

**WESTLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**HISTORIC HERITAGE ITEM RECORD FORM**

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**HERITAGE ITEM NAME**

Dillons' Homestead Hut

**ADDRESS**

Taipo River Track, Taipo Valley

**PHOTOGRAPH**



(WCRC, 2023)

**TTPP PLAN ITEM No.**

HHxx

**HNZ LIST No. & CATEGORY**

N/A

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

Part 39004-GRA PT BED TAIPO RIVER BLK XII XVI  
TURIWHATE SD BLK IX OTIRA SD

**WDC FILE NUMBER**

2573013900

**DATE OF CONSTRUCTION**

c.1935

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER/  
BUILDER**

Andrew & Mary Dillon, owner/occupiers

**STYLE**

Vernacular bach

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

Small, single-storey cottage with rectangular footprint and saltbox roof. Partially enclosed entrance porch on south-west elevation, lean-to at rear (north-east). External chimney centred on north-west elevation. Casement windows.

**MATERIALS/STRUCTURE**

Timber framing, corrugated metal roof and wall cladding; masonry chimney.

**ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS**

Internal walls removed; entrance porch extended; north-west elevation reclad (date unknown).

**SETTING**

The hut is located near the confluence of the Taipo River and Seven Mile Creek; Jacksons is to the north-east and Otira to the south-east. A long-drop toilet is situated to the north of the hut. The extent of setting is limited to the immediate surrounds of the hut, rather than the land parcel as a whole.

## **HISTORY**

The hut dates to c.1935 and was built by Andrew and Mary Dillon as their home. Andrew Dillon was a prospector and miner and was likely extracting platinum from the quartz rock in the vicinity; geological surveys in c.1906 having established the presence of the precious metal, along with some gold. Andrew John Dillon had been born in Tasmania in 1882 and he was a saw mill hand in Southland by the time he enlisted in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in December 1917. Dillon had married Mary Wilkinson in 1910; the couple had no children. Andrew Dillon died in 1948 but Mary continued to live in the hut until the mid-1960s; she died in 1969. Since the later 1960s the bach has been maintained as a hunters' hut and is reportedly now maintained by the Kumara Hunting Club. A DoC hut, known as Dillon Hut, is to the south-east of the bach that is known as Dillons Homestead Hut.

## **HISTORIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Dillons' Homestead Hut has historic significance for its association with Andrew and Mary Dillon and the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century history of mining that was undertaken by individual prospectors in remote parts of the West Coast.

## **CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Dillons' Homestead Hut has cultural significance as a place of community identity and historic continuity. The hut demonstrates the way of life of the Dillon family and the hunters and trampers who have stayed in the hut since the later 1960s.

## **ARCHITECTURAL AND AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE**

Dillons' Homestead Hut has architectural and aesthetic value as a modified mid-1930s vernacular bach that has been adapted for use as a hunting hut.

## **TECHNOLOGICAL AND CRAFTSMANSHIP SIGNIFICANCE**

Dillons' Homestead Hut has technological and craftsmanship value as a vernacular structure, built from locally sourced timber and easily carried corrugated metal.

## **CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Dillons' Homestead Hut has contextual significance as a local landmark in the Taipo Valley.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC SIGNIFICANCE**

As the hut was built in the mid-1930s, any potential archaeological significance of its setting would likely relate to the area's earlier use and development

## **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

Dillons' Homestead Hut has overall heritage significance to the Taipo Valley and to the district of Westland as a whole. The hut has historic significance for its association with Andrew and Mary Dillon and the early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century history of individual prospecting and mining in the area and cultural significance as a reminder of the Dillons' way of life in this remote place. Dillons' Homestead Hut has architectural and aesthetic value as a modified mid-1930s vernacular dwelling and technological and craftsmanship value for its locally sourced timber and corrugated metal construction. Dillons' Homestead Hut has contextual significance as landmark feature within the Taipo Valley.

## **REFERENCES**

- *Grey River Argus* 31 August 1906, p. 3; 27 July 1935, p. 2; 7 August 1948, p. 2; 9 August 1948, p. 4; 24 August 1948, p. 4.

- *Hokitika Guardian* 14 June 1935, p. 4; 8 July 1935, p. 4; 11 November 1935, p. 5; 12 October 1936, p. 7; 7 May 1937, p. 1; 17 May 1937, p. 1.
- *Greymouth Evening Star* 6 August 1948, p. 4.
- *West Coast Recollect*.
- Electoral rolls & military records.

**REPORT COMPLETED**

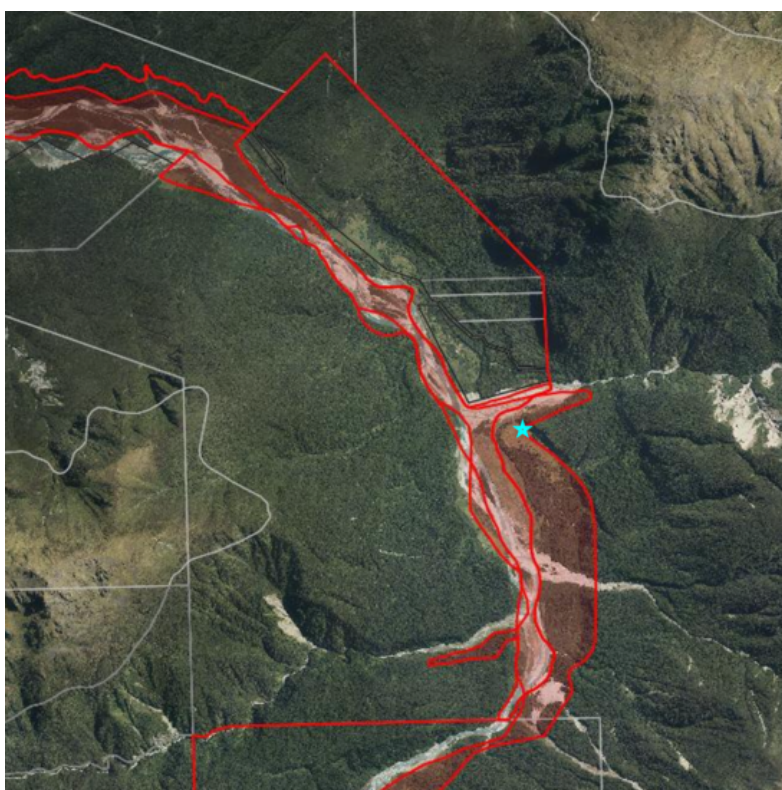
15 September 2023

**AUTHOR**

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Extent of setting, limited to the immediate surrounds of the hut.



Wider view of setting with hut site marked by star.

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Image Text Research info

### THANKS.

MRS MARY DILLON of Taipo Valley wishes to thank the doctors and Nursing Staff of the Grey River Hospital for their kindness to her late husband, Andrew John Dillon; Dr. Logan for taking the long trip into the Taipo Valley; Allen Morris, Invercargill; James Michie and Lovell Hurring, of Balclutha, who helped T. B. Wilkinson to carry Mr Dillon on a stretcher six miles where they were met by Manson brothers, who kindly helped to carry on the last mile; the organised party from Kumara who arrived very willing but too late to relieve the carrying party; the owner of the little van who took Mr Dillon from Mansons to Kumara where the ambulance met them; and many thanks to all kind friends for letters, telegrams, and floral tributes.



### THANKS.

GREY RIVER ARGUS, 24

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Mary Dillon at the hut in c.1958. West Coast Recollect.