

1895.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# BLIND RIVER ESTATE

(REPORTS OF OFFICERS ON WHICH THE MINISTER ADVISED THE GOVERNOR TO ISSUE HIS WARRANT FOR THE PURCHASE BOARD TO CONSIDER THE OFFER OF THE).

*Laid on the Table by Leave of the House.*

[Extract.]

“THE LAND FOR SETTLEMENTS ACT, 1892.”

THE Blind River Estate is very similar to the best of Starboro', and may be divided as follows :—

	Acres.
Flats along Blind River, about ... ..	700
Downs practically level ... ..	1,500
Downs not level, but ploughable ... ..	1,400
Downs not ploughable ... ..	1,000
	<hr/> 4,600
Agricultural land on Blind River ... ..	3,600
Pastoral ... ..	1,000
	<hr/> 4,600

Blenheim, 2nd September, 1893.

SIDNEY WEETMAN,  
Chief Surveyor.

## TELEGRAM *re* BLIND RIVER ESTATE.

Blenheim, 29th September, 1893.

THE pastoral land is quite suitable to be cut up with some of the more level land into 320-acre farms. The highest point on the estate is only 352ft. above the sea.

The Surveyor-General, Wellington.

SIDNEY WEETMAN,  
Chief Surveyor, Blenheim.

## REPORT ON PROPERTY OFFERED BY C. Y. FELL, SITUATED AT AWATERE, MARLBOROUGH LAND DISTRICT.

THE land offered consists of Sections Nos. 89, 90, 91, 94 to 101, 15, 16, 17, and 1 of Block V., Clifford Bay District.

1. *General position and distance of land with respect to nearest township and to county town; distance from railway or main road.*—In Lower Awatere District, twenty-two miles from Blenheim, or, say, sixteen miles *via* Redwood Pass Road, now being opened. Blenheim is the nearest township; railway is distant about fourteen miles. Main South Road lies along part of the property. (See General Remarks.)

2. *Brief description of district, whether agricultural or pastoral. Nature of industries, if any.*—Awatere District is mainly pastoral; agriculture is rapidly spreading into it. Raising of stock forms the chief industry; the tilled portions give good grain crops.

3. *General description of the land under offer: height above sea; nature of soil, whether all under cultivation or pasture; if soil worked out or not.*—About 2,000 acres agricultural land of good quality; about 2,600 acres of semi-pastoral land. Height above sea nowhere exceeds 400ft. Soil strong loam, well grassed, native pasture, all virgin soil.

4. *Improvements—fences, houses, sheep-washes, limekiln, or other improvements, &c.—and state of repair.*—Sole improvement consists of about seven miles of wire-fencing, rabbit-netted throughout, very substantial, in excellent condition. It seems to be nowhere erected on the boundary of the land, but apparently cuts off some 300 acres.

5. *Carrying-capacity, produce per acre ; average price of stock and produce in district.*—Fully a sheep to the acre. This year 5,000 ewes were wintered on the leasehold block, 550 acres, and produced 92 per cent. of lambs. Price of stock not easy to state, depending so much on breed, quality, and condition.

6. *Climate, rainfall, water-supply, and if sufficient when land is cut up.*—Climate good. Rain-fall fair average. Water-supply deficient in summer on land not bordering on Blind River.

7. *Is the land suitable for cutting up, and into what sized farms, township, &c. ?*—All the blocks in the vicinity of the Blind River are very suitable for small farms of from 200 acres to 300 acres each ; but care must be taken to give each farm a fair frontage to the river. No township necessary. When required, a township might be laid out on a reserve which lies close to the site of the bridge over the Awatere proposed by the Public Works Department.

8. *Is the land overrun with rabbits, or with gorse, broom, &c. ?*—No gorse, broom, or sweetbriar visible. Rabbits are few in number, except near the sea and in the cliffs, where they are rather plentiful.

9. *Is there a demand for small farms in the neighbourhood ? If so, of what size ?*—There is a very good demand for farms of from 300 to 500 acres extent, at prices varying from £3 to £6 an acre, according to the quality.

10. *Is employment to be obtained in the neighbourhood ? Of what nature ?*—A fair amount of employment is obtainable on neighbouring sheep stations in fencing, rabbiting, mustering, and other pursuits in connection with sheep stations.

11. *Give ruling prices of land of similar character, and of rents, in the neighbourhood.*—In Wairau, twelve miles from Blenheim, land has lately been cut up and sold at prices ranging from £3 to £6 10s., not being virgin soil, and not so good quality at these. In Awatere rents are—for cropping, 10s. an acre a year for two years, tenant leave land in stubbles ; or 8s., and tenant leaves it ready for grass-sowing.

12. *How long has present proprietor held the land ?*—Over forty years.

13. *What facilities are there for obtaining fencing material, timber, firewood, coal, bricks, stone ?*—These articles must be brought from Blenheim.

14. *Value per acre ; value per acre to let in small farms.*—Agricultural land : £5 an acre ; to let, 8s. to 10s. an acre. Semi-pastoral : To sell, £2 an acre ; to let, 1s. to 2s. an acre.

15. *Would any expenditure be necessary on roads or drains if property were cut up ?*—A road is wanted from the Main South Road through the agricultural block to the sea. The road shown on the map, with a little alteration to avoid the river, would be suitable. No expenditure is required on drainage.

16. *General Remarks.*—Sections 90, 91, half of 94, 95 to 101, are agricultural ; also part of Sections 15 and 16, about 200 acres ; and about 60 acres of Section 17 ; also, I think, about 400 acres of Section 1 of Block V. ; but it was difficult to estimate the position of the south-east boundary of the old New Zealand Company's sections, which adjoin that block. There is no water in the middle of a dry summer on Blocks XV., XVI., XVII., and Section 1 of Block V., which, with the exception of the above-noted, are semi-pastoral—that is, can be ploughed and laid down to grass, but are not suitable for ordinary farming. The Main South Road lies, or is said to lie, along the eastern side of Block XVI. and south-east of Block XVII. ; if so, it should be made the boundary instead of the creeks.

14th December, 1893.

A. P. SEYMOUR, Valuer.

*Rough Estimate for Roothing, Draining, Survey, Administration, Advertising, &c.*

Cost of roading, about	...	...	...	...	...	£500
" draining	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
" survey, about	...	...	...	...	...	250
" advertising, about	...	...	...	...	...	50
" administration	...	...	...	...	...	50
						<hr/> £850

14th December, 1893.

SIDNEY WEETMAN, Chief Surveyor.

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