

# Place Name Summary Report

## Mount Aitkin

(spelling alteration)

### West Southland – northern end of Lake Hakapoua

#### General Background

The submitter is seeking to have the spelling corrected for a mountain situated to the east of the northern end of Lake Hakapoua, in the south-western region of the South Island, from **Mount Aitken** to **Mount Aitkin**. The submitter provides supporting evidence that this feature was named after Robert Walter Aitkin (c.1828-1910), an early Southland run holder who occupied the Clifden sheep station, on the western side of the Waiau River, in the 1860s and 1870s. The submitter proposes that naming this feature recognised the important contribution made by Aitkin to the development of the remote and mountainous area situated to the west of the Waiau River.

The submitter refers to three writers, James Herries Beattie (*Otago Place Names, The Southern Runs, Far Famed Fiordland*), FWG Miller (*West to the Fiords The History of Western Southland*) and FG Hall-Jones (*Invercargill Pioneers*) whose local histories or historical studies all referred to 'Aitken'. However, the submitter has provided documentary evidence of official records from the *Otago Provincial Government Gazette, 16 March 1864, p.93*, electoral rolls 1872-1878, and death certificate of Robert Walter Aitkin, supporting the proposal that the spelling should be 'Aitkin'.

There are no other geographical features or streets and roads in New Zealand with the name of 'Aitkin'; and while there are street and road names 'Aitken', there are no other geographical features of that name.

Changing **Mount Aitken** to **Mount Aitkin** should not cause confusion as both the current and proposed names are pronounced the same.

Cadastral and Topographic maps have shown the following through the years:

NZMS 1, S173/S174	Edition 1, dated 1974	Mt Aitken
NZMS 13, SND047	Edition ?, dated 1906	Mt Aitken
NZMS 177, S173/S174	Edition 1, dated 1968	Mt Aitken

An early survey plan shows the following:

SO 2119	Dated 1883	Mt Aitken
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Early historical maps/plans show:

GAZ1	Dated 1877	Not named
G179A	Dated 1886	Not named

The archive records of the Board (Southland card index) refer to Mount Aitken, however, the following note has been made:

Aitken, Mount. TRIG.

A heavily wooded mountain to the west of Lake Poteriteri named in 1862-63 after the owner of the Clifden Run (RW Aitkin) note spelling. The family gravestone in Eastern Cemetery, Invercargill confirms this spelling.

The name Mount Aitken has not been gazetted as official through the NZGB Act, however, it appears in the New Zealand Place Names Database (Archived) as a recorded name:

#### Mount Aitken

District: Southland

Description: HILL: A natural elevation of the Earth's surface

Lat: -46.1395

Long: 166.9996

NZMG: Easting: 2046566.4  
NZMG: Northing: 5435289.4  
NZMS 260 Sheet: B46

Mount Aitken is located within Fiordland National Park

The views of Ngāi Tahu as to whether an original Māori name exists for this feature may be brought to the Board's meeting on 27 March 2009.

The evidence provided by the submitter concludes that this lake was named after Robert Walter Aitkin. The submitter has requested that the Board exercise its responsibility to examine cases of doubtful spelling, in terms of Section 8(1)(b) of the New Zealand Geographic Board Act 1946 [*now Section 15(1)(b) of the 2008 Act*]. The Board should note that its discretion to uphold misspelled place names which have been in long term local usage, may not apply for this place name, given that it does not appear to be a place name that would attract controversy or contention.

## Map

