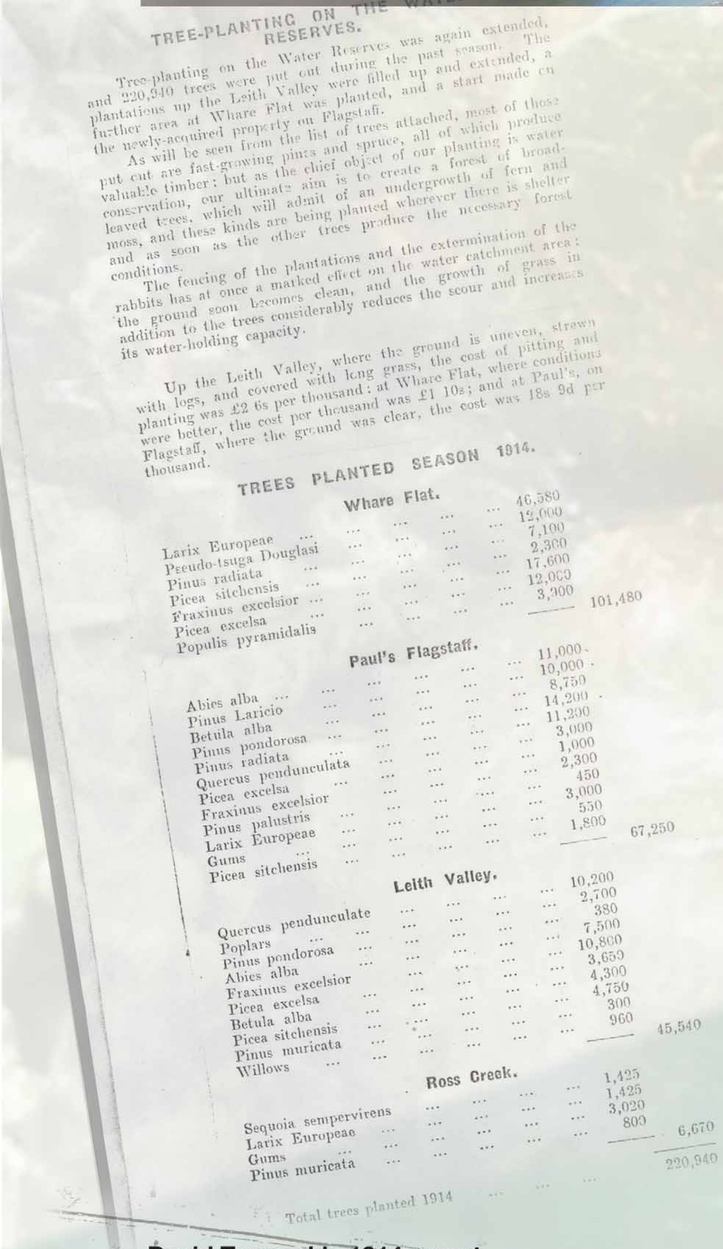
100 Years

OF DUNEDIN CITY FORESTS

Ross Creek Reservoir - scene of the City's first forestry plantings in 1906



TREE-PLANTING ON THE WATER RESERVES.

Tree-planting on the Water Reserves was again extended, and 220,500 trees were put out during the past season. The plantations up the Leith Valley were filled up and extended, a further area at Whare Flat was planted, and a start made on the newly-acquired property on Flagstaff.

As will be seen from the list of trees attached, most of these are fast-growing pines and spruce, all of which produce valuable timber; but as the chief object of our planting is water conservation, our ultimate aim is to create a forest of hard-leaved trees, which will admit of an undergrowth of fern and moss, and these kinds are being planted wherever there is shelter and at such as the other trees produce the necessary forest conditions.

The fencing of the plantations and the extermination of the rabbits has at once a marked effect on the water catchment area: the ground soon becomes clean, and the growth of grass in addition to the trees considerably reduces the scour and increases the water-holding capacity.

Up the Leith Valley, where the ground is uneven, strewn with logs, and covered with long grass, the cost of pitting and planting was £2 6s per thousand; at Whare Flat, where conditions were better, the cost per thousand was £1 10s; and at Paul's, on Flagstaff, where the ground was clear, the cost was 18s 9d per thousand.

TREES PLANTED SEASON 1914.

Whare Flat.

Larix Europeae	46,380
Pseudo-tsuga Douglasi	15,000
Pinus radiata	7,100
Picea sitchensis	2,920
Fraxinus excelsior	17,600
Picea excelsa	12,000
Populus pyramidalis	3,900
	101,480

Paul's Flagstaff.

Abies alba	11,000
Pinus Laricio	10,000
Betula alba	8,750
Pinus pondorosa	14,250
Pinus radiata	11,250
Quercus pendunculata	3,000
Picea excelsa	1,000
Fraxinus excelsior	2,200
Pinus palustris	450
Larix Europeae	3,000
Genista	500
Picea sitchensis	1,800
	67,250

Leith Valley.

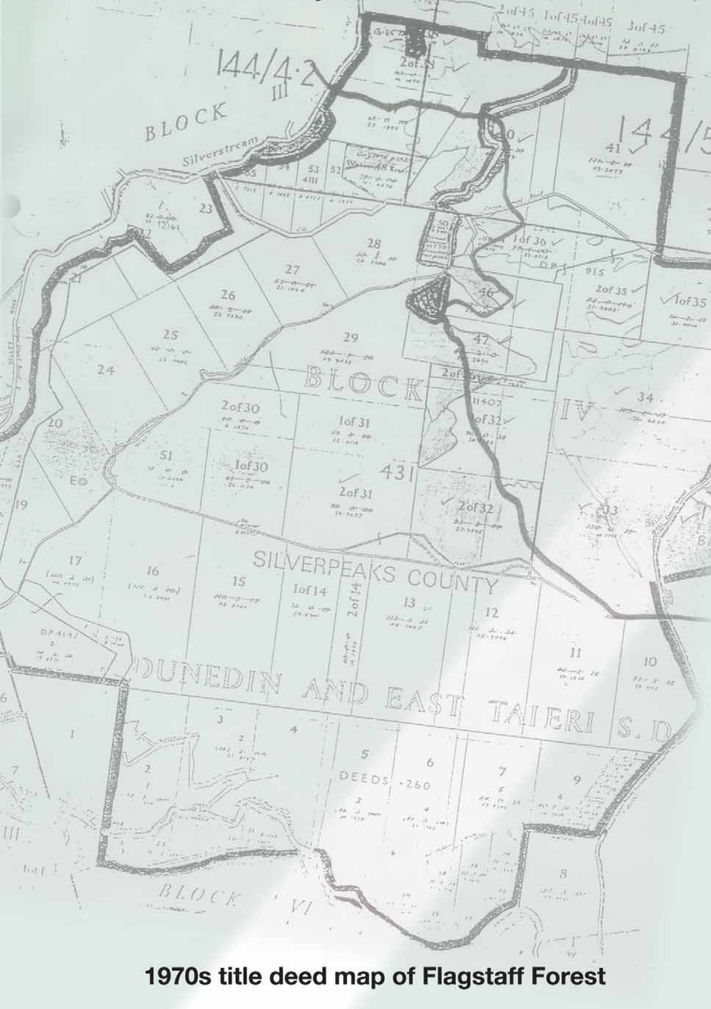
Quercus pendunculate	10,200
Poplars	2,100
Pinus pondorosa	380
Abies alba	7,500
Fraxinus excelsior	10,000
Picea excelsa	3,600
Betula alba	4,200
Picea sitchensis	4,750
Pinus muricata	300
Willows	960
	45,540

Ross Creek.

Sequoia sempervirens	1,425
Larix Europeae	1,425
Gorse	3,920
Pinus muricata	800
	6,670

Total trees planted 1914 ... 220,940

David Tannock's 1914 report to Dunedin City Council



1970s title deed map of Flagstaff Forest

Empire Forest Conference delegates visit Dunedin in 1928

1906 Dunedin City's first plantation forest was planted around the Ross Creek Reservoir on land owned by the Dunedin City Council Water Department. Then superintendent of the DCC Reserves Department, David Tannock, intended that the new forest would increase the aesthetics of the area, control weeds (gorse and broom), improve the quality and quantity of the water catchment, reduce evaporation and prevent erosion. The provision of timber as a commercial crop was secondary. A total of 15,540 pines and spruce and some ash and birch were planted in the first year. Booth's House was purchased to make a nursery "to grow trees for planting the water reserves both at Ross Creek and the Leith Valley" – Tannock.

1908 Douglas fir seedlings imported from the USA.

1910 Land purchased at Whare Flat for forestry development.

1911 Whare Flat nursery and workers' camp established.

1913 Rabbit-proof fence recommended for Whare Flat forest.

1914 Planting began on Flagstaff. World War One saw a dramatic decrease in the labour available for planting and forest maintenance.

1915 Land at Bethunes Gully purchased for forestry development.

1916 Two mature Menzies (sitchit) spruce trees harvested from Jubilee Park for the manufacture of aeroplanes.

1917 Returned soldiers employed to plant seedlings and clear gorse and broom. Plantings began at Sullivans Dam.

1920 Over 100,000 seedlings purchased from the government nursery at Rotorua.

1922 Tannock recommended "the planting of great many trees" at the Flagstaff Sanatorium. A national research programme concluded that grazing animals, including deer, were "most harmful to the forestry industry".

1924 Planting began at Waipori on land owned by Dunedin Electricity Light and Power Company, builders of the Mahinerangi dam and power station. Thinnings taken from the city's forests used for fencing the New Zealand & South Seas Exhibition complex at Logan Park.

1928 Empire Forest Conference held in New Zealand and Australia with delegates visiting Dunedin' forests, described as "the most extensive and most satisfactory Municipal forests in the Empire".

1931 The milestone of planting 1,000 acres (400ha) was reached (628,000 trees). During the Great Depression firewood from Ross Creek Forest was donated to the unemployed via relief agencies and the Mayor's Relief Depot. The unemployed reciprocated by providing labour in the forests, achieving record plantings.

1932 Tannock notes that "President Roosevelt and Herr Hitler are utilising unemployed for improving forests in their countries".

1934 Clearfelling of forest crop commenced at Flagstaff, the produce being sold for five shillings (50 cents) per 100 feet (30 metres) measure.

1935 Serious fires in Flagstaff, Swampy Hill and Mount Cargill forests.

1938 Public awareness campaign on preventing forest fires.

1939 Severe winter storms and snowfalls caused damage to forests. Planting ceased during World War Two.

1948 Land purchased at Whare Flat from Boy Scouts' Association.

1956 Sawmill opened at Waipori Village.

1959 Trial export of Whare Flat logs to Japan.

1970 Clear-felling of all blocks to meet Japanese export demands. Waipori forest area doubled with a land purchase, described by the *Otago Daily Times:* "the City Council has acted, dramatically and with flair, to give a necessary lead, and to show that Otago means business".

1980 Dunedin City Council formed the DCC Forestry Department, transferring the management of forest assets from the DCC Parks & Recreation Department.

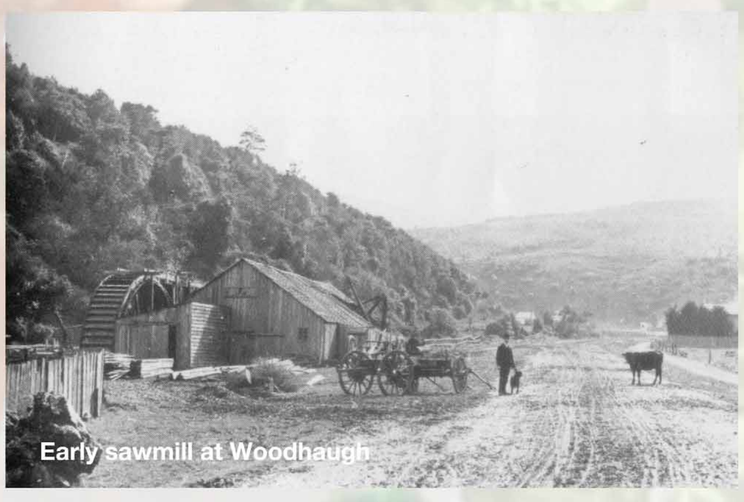
1988 Purchased a chipmill at North Taieri and formed a joint venture (Otago Chipmill Limited) with South Wood Limited.

1990 City Forests Limited formed, later to become part of the Dunedin City Holdings Limited group owned by Dunedin City Council (1993).

2001 Forest Stewardship Council certification awarded to CFL, one of the first major forest owners to achieve this in New Zealand. CFL reached the milestone of harvesting over 100,000 cubic metres of timber in a single year (121,600m^3 compared to 61,300m^3 in 2000).

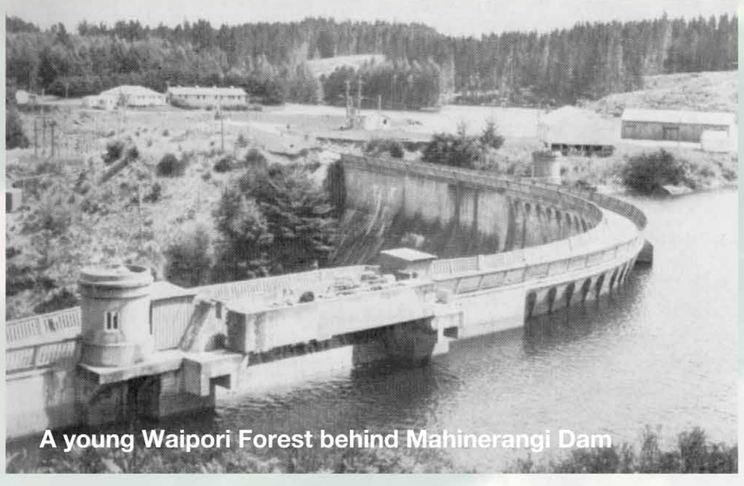
2003 CFL purchased the Silverpeaks Forest from Ngai Tahu Property Group Ltd.

2006 CFL opened its Milburn wood processing plant near Milton. CFL acquired Opio Forestry Fund's 830ha forests at Nobleburn and Kaitangata. The centennial year of forestry in Dunedin is celebrated with a ceremonial planting at Ross Creek.



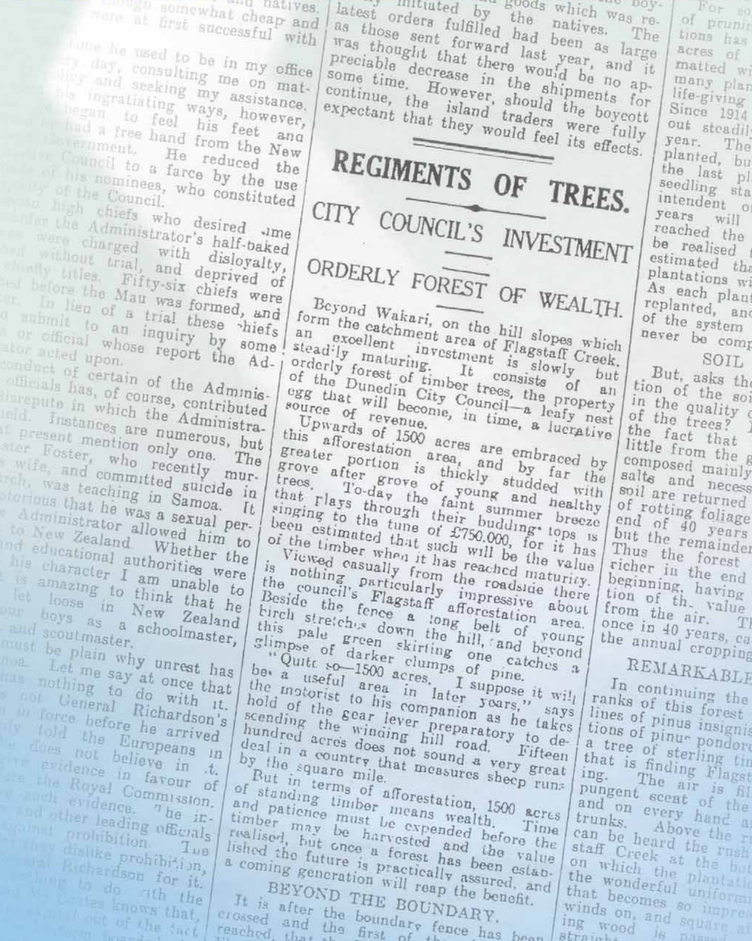
Early sawmill at Woodhaugh

New plantings in Waipori Forest



A young Waipori Forest behind Mahinerangi Dam

Historic specimen spruce on Flagstaff Forest Track



REGIMENTS OF TREES.

CITY COUNCIL'S INVESTMENT

ORDERLY FOREST OF WEALTH.

Otago Witness article 7 February 1928