

Sat. 22nd Sept., 1866

"The Egmont Steam Flour mill.....has lately been erected in N.P.existence is due to the enterprise of Mr Hulke..... at a ? at the Carrington Road end of Currie St; 78ft long, 31 ft wide and an altitude of about 50 ft. The foundation walls are of stone, being 9ft in the ground and 4feet in thickness. The basement storey is also of stone and is 13 ft in height, with walls 2ft 6" thick. The stone was the ordinary beach stone. The upper part of the building is of wood. Red pine and Kauri were the timbers used, the scantling being of the former, and the flooring of the latter. The principle scantling is very heavy being 10" square. Indeed the whole building is built in a very massive style, and we question whether another building of the same size could be found in N.Z. to compare with it in that respect. For example the flooring joists of the second storey are 14x9 inches thick, and tongued with iron.....the contract for masonry was executed a most workmanlike manner by Mr N. Hooker, and the carpenters work was performed no less satisfactorily by Messrs Bull and Bond.

March 1866

A building of a more pretentious character than is usually to be met with in small colonial towns has lately been erected in New Plymouth; and has attracted a great deal of notice both from inhabitants and visitors. We allude to the Egmont Steam Flour Mill, whose existence is due to the enterprise of Mr Hulke. As this is the first steam flour mill which had been erected in Taranaki a brief description of it may be interesting to our readers, and will also serve to show to our well wishers in other parts of the world that we have by no means been crushed by our misfortunes.

The building which now occupies a conspicuous position at the Carrington end of Currie St, is 78ft long by 31ft wide, with an altitude of about 50 ft. The foundation walls are of stone, being 9ft in the ground and four feet in thickness. The basement storey is also of stone, and is 13ft in height, with walls 2 feet 6 inches thick. The stone used was the ordinary beach stone. The upper part of the building is of wood with battened sides; and the whole is roofed with corrugated iron. Red pine and Kauri were the timbers used in the construction of the building, the scantling being of the former and the flooring of the latter. The principle scantling is very heavy, being 10 inches square. Indeed the whole building is built on a very massive style, and we question whether another building of the same size can be found in New Zealand to compare with it in that respect. For example, the flooring foists of the second storey are 14x9 inches and the flooring throughout is 3 inches thick and tongued with iron.

The chief room in the basement will be occupied as an engine room. The machinery is now being fitted up by Mr Gibson, brother of Captain Gibson, Harbor Master. Part of the second storey is occupied as an agricultural agency office, for the negotiation of sales and purchase of farm produce and stock. Every facility is afforded for the dry storage of large quantities of goods. We must not forget to mention that registers are kept of horses or land for sale or to let, stock to be sold, etc, an inspection of which would in many cases save much loss of time. An agency of this kind has long been wanted, and will no doubt meet with ample support. In the other part of this storey, two pairs of French millstones will be worked. Although it is only intended to use two pairs at present, arrangements have been made for the reception of four pairs. Close at hand we see bean, corn and oat crushing machines. Ascending to the next floor we see a fine solk dressing flour machine. on each side of the room is a row of stout uprights, placed there, we presume to resist the vibration of the machinery. The same thing has been done in the room below. The fourth storey and a fine loft offers storage accomodation for an immense quantity of goods and ample precautions have been taken against fire by placing a 400 gallon iron tank fitted with pipes etc on each of the floors, and as the Huatoki river is hard by a plentiful supply of water could be readily obtained in case of need. We may here be permitted to remark that some of our shop keepers might wisely follow the example of the proprietors of the Egmont Mill, and place water tanks in their premises to serve in case of fire.

The contract for masonry was executed in a most workmanlike manner by Mr N. Hooker, and the carpentry work was performed no less satisfactorily by Messrs Bull and Bond. The whole establishment is highly creditable to colonial enterprise, and shows that we have still capitalists amongst us who have a firm belief in the future prosperity of Taranaki."

14 Dec, 1867

The Undersigned invites tenders up to noon on Saturday the 21st instant, for carting for the 12 months commencing 2nd ? January 1868, and ending Dec 31st, 1868 as follows:-

From Beach Store in Brougham St, or to Egmonts Mills from Beach Store at per ton

Brougham Street or from Egmont mills to Beach at per ton

From Store in Brougham Street or from Egmont Mills to Waitara Township, at per ton.

From Waitara township to store, in Brougham Street, or to Egmont Mills at per ton.

For further information, enquire of Webster Brothers.

March 26, 1889

"Currie street presented quite an animated appearance this Tuesday morning, there being about fifteen bullock drays loaded with grain outside the Egmont Mill."

Tuesday Jan 18, 1887

"Mr Smith, lately of the firm of Messrs Thornton, Smith and Firth, millers of Auckland, was in N.P. on Saturday, and took the opportunity of inspecting some of the machinery which his firm turned out for N.P. millers. The plant of what is known as "Hulke's Mill" but which is now in the occupation of Messrs Webster and McKellar, was made by Mr Smith's firm."

Tuesday, March 29th, 1889

"About a dozen Maori Bullock drays and brakes came up from Parihaka today (Friday) with grain for the Egmont mill."

15 July, 1885

BANKRUPTCY MEETING. "A meeting of the creditors of Messrs Webster and McKellar's estate was held this morning....."

The principle (cause of failure) wasdepreciation. The Egmont Mill cost £6,000 and the loss by depreciation was estimated at £2,500 The mill at Hawera, which cost £3,300 has depreciated at least £1,300. This mill was opened under more favorable circumstances, the farmers having promised to grow wheat, a promise however, which was not fulfilled....."

March 1st, 1871

NEW CORN SCREENER AT "EGMONT FLOUR MILL" - "Messrs Webster and Hulke have just erected at their mill one of Roby and Co.'s patent Corn Screeners, which they have recently imported from England. It is a great improvement on the old wire screens that have till lately been used, and does the work most thoroughly."

16 April, 1903

DEATH - Courtenay Street N.P. on 15th April, 1903. 65 years:
Amelia Thompson (1211/476)

"In 1861 he and his brother W.D. Webster commenced business as shipping and commission agents; after Maori War he established Egmont Flour Mill in conjunction with his brother and J.S. McKellar-said mills and dissolved partnership with brother and with McKellar carried on shipping and general agent.?"

Webster, Fred. Lewis

Feb 16, 1861

"The undersigned have commenced business as licensed customs, Shipping and General Commission agents, under the name of Webster

Brothers, will not fail to give the best attention to all business entrusted to their charge.

F. Lewis Webster.

William Dawson Webster.

New Plymouth, 1st Jan 1861.

Sept 4, 1897

WEBSTER'S VIVIAN STREET HOUSE - "Another of those historic links with the past was demolished on Friday night in the shape of an old house in Vivian Street, next to the Railway Viaduct over the Carrington Road. This house was built for Mr James Webster, father of F.L. and W.D. Webster, the well known residents of the town, as far back as 1843, and therefore it has for 54 years withstood the ravages of time. Mr J. Webster was the first post master in New Plymouth. The house in the War time proved a hospitable shelter for settlers who had to leave their homesteads in the country and also for some of those who were wounded in helping to suppress the Maori rebellion. The building was composed of red pine, and when the timbers were separated on Thursday, it was seen that the studs, boards etc were as sound almost as the day they were put in position, which fact speaks volumes for the durability of our climate. Among the timbers was noticed a totoara mantlepiece, the timber of which was carried by the late Mr J. Webster, all the way from the Manawatu beach while on a postal journey of some importance. The timber is thoroughly sound and Mr W.D. Webster prizes it so much as a relic of the past that he intends to have it placed in his residence in Fulford Street. The site of the old house will be part of the tennis court of the New Plymouth College and School of Music.

Aug 20, 1891

Mr R. Cock has sold to Mr W.D. Webster the section at the corner of Brougham and Powderham Streets and adjoining Mr Roy's office. The price is not disclosed."

June 15, 1895.

"Mr Courtney reports having sold to Mr W. Webster, 30ft frontage to Devon Street, next to Mr ~~Sykes's~~ Chemist shop, at £31 per foot.
S. West's

August 24, 1895

The following tenders have been received by M.F. Messenger, architect, for building shops and offices in Devon Street, for Mr W.D. Webster

G. Gift - £500 (accepted) etc
other references to building on this site.

July 6, 1877

"South Currie Street has been metalled from Messrs. Webster and Hulke's mill to Devon Street."

March 23, 1867

"We have great pleasure in announcing to the public the commencement of operations at the steam flour mill of Messrs Webster and Hulke."

May 24, 1873

Prize Cups for the best Samples of Wheat Next Year

"Messrs Websters and Hulke, with their usual spirited liberality, offer to give silver cups for the two best samples of wheat grown in this province. One cup is to be given for the best sample of 150 bushels of white Tuscan wheat; and the other is for the best sample of 75 bushels of the same description grown in the Province in 1874. We believe the Canterbury Millers recommend the growing of the following wheats:- White Tuscan, Velvet Chaff, Pearl, and Hunters White. The flour from the latter is weak, but greatly improves the colour. Some of the red and white wheats - which has been sown on the same soils more than one yield only a grain fit for fowl's food only. We notice in Messrs Webster and Hulke's advertisement that they intend to decline purchasing Pedigree and other inferior wheats in future.

Copy of the List of T.H. of
 Land & Deeds - [unclear]
 Camp.

L. A. [unclear]