

The earliest settlers in the Manawatu were the Maori tribes, Rangitane, Ngati Hauti, Ngati Apa, Ngati Raukawa and Ngati Kauwhata. They lived around the Manawatu River and its tributaries such as the Oroua River. The area was heavily forested by trees such as totara and rimu and swampy underfoot. The rivers, the swamps and the forest provided kai such as eels, birds and puha.

Around 1856 106,000 acres was purchased by the N.Z. Government (founded in June, 1853) from Maori for 25,000 pound. In 1871 Colonel Feilding purchased this, the Manchester Block, for 75,000 pound.

Te Iwa Tekau Ma Iwa Marae



On the Oroua River near Awahuri built in the 1880's but not well maintained and was destroyed by the great gale of 1936. Some of the Tamariki attended Awahuri School which opened around 1878 on two acres of land being given by Ngati Kauwhata leader, Tapa Te Whata for the establishment of the school.

HAPPENING AT THE COACHHOUSE MUSEUM IN MARCH

SMOKO EVERY THURSDAY 10AM

1-3 MARCH SESQUICENTENNIAL 150 YEARS OF 'THE MANCHESTER BLOCK'

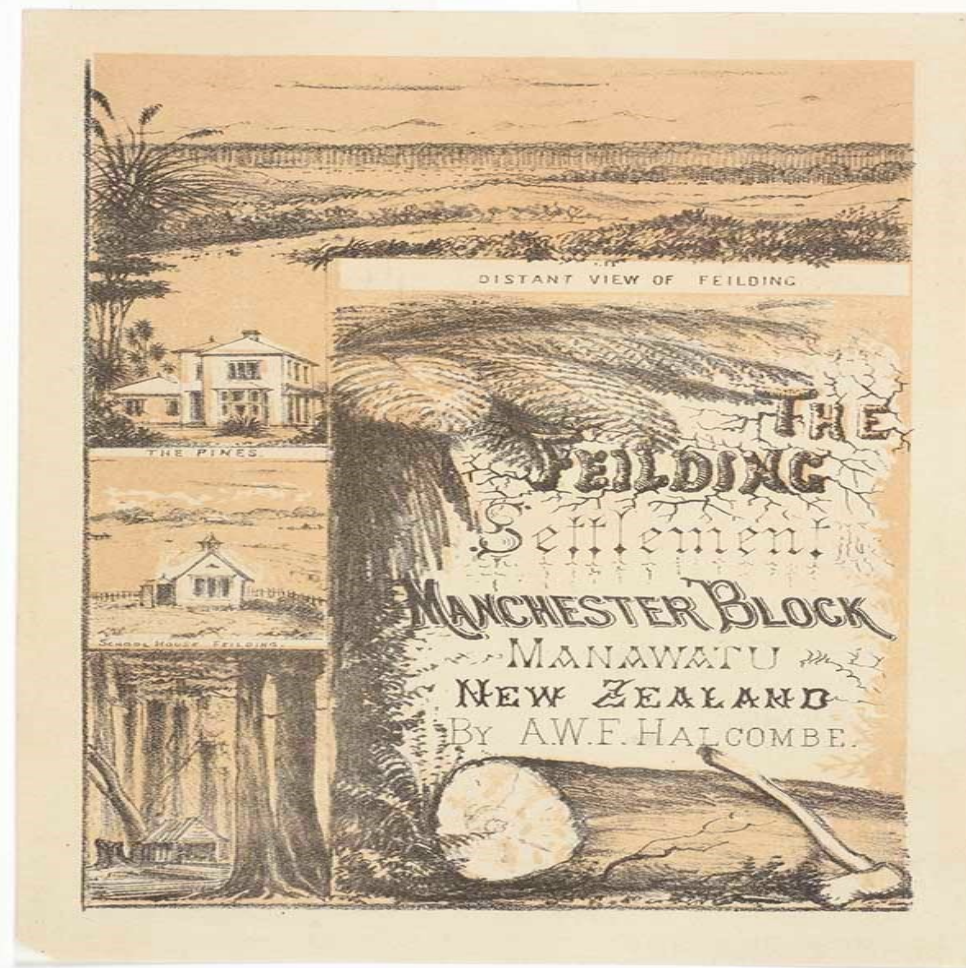
NEW EXHIBITS—Have you seen Morgan the female Moa? A stuffed Moa is better than a stuffed mower. The Engine Room is looking splendid.

3 MARCH CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE SWAP MEET 8am –1.30pm Gold Coin Donation

MOVIES AT CHM

Would you like to see some of the old, classic, comedy, romantic, war, western, or another genre movies? The Hunter Room is the venue. If you are interested, please fill in the questionnaire at smoko or at the front desk giving your opinion on best day and time as well as suggestions for choice of movies. Movies shown to date include 'Springtime in the Rockies', 'Genevieve', 'Carry On Doctor'. The \$5 charge for movie, 'cuppa' & biscuit cover's the costs. Any surplus goes to CHM funds.

THE MANCHESTER BLOCK 150 YEARS
1-3 APRIL, 2024



CELEBRATION **150**TH ANNIVERSARY

Mrs Edith Sandon Halcombe 1844 – 1903 nee Swainson.

As most photographs taken around 1874 have been lost, the informative sketches made by Mrs Edith Halcombe in the 1870's are invaluable. These are indicative of Feilding's development and the living conditions at that time. As well as being an artist she was a mother of 5 sons and 3 daughters; a farmer; a nurse and a community leader. Her father was a scientist



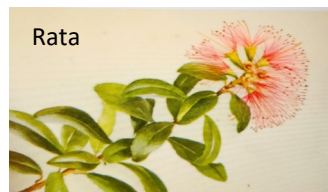
Arthur William Follett Halcombe married Edith in the Hutt Valley in 1868. His career included farmer, a school inspector and a member of Wellington Provincial Council. 1872-1881 he was an attorney and agent for the Emigrant and Colonists Aid Corporation for the Manchester Block settlement. Some of Edith's sketches were used in much the same manner as real estate photographs are used today—to sell the land.

As both Edith and Arthur were often away from home on career related matters, a relative was reported as saying, "No sooner does one return home than the other goes away." Alternative childcare?

EDITH HALCOMBE USED PENCILS, COLOURED & PLAIN, PAINT, OIL & WATERCOLOUR, ETCHINGS AND PRODUCED ABOUT 15,000 WORKS.



**MAORI COOKING OUTSIDE A WHARE BY A STREAM
CIRCA 1860**



Rata

This
Is not
Jenny



Pittosporum

Edith's father, William Swainson, a 'botanical draughtsman', a naturalist and artist, taught her the artistic skills needed to capture history.

In the early 1870's, Edith was given a jersey calf named 'Jenny' and by 1879 had built up a herd of approximately 20 jersey with the help of Laurie Daniell, the donor of the calf. Hugh L. Sherwill gave her a bull named 'Valentine'. She was also commissioned to travel to England and bring back jersey cows. The two cows she returned with have bloodlines leading to the establishment of the jersey cow in New Zealand.

The Halcombes lived at William Fox's 'Westoe' in the Rangitikei, then 'The Pines' on a large section encompassing Warwick, Kimbolton, Queen Streets. They moved to Taranaki and New Plymouth's Puke Ariki has many pieces of art done by Edith during the time she lived in the Taranaki. She is reputed to have been the first New Zealand artist to use oils.

Sadly, in 1903, Edith's body was discovered washed up at the mouth of the Waitotara River. A Coroner's jury never reported why her body was found in the river.



Thank you to FDCA, National Library of New Zealand, Alexander Turnbull Library, Te Papa Collections for the foresight of retaining historic collections.