

Gold in a Tin Dish Volume 1

The History of the Wakamarina Goldfield by Mike Johnston (1992)

p42 Farms in the Wilderness

The distinction of being the first European settlers in the Pelorus goes to John Wilson and his wife Lillias. At the age of 21 Wilson left his native Perthshire in 1852 for Australia where he spent a little time, unsuccessfully, on the Bendigo and Ovens goldfields. After marrying, Wilson and Lillias arrived in Nelson in 1854 where he took up brickmaking. Tiring of this Wilson began searching for a suitable block of land which they could farm. During 1856 **William Jenkins**, a former missionary amongst the Maori of the Pelorus Sound but by then a paper-hanger and upholsterer in Nelson, advertised that he was available to select land for intending settlers. Wilson responded but was not satisfied with the outcome.

Having purchased their land at a cost of 10s an acre, the prospective settlers had to get both themselves and a large quantity of supplies to the Pelorus. With **Jenkins** assistance an agreement was drawn up, both in English and Maori, between Wilson and a group of Pelorus Maori for the latter to take the settlers and their belongings by cutter to the estuary of the Pelorus River.