

Historical Note

Continuing our educational theme begun in the Historical Note last newsletter, here is more about the early educational life of Mt Victoria. All these extracts are taken from *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand*, published in 1897.

Very early on, there was a private Preparatory School in Scarborough Terrace:

"This school was established in 1885. About thirty pupils, boys and girls, attend. The standards adopted by Miss McGowan are on similar lines to those in the public schools. The principal is a sister of Mr J. McGowan, Commissioner of Taxes."

In 1897 there was also the private Ladies Collegiate School in Melmerbe House, 99 Brougham St:

"The principal is the wife of Lieutenant-Colonel McDonnell, whose interesting career is referred to under the heading "Military.""

And, of course, there was The Clyde Quay Public School, situated in Clyde Quay and Roxburgh St:

"It was established in 1889, and is a mixed school, its roll including boys, girls, and infants. The main building, which is a very fine one, contains seven convenient rooms, while the infant department, conducted in a separate building, has three rooms. There are about 827 scholars in attendance at Clyde Quay School, which is about the full number that can be accommodated. This being the latest school built in Wellington, it of course contains all the most recent improvements. One of the rooms is an exceptionally fine one, measuring 49 ½ feet by 22 ½ feet, with 15 feet studs. The building is surrounded by an asphalt playground with cover sheds, in addition to the large main playground, the former being intended for wet weather. The staff consists of seven certificated teachers, and ten pupil and ex-pupil-teachers, in addition to the headmaster. The roll of honour for the years 1889 to 1894 inclusive, numbers eleven pupils who have been successful in winning Education Board scholarships, entitling them to a course of tuition at the Wellington College or Girls' High School.

Mr. William Thomas Grundy, the headmaster of the Clyde Quay School, was born at Liverpool, England and was educated in Birmingham for a time, subsequently attending the Saltley Training College for teachers. Here Mr Grundy qualified for his profession, taking the certificate under the Committee of Council of Education, equivalent to the D1 certificate of New Zealand. He was appointed to the headmastership of St. Philip's National School, Birmingham, but after three years, resigned and came out to the colonies. He arrived in Brisbane in 1879, per ship "Isola," to fill a position in one of the schools, which he had accepted while in England; but after remaining in it for about two years, he came to New Zealand. On arrival he accepted an appointment as first assistant-master in the Mount Cook Boys' School. In a short time he was appointed to the headmastership of the Masterton School, where he remained till 1889, when, on the completion of the building, he accepted the position in the Clyde Quay School, which he still holds. He takes a great interest in the sports of the children, and does as much to encourage them to play earnestly as to work earnestly, and is deservedly popular with his young charges."