies approximately equidistant between these two places and Quartzville.

It seems that, until the 1980s (a century after the survey was carried out), most of the houses associated with Bannockburn township were actually outside of the surveyed town area. The cluster of houses we know as Bannockburn today is mostly a relatively recent event (most houses date from the 1980s and after). Even in the late 1970s there was little development along Hall Road: a planning report in 1976 noted 'on the way from Cromwell the only two buildings which catch the eye are the Church and Hall, so well tucked below the skyline are all the others' (Paterson 1976: 4).

Today, the stone store, Post Office and a couple of houses nearby represent the few buildings that were built within the 'Town'. The clusters of mainly mud-brick and corrugated iron cottages that made up 'Old' Bannockburn - those at Miners Terrace, Domain Rd and the main road - have largely gone, but a few remain to show the scattered nature of the original settlement (Figs 15, 17).

Figure 13. General store, Bannockburn, 1910. Reproduced by courtesy of Hocken Library, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago.



earthworks. By 1869 the banks of the Kawarau River had been sluiced. In 1873, Baileys Gully (also known as Raupo Gully) at Bannockburn, an area that already been surface sluiced, was reworked, and the miners broke through a false bottom to relatively rich ore bearing layer (Parcell 1976: 35–37). The whole of Templars Hill had been sluiced away by April 1883 (Parcell 1976: 33).

4.4.7 Coal

Coal was an essential resource for running the crushing machinery—and luckily there was plenty of it. Coal mining developed alongside gold mining in Bannockburn from the mid 1860s (see Fig. 16) and continued for almost a century into the 1950s. Coal from the mines was used for domestic purposes, but its primary importance was in providing motive power for gold-mining machinery. The batteries used in quartz mining, for example, were typically steam-powered, which required the continual firing of a boiler. Dredges also used significant quantities of coal. The mines were also important for local employment, providing an alternative to the declining gold returns, and a possible contributor to the continued settlement of the Bannockburn area in the twentieth century. It is difficult to imagine how the mining industry would have evolved were it not for the local availability of this energy source. See Box 6: Bannockburn coal mines.

4.4.8 Quartz and alluvial mining continued

Other forms of mining started to become important in the late 1860s. Underground mining was one: by the end of 1869 there were deep leads sunk in alluvial gravels at Bannockburn (Parcell 1976: 34). Quartz mining also gained momentum at the end of the decade; the Elizabeth, Start and Golden Phoenix companies had mines at what became later known as Carricktown, and in 1870 the Royal Standard Company set up a quartz crushing battery at Quartzville which could crush on hire for the various mines on the range above (Parcell 1976: 82). The battery was operated by a steam engine, fired by coal from

Figure 14.
Bannockburn c. 1899,
looking southwest from
Slaughteryard Hill.
Bannockburn Hotel on the
right. Note extensive
sluicings behind.
Mrs E. Olds, Cromwell,
P. Crump Collection.



Figure 15.
A view of Bannockburn
today, looking south
along Nevis Road. The
Bannockburn Hotel (recent
construction) is in the
foreground, the old
bakery beyond, and new
housing on the skyline.
Janet Stephenson 2003.



Figure 16.
Coalpit, Bannockburn
(no date). Reproduced by
courtesy of Hocken Library,
Uare Taoka o Hakana,
University of Otago.



Box 6: BANNOCKBURN COAL MINES

Coal mining forms part of the relatively invisible history of Bannockburn, and yet it was in some ways the backbone of the local economy. Its remains are not easily visible today. While some coal pits were open, there were also extensive underground workings. The coal seams followed the margins of the prehistoric 'Lake Manuherikia' and broke to the surface in various locations along the course of Shepherds Creek, from its junction with Bannockburn Creek as far south as Adams Gully, and adjacent to the Kawarau River.

It is likely that coal was discovered soon after the miners came into the Bannockburn area, for by the mid 1860s a number of coal mines had opened. The first Bannockburn coal-pit on a business scale was opened in 1862 on what is known as the Cairnmuir seam at Bannockburn Creek. The next coal discovery was made in 1864 by hotel keeper J. Stuart, who opened the Excelsior Mine on the northern side of Slaughteryard Hill (Parcell 1976: 264). In 1878, J. L. Moore and J. Pryde applied for a coal lease of twenty acres at the junction of Shepherds Creek and Bannockburn Creek, calling it the Kawarau Colliery, a name that later shifted up to the mines in Shepherds Creek (Parcell 1976: 265). Coal mines came and went over the years, mining in various seams and under various names. As with gold mines, coal mining partnerships changed regularly, making ownership and location difficult to track.

The mines provided fuel for domestic purposes, but the major production was for the machinery used in the gold industry. Coal mining fortunes tended to follow mining booms and busts. Quartz mining required large amounts of coal to run the boilers but was in decline from the 1880s. Luckily for the collieries, dredging created a large demand for coal again from the 1890s.

An example is the Excelsior Mine. James Gibson and W.R. Parcell Jr took up an area of land on the east side of Bannockburn Creek, about half a mile up from the Kawarau, and were producing coal by May 1899. The mine turned out 100 tons a week and for a number of years supplied up to sixteen dredges with steam coal. It was connected underground with Wilson's workings on the same seam, which also supplied dredge and household coal, delivered by a winding chair across the Kawarau River. It was closed in 1907 following the decline of dredging (Parcell 1976: 266–267).

The decline in dredging caused a similar decline in the collieries. But despite the downturn, three mines were still operating in Bannockburn in 1909—two belonging to the Cromwell & Bannockburn Colliery Company, and the Ranfurly mine, which had just been opened by John Hodson Snr (Parcell 1976: 268). In 1917, all the mines amalgamated into the Bannockburn Coal Company. The Ranfurly and Cairnmuir pits were closed, and the whole of the coal was supplied from the Shepherds Creek mine (Parcell 1976: 269).

Coal mining provided an important source of local employment. The 1910 *Stone's Directory* gives 111 entries for Bannockburn: 72 of these men have mining-related occupations (it does not differentiate between gold and coal); 21 are associated with the stations; and two describe themselves as farmers or orchardists. The 1910 mines report confirms the importance of coal mining at this time—37 men were listed as working on the coal mines, both above and below ground, the two main mines being the Cromwell and Bannockburn Collieries and the Cairnmuir Coal Company (*Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR)* 1910 C-3a: 18, 33). At the same time, gold mining was in a slump due to water problems, and dredging was on the decline (*AJHR* 1910 C-3: 50). By this stage, coal mining may well have provided a steadier source of income than gold mining (see Fig. 16).

Despite the reduced demand for locally produced coal, it was still mined in Bannockburn into the 1950s by a variety of companies and syndicates, and in various locations (Moore 1953: 95–96; 100). During the Depression of the 1930s some mining areas were reopened as work schemes (Parcell 1976: 44). Coal mining continued in a small way into the 1940s and 1950s at Coopers old mine on the Kawarau, the old Cairnmuir seam, and a shaft at the foot of Revels Gully.

Adams Gully. In the ensuing few years, numerous other quartz mines were opened on the Carrick, and a road was constructed up the Carrick spur to improve access and the conveyance of ore to the battery. Quite a number of claims failed to find payable gold but most got something, and many were taken

up over and over again by different parties. By 1872, three batteries were operating, the last two of which required some 25 tons of coal per week to be carted up the steep Carrick Spur road. An alternative source of energy was attempted with a water wheel built at the Young Australian mine, which was powered by water from the Carrick race, but it was not a great success (Parcell 1976: 87–88).

By 1875 there were numerous large and small quartz mines on the Carrick Range in four main groups—a cluster near the foot of the range at the bottom of

Box 7: QUARTZVILLE

In October 1870, a settlement was formed on a small flat at the base of a spur of the lower Carrick Range, overlooking Smiths Gully and Bannockburn. Its location was based around the Royal Standard quartz battery, which crushed ore from nearby mines, and it was accordingly named Quartzville. Today, an expanse of grass, some mature trees, and a few building foundations are all that remain of this short-lived town, although until the 1960s the remains of mud-walled cottages were clearly visible.

A number of businesses were established at Quartzville to supply miners with the essentials of life. In the early 1870s, James Cossar and Gilbert Staite started a store and butchery, and the first hotel was opened there by John McCormack opposite the Royal Standard battery. Other hotels, a blacksmith's, stables, and residences followed. The establishment of the township was celebrated by a ball and supper in October 1872 (Parcell 1976: 83–84).

The Quartzville settlement continued to develop into the mid-1870s. A few more business premises opened—John Grindley's butchery, James Lawrence's Commercial Hotel; George Murchie's drapery; and Reuben Isaacs' fancy goods store. Many of these people had previously come from Bendigo. Around 1871, an access road to the many Carrick quartz claims was constructed up Carrick Spur (Parcell 1976: 84). Although by 1876 mining returns on the Carrick Range were falling, the settlement at Quartzville was still developing—in January 1876, there were tenders for a new butchery; the Walker Brothers had a new store and bakery; and Jesse Geer and E. Aldridge ran a bakery, confectioner's, and restaurant.

However, by 1886, hard-rock mining returns were so low that the Quartzville settlement was virtually at an end (Parcell 1976: 84–86). Some of the miners' residences were reused during the 1930s depression by the subsidised miners. Tents were erected within the framework of the old cottages, reminiscent of the early tent camps of the 1860s. On this later date, the harsh living conditions were not balanced by good gold returns.

the Carrick Spur; a second cluster about a mile and a half up the spur in the Carricktown area; an area high in the range at the top of Adams Gully, chiefly occupied by the Young Australian mine; and the John Bull area between Smiths Gully and Pipeclay (see Fig. 2). Towards the end of the 1870s there were small mining settlements relating to both quartz and alluvial mining in various locations in the study area. Although returns were declining, gold still provided the backbone of the local economy.

4.4.9 Antimony

The discovery of antimony at Bull Spur on the Carrick Range in 1872 gave hope of another economic industry in the area, but it proved to be a short-lived bubble. As with other areas in the Carrick, access was difficult. A pack track was put in to the mine but the deposit was found to be small and shallow. A further attempt was made in the early 1880s. The Carrick Range Antimony Company planned a large smelting works and put out tenders for 20 000 bricks. The

Box 8: CARRICKTOWN

High above the Bannockburn Valley, huddled on a gently sloping area on an otherwise steep and rocky spur, sit the collapsed remains of a number of stone buildings. Crawling through a barbed wire fence reveals waist-high stone walls, some with sills marking windows and doors. Creeping through dense briar provides evidence of further stone buildings. The wider area is marked by mining pits and tailings, as well as the remains of old batteries. This exposed spot is all that remains of Carricktown, another short-lived settlement based around the hard-rock mining on the Carrick Range.

The settlement was formed in the early 1870s, based around the success of the nearby gold mines. It was at the heart of the Carrick quartz goldfield, with the sites of the Elizabeth, Star of the East and Heart of Oak quartz mines nearby. By September 1871, the settlement was built on a small patch of semi-flat land below the mines. There were a store, butchery, and bakery, and about fifteen huts (Parcell 1976: 86–87). Mining on the Carrick was isolated, access was difficult, and the good returns were short-lived. There were still 150 men working in the Carrick in 1877, but the settlement was already declining. By August 1877, businesses were moving away, and the Carrick Range Hotel shifted down to Bannockburn, as did the bakery (Parcell 1976: 86).

Approximately 16 building sites are still visible; most of the remains are of stone-walled buildings, but there are also flat areas which could have been the site of tents or corrugated iron buildings. The settlement and mines together provide a good example of the whole system associated with quartz mining, including mines, battery sites, the service centre of Carricktown and large parts of the water reticulation systems (Bristow 1998: np).

smelter was erected on the point of Slaughteryard Hill above the Bannockburn Bridge, near Pryde's Excelsior coal mine. The smelter opened in July 1882, but the mine was closed by the end of the year when the antimony vein ran out. In October 1883, the chimney blew down, and the bricks were re-used in Cromwell bakers' ovens (Parcell 1976: 101–102).

Box 9: BANNOCKBURN IN 1878

Three sources of information give us a picture of Bannockburn when both alluvial and quartz mining were still in full swing. A topographical survey of the Bannockburn area was completed in 1878 and the plan gives a snapshot of development and activity at this time. In the same year, a survey was carried out to create the 'Town of Bannockburn'. Fortuitously, there is also an electoral roll for this year, which provides details of occupations, locations, and types of dwelling.

Figure 17 reproduces details from the 1878 topographical plan*. Virtually all land on the plan is still part of Kawarau Station's leasehold, even though parts are being mined. Leasehold tenure was designed not to inhibit mining activity, and mining rights predominated over pastoral activities. Kawarau Station's pre-emptive right (freehold land) is shown, with its house, stable, and store ('store' refers to a storeroom rather than a shop). Two other pre-emptive rights are indicated at the north of the area, one for Douglas & Alderson (near Long Gully) and one for the NZ and Australian Land Company (near Bannockburn Creek).

A rectangle shows the newly surveyed township of Bannockburn just south of the bend in the Kawarau River. Other rectangles may represent mining licences for gold, coal, and antimony. Where buildings are shown inside a square, this may indicate the boundary of some form of lease or occupation right, or possibly a garden enclosure (e.g. Angels Hotel and scattered houses nearby, in the general location of Miners Terrace today).

A survey camp is located further up the Valley, possibly the base for those who carried out this survey.

* The 1878 plan only covered the Bannockburn Survey District, ending just north of the surveyed township. From here north the mapped information is taken from other sources and is therefore less certain and less detailed than elsewhere on the map. It is likely that there was more mining activity and more buildings than shown.

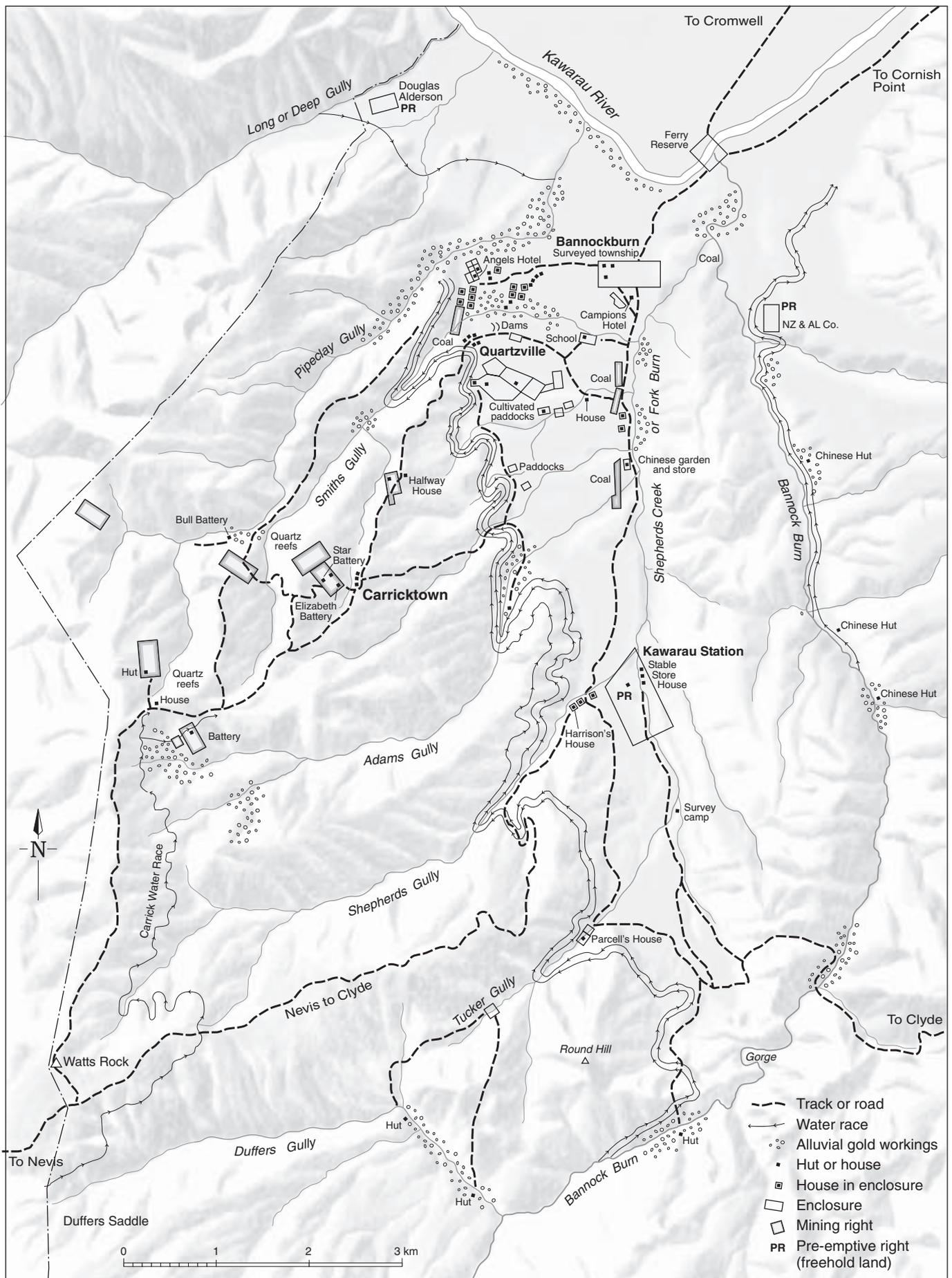


Figure 17. Map of Bannockburn in 1878.