

There are by now many routes into and out of Bannockburn. The main routes are:

- north to the Kawarau River crossing (this was bridged in 1874 but swept away by floods in September 1878 and temporarily replaced by a ferry until repairs were completed in 1879);
- north and east to Cornish Point;
- south to Kawarau Station and over the Cairnmuir Range to Clyde;
- south and west over the Carrick Range to the Nevis Valley;
- southwest up the Carrick spur to Quartzville, Carricktown and higher mining sites.

The landscape is still being heavily mined. Areas of alluvial mining are shown on many of the creeks. Given that the area had already been thoroughly worked over in the previous decade, it is probable that the alluvial areas shown in the 1878 map represent only what was being mined at that time. It is notable that some of the mining was occurring well up into the Carrick Range at Adams and Duffers Gullies. Quartz reefs are shown on the Carrick Range with their associated batteries. Several coal reserves are shown along Shepherds Creek, and the antimony reserve is shown west of Pipeclay Gully, this bubble having not yet burst.

Scattered habitations can be seen at most of the alluvial workings, and closer settlement at Carricktown, Quartzville, and around Miners Terrace. Some house sites surrounded by cultivated paddocks are situated near Quartzville.

Only three buildings are shown within the surveyed Bannockburn Township area. From other sources we know that only one of these was a house, the other two being a stable and slaughter yard. Unfortunately the 1878 plan cuts off what is now the end of Domain Road, where a number of other houses were probably located at this time.

Various water races snake across the landscape, terminating at gold workings. Parallel races traverse the hills from the upper Bannockburn Creek and appear to end at Pipeclay gully (although this may be because the base map does not go any further). The Carrick race has not yet extended far beyond the Young Australian mine (Fig. 18), where it was used to power the gold battery.

Figure 18.  
Young Australian water  
wheel, Carrick Range.  
Peter Petchey, 2003.



The 1878 plan gives the most vivid indication we have of the significant Chinese population in the Bannockburn area. There are Chinese huts shown among alluvial workings on the true right of Bannockburn Creek and a Chinese garden and store at Shepherds Creek. The store was 'fully equipped with benches for opium smokers and tables for dominoes' (Parcell 1976: 149). The workings on Shepherds Creek and Upper Bannockburn Creek were mainly by Chinese miners (See Box 11: Chinese miners).

The 1878 electoral roll provides more depth to this image of Bannockburn. At this stage there were limitations as to who could be on the roll, and only 70 names appear, none of which was a woman or Chinese. While around 30

people specified Bannockburn as their place of residence, another fifteen gave the location of their house as one of the gullies that were being mined at the time, and another 18 stated they lived in the Carrick Range or one of the associated settlements. There was a clear sense that the land was intimately known and that these locations were distinctive. The construction methods and descriptions given for residences range from cottages and dwelling houses, to a large number of wood and iron houses, stone houses on the Carrick Range, sod huts and two wood and calico houses (1878 Electoral Roll—Wakatipu Electorate).

School attendance shows that there were many families in the area. In 1878 there were 75 children enrolled, and it was the following year when the first of the annual school picnics was held (Parcell 1976: 108).

### **Box 10: STEWART TOWN**

To the west of Bannockburn, sitting on a terrace near the huge Menzies Dam and overlooking extensive and spectacular sluicing faces of Pipeclay Gully is the cluster of remains known as Stewart Town (Fig. 19). Within a low sod wall stands a group of fruit trees and the full-height remains of cob and stone cottages. The feeder races to Menzies Dam are still evident, as are the races which took the stored water to sluice Pipeclay Gully below.



Figure 19. Menzies Dam (foreground) and Stewart Town (rear). Peter Petchey 2003.

Rather than a town in the usual sense, Stewart Town existed primarily because of its relationship with the control and sale of water to miners. It was named after miner and entrepreneur David Stewart, who settled there in 1876. He secured the water right from Long Gully, cut a race, and built the stone-faced Menzies Dam to store water, which he sold to the miners. Access to water allowed previously unworkable areas to be mined, including Menzies Terrace, Pipeclay Terrace, and Baileys Gully.

A few other miners settled at Stewart Town and worked the surrounding land. After a number of changes in ownership following the downturn in mining, it was purchased by D.U. MacGregor, who planted a small orchard. Some of the fruit trees are still present today.

#### **4.4.10 Mining in decline**

By 1886 some of the rich gullies surrounding Bannockburn, such as Smiths and Pipeclay, had been worked over two or three times. The new technology of hydraulic sluicing enabled deeper working, but the tailings raised the levels of the gullies to such a degree that they could eventually no longer be worked because of lack of sufficient fall to discharge the tailings (McPherson 1986: 13).

The subsequent ten years saw many fluctuations in enthusiasm and returns, but by 1889, quartz reefing was practically finished and the settlements that had supported the mining had waned. However, mining continued in a very small and episodic fashion on the Carrick until 1921.

By the 1890s, most of the alluvial gold that was accessible through the technology of the time had also been taken out, but mining still remained the

### **Box 11: CHINESE MINERS**

Chinese miners (Fig. 20) formed a significant part of the community for many years. It is estimated that in 1869 there were 300 Chinese miners at Bannockburn, the same number at Nevis and 60 at Cromwell (Ng 1993: 144). Groups of Chinese wintered over at Shepherds Creek, and worked the 'head of gullies that Europeans have left rather than face the rigour of a winter in the ranges' (Ng citing *Otago Witness*, September 1870: 166n). By 1871, a Chinese settlement had developed along Shepherds Creek, with dwellings, gardens, and the Chung Hung Lung store (Parcell 1976: 105). The Chinese storekeeper, Ah Chong, had a slaughteryard licence and ran a butchery as well (Parcell 1976: 150).

Public opinion was hostile towards the Chinese, and a public meeting in Bannockburn in 1879 passed a resolution against them and asked for the imposition of a poll tax (Parcell 1976: 150).

Although the Chinese population declined with the fortunes of mining, it was not until the 1920s that the last Chinese resident died. A local informant told of a number of old Chinese men who lived in simple circumstances along Shepherds Creek until the 1920s. An elderly Chinese man sold vegetables around the village from his market garden until the same period.

There is no obvious visible reminder of Chinese in the area today. Anecdotal evidence tells of finds of Chinese crockery shards in the Shepherds Creek area, but the Chinese story is largely silent.

Figure 20.

Chinese miners, Potters Gully, Carrick Range. (No photos were found of Chinese miners within the study area. Potters Gully is on the Nevis side of the Carrick Range.)  
Reproduced by courtesy of Hocken Library, Uare Taoka o Hakena, University of Otago.



dominant occupation. In the 1895 *Stone's Directory* over 90 men in Bannockburn (out of around 168 entries) described themselves as miners. Station work also provided a significant backbone to the population, with 32 people giving station-related employment. Only one person indicated farming as their occupation. Fifteen worked in town-related services.

Despite the falling returns, speculators turned up trying to rejuvenate mining, with a particular concern being the development of an adequate water supply. One infamous scheme in Bannockburn was suggested by a Mr J.O. Matthews in 1896. He wanted to apply for a special claim at Bannockburn on Deep Lead Terrace (perhaps now Miners Terrace), and also to buy up all the water rights and claims in Bannockburn (part cash and part shares in his company) and bring a large race over from the Nevis. The claim was at the centre of the goldfield and took in about 20 homesteads. Locals considered that the claim would smother all the outlets and cover a large payable area. They also thought that to grant a

claim on such a scale would mean the “extinction of the individual miner” (*Cromwell Argus* 5 December 1896). After overcoming the initial opposition and getting support from local miners it was found that the original site did not have enough fall to remove debris. Appeals to the Minister of Mines for financial support failed, and the scheme died (J.P. Parcell Notes, P. Crump Collection).

#### 4.4.11 The dredging boom

The dredging boom of the mid 1890s and early twentieth century provided a new source of gold extraction once again. Dredges worked up the Bannockburn and Shepherds Creeks as well as on the Kawarau River (Figs 21, 22). There were some significant local successes, particularly James Horn, who was involved in

Figure 21.  
Dredge at Shepherds  
Creek, Bannockburn.  
Reproduced by courtesy of  
Hocken Library,  
Uare Taoka o Hakena,  
University of Otago.



Figure 22. (below)  
Bannockburn sluicings  
and dredges, 1900.  
Probably taken from  
Renshaw trig: dredge is in  
Shepherds Creek.  
Reproduced by courtesy of  
Hocken Library,  
Uare Taoka o Hakena,  
University of Otago.



the Electric Company dredges. The first Electric Co. dredge was so successful as to pay for another dredge, and the second paid for itself in one week's work. The third, the *Lady Ranfurly*, was one of the most productive and famous dredges in Central Otago (Perriam c. 1988: 6). Dredging companies in various forms worked the area around Bannockburn Creek and Cornish Point until around 1910 (Parcell 1976: 227–230). At this point the final source of easily won gold had been sucked dry. The great mining era was over.

#### 4.4.12 Gold mining during the Depression

During the 1930s Depression there was a minor renewal of mining activity as the Government actively encouraged men to move into goldfields areas to re-work them. The Government undertook geological surveys to try and facilitate good gold returns. Work was also done on goldfields roads, tracks and water

#### ***Box 12: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN BANNOCKBURN IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY***

As gold mining gradually declined and the transient population drifted away to other areas, a stable population established itself. The focus of settlement and community life concentrated on Bannockburn township and environs, as shown by the establishment of community structures and meeting places in this area from the 1870s onwards.

Schooling was an early need. In May 1871, a private day school was opened by John Simpson, situated between Doctors Flat and Smiths Gully. Clearly, this was insufficient, as eighteen months later a public school was established in Smiths Gully, well situated to draw children from the various small settlements in the area. The school provided a centre for the community, and by 1876 included a library and post office (Parcell 1976: 107). The first school picnic was held in 1879, and became an annual fixture. It was held initially at Raupo Gully, at the end of the century at Happy Valley (until 1912), and thereafter at Shepherds Creek. It lasted as an annual event into the 1950s (Parcell 1976: 109). The school remained in its original location and closed in the late 1960s. It has since been used as a school camp.

Adult education for miners developed in the town when, in 1882, a branch of the Otago School of Mines was established at Bannockburn. Professor Black was in charge, assisted by other visiting lecturers. By this late date, mining was in steady decline, and this showed in the short life of the school: it was moribund by 1890, revived in 1894, and closed for good in 1898 (Parcell 1976: 112–113).

Stores, the post office, churches, halls, and hotels were also important in community life and developed at different places at different times. A few of these still exist today.

The stone store at the intersection of the Nevis Road and Domain Road was erected in 1880 by James Smith. The store operated as a cooperative venture from 1880 to 1882, but this failed and the store was then taken over and run privately (Fig. 23). For most of its existence it was run by three generations of the same family (Robertsons and Stewarts). Although it closed in 1971, the store still stands (Fig. 24), is still owned by the same family, and is used as a private museum.

Another important aspect of community life developed with the construction of a community hall with room for a library in 1887, located in Hall Road. This hall was used until 1911, when a new one was built (Parcell 1976: 111).

Local initiatives also saw the building of two churches. The Presbyterian church in Hall Road was first mooted in 1873, but the idea made no progress until 1892, when the Ladies Guild formed a sewing circle to raise funds, and it was eventually built with local labour and locally raised funds. The Bible Christians also built a church (later Methodist) in Domain Road in 1893. Both churches are still standing.

The Post Office, having begun life at the school, moved through various temporary premises until the stone building (still existing today) was constructed in 1919. The Post Office closed in the early 1970s and the building is now managed by the Department of Conservation and used mainly for staff accommodation.

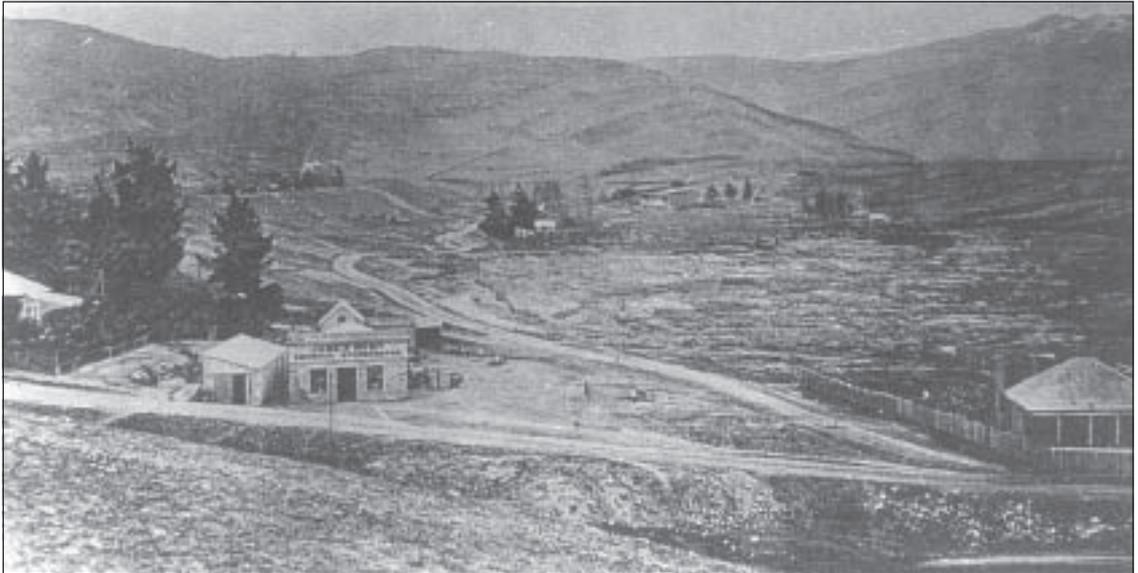


Figure 23. Bannockburn, 1908. Nevis Road in foreground, looking along Domain Rd (previously North Road). Bannockburn store on left, storekeepers house on right, with apparent sluicings behind. Source: F. McNulty, Cromwell, *P. Crump Collection*.



Figure 24. Bannockburn, 2003. A photograph from approximately the same place 95 years later. Bannockburn store on left. Heather Bauchop 2003

races (Salmon 1963: 271). The men received a tiny allowance and were permitted to retain the gold they won until they began to earn more than the single man's subsidy (15s; 30s if married). In all areas where goldfields had once existed, the subsidised prospectors and mining companies prospected in the hope of staking new claims—there were some 600 in 1931, numbers peaking at 4000 in 1933. The vast majority of miners were inexperienced, and while a few found significant deposits, the majority found little. For example, Dick Short and Archie Gilcrest, who mined an area at Stewart Town, dug shafts, built a small dam, and upgraded an old water race, but found little gold. The claim

### **Box 13: JOCKEY JONES**

Tracing the life of a locally notorious woman has been a passion for local genealogist Constance Spears. The Spears family bought Jockey Jones' house in 1985, and its history inspired her efforts to delve into the life of one of its previous owners. She has traced the path of Jockey Jones through the *NZ Police Gazette*, the Cromwell Charge Book, Magistrates Court records, *Stone's* directories, Australian Vital Records Index, and local oral histories. Through these records she established that Jockey Jones' name was Sarah Jones (née Downes).

Little is known of her early life, although it appears she may have married in the 1860s and was 36 years old in 1887.

Locals remembered Sarah Jones with some trepidation: she was a tough figure, always on a horse, stealing fruit, money and cattle; children were fearful of her. It was rumoured she was a member of the Kelly gang. Court records elaborated her notoriety—convicted for theft on more than one occasion.

Spears dug deeper behind the public face of Sarah Jones. She found that Jones largely brought up her family on her own. Her blacksmith husband, who worked at Pisa Station, was often in the courts for drunkenness, spending his wages before he came home, and absent for long periods. To support her children she worked as a rabbitier and mined on her own account (she is recorded as having a mining claim in the Carrick Range in 1895). She bought a house at Quartzville in 1902 and is listed in *Wise's* directory as living there till 1922. Jones was no doubt a formidable woman, dealing with the difficult circumstance of raising a family largely alone on a declining gold field.

was worked for about seven months before Short went back to his work as a wool classer (Crump c.1994).

Depression miners in the Bannockburn area appear to have primarily lived and worked near old claims, including some at Stewart Town. Local oral history suggests that some stayed in a small tent town at Quartzville.

One informant recalled his childhood as the son of a Depression miner, who took his wife and children into Central Otago and Westland goldfields over many seasons. They lived in a tent and spent some time at Bannockburn. He recalled that floods would bring fresh supplies of gravels to the river margins. One of his jobs as a child was to scoop out gold-bearing river silt from narrow crevices (Huata Holmes, pers. comm.).

Depression mining had largely ended by the winter of 1934 as New Zealand emerged from the economic slump, although small alluvial claims continued to be worked until 1935 (Salmon 1963: 273-274).

## **4.5 DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE c. 1910-70**

### **4.5.1 Regional picture**

The gold rushes occurred at a time when much of the South Island seemed likely to remain divided into vast sheep runs controlled by absentee capitalists and a squatter aristocracy. In 1881, there were 21 such runs covering 1.5 million acres of the little more than 2 million acres in Vincent County. The five largest runs—Kawarau, Morven Hills, Moutere, Galloway, and Earnsclough—together held over 780 000 acres (Angus 1977: 20-21).

**Box 14: JOHN PATRICK PARCELL (1881–1976)**

J.P. Parcell's book *Heart of the Desert* is a detailed and comprehensive account of the history of the Cromwell district (including Bannockburn). First published in 1951, it was reprinted in 1976 and is still a vital resource for local historical information. But his own history is also revealing of the way of life around the turn of the century. Parcell's notes of his early life provide a fascinating insight into a life on the land in Bannockburn, tied to the changing fortunes of gold, coal, the township, and station life.

After leaving school in 1896, he rabbitied at Kawarau and Northburn Stations. Following a trapping accident which damaged his thumb, he went coal mining on the Bannockburn Creek near the old Cairnmuir mines. When he was fifteen he was given a job trucking the coal and carting water in a tank, as well as digging coal in his spare time.

In 1897, he helped gold miners drive a tunnel through to a terrace at Adams Gully so that it could be sluiced—a tunnel 330 ft long, 5 ft 6 in high, and 4 ft wide. After construction of a tail race, the area was sluiced using water from a water race.

Later, coal mining called again, and Parcell worked for the Excelsior Coal Mine.

Storekeeper James Horn offered Parcell a job in his Bannockburn store in 1902. Parcell worked there until 1915, a relatively easy job compared to the tough coal and gold mining work. In 1915 Horn sold out to Cromwell storekeepers. Parcell managed the store for them until 1924, when the business was in decline. He then worked for the same company in Cromwell until 1935.

After returning to Bannockburn, Parcell bought his own land where he had a few sheep, and supplemented his income working on Cairnmuir station.

In later years he wrote history and curated the Cromwell Museum. He died in 1976, having made a substantial contribution to local history.

The land on which mining occurred was almost all Crown land leased to stationholders. The 1860 Goldfields Act made no proper provision for permanent settlement. Even the restricted areas available in the mining towns for business sites were leasehold under this Act. The denial of freehold rights prevented substantial building. The majority of miners, then, remained a 'rootless population, ready to move off to better fields' (Salmon 1963: 74).

As gold returns fell and extraction became increasingly complex and expensive, many miners wished to settle down and turn from mining to agriculture. Miners pressed for suitable land for closer settlement, and opening land up for such settlement became government policy in the 1870s (Hearn 1981: 4). But there were difficulties: runholders opposed the resumption of land for settlement and were determined to protect their own interests, and miners opposed the disposal of land on tenures which would deny their freedom of access to mine (Hearn 1981: 6). In Bannockburn, this impasse remained for nearly 50 years until the forced division of Kawarau Station in 1910. Until then, almost the entire Valley remained leasehold land, albeit with occupation rights of various types being held by miners and others.

By the turn of the century the predominance of mining was clearly over. Those who continued to mine combined it with other sources of income, such as station work and subsistence agriculture. As mining declined, water races started being put to new uses:

*A few miners living in hope or too old to break fresh trails remained on their claims, but, finding that the amount of gold procurable would barely suffice to keep them in food and clothing, were forced to augment their scanty earnings by the growth of vegetables and such produce as they required for the own use. Realising from bitter experience the futility of depending upon the rainfall for moisture sufficient to the needs of their crops they utilised water-races primarily designed to facilitate the extraction of gold from the soil for the purpose of conveying water to their crops in times of drought. This, then, was the birth of irrigation in Central Otago (Tennant & Marks 1930: 1).*

But miners could still not 'own' land in the Bannockburn area. A complex and ever-changing system of leases and occupation licences was the best they could achieve. At the turn of the century there was further pressure on the Government to cut up the large runs. In 1904, there was a petition from miners in Bannockburn and Cromwell demanding subdivision of neighbouring runs. From 1905, many small leaseholders wished to convert their land to freehold, and after 1912, this became government policy with the formation of the Department of Agriculture to look out for the interests of small farmers (Salmon 1963: 211).

Despite the strong resistance of station owners, the last of the large stations in Central Otago were cut up in the first decade of the twentieth century—Kawarau and Morven Hills in 1910, and Galloway in 1916.

#### **4.5.2 Dividing the land**

The subdivision of the huge Kawarau Station in 1910 heralded a new era. The old run was subdivided into 16 holdings, and some favourably sited areas were made available for closer settlement, some confirming prior occupation.

The area containing the old homestead retained the name Kawarau, but was reduced in size to 11 900 acres (Run 330a). The freehold and pastoral runs were bought by P. Johnstone. Other newly created stations which partly lie within or border the present study area include:

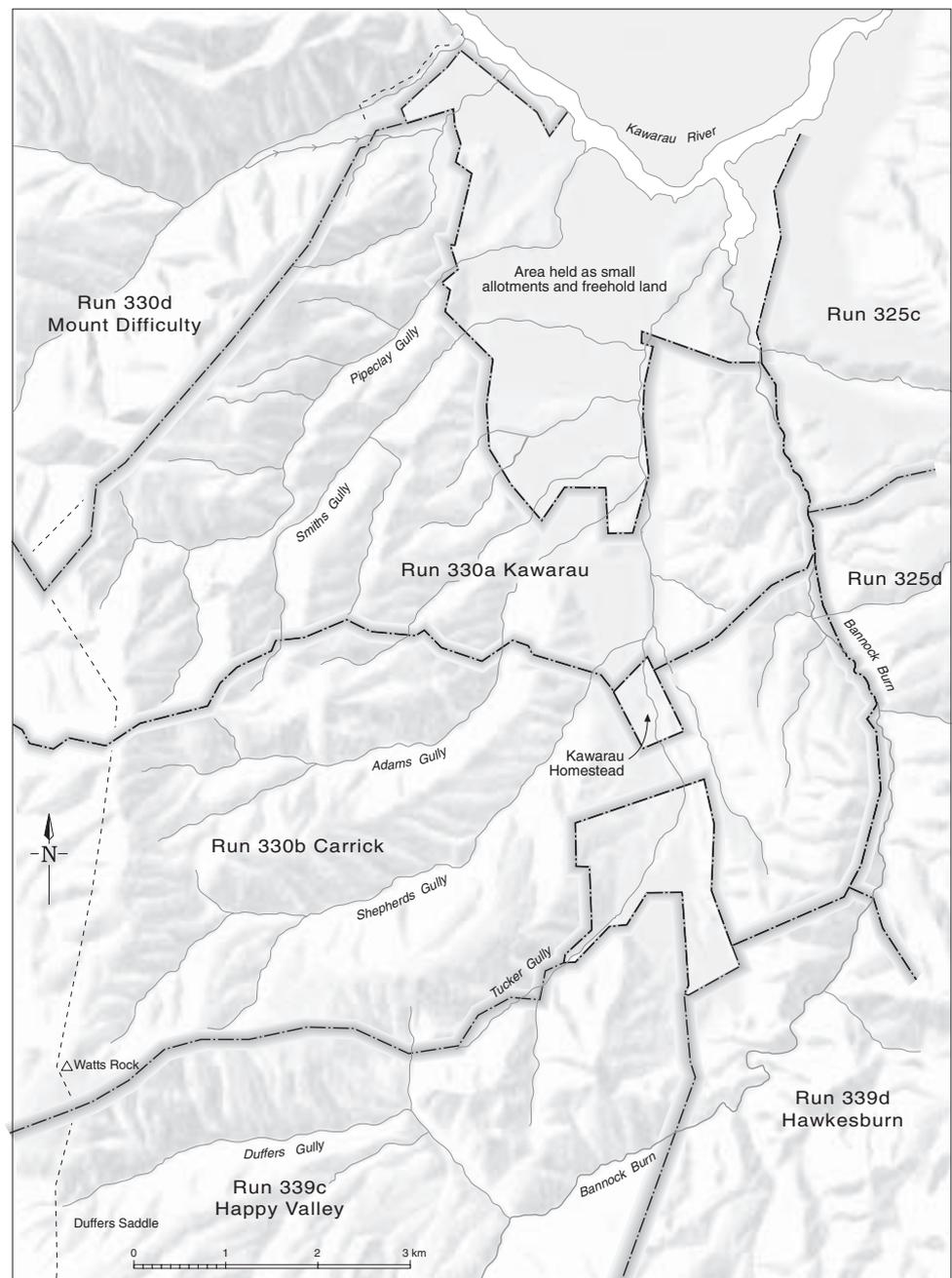
- Run 330b: Carrick (14 400 acres, W.J. Ritchie)
- Run 330d: Mt Difficulty (14 450 acres, H. Felton)
- Run 325c: Cairnmuir (8300 acres, E. Holloway and Australia and New Zealand Land Company)
- Run 339c: Happy Valley (8100 acres A. Crombie, W. Crombie and W.R. Parcel)
- Run 339d: Hawksburn (11 700 acres D.R. Corson)

See Fig. 25: Pastoral runs, 1910.

Homesteads and associated buildings on the new runs were built soon after the subdivision, including the Carrick homestead and woolshed at the foot of the Nevis Road, Cairnmuir Station homestead, and Mt Difficulty Station homestead.

Smaller areas were also cut off from the runs in 1910. Sometimes these sections were confirmation of land previously occupied as residence areas under the mining legislation, and now transferred to other forms of title. Most of the

Figure 25.  
Pastoral runs around  
Bannockburn, 1910.



blocks were granted to families who were longstanding residents: including the Crabbes, Ritchies, Parcels, Taylors, and Lynns (Parcell 1976: 16). One local informant recounts that those occupying the land when the station was cut up were given a year to fence the land they were using, and were leased the land that they had managed to fence (an expensive undertaking, but one which their livelihood depended on). Some of these were large enough to be agricultural units, others (particularly around Bannockburn settlement) were smaller blocks, some with existing dwellings (see Fig. 25 where this is noted as ‘Area held as small allotments and freehold land’). Scattered residence areas existed close to the Kawarau River, and on smaller sections closer to the township (SO