



Weddel's World

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
ISSUED BY
W. & R. FLETCHER (N.Z.) LTD

★ WESTFIELD
★ TOMOANA
★ PATEA
★ KAITI - in conjunction with
Gisborne Sheepfarmers
Freezing Co. Ltd.

JANUARY 75

JAPAN OUTLOOK GOOD

The Export Sales Manager of W. and R. Fletcher, (N.Z.) Ltd., Mr Bruce Bishop, predicts that New Zealand's lamb sales to Japan will grow steadily, but this depends on two important provisos.

Mr Bishop who recently visited Japan to study market opportunities, says New Zealand must look to a long term view of lamb sales, and must not push too hard now for a product that is not yet generally accepted.

"Only one area of Japan, Hokkaido where they raise some of their own sheep, is a true lamb market even to the extent of indigenous recipes emerging to incorporate the use of lamb.

"I think that it will be a natural process for the acceptance of lamb to filter from this area to the greater centres of population, which in time will provide a huge market for New Zealand growers."

But Mr Bishop cautioned that any increased tonnage to Japan must be for a boneless product produced to the buyer's specification.

Mr Bishop reported that both buyers and sellers were disturbed at the downward trend in lamb and mutton prices following the record levels reached in 1973. This had led to Japanese manufacturers seeking alternative products, such as pork or horsemeat, and it was absolutely essential that after prices returned back up to a reasonable level, they were not allowed to escalate to a point where New Zealand once again priced itself out of the market.

Mr Bishop observed various New Zealand Meat Board lamb promotions arranged with leading Japanese supermarket chains, at which New Zealand meat was featured and recipes devised for the Japanese market were handed out.

But he said that a fresh look should be taken at the restrictions on the quality of exports to Japan, presently restricted to lambs selected for a fat coverage.

"These restrictions are sensible for most of Japan but I think they are foolish for an area like Hokkaido, which is a sheep eating area and where the people have differently defined tastes.

Mr Bishop said that Fletcher's were looking optimistically to the future of the beef trade with Japan despite the present depressed state of the international market. Fletcher's had tailored the wrapping and butchering of the meat to the Japanese Market, but there was a need for a more adequate container shipping service if New Zealand was to have any chance of competing with Australia in this area.

Weddel's have two offices in Japan, one in Tokyo and the other in Osaka. The Osaka office also covers the Korean market which although not significant now is predicted by Mr Bishop to become a good outlet for New Zealand meat in the future.



The new elevated sheep yards which form part of a half million dollar rebuilding programme at the Gisborne Refrigerating Company's works at Kaiti. Full story page 3.

Fletcher's Set Trend

W. and R. Fletcher (N.Z.) Ltd. showed the way for the second successive year in announcing its spring lamb schedule. And it was again above that published by the Meat Board.

The Schedule of \$7.45 for a 13.5 kg lamb with a wool pull of .75 kg in the Hawkes Bay area, and \$7.16 at the company's other works, was the first to be declared in the North Island. Other companies were quick to announce their schedules in line with this offer.

The schedule drew a generally favourable response even though it was well down on the record opening schedule of the previous year.

The chairman of the Meat Board, Mr C. Hilgendorf described the Fletcher offer as not an unsatisfactory one.

After the announcement of the schedule, several international factors, including increased U.K. duty and a general downturn in the markets, led to a drop in prices. This necessitated support from the Meat Board to maintain a minimum schedule.

However, Fletcher's management is looking forward with guarded optimism to improved trading conditions in the U.K. in 1975 following the steadying of the meat stockpiles in the E.E.C. which should lead to a restoration of normal trading conditions. This in turn would be reflected in higher prices for N.Z. lamb.

Weddel's stand at Smithfield market saw a busy trading period when the first new season's

lamb from New Zealand went on sale last month, with prices rising in keen competition.

The full offering of about 800 lambs was sold in the first four hours of trading with rates being between 2.5 and 3.5 cents higher for a pound weight than the previous close.

The prices reached were just over 53 cents for Ds and between 49.5 and 50.4 cents for twos.

OVERSEAS VISITORS

The Director in charge of Overseas Meat Operations of the Vestey Organisation in London, Mr W. P. M. Griffiths and his wife made an extensive three week tour of W. and R. Fletcher (N.Z.) Ltd.'s operations at the end of last year.

They were accompanied by Mr Mark Hinchliff, the general manager of Fletcher's.

During the latter part of the tour the party was joined by the Hon. Mark Vestey, who looks after Weddel's South American interests.

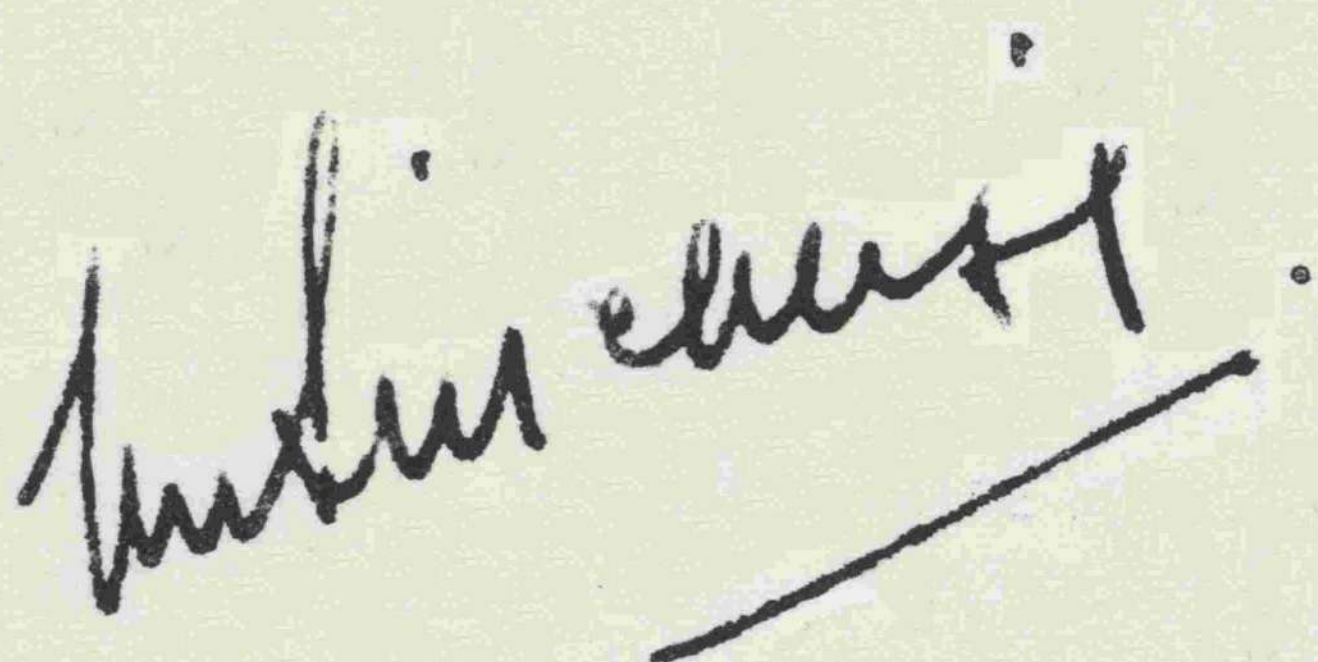
Mr and Mrs Griffiths and the Hon. M. Vestey met many members of Fletcher's staff at all its New Zealand operations, but they regretted that owing to the brevity of the visit it was not possible to meet as many people as they would have liked.

GENERAL MANAGER'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

This is our fourth quarterly issue of Weddel's World and I think it is appropriate on this occasion to report on the reception our first newsletter has received. We have been most encouraged by the enthusiasm shown and the congratulatory comments received from many quarters, including our overseas offices and associates. I am sure it has been the means of making our far flung organisation more aware of each other's activities and is providing a means of improving our contacts and interest for the mutual benefit of us all. I would like to thank the staff who have contributed and particularly Mr Peter Angland of Head Office Sales staff who has co-ordinated material and worked closely with our Consultants. The continued success of the publication depends on our contributors and I trust the items will be many and varied.

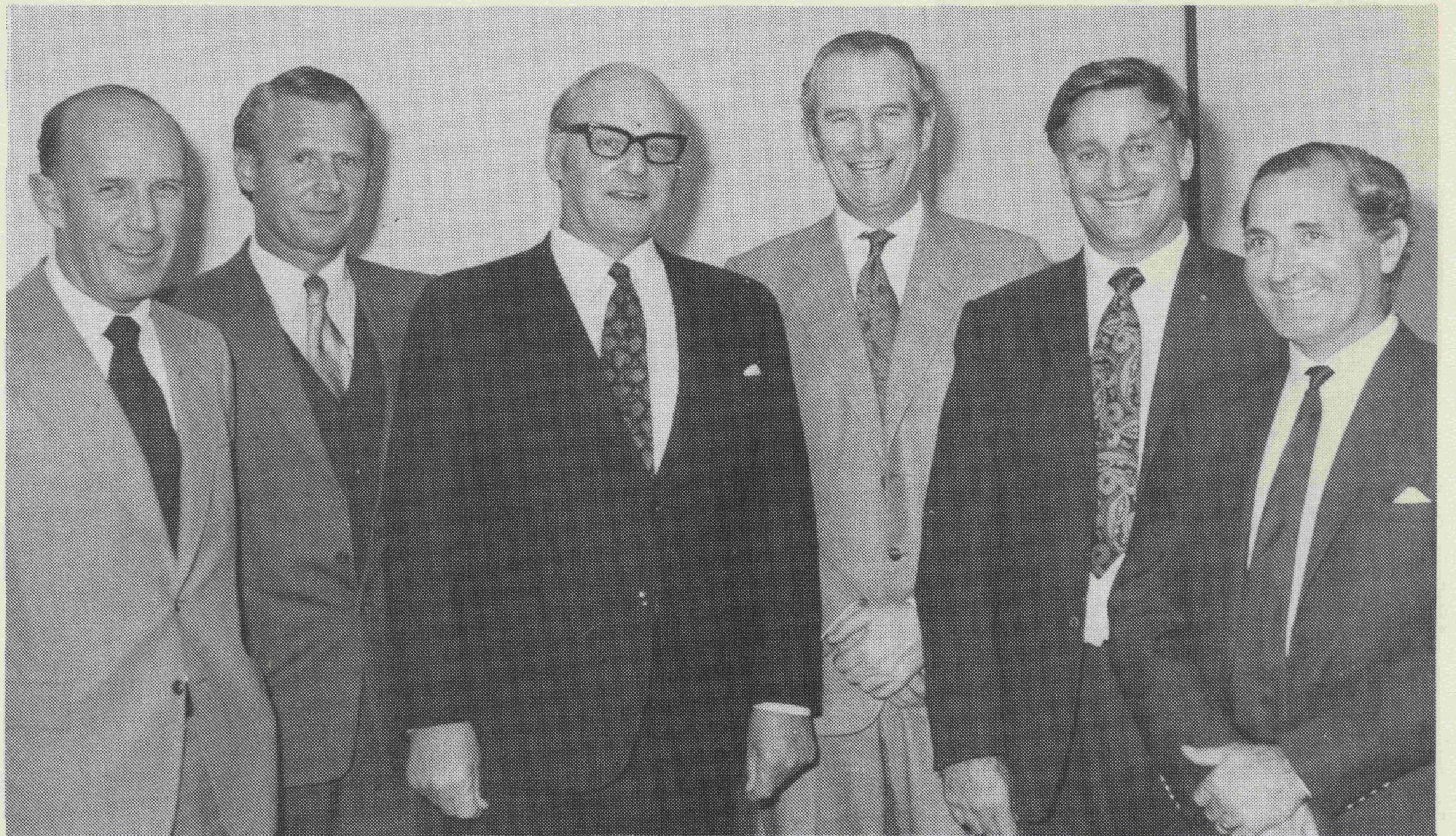
As you are well aware, the meat industry as a whole is passing through one of its most difficult periods brought about by political and economic changes in the international market place. This is a time when we must all encourage higher consumption for our products. There are no marks for high prices if the consumer won't buy and an important factor in this exercise is costs from the farm gate to the consumers. Every effort must be made to contain these as much as possible to give the producer the maximum return. The general opinion is that overseas prices will not improve much before the middle of next year because of the supply position in the countries to which we export. However, we are confident of the long term future and must do our best to weather this difficult situation.

We take this opportunity of wishing all our staff and employees and readers of Weddel's World a happy and prosperous New Year.



MR M. HINCHLIFF
GENERAL MANAGER

CHEERFUL MEETING



Smiling faces at a recent meeting of general managers at W. and R. Fletcher (N.Z.) Ltd., Head Office in Wellington. From left: Mr C. C. Greenough (Auckland Meat Co.); Mr J. N. Baker (Gisborne Refrigerating Co.); Mr Mark Hinchliff, general manager W. and R. Fletcher N.Z.; Mr R. H. Jeffery (Westfield Freezing Co); Mr R. L. Steward (Patea Freezing Co.); and Mr G. T. Taylor, Nelsons (N.Z.) Ltd., Hastings.

International Hygiene Standards Suit New Zealand

The works superintendent of W. and R. Fletcher (N.Z.) Ltd, Mr Robin Reid, has described the penultimate meeting of the WHO-FAO Codex Committee on the draft code on meat hygiene laws as fitting well into line with present New Zealand slaughtering practices.

Mr Reid was one of two freezing company representatives in the nine-man New Zealand delegation to the talks which were held under the auspices of the United Nations at New Zealand House in London. Representatives from 30 countries attended the session which was held last November.

Mr Reid said he was particularly impressed with the willingness of the European Common Market countries to make concessions and allow negotiations on the code to progress to their now near final stage.

The importance of the E.E.C. countries' readiness to discuss difficult areas of the issue was borne out by the fact that the bulk of New Zealand's lamb exports go to the region, principally to Britain.

"Essentially the Code will set out the minimum standards of hygiene for meat," Mr Reid said.

"Most of the requirements set down are already being met by present New Zealand standards; however there are a couple of minor discrepancies which require investigation. But by the present phrasing of the document there is flexible provision for New Zealand to open further negotiations at anytime, and a provision is available for the modification of standards as technological progress demands it."

Mr Reid pointed out that as only minimum standards were being laid down individual importing countries could impose much tighter

restrictions, but he was confident that New Zealand meat would already meet these requirements as well.

In his opening address to the meeting, the chairman, Dr A. T. Johns, Director General of the N.Z. Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries said the proposed code of practice was intended to outline the minimum requirements to ensure a healthful and wholesome international meat supply.

He stressed that the code needed to be realistic both in terms of veterinary requirements and economic aspects: It would be quite pointless to formulate a code that would raise production costs to such a level that the consumer could not afford to buy the product.

Mr Reid said that a number of delegations had expressed their appreciation of Dr Johns' excellent chairmanship of the meeting, which had facilitated the smooth progression of the hygiene codes to their present stage.

He added that the leadership of the New Zealand delegation by Mr J. D. McNab, the director of the meat division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries had ensured that the total New Zealand viewpoint was well catered for.

The final draft of the international code for meat hygiene will be tabled sometime this year to the WHO-FAO Commission at its European headquarters. This will then be sent to all individual governments of the United Nations for their comments before being formally accepted as a binding agreement for meat hygiene standards by member countries of the U.N.

Fletcher's would like to take this opportunity of acknowledging the assistance given by the Meat Industry Research Institute of N.Z. in the Codex negotiations.

Major Rebuilding Works at Gisborne

A \$500,000 rebuilding operation has just been completed on the elevated sheepyards at the Gisborne Refrigerating Company's freezing works at Kaiti, jointly owned by W. & R. Fletcher (NZ) Ltd and the farmers of the Gisborne Area.

The major part of the overall operation will be the construction of an essentially new mutton killing floor. This will have three chains, each with a capacity of 3,200 carcasses a day, but provision is also being made for a possible fourth chain some time in the future.

The sheepyards are the largest set of elevated sheepyards in New Zealand, with capacity for around 12,000 lambs.

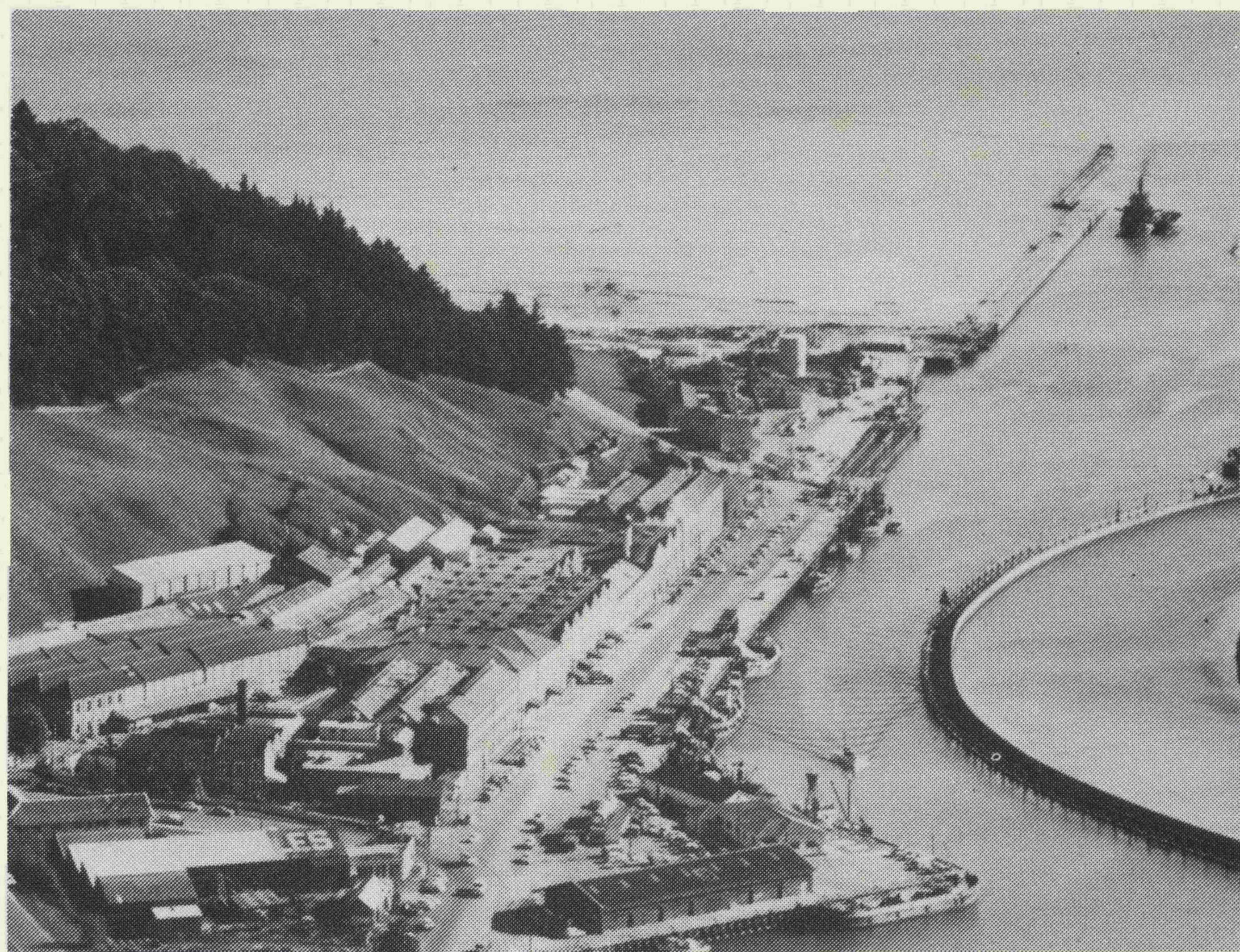
Because the present Works is sited on the harbour side special problems have to be overcome to enable operations to continue uninterrupted during the construction period.

A temporary race was constructed to move stock through parts of the new construction site in order to get them to the existing mutton floor for slaughtering.

LONG SERVICE



W. and R. Fletcher's shipping manager, Stuart Pauling (left) is presented with his gold watch for 40 years' service with the company by the general manager, Mr Mark Hinchliff. Mr Pauling joined the Patea Freezing Company in August 1934 as an office boy, and came to Wellington in 1938 to learn shipping techniques. He returned to Patea in 1941 and during the next seven years became involved through necessity in most branches of operations at the freezing works. He returned to Wellington in 1948 and after a few months took over as manager of the shipping department.



An aerial view of the Gisborne plant.

A new freezing unit is to be constructed along side the Mutton floor. Previously carcasses have been frozen in still air freezers but the proposed new blast freezers will reduce the process from three days to one.

As well as incorporating blast freezers, the new units will introduce a high degree of mechanisation to the freezing, sorting and storing phase of the total operation at Kaiti.

Automatic sorting with the use of computer is just one aspect of mechanisation seen at Kaiti.

A new butcher shop and a fitting shop are being constructed on a new site and the original buildings will have to be demolished to make way for the new blast freezers.

Previously at Kaiti, mutton has been boned out using beef boning facilities. This will no longer be necessary when the re-building programme is complete, since there are plans to have a special mutton boning room.

Other facilities for further processing and packaging of frozen lamb will also be introduced specially for processing lamb destined to North America and other areas.

Construction of a set of covered, elevated sheepyards at Kaiti has now been completed. This location allows the daily removal of manure.

Effluent disposal problems are also receiving special attention at Kaiti with the installation of "Keith" fat recovery vessels and other treatment plant to reduce the incidence of pollution in discharge.

KAITI G-M



Mr Jack Baker has been general manager of the Gisborne Refrigerating Company since 1973. He joined the Vestey organisation at Patea in 1941, and in his initial years of service gained experience in a number of divisions of the meat export industry working in the fellmongery freezer, livestock and accounting sections. He was appointed accountant at Patea in 1954, and took over as manager of the works in 1966.

Mr Baker's main interests lie on the golf course and in looking after his garden.

TANNING INDUSTRY EXPANDS IN N.Z.

The tanning industry has undertaken a comprehensive training expansion programme to enlist competent staff to cater for New Zealand's growing and important tanning export trade.

A Tanning Industry training course has been organised in Hastings under the auspices of the Vocational Training Council to meet the needs for qualified technicians in an industry which has one of the highest growth rates in New Zealand. In its first year the course drew an impressive role of 50 students.

The chairman of the Tanning Industry Training Board, Mr Lloyd Astley recently presented a prize to Mr Nigel Dobson for being the most successful student on the first course, and a cheque was also presented on behalf of the Hastings Tannery by the Manager, Mr B. A. Munden.

New Zealand produces 28 million sheep skins and 1.5 million cattle hides annually, increasing quantities of which are being tanned for export.

The industry says that with more and more modern automated tanneries being built each year tanneries have lost their reputation for being smelly noxious industries and the future for leather technologists is very promising.

OBITUARY W.J.B. LUNDIE

The death has occurred of Mr W. J. B. (Bill) Lundie, foreman in charge of the bag room operation at the Westfield works. Mr Lundie, who passed away after a short but tragic illness, joined Fletcher's more than 30 years ago. He was appointed bag room foreman in 1967.

LIVESTOCK BUYERS RETIRE



Two of the Westfield Freezing Co.'s livestock buyers, Mr Jack Turnbull of Otorohanga (left) and Mr Geoff Howlett of Hamilton, proudly display the embossed silver salvers presented to them on their retirement by the Company's general manager, Mr R. H. Jeffery (right) on behalf of the staff at a reception at Otahuhu. Mr Howlett is also holding a gold watch presented to him by Mr M. Hinchliff, N.Z. general manager, to mark his 40 years' service with the Westfield works.



An exuberant break from work at the Westfield works as members of the staff join in the celebrations marking the retirement of Mr Wally Dear, foreman of the offal department, on the anniversary of his 40th year of service with the company. The Westfield general manager, Mr R. H. Jeffery, presented Mr. Dear with a gold watch to mark his length of service, and the staff handed him a handsome clock to mark his retirement.

PICK THE FUTURE G-M'S

FAREWELLS

Miss Alice Moxey, head typist at W. and R. Fletcher's main office in Wellington retired at the end of last June after more than 32 years' service with the firm. She now hopes to spend more time visiting her friends, tending her garden in Lower Hutt, and improving the standard of her lawn bowls.

Mrs Janice Hale recently resigned from the Wellington office after 16 years service as a senior typist because of her husband's transfer to Auckland.



Aspects of the continued involvement of the Weddel Organization in the national sport continue to emerge, with details of the number of prominent players both past and present, including All Blacks and provincial representatives, in the company.

While the above photograph may not contain the "giants" of rugby in its ranks it may engender a lot of interest among many of Weddel's old clients and staff as it contains no less than four future freezing works general managers.

The venue was the Auckland Domain in 1932 for the annual match against AFFCO (Auckland Farmers Freezing Co.), but as there are not details of the score the obvious hint is that AFFCO must have won.

The team from left: back row: (referee); J. A. Lee S. Hunter, H. Gardiner A. H. Cashel, R. A. Potter (who became general manager of Patea Freezing Co.), P. Mansill (g-m Co-Op Wholesale Society), W. Lowry (g-m Gisborne Refrigerating Co.) C. H. Heald (accountant). Front: J. E. Taylor (Patea Freezing Co.) D. A. Leslie, J. Burnes, C. F. Grant, M. W. Laird, and A. B. Spence.

COMPANY PROFILE

Mr Michael Sanders, who recently took up his appointment as assistant to the general manager. Mr Sanders joined the parent company, W. Weddel, in London in 1960, as a member of the general produce department. In 1967 he transferred to William Angliss and Co. Ltd in Sydney as a management trainee, and after experience in Townsville and Rockhampton he went to the Queensland Meat Export Company in Townsville in 1972, as General Manager. Mr Sanders then moved back to William Angliss in Melbourne where he was assistant state Manager for Victoria. He gained some experience of the New Zealand operations in 1970 when he spent four months on a familiarisation course, based in Wellington. He's looking forward to renewing old contacts as he starts off on an extensive tour of Fletcher's operations in New Zealand to reacquaint himself with the local operations. Mr and Mrs Sanders have two children, Paul aged 13 and Jane 11.

