

Reconnaissance Survey of the Head Waters of the Arawata & Waikato Rivers Westland

Report of Gerhard Müller Chief Surveyor  
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Last year's expedition did not take in the country about Mt. Aspiring, & I therefore started again for the South Coast in January & completed, if possible, the Survey of the Southernmost portion of the Westland District of which we knew little or nothing. I left Jackson Bay on Jan 25 for the headwaters of the Arawata & returned to it again on Feb 23. As the whole I had favourable weather & succeeded in fixing the topographical features of that wild part of the West Coast satisfactorily.

The Arawata R. about 40 miles long has been roughly traversed to Williams' Flat; the Williams R. to the foot of Lewis's G. Laccis & the Waipara to the foot of the Base of L. And all the Mountain peaks with the exception of Galii (maj Galii) Victoria, & the Silesia Lydia & was Maori & Maori as well & finally fixed. The relative positions of these named are, I believe, fairly correct; but I expect that the whole of them will be found to be placed too far to the South. I got observations to most of them from Cairns O. & P. at the head of Clark's Creek & to all of them from P. & Q. at Tonia. From P. & T. no one of them could be got at; the high range stretching from Mt. Barff to Tonia shutting them out completely all from view - and the I managed to get a few shots from the Arawata & Williams rivers but, still as a rule, the shoulders of the high spurs running down from their Mountain peaks were visible. I caught G. Gray, & took an well fixed bed in no case, as regards the peaks between the Ark & Barff were the highest which could be seen satisfactorily well.

In ground plan of scenery, I do not think there is another S/W

from when in 1881.

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in New Zealand to equal the Mt. Aspiring Country. I have seen magnificent Alpine scenery in my travels, but I have never seen anything to approach in our country except the view from Mt. Tonia. At an elevation of 7000 ft. with a G. Laccis crossed & recrossed of garrison crevasses 200 ft. below, & five other glaciers at about the same elevation close to view, within a few miles of the beholder, behind the great circle of towering peaks, some snow capped & some black ominous marks of rock, the snow fields extending seemingly as far as the eye can reach to the last of the "King of G. Laccis" Aspiring, pure & white from base to top, rising to a height of well nigh 3000 ft., the white blue sky overhead, and the deadly stillness, broken only now & then by the sound of water as of heavy thunder with distance, caused by the falling avalanches & heights of landslips, is a scene that cannot be surpassed.

Amongst the variety of G. Laccis, there is a little one worthy of special notice. I am referring to the "shaly glacier" below Jagger's Ridge. It is quite a curiosity in its way, inasmuch as there is no connection whatever between it & the snowfields on the range above. It is bounded on all but its S.E. side by perpendicular cliffs of massive height & the entrance can therefore be due only to continued drifting in (of) the snowfields of winter, & not to any pressure of snow from above, as with the case of with all the other G. Laccis.

Prob. same as  
Dalgus &  
J. W. &  
Barff's glacier.

see next page 163 which follows here.

As all my camps & points of observation are marked on the map I need not go into particulars of procedure, very and simply stating that, after I finished work at the headwaters of the Arawata & descended to junction with Waipara, travelled up its western bank & returned to eastern bank, observed at Mt. Styberia (point S & A) & returned to Jackson Bay. In carrying of heavy loads as a journey like this being a matter of very serious consideration, due allowance for bad weather had not been made, & the stock of provisions ran out. In several days we had to go on short allowance, but for the last 3 days we had absolutely nothing else to eat, but the birds we caught, & we fell - better "weekend" of the time we got back to the Bay.