

The first man-of-war to visit the island was H.M.S. "Tees," to try and effect the rescue of the "Elizabeth Henrietta," which had been cast ashore at Ruapuke. She anchored at Port William from the end of April to the middle of May, 1824, but had to return to Sydney unsuccessful.

In 1826 two remarkable expeditions met at Port Pegasus. Our old friend William Stewart had been in England trying to form a company to settle Stewart Island. He was not successful, but he had induced a party of ships' carpenters and bushmen to come down from the Bay of Islands and form a station at Port Pegasus. While there the expedition of the first New Zealand Company, under Captain Herd, which was being organized in England the same time as Stewart's, also arrived at Pegasus. Both expeditions remained there some time. Both came to a similar end.

As indicating the youth of our country, it may be mentioned that Harry Cook, the eldest son of the headman of Stewart's gang, born at Pegasus the following year, is at this moment a resident of the Bay of Islands.

About the same date a small colony of sealers, who procured for themselves wives from among the Maoris of Stewart Island, obtained and settled upon Codfish Island, where they kept in touch with Sydney by means of occasional visits from sealing craft.

Some say that in 1829, but all are agreed that in 1830, a shore whaling-station was established at Preservation Inlet. Many of those who resided at Codfish Island went over to the inlet for the whaling, and during the "off" season killed seals or cut timber. Port Pegasus was this year (1830) visited by Captain Morrell, of the American sealer "Antarctic," who spent a few days there before sailing up the east coast to the Bay of Islands.

At the time of Morrell's visit a vessel was being built at Pegasus. This vessel ultimately became the property of the Wellers, who established a shore whaling-station at Otago. She was the first craft recorded as being built at Stewart Island, was named the "Joseph Weller," and regularly traded between Sydney and southern New Zealand for several years.

In spite of the great number of vessels which had visited Stewart Island, and the rocky and uncharted coast they were compelled to negotiate, no wrecks had, up to this date, been recorded. The year 1831 brought the first, in the form of the loss of the "Industry" at Easy Bay. During February she had been to Codfish Island, and had run for shelter from a gale then raging to Easy Bay. Captain Wiseman, ten seamen, and six Native women were drowned, two men only escaping. A second wreck was reported in 1836. At various points on the island signs of wreckage were visible, and at one place the Europeans mustered in their boats and dragged ashore the poop of a vessel, portions of which were taken over to the Bluff to the captain of an American whaler there, and he gave his opinion that the vessel was of American build. She had evidently been loaded with cedar, but her name was never discovered.

This brings the narrative down to the commencement of the whaling period so far as it affected Stewart Island, and will give the reader an outline of the history of civilised man's first contact with the southernmost of New Zealand's three principal islands.

C. HISTORY OF BOTANICAL RESEARCH.

Dr. Lyall, surgeon to H.M.S. "Acheron," which carried on a survey of the New Zealand coast during the years 1847-51, made the first collection of Stewart Island plants. This, quite a small one, containing only a dozen or so flowering-plants and a few cryptogams, chiefly seaweeds, was sent to Sir Joseph Hooker, who published the species in the "Flora Novae-Zelandiae" (40).

For the long period of years after Lyall's visit no further details of any moment were added to our knowledge,* and botanically the island was a *terra incognita* until the most praiseworthy zeal in the cause of pure science led to Messrs. D. Petrie, M.A., and G. M. Thomson, F.L.S., visiting the island in January, 1880, in order to investigate its natural history. In a small sailing-craft, with Mr. W. Joss, of the Neck, as captain, they explored Port Pegasus and Paterson Inlet, dredging in their waters or plant-collecting in the lower country. They also crossed over from the head of Paterson Inlet to Mason Bay, an unpleasant task until quite recently, on account of the miles of swamp which had to be traversed, but unfortunately were compelled through lack of time to return without gaining the actual coast. Mr. Petrie published a most interesting paper (69), giving a short account of the nature of the country visited, calling attention to the ancient strait between Mason Bay and Paterson Inlet, and suggesting a recent glaciation of the Pegasus district. Most important was his discovery of numerous alpine plants at sea-level. Amongst remarkable plants discovered were *Liparophyllum Gunnii* and *Actinotus novae-zealandiae*, the former also Tasmanian, but since found to extend as far north as the volcanic plateau of the North Island (Cheeseman, 16A; Cockayne, 26). Other noteworthy species discovered were: *Ehrharta Thomsoni*, *Elaeocharis sphacelata*, and *Carex longiculmis*. The paper concludes with a list of two hundred species of flowering-plants, the ferns not being dealt with (Petrie, 1881).

Mr. G. M. Thomson, M.P., F.L.S., had visited the island a year or two previously, hoping also to reach the Snares, and, while wind-bound at Wilson Bay, had made the remarkable find of *Suttonia chathamica* (78), a Chatham Island tree not observed as yet on the New Zealand mainland. Also he had collected the *Brachycome* now bearing his name. But Mr. Thomson's connection with Stewart Island botany does not cease here, for he made use of a number of the plants in connection with his

* Hector (36A) had visited Port William and Paterson Inlet in 1863, and published a line or two regarding the vegetation, along with certain geological details. Professor J. Black in 1872 wrote a report for the Provincial Council of Otago, but, so far as botany is concerned, mentioning only some sixteen species, of which *Sophora tetraptera* is certainly an error.