JOHN MCKELLAR

John McKellar was born in Scotland in 1840 and travelled to New Zealand after his other family members.

In 1867 William Pinkerton sold his Brooksdale Estate to his son in law John McKellar.

John McKellar was only in West Otago for ten years but had a very fruitful and energetic involvement in community activities in West Otago.

John McKellar was a promoter of the foundation of the West Otago Agricultural and Pastoral Society. He was a very keen sportsman who bred and raced thoroughbreds. He was voted “most principal racing stable in the Middle Island”. John McKellar, through his involvement in the Agricultural and Pastoral Society, promoted a racing event for the Tapanui Racing Club. He introduced fallow deer to the Blue Mountains. He also held ploughing matches.

In 1876 John McKellar was elected first Mayor of the Tapanui District by ratepayers of the Borough. He only held office for five months before he resigned.

In 1877 John McKellar gifted land for the development of the Crookston School. The same year John, Eleanor and nine children left for New Mexico to join the Pinkertons. However, after being there for five years John McKellar died of smallpox leaving a widow and nine children.

Although John McKellar was only in the district for ten years it is clear why his name was used for one of the houses as he was an energetic man who prided himself on community involvement.