



John Reid & Sons was a firm of Land and Estate Agents, Civil Engineers and Surveyors, Corner of Bond and Water Streets, Dunedin, which was founded in 1876 by the present senior partner, together with Messrs J. W. and G. S. Duncan, under the style of Reid and Duncans. The Messrs. Duncan (who went to Melbourne and constructed the Cable Tramway,

for which they acted respectively as superintendent and engineer) retired from the business in 1885.

Mr. Henry William Reid was then admitted, and the firm was carried on under the style of John Reid and Son for three years later, when the present partners became associated under their present designation.

Messrs J. Reid and Sons have a large circle of Home clients as well as in Canterbury, Otago, and Southland, where they have sold and bought large numbers of estates in both town and country. They have had an extended experience as civil engineers and surveyors, and between the years 1877 and 1881 executed considerable survey contracts in Canterbury under the General Government. As surveyors they undertake the subdivision of blocks of land, and their experience as salesmen is of the utmost value. As scientific and expert farmers and attorneys for absentees in the management of estates, they have particularly distinguished themselves.

Their celebrated prize farm, known as "Monte Christo," and situated at Wright's Bush, Southland, has long been managed on the most approved principles. Divided as it is into twenty-six paddocks, a record is kept of the rotation of crops in each paddock for years back, and the entire property, which consists of 958 acres of freehold land, is in splendid order and condition; so much so that in 1894 the enterprising owners were awarded Sir John Bennett Lawes' Challenge Shield for the best managed farm, and each year since that time have scored second place in the competition.

As breeders, Messrs Reid and Sons have won fame for their celebrated flock of registered Shropshire Down sheep, which was founded in 1886; by careful selection and heavy culling, and by adding from the best imported strains, they have a stud flock second to none in the Colony for producing the highest quality of mutton, lamb, and wool. With these sheep 286 awards were secured to the close of 1896; namely, thirty-six champions, eighteen special, 116 first, ninety-six second, seventeen third, and three highly commended prizes and certificates. With such records, it is not surprising that buyers are readily found for both rams and ewes at highly satisfactory prices.

Mr. John Reid, the founder of the firm, was born in 1829 at Longside, Aberdeenshire, where he was educated till fourteen years of age. At this time his father—an agricultural implement maker—was killed, and the necessity of doing something to provide for the support of his widowed mother and fatherless brothers and sister inspired the youth to take the burden of conducting his father's business upon his own young shoulders. Appointing an experienced foreman—to whom he apprenticed himself—he was successful in supporting the home.

In 1854 Mr. Reid arrived at Dunedin, and, after a stay of about a year, during which he made a trip to Jacob's River and saw the country (there being at that time no settlers west of Mataura River, only about a dozen between Clutha and Mataura, and scarcely any in the Taieri and Tokomairiro districts), returned to England.

Having married in Scotland in 1856, he sailed again for Otago by the ship *William and Jane* in the following year, soon afterwards acquiring 150 acres of land at the North East Valley. While dairying on this farm, Mr. Reid joined the Survey Department in Dunedin as Clerk of Public Works and Assistant Draughtsman, under Mr. J. T. Thomson, and in 1859 became Chief Draughtsman.

The confinement impairing his health, he resigned in 1862, and subsequently, with Captain Sutter (afterwards of Timaru), entered into business as a goldfields storekeeper at Waitahuna, under the style of Reid and Sutter.

On the dissolution of this partnership in 1866, his brother, Mr. G. F. Reid, arrived from India, and the brothers joined Mr. E. Herbert, of Lawrence, in founding a business as buyers and forwarding agents in Stafford Street, under the style of Reids and Herbert. In 1869 this partnership was also dissolved, and, Mr. Reid having purchased "Corner Bush," he resided for some time on that estate, which he improved extensively. He subsequently sold part of the estate, though he still retains 1,000 acres, and as his family grew up around him, he established the firm described in this article.

John Reid died on 31 July 1912 and is buried in the family grave in Dunedin's Southern Cemetery.

Prepared by the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand
(www.cemeteries.org.nz) from information in *The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand [Otago & Southland Provincial Districts]*

Photographs available from:

http://www.dunedin.govt.nz/facilities/cemeteries/cemeteries_search?recordid=108569&type=Burial