

## CHAPTER IV.

INCIDENTS, ANECDOTES, AND GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS COMPILED FROM ACCOUNTS OF SOME EARLY SETTLERS.

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**B**EFORE the arrival of the pioneer ships at Otago, one of the oldest of the Otago settlers, Archibald Anderson, lately deceased, arrived from Wellington. Of his arrival in the colony and subsequent actions the following particulars have been gleaned:—

The late Mr. Archibald Anderson left Scotland on the 31st of October, 1839, in the ship "Bengal Merchant," from the Port Glasgow, and arrived at Port Nicholson on February 22nd, 1840. He had purchased for £131 (£101 cost, and £30 premium) a land order for 161 acres of land in the township of Wellington. With this he got a cabin passage, and also could take as many servants as he liked; so he brought a ploughman named Donald Drummond, his wife, and her mother. He intended starting a farm for dairying, but when he arrived in Wellington he found that the surveyors had landed only just a few weeks before, and for this reason he was told he would not get his land for two or three years. He therefore paid his servants off, and the dairymaid's mother, a Mrs. Miller, kept a boarding-house very successfully for a long time.

Mr. Anderson got some natives to put up a whare for him, near the site of the present railway station, and then started a store, which he kept going for about twelve months, doing the most part of his trade with the natives. At that time the wages in Wellington were 3/- a day, and the price of beef and mutton was 1/6 and 2/- a pound, butter and cheese 2/- a pound; pork, however, was only 6d. How the poor man could live, Mr. Anderson said in later years, he did not know. Of course, the natives were easy to deal with, and would give a basket of potatoes for a plug of tobacco. However, they soon knew better than this. All the sheep and bullocks had to come from Syd-

ney. In the course of a short time, Mr. Anderson took into partnership a man named Andrew Rowan, and built another store in Willis Street, so that he had shops at each end of the town. His partner, however, got tired of storekeeping, and so Mr. Anderson bought twenty milk cows at £20 a head, 500 sheep at £2 each, and sent Rowan with them to Cape Terawhiti, about two miles south of Wellington. For two years they carried on a small farm there. But the natives were very troublesome, so Mr. Anderson came south in the "Scotia" with Johnny Jones in 1845 to have a look at the Otago country. Being very well satisfied with it, he chartered two schooners from Wellington, and in the one sent down thirty cows and two horses, and in the other 500 sheep, and landed them safely without the loss of a single head. They were landed at Otago Heads, where Rowan took charge, and kept them for eighteen months, Mr. Anderson returning to Wellington to settle up his business affairs. On returning to Otago, Mr. Anderson found that his partner had made "ducks and drakes" of their property, selling the produce to the whalers. On the advice of Johnny Jones, Mr. Anderson decided on dissolving partnership, and this he did, each partner taking half of the stock. Rowan sailed in a craft for Sydney, but the boat and all hands were lost.

Mr. Anderson went to Blueskin with his stock, and remained there for two years. Native dogs were, however, a source of great annoyance here, so Mr. Anderson shifted his stock to the hills, which is now the site of Roslyn. He subsequently engaged as shepherd Mr. Wm. Jaffray, now of Saddle Hill, one of the "Philip Laing" passengers, who took his sheep and cattle to Saddle Hill, where he looked after them, Mr. Jaffray being with Mr. Anderson for about eight years in all.

The settlers then began to get more numerous, and, after a time, Mr. Anderson leased the North Molyneux run of 30,000 acres, extending from the Lake to Manuka Island. This was about the year 1850. His first house on this run was near Moir's Bush, above Barnego Flat. In the meantime and for some time Mr. Anderson had a store in Dunedin at the corner of Princes and Rattray Streets, and he was the first Postmaster in Otago. After a time, when the place was becoming more extensively settled, Mr. Anderson bought 2,000 acres, extending from the present railway bridge at Balclutha to the Lake front,

on condition that he made improvements to the extent of £2 an acre within four years, but this regulation was done away with. He used to travel from Dunedin about once a month to see how things were progressing, and on the occasion of these visits, about 1853 or 1854, he bought 200 acres of land on Inch Clutha at £2 an acre, and settled his family there. This 200 acres was purchased from Mr. Redpath, and was then, and is now, the well-known Balmoral Farm.

At that time Balmoral was a delightful spot. There was a large horse-shoe-shaped lagoon in front of the house, nearly a mile long, covered to the edge with manuka scrub. In the early summer, when the scrub came out in a mass of white bloom, the scene was one to be remembered. The water was clear and placid, and with the native songsters and the natural surroundings, the place was a picture. Here Mr. Anderson resided for twenty-five years, and then moved to the Hermitage, where he resided for the last thirty years of his life. After two years he gave up the lease of his run to Mr. Peter Bell, who subsequently settled at Stony Creek.

Mr. Anderson also held for a time the Beaumont run. This was in the '50's, but he sold out about 1860, the price for the place as a going concern being £1 per sheep. The gold rush broke out the following year, and the purchaser of the run was able to get £3 per head for the sheep.

While at Balmoral, Mr. Anderson kept a boat for the purpose of carrying settlers across the river to the south, and for four years he had a man working a ferry between Balmoral, or the hill opposite it, and the lower reserve near where the south end of the railway bridge is now, the charge being sixpence a trip. At this ferry, but previously, Mr. Matthew Marshall crossed about February of 1852, when he went south to Popotunoa Hill to shepherd for Mr. Meredith.

There was a big flood on Inch Clutha eighteen months before the flood of 1878, and it rose to within six inches of the "big flood" mark, but it stayed only for ten hours, while the '78 flood stayed for weeks. Mr. Anderson brought his family out from Dunedin to the Clutha in a sledge drawn by two bullocks, and it took a week for the journey.

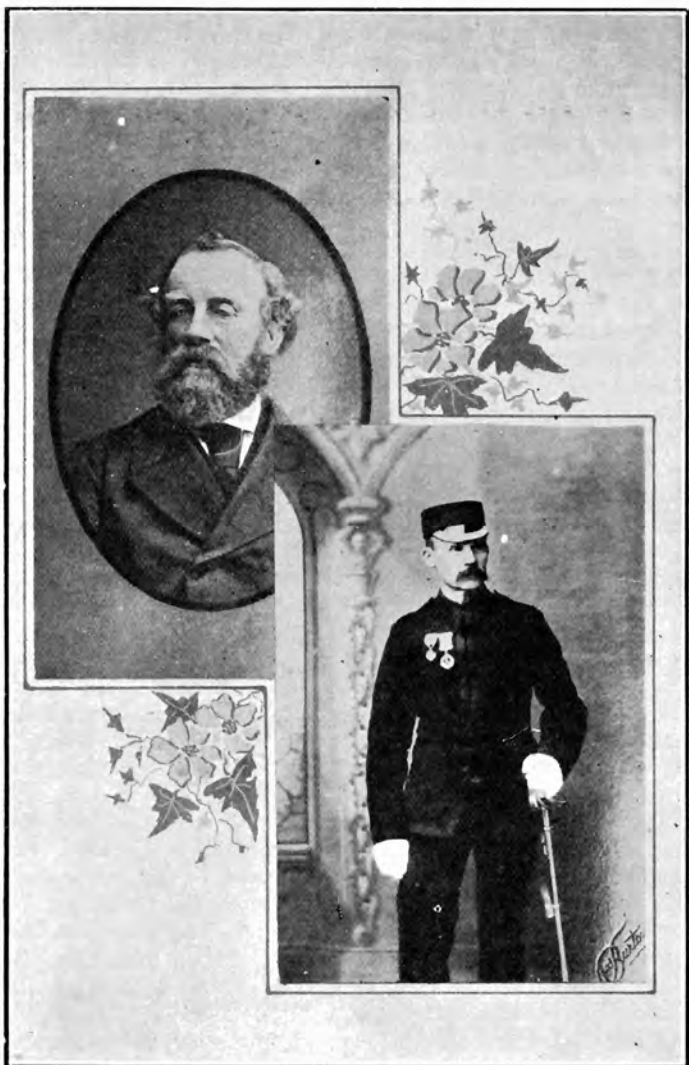
While at Balmoral, on Inch Clutha, Mr. Anderson used to grow his own wheat and grind it into flour in a steel mill. All the produce grown had to be sent by boat

from Port Molyneux round to Dunedin. Mr. Anderson grew large quantities of potatoes and sent them round, but the charges were heavy and the profits small. Anything they got round from Dunedin had to be sledged from Pinegand.

Mr. Joseph Anderson, of Waiwera South, gives the following particulars of the arrival and subsequent settlement of his family in the colony. He says:—"My grandfather, James Anderson, and father, John Anderson (a young man of twenty), natives of Sutherlandshire, Scotland, left for New Zealand in August, 1839, by the ship 'Oriental,' she being one of the first four emigrant vessels to leave London on the same day. The 'Oriental' arrived on January 30th, 1840, in Wellington, which at that time was very subject to earthquakes, so much so that it was considered unsafe to erect high chimneys to the houses.

In 1842 my grandfather and father left Wellington for Nelson, their intention being to start sheep-farming in that province. They took a cargo of sheep with them, but the vessel was wrecked near Nelson, and nearly all the sheep were drowned. During their stay in Nelson, Captain Wakefield and a number of leading citizens were massacred by the Maoris. When word was brought to the town, the settlers, expecting a raid, gathered in the town, and attempted to build some rude fortifications. They also cut away the grass, fern, and rough growth, so that the Maoris would not be able to approach without being seen. If beaten by the Maoris, the defenders made arrangements to retreat into the church on the hill, and there make a last stand. However, the Maoris did not turn up, so the scare soon passed away.

"My mother, Isabella Allan, my maternal grandfather, John Allan, his wife, four sons, and three daughters, arrived in Nelson, from Ayrshire, Scotland, in the ship 'New Zealand,' in 1842. In 1844 my father and mother were married in the English Church at Nelson. In the latter part of this year, in company with my father's brother-in-law, Alexander McKay, and his wife, they decided to leave for Otago. On the eve of their departure word came from the Home Country that the New Zealand Company, which held the Charter from the Crown for colonising New Zealand, had failed. However, as they had made all arrangements, they decided to set off, and, after a very rough passage of six weeks, landed in Port Chalmers. It was on the arrival of the vessel that my eldest brother, James Anderson, was born.



MR. W. S. MOSLEY  
1848, "John Wickliffe."

MR. THOS. BLATCH  
1848, "John Wickliffe."

“My father took up his residence in Anderson’s Bay, hence the name, afterwards removing to Dunedin, the only occupants of which at that time were two pig hunters. My brother John was born in the district, and was the first white male child born in Dunedin. My grandfather died in Dunedin in the early part of 1849, and was buried in the cemetery, then in Upper York Place. After the first batch of immigrants arrived, my father removed to Port Chalmers, where he started in business as a butcher, and just about this time I was born. In 1852 we removed to a farm in the East Taieri. Farming work was in a very primitive state, hand ploughs being used to break up the ground. The grain had all to be cut with the hook, threshed with a flail, and ground in a hand-mill, most of the grinding being done after the men had returned from their work. After about four years of farming life, my father leased the Dalvey Station for a term of years from Thomas Martin. Possession was given in the beginning of 1856, and about eighteen months afterwards my mother and the family were taken in bullock drays from the Taieri to Tapanui.”

A large number of the early settlers obtained employment from the runholders. The most important work of the time was shepherding, but the life was a very lonely one and full of hardships. Thomas Blatch, one of the arrivals with the “Wickliffe,” says that he lived at Totara in a hut, which was really half cave, near where a big totara tree stood. There was no other living being nearer that Otepopo, which was ten miles away. Often he ran out of provisions, and had to live for weeks at a time on Maori cabbage and mutton. The following incidents occurred while he was shepherding for Suisted. It had been very wet weather for some time, and all the rivers were rising fast. When out on the run, Blatch saw two men coming towards him. They had crossed the Kakanui, and were making for the Waiareka, but, finding it impassable, were about to recross the Kakanui. Blatch knew that the river had risen since they had crossed it, and that if they attempted to cross they would be drowned. It was blowing strongly, and he tried to light a fire to attract their notice, but failed. He then tied his plaid to a long stick and waved it till one of them saw him. They came to the bank of the Waiareka, and on their asking how they were to cross he told them to make a strong flax rope, and to pay particular attention to the knots. He

would make a light line which he would throw to them. They were to fasten it to the strong line, and he would pull it and them across, one by one, but they were to make a light line too, so that the one that remained behind could pull it back. They wanted him to make the heavy line, but he refused, saying it was their lives which were at stake, not his. At last they made the line, and one—Ure—after fastening it to his body, stepped out. He walked boldly on, feeling with his stick until he was about up to the waist, when he could find no bottom in front, and he was about to turn when Blatch jerked the rope and pulled him forward. The rapid current swept him down, and his mate, a young fellow named Mann, became frightened and held tightly to his line so that Blatch could not draw Ure in. After much yelling he managed to let Mann know that he was to slack the line, with the result that Ure was safely landed. Mann then drew back the line and fastened it to himself, but tied it round his waist. When Blatch pulled, the rope tightened so much that he was doubled up, head and feet being together. Blatch pulled with all his might, and at last landed him more like a drowned sheep than a man.

On another occasion, while crossing cattle at the Shag River, a steer rushed at Blatch, and, before he could escape, pierced the clothing in front of his body with his horn. The belt about the waist held, and the bullock galloped off, with Blatch swinging on his horn. At last, by a sudden jerk, he managed to so twist that the tongue came out of the buckle, and he fell with a fearful crash. His clothing was torn to ribbons, and he had to return home, where he was laid up for some time. Towards the end of 1859, Blatch joined the police force in Dunedin under Shepherd, and in 1861 he served under St. John Branigan, he being the only one of the old hands who remained in the service. He was stationed in Dunedin, and had charge of the night duty men. During this time a great fire took place in Shand's shop in Princes Street. Shand's baker's shop, Pollock, the butcher's, and Simpson, the shoemaker's shops were burned, while Cargill's store narrowly escaped. In one of the shops Blatch had a narrow escape. He had gone in to try to save some goods, when a room, containing corrosive sublimate and arsenic, took fire, and he was almost stifled, when he heard a voice outside saying: "Lie down and crawl out." He did so and escaped. On another occasion he had to jump over a pile of blazing weatherboards to get out.



Shortly after this he took typhoid fever, which was raging in Dunedin, the people dying off like flies. More immigrants arrived, and Dunedin was crowded with men on their way to the diggings. Three ship loads arrived in one day, and the Town Belt was nothing but a canvas town. Garret's bushranging gang broke out at this time, and Mill's gunsmith's shop was broken into.

A man, named McLennan, brought word to the police at Dunedin that a man named Tom Tait had left Waikouaiti several days before, but had not arrived at his destination in Dunedin, and it was feared that he was lost, as the weather was bad. It was arranged that McLennan, Blatch, and another should search towards Waikouaiti. On the Sunday morning they went over Flagstaff, but shortly after they started a blinding snow-storm came on. The top of the Snowy Mountains was covered with snow, and a dense fog with a bitterly cold wind came on. The men took shelter for a while under a large rock, and on again starting they had a job to get their horse (they had only one) to start. They then began the search, one man keeping in the track, while the others spread out on either side. In this way they searched the whole mountain, but without success, and long after dark they got to Waikouaiti, where they stopped the night. Next morning the mountain road was impassable, and they had to go by Jones's road, called Kilmog. It was so cold that now and then they had to light a big fire to warm themselves. They crossed Blueskin Bay and the Bush, and arrived at the Junction Hotel, where two of them stayed, while Blatch went on to Dunedin. On his arrival he met Shepherd, going for his milk just about dark. "Is that you, Blatch?" said he. "Yes," was the reply. "I am glad to see you. We thought you were all lost. Put your horse in the stable and go home." On going to the station, he found that Tait had been found that morning drowned in the Silverstream. Before Blatch could get his coat off that night he had to have the sleeves ripped up, his hands and arms being swollen up with the cold.

The first gaol was a very primitive affair. Mr. Monson, who had two assistant warders, being the first gaoler. When there was trouble, Blatch, who lived opposite the gaol, was always sent for to assist. There was a notorious character, one Jeannie Stewart, who was always in trouble for drunkenness. One day she got very drunk and kicked



up such a terrible row that Blatch was sent for to take her to the lock-up. She was coming along quietly, jawing away at the gaoler, who occasionally gave her a good shake, when suddenly turning round, and finding the officers' backs turned, she quickly opened the prison door, letting out all the prisoners, about twenty in number. She then caught Blatch by the hair, and one of the prisoners gave him a blow between the eyes. They all got away, but Blatch followed, and one was heard to say: "If he strikes with his 'neddy,' we'll kill him." They surrounded him, trying to get his "neddy" from him, and in the scrimmage he got a smack in the face which broke the bridge of his nose and half stunned him. Other constables who soon arrived upon the scene managed to capture all the prisoners. Jeannie was taken charge of by two constables, and Blatch, going towards the lock-up behind them, with clothes torn and spattered with blood, was met by Shepherd, who told him there was a "drunk" in the Maori house on the beach. Blatch went to the place and called upon the man to come out; he refused, and there was a rough-and-tumble. A young constable came to help, and, seeing Blatch's condition, imagined that the man had caused it. Calling out: "Oh, you beggar, you've killed him," he let him have it on the face. Next morning all the prisoners were sentenced to various punishments, Jeannie suffering solitary confinement in addition.

On the outbreak of the diggings thousands of diggers were in Dunedin, and things were very lively. One evening the Sergeant of Police was told that there was a row at the Provincial Hotel. Constable Sheridan was told to go up, and he asked Blatch to go too. They found that a digger had thrown a tumbler at the barman and cut his head open. They arrested the man, and were taking him to the lock-up when they were rushed by a crowd of diggers, who tried to rescue the prisoner. One man in particular made himself very offensive, and Blatch was ordered to arrest him. He struggled so much that Sheridan left the first prisoner and came to help, shaking a heavy guttapercha riding whip over the man's head. The diggers crowded round and crushed the officers against a paling fence. Five constables arrived and succeeded in arresting five men, but in the melee they were nearly suffocated. Blatch had a fifteen-stone Irishman to deal with, and in the course of the struggle the two were sometimes together, sometimes separate. Some of the better



MR. JOHN SOMERVILLE  
1848, "Blundell."

MRS. JAMES SOMERVILLE  
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1848, "Blundell."

MRS. JOHN SOMERVILLE  
1850, "Eden."

class of diggers helped the police for a while, but soon left. A crowd of nearly 1,000 men had quickly gathered, and there was danger of a regular rush. The other constables managed to get together and rushed along the fence, but Blatch and his man were stopped by the crowd, who pulled them round the street until the others were gone. Though his arms ached, Blatch kept hold of his man, until two or three of them, by throwing their weight on his arms, broke his hold and forced him down. The crowd then opened and let the prisoner away, but at once closed again around Blatch, who, jumping into the air, saw his man without a hat hurrying off. Near by was a policeman, to whom Blatch called out: "Seize that man." He was captured and taken to the lock-up, where, for fear of further trouble, a sentry, fully armed with rifle and bayonet, had been placed on guard by the authorities. Next morning the five men were fined £10 each, and the Magistrate said that if all that had happened had been made known to him he would have committed them for trial. During the struggle Blatch lost a gold pin valued at £1.

Mr. Mosley's house in Dunedin at Half-Way Bush was a two-roomed one, the sides of which were built of slabs and the roof of saplings and thatch made of grass and rushes. On Sundays the Mosleys often walked one and a half miles to a place of worship along the beach. A Miss Dunlop started a school near them, and she had about a dozen pupils.

One of the chief events of the time was a great dinner given to all the children of the place by Mr. Valpy, of Green Island. He sent bullock drays to take them out, but Miss Mosley saw that some of the children in the drays were sick, so she refused to go in one, and, along with a neighbour named Hepburn, walked the distance there and back.

One winter it was very cold, and a Mr. Lewis, when looking for his cows, was lost in the bush. Mrs. Lewis got Mr. Mosley to search for him, but he also got lost, and was found only by his wife cooeeing, when he came towards the sound. Three days later Mr. Lewis was found dead in the snow.

Mr. James Somerville, a passenger on the "*Blundell*," gives a good account of the experiences of some of the immigrants arriving by that boat. He says that the bush was alive with birds, wild pigeons, tuis, parrakeets,

robins, kakas, and others. Their party (the Somervilles) was the first to get away from the ship on a fine, clear morning, and they reached their destination, where Portobello now is, safely. Their luggage was landed with the help of the sailors, who, after a good meal, prepared to go back to the ship.

In the meantime the wind changed, and the return trip was a difficult one to accomplish. The party, being unprovided with tents, set to work to arrange the boxes as a shelter, but night overtook them before they were finished. The wind blew right in on them, but, by keeping a fire burning, they were fairly comfortable, till a shower of hail came on, when things became very disagreeable.

Next morning they erected a shelter with the fronds of the tree ferns for a roof, but these, although fine for keeping off the sun, were useless to keep out the rain. The beds were anything but comfortable, being only a platform with sails and branches, the softest procurable, laid across. You could not call it the Board of Health, but it was a bed of health. If it rained, they put up all the umbrellas they had to shelter them.

Boats were not easily procured, but after some trouble they bought one at a cost of £30, and then had to travel from Dunedin to North-East Harbour to get it. The beach was very rough, being covered with large stones, while the bush came to the water's edge. There was no track through it until Grassy Point was reached, where a surveyor's track had been cut through to Anderson's Bay. Then they had to cross the swamp between Goat Hill and Dunedin.

On reaching North-East Harbour they got the boat, but were advised not to attempt to return that night, as wind and tide were against them. However, they all thought they would get on all right, and set off. On reaching Grassy Point it became very dark, and it came on to rain, a thick, heavy drizzle, which continued all night. They hugged the shore so closely that very often the boat bumped against the stones. After pulling for some hours, they were startled by a peculiar cry, which turned out to be nothing more alarming than the crowing of a cock. This put them all in good humour, for it showed that they were nearing home, where they arrived at 4 a.m., after pulling for nine hours.

Dr. Burns advised them to shift to Anderson's Bay, and this was done. They went in the boat, but found that they could not get it up to the beach. In carrying one of the men to land, John Somerville got stuck in the mud, and let his passenger slip into the water.

The building of a house took some time. They sunk posts and nailed battens outside and inside. Then clay, mixed with grass, was dumped in and rubbed smooth. When the walls dried, any cracks were carefully filled up, and preparations were made to put on the roof, which was pavilion shaped and made of timber.

Two carpenters, employed at this job, had to go down the harbour for the material. One of them thought that if they could rig up a sail they would get on better, but on trial it proved unsuccessful, and they had to pull it down.

James Somerville was left in the boat to keep it afloat while the others got the timber and loaded up. The return journey was then begun, and for a time they got on well. Instead of going to the jetty at Dunedin, they went to Pelichet Bay so that they might sail across the bay. However, here their difficulties began, for the boat grounded and gave them some trouble to get off. Before going very far they noticed water coming in, and thought they had sprung a leak. The sails were put up, but the water came over the side, and soon filled the boat, which was only kept afloat by her loading. They managed to get to Grant's Braes, where they got a rope and towed the boat the rest of the distance. When they unloaded they found the plug floating about, hence the supposed leak.

After the house was finished and the families were brought home, preparations for getting in some crop were made. The grass, fern and flax were burned off, and the ground dug and grubbed for potatoes and vegetables. More houses were then built for the rest of the party, and things began to be more comfortable.

To procure some cows was the next business, nine being bought at Blueskin for £10 each. They had to be driven over Flagstaff, and, after a journey of five days, all, except one which was lost at the foot of the Half-Way Bush, were landed safely. William Duff was engaged to look for and bring the missing one in, but he failed to find her.

Bush felling was pretty hard work, more especially as the axes were unsuitable, but ultimately American axes were procured, and the work went on better. After the ground was cleared, the seed was sown and then chipped in with grub hoes. The stumps had been left in the ground, so that neither ploughing nor harrowing could be done. The crop had all to be cut with the hook and carried on the back to the stackyard, until bullocks could be broken for sledges.

Then it had to be threshed with the flail. A sheet was put down and a good-sized board was put in the middle. A man stood on either side of the board and struck the sheaf time about. After the grain was threshed, it was winnowed outside to blow away the chaff. As things improved, a fanner was made and worked at night.

The children went over to Dunedin to school, which was held in the Church. This building was also used for the meeting of the Provincial Council, the Courthouse, and for public meetings. After a while it was sold and used for a wool store. At the last it died a martyr's death, being burned to the ground.

To cross to Dunedin was a difficult job. There was no path, and people kept close to the edge of the swamp. There were two creeks to cross, one, a small one, about where the Bay View Hotel stands, and the other, a larger one, about the turn of the Bay Road near the Gasworks. They were crossed on round rails laid from bank to bank, with a hand rail to steady the folk. On the big creek the bridge was raised in the centre, two cross pieces being nailed to posts driven in the centre of the creek. Both bridges were very shaky concerns, one being called Big Waverly, and the other Little Waverly. Oftentimes the ladies crossed on their hands and knees.

Soon a track was made across the swamp. This started at the Bay View Hotel and crossed higher up, where it joined a road that connected with the main road at the Southern Cemetery. The people from Green Island, Caversham, and the Forbury usually met the Anderson's Bay people and some settlers from the Tomahawk here. The early settlers thought nothing of a long walk, and in the summer it was enjoyable enough, but in the winter, when the ruts were full of water, it was a miserable job.

The road to the Taieri was formed through the swamp by the authorities cutting two parallel ditches

some distance apart and throwing the material taken out between. This was then macadamised with bundies of flax. A serviceable track was thus made, but it was rough and so boggy that it was no uncommon thing to see waggons stuck fast from Saturday to Monday morning.

All the country folk dressed much alike, the ordinary costume being a blue flannel or serge shirt for a coat, with vest and trousers of rough tweed, corduroy, or moleskin. People were not particular about the material so long as the garments were whole and clean. The boots were very heavy, and often laced with flax for want of leather laces. One young woman went to church in a silk dress, with her boots laced with flax, while a man wore his nightcap for a hat.

Some amusing incidents took place on the road from the Bay to Dunedin, when those who imbibed rather freely found the path not wide enough, and tumbled into the ditch. Sometimes they could steer a pretty straight course, crawling along with a hand on either side. If the one in trouble were of the gentler sex, she went floundering along, shouting for assistance until some passer-by pulled her out.

One of the "Philip Laing's" passengers, who sometimes got into the ditch, owned a boat, and often rowed across to Dunedin on Saturdays with his butter and eggs. He usually got on the spree, and roared and bawled until the police were glad to get him away. If it were blowing, they tied the painter of the boat round him, so that if the boat were capsized they would be sure to find his body along with the boat; but fortunately the old man always got across safely.

Provisions sometimes ran short, and on one occasion there was no flour to be got. Fortunately there were plenty of potatoes, and the skill of the cooks had to be displayed in cooking them. It was "taties" at all meals: taties boiled with their jackets on, taties with their jackets off, taties fried, taties mashed, taties stoved, and taties and point.

Just about this time, or shortly afterwards, a hand flourmill, which completed the operation of grinding and dressing at the same time, was purchased by them (i.e., the Somervilles) from a settler at Green Island, from which place it was carried to the Bay. A pole was tied to each side and slung on men's shoulders. As there was





MR. &amp; MRS. GILFILLAN

1848, "Blundell."

DR. H. MANNING

1848, "John Wickliffe."

no road they carried it over the hills and along the sand-hills. The Somervilles then managed to get 100 bushels of wheat from the Maoris of Waikouaiti and set to work; but, as the stones of the mill were a foot in diameter, they found the driving a difficult job. So difficult was it that six men had to be employed, and even then the work was so hard that two of them could work only five minutes at a time, when they took a ten minutes' spell while other two worked.

The flour was what was called "overheads"—that is, only the bran was taken out. At first people were glad to get the flour, but it soon got a bad name because it was so black. Investigation proved that the wheat was smutty, and it had all to be washed and dried before any more flour could be made.

This was the first flour made in a stone mill in Otago, and the Somervilles were the first millers. By and by bullocks were used to turn the mill, but were not much of a success. After the Blagdon Mills started at the Water of Leith this mill was stopped. When the Somervilles shifted to Wharepa, the mill was taken there. It was at first driven by bullocks, then by a small water wheel. The barn in which it stood took fire, and everything was burnt. So ended the first stone mill in Otago.

All the woodwork required for tools, axes, grub hoes, etc., had to be made by hand, and this entailed a good deal of labour. At first only round sticks were used for some of the implements, and these were pretty rough, but with axe handles and flails more care was taken; these latter were made of white manuka and kowhai. Another occupation in the long winter evenings was the teasing and carding of wool. The spinning was done by Mrs. Somerville, senior, on the big wheel which had been manufactured by one of her sons.

William Gilfillan, a son of James Gilfillan, who arrived in 1848, in the "Blundell," and settled at Blanket Bay, gives his recollections of the times when the family lived in that quarter. He says:—

"I was born on the 7th of October, 1850, in a little two-roomed hut at the Bay. I have a dim recollection in after years of my father carrying pieces of saplings, which he had ripped up the middle with a hand saw, to a spot where he was building a new house, which house, by the way, was never finished, although we lived in it for a year or two. One day I wandered down to the

beach, where I sat down on a big stone. My attention was so taken up with gazing around that I did not note the rising tide till I was completely surrounded. Still I sat on, thinking all sorts of horrible thoughts about what would happen to me. Happily before it was too late my father came to the rescue, only saying, 'Man, ye might hae been drunt if I hadna gotten ye.'

"Robert Campbell was our nearest neighbour until he bought Glenfalloch, Wharepa, when he sold out to a Mr. Lewis, for whom my father built a new house. Lewis started brick works on the property, cut a water race, put in a lot of fluming, and built a water-wheel to drive a pugg machine; but somehow the works were a failure, and the fluming and wheel stood there till the timber rotted. Lewis afterwards obtained an appointment from the Provincial Government to supervise the opening up of the Coal Point Coal Mine near Kaitangata. He then took up some land in the South Molyneux District, along the Puerua Stream.

"In those days everyone at the Bay and on the Peninsula side had boats, and my father did a good business in repairing and painting them. The Maoris also brought their boats for repairs, but were hard 'nails' to deal with. I can well remember the old man Kori-Kori, called by the Europeans 'Colika,' standing debating the charges for hours at a time. He did not like parting with 'Te Huti,' and always tried to beat down the prices.

"Somewhere in the fifties my father decided to shift to Sawyer's Bay, where he had previously erected a small house. Some potatoes were then planted among the tree-stumps, the ground being broken up with grub hoes or mattocks; wheat was sown and chipped in. The harvesting was done with the reaping hook, and the crop threshed over a barrel. Later on, a man named Riddie at Portobello procured a hand mill, which he carted round in his boat and did the threshing. This mill was driven by two men, one man attended to the feeding, and another carried the sheaves and attended to the straw. The great drawback was that the neighbours had to help each other, and this often caused long journeys both by land and water, there being no roads.

"Nearly all the settlers around Sawyer's Bay earned their living by pit-sawing, the logs having to be brought to the pit by hand labour. The sawn timber was then carried to the beach, where it was packed into a raft and

floated up to Dunedin or down to Port Chalmers. On one occasion a raft had been made up and anchored opposite our house, ready to catch the tide on the Monday morning, but meanwhile a storm arose, and during the Sunday the raft began to break up. My father set off in the pouring rain to warn the owners, and soon about a dozen men had collected, and, setting to work, in a very short time had everything snug and safe again. About the middle fifties Hugh McDermid started the first saw-mill in Otago on McDermid's Creek, better known at that time as the 'Big Burn,' in contradistinction to the 'Wee Burn,' another creek close by. McDermid was also the first to own a pair of working bullocks, which went in harness like horses.

"Towards the end of the fifties a Wm. McCalley built a two-masted schooner at the Bay, wholly of native timbers, but on her trial trip the 'Kate McCalley,' as she was called, capsized on a sandbank on the Peninsula side. The settlers, however, all turned out, and soon raised and towed her back to anchorage. Repairs having been effected, the 'Kate McCalley' attempted a trip to the Bluff, but was wrecked at the Tois-Tois, her remains and gear being disposed of for thirty odd pounds.

"The first brewery in Otago was started at Sawyer's Bay by Wm. Strachan, who worked away for a year or two in a small way, and then shifted to Dunedin, where he started the famous Strachan's Brewery.

"When the Rev. W. Johnstone was settled as the first Presbyterian minister at the Port, the Presbytery bought a property facing the bay, and a contract was let to my father to build a manse. He had just about finished the work when something went wrong at McDermid's Saw-mill, and he was sent for to fix it up. During his absence a fire, which had been burning in the neighbourhood for two or three days, commenced to spread with amazing rapidity. Soon the manse was in flames, and, in spite of all efforts to save it, was reduced to ashes, my father losing nearly all his tools, and Mr. Johnstone a large quantity of goods. My father also lost the contract money, besides having to pay his men for two months' work. However, he secured the contract for the new manse, but owing to a miscalculation in his prices came out of the affair practically a ruined man. Shortly after the diggings broke out he sold out to David Kilgour, who had been the police officer in Port Chalmers, but had retired to

turn publican. We then shifted to Dunedin, where we stayed a week before coming to the Clutha District."

In 1853 McGlashan's Mills at Woodhaugh were being carried on, and the wheat was taken up either in horse drays or bullock waggons. Five bags was a good load, and often the dray got stuck in the streets. On one occasion Robert Christie, who was driving for John Duncan, got stuck in Rattray street, the horse sinking up to the belly in mud and the dray up to the axle. A man with eight bullocks pulled them out, and he had hard work doing it.

Mr. Alex. Petrie, who arrived in the "Strathmore" in 1856, describes in a racy way his experiences while working at Green Island:—"I engaged with a Mrs. Shand, Green Island, but soon found I did not like the job, so I said I would leave. Mrs. Shand told me if I did she would send for the police, as I had engaged for six months, of which only one had gone by. I told her to keep the month's wages, but she threatened to put me in gaol, so as I knew nothing about the laws I stayed on. She laughed at me, but I made up my mind that I would have the laugh before the other five months were over, so we were at cross purposes all the time working against each other, and often I am sure she wished she had never been born or that I had cleared out.

"Once I was carrying posts from the bush, doing two loads a day, which was a day's work, and as I wanted to go to a spree at the Taieri, I hurried up and got home twenty minutes before five, so she told me as it was not five o'clock I could go for a plough which was two miles away. I knew she did not want the plough, and only sent for it to hinder me from going out that night. My spirits fell to zero, but off I went, thinking all the time how I could have her. Nothing struck me until I came to the plough, when, seeing the swingle-trees on the ground, I determined to leave them behind. On my return home with the plough, but no swingle-trees, there was Old Nick to pay and no pitchfork.

"After being the six months with Mrs. Shand, I went to Mr. Dawson, who managed a place for a Mr. Currie. Currie had a number of bullocks running wild about the ranges, and Dawson wanted to kill one every week for the settlers. There was no stock horse, so he proposed to shoot the bullock and sledge the carcass home. Getting one of the riding horses, I tried to drive the bullock in.

and got on well for a while, until the bullock thought he had gone far enough, when off he went back. When I headed him the horse turned short, and I went straight on. However, I got on again and had another try, but the bullock stuck in the flax, so Dawson asked me if I could shoot it, and I said 'Yes,' but why I don't know. He had a rifle, and gave me a double-barrelled gun. He was to take the first shot, and if he missed I was to shoot. He kept aiming, but did not fire, so I thought I would have a shot. I fired, but Dawson also fired, and the bullock dropped. Each of us claimed him, but it was only when we had dressed him that I found it was my shot that had killed him. This was my first attempt at stock-riding and cattle-shooting in the Colony. After that I always did the shooting.

"On another occasion Mr. Jaffray, of Saddle Hill, told us that one of the bullocks was running with his cows, and that we could get him any time. So we took the dray, but when we got to the place we found that Mr. Jaffray was not at home. It was a misty day, and we could not find the bullock. Then Mr. Dawson went home and left me to bring on the dray.

"When I got part of the way home I saw the bullock feeding on the side of the road. I looked about for a place where I could load him, and having found a shelf backed the dray in. I then shot the bullock, and managed to get him on the dray. As it was after dark Dawson, thinking that something had happened, came to look for me. I told him I had got the bullock, and he wondered how I had got him on the dray. We left the carcass on the dray all night, but that was the end of our killing, for we had not taken the inside out, and the meat was spoilt.

"In 1858 I went with Murison Bros. to search for a run. We went to Waikouaiti, where we bought a team of bullocks from Johnny Jones, also a dray, which we loaded with a frame house and provisions. We drove to Hopkinson's ('Dutch Charlie,' as he was called), the run which was the farthest station up the Shag River, the country farther up being unknown, and he told us we could not possibly go any further with a dray. So we left the team there, and having sewn two bed sheets together for a tent, set off to find the easiest way to make a road.

"We discovered a suitable course, and set to work making cuttings. I used to ride ten or twelve miles

ahead to survey the course, and then turn back to the others. The Shag River had to be crossed again and again, and it was usual for us after crossing to take off our boots and pour the water out. I was the first white man to set foot on the Maniototo Plain. Sometimes parties of Maoris were ahead of us up the Maniototo eeling, and had built here and there scrub whares shaped like beehives, roofed with tussocks, which we often found very useful.

“Once we got to a narrow gorge with a steep spur, up which we had to go. We made a narrow cutting up this, but we had to exercise great care, as there was only a narrow ledge. If anything had gone wrong, our bullocks and all would have been precipitated into the gorge below.

“On another occasion we lost our bullocks for three weeks. They went right back towards the coast, where they were found by Jones’s stockmen. I put bows on them and shepherded them at night. One night a bow was lost, and we made a long search for it. There was a foot of snow on the ground, so we joined hands and searched the whole piece, but in vain. I had to ride to Hopkinson’s, a distance of 80 miles, for another bow.

“We again got a start, and after making some more cuttings we reached the top of the Taieri Lake, where we camped. There was splendid grass, and Murisons decided to stop there. Here I may say that, at a place called Coal Creek, I advised the Murisons to take up some land. When they rode back to apply for it, Jones met them, and after hearing their story advised them to go back and go further up. They did turn back, and soon afterwards Jones applied for this land himself and got it.

“The weather was intensely cold, and we had to break the ice on the river every morning to get water for the bullocks. The ice was the depth of an American axe. I once led my horse over the river on the ice. One night I woke up and found myself lying in water. I lay till morning, and then found it was raining heavily. For three days this went on, and for that time we lay in the wet, as we could not get our blankets dry.

“Wild dogs were numerous, and had made tracks all along the river side. We put our tent across one of these tracks, and were awakened one night by hearing our dog growling. Looking up I was confronted by a wild dog, which on being struck at went off. I got tired of this





MR. AND MRS. JOHN BARR  
1848, "*Philip Laing*," and 1851, "*Clara*."

sort of life, and taking the team returned to Waikouaiti, where a man from Dunedin took it in charge.

“Next morning I started to walk to Dunedin, a distance of 33 miles. On the way a heavy mist and rain came on, and I was afraid of losing my way. I managed to find a Government hut, built for the accommodation of travellers, and soon got a fire lit. The place was a comfortless one, the thatch being mostly off the roof. I had nothing to eat, but found a teaspoonful of tea behind a rafter. Thinking I would have some tea I put on a billy, but it had no lid, and the soot came down and spoilt my brew.

“Next morning it was as wet as ever, and I tried to snare a wood hen which came about, but without success. I was so hungry that I could have eaten bones and all had I been successful in catching it. Leaving my swag I again set off, and soon had the luck to hear a dog bark. Shortly afterwards I came to a house, and eventually reached Dunedin.”

Mr. John Crawford, a passenger by the “Robert Henderson” in 1858, gives the following account of his experiences after arriving in Otago:—“When we got to land I, with two other young fellows, essayed to walk to Dunedin from Port Chalmers. We got on all right, although the track was exceedingly rough, and on reaching Bell Hill we met one Gebbie, a gardener, whom we asked how far it was to Dunedin. ‘Well, my lads,’ said he, ‘you are in Dunedin now.’ We were fairly knocked out at such a reply.

“We wandered about Dunedin that night, and next night slept, along with the Lamond family, in the chief policeman’s (Shepherd’s) house. The others went to the Barracks, and one day when passing I heard one of the men crying out, ‘My Betty’s tooted, my Betty’s tooted.’ I wondered what was up, till I discovered that Betty was his wife, and she had eaten some tutu, but she soon recovered.

“I afterwards engaged to work for one Rennie, driving his horse and cart. I got loads of flax and put them in holes in the roads, covering the flax with clay. There were numerous deep holes in the streets, and laughable incidents often took place. One Loper, a butcher, was galloping along Manse Street, when he came to a big spring, where his horse balked. Loper went head first into the spring, and nothing could be seen but his boots.

“Rennie then sent me to his farm on the West Taieri, after which I drove grain to McGlashan’s Mill with a horse and a bullock, the latter in the shafts. The same horse would not be worth a pound a leg now, but then it cost £80. Sometimes when carting I got stuck in the Caversham mud, and when I managed to get to the top of the hill the bullock just sat back in the breeching and would not lift a foot. Going home we had to go down a ridge, and here the bullock would bolt, and just stop when we got to the flat.

“When seed time came on I called on Grant and asked him what quantity to sow, and he said I could not sow too little. I sowed one and a-half bushels to the acre, and thought I had spoilt the crop, but when it was reaped it yielded 60 bushels per acre, which sold at 5/6 per bushel.

“Once I was going to Dunedin with Peter Campbell. Instead of crossing the river in a boat we crossed in a ‘moggie.’ On getting near the other side the current was much stronger, and swept us down the stream. Campbell sprang to the bank, but in doing so upset me into the water. The distance to Dunedin was 18 miles, and by the time I landed there I was quite dry.

“Three of us arranged to go north ‘shearing.’ These were W. Grant, John McIntosh (a brother of Jas. McIntosh, the coach driver), and myself, but we were afterwards joined by a youth named Robson from Waiholo. The first night we camped at a place called ‘The Clump of Trees,’ but got little sleep owing to young Robson’s continual coughing. The third night we got as far as Oamaru, where we stopped at the only house there, kept by Ned Hudson and his Maori wife.

“Next night we arrived at the Maerewhenua, where we found that Borton and McMaster were not ready for shearing, so we did some grubbing for them at £2 5s. per acre. We also planted some potatoes, Maori fashion, for them. We stopped till the end of the shearing, I managing to shear the first day 36 sheep, the rate being 25/- per 100.

“While here I made the acquaintance of one Matthew Miller, who had been stuck up by bushrangers in Victoria, and had been shot through the cheeks. He was afterwards the first to get stuck up by Garret, the bushranger, at Maungatua.

“Mr. Geo. Munro, afterwards a resident of Wharepa, was employed at the station. He was a stonemason by trade, and built the first stone house in the district.

“We got no ready money as pay, but a ‘blue blister,’ i.e., a cheque on Johnny Jones. We then returned to Dunedin, but next season again went north. One day the three of us went up the river Maerewhenua. I was fossicking for gold, and found two or three specks, but the others said it was only mica, so I threw it away. This time we did very well, and returned with £45 a man.

“Next time we went there was a big party of us. Hector Munro and Peter Dow went ahead of us by a day or two to cross into Canterbury. The Waitaki was a difficult stream to ford, so they made a ‘moggie,’ and were crossing nicely when Munro found they were being carried out to sea. He swam to land, but Dow floated right out on the moggie as far as could be seen. Munro lit a fire on the beach and waited. Dow came back with the tide just as he had gone out with it, landing on the same spot he had started from. When our party crossed the river I came down, but by holding on to Grant got over safely. We got into a gully out of sight of any passer-by, stripped, and ran about till our clothes dried in the sun. We then shored at Myers’s Station, where one Gibson was manager.

“One day Gibson had a trying experience. He was driving a waggon across the Plains, when a big bull charged it, capsizing the whole show and letting the bullocks loose. Gibson got under the waggon mighty quick, and was found there next morning by our party.

“Then we went on to the Hakataramea Station, where six Maoris and six whites were employed. We shored 10,000 dry sheep, but when we came to the ewes the manager wanted to cut the price from 25/- to 22/6, so we left. This I believe was the first strike in the country districts of Otago. In returning home, we crossed the Waitaki by placing our hands on each other’s shoulders, Grant, the biggest of the party, being in the lead. On reaching Oamaru I took passage to Dunedin in the ‘Stormbird,’ which was trading between these ports.”

Another description of early times is the following personal sketch by Mr. J. W. Roberts, who arrived in the “Jura” in 1858:—

“Work on the roads about Dunedin was being carried on when we arrived, and all who desired were taken on

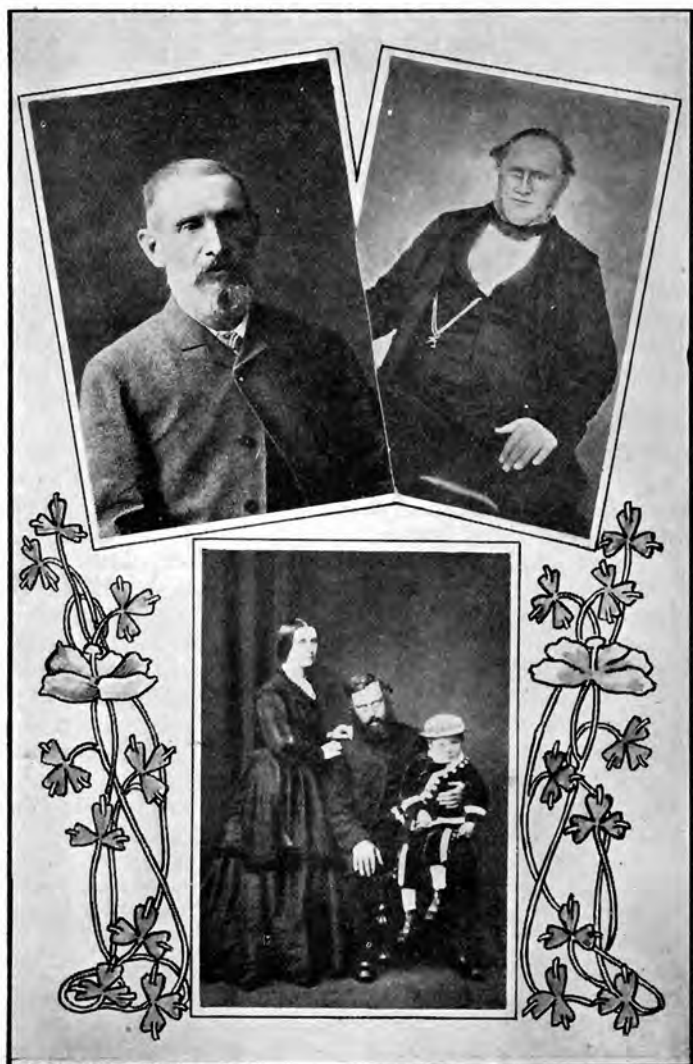
at Caversham. Mr. Marchbanks was foreman, and above him was a Mr. Calder, while the chief was Mr. Oliver. The old hands had a fixed wage, but the new ones were paid according to ability. I earned 6/6 a day, but one man named Powell, a tailor by trade, had a difficulty in wheeling his barrow along the planks, so when pay day came he got only 5/6. He said he really thought it was all he was worth.

“Soon afterwards I took a trip north to Kakanui shearing. When we reached the station shearing was not ready, so I was employed threshing wheat. A primitive method of threshing over a barrel was in vogue, but I made a flail, threshed a large stack, and winnowed the grain.

“On returning to Dunedin, I built a house with a weather-board roof, but the rain came in everywhere. Our first bed was made of sticks nailed together, but it swayed so much that I was forced to let the uprights into the ground, thus making a fixture of it. I also made some chairs in the same way.

“I was next engaged to take sheep to Oamaru. Preparations for the trip were made, and Peter McGregor was boss; John McMaster and I were under him. He had 12/- a day, and we had 10/-. On the trip fogs came on, and often we lay out without tents, bedding, or covering of any kind. One day the owners came along, and found the men but no sheep; they were scattered everywhere. It took several days to collect them again, and on reaching a place called Sheep Hill we lost 150 of them with tutu. At night we had to tie our dogs to our legs to keep them near. Heavy work it was collecting and carrying the half-dead sheep, especially the rams, up the steep faces. One day, after struggling till we were quite worn out, we found a bottle of rum—a perfect godsend, it was declared.

“Near Waikouaiti we had met Johnny Jones riding a white horse, and he ordered us to drive faster, as he said we were only grazing our sheep on his run. Owing to the flooded state of the river we had to stay on his land for two days. Crawford then went on with the sheep, and I turned back to Dunedin. Heckler wanted me to go back by way of Blueskin, but I refused, and for my obstinacy lost my way. After wandering about a good bit, I followed a creek, and came out at North-East Valley.”



MR. NAT CHALMERS  
1849, "Ajax."

MR. JOHN SHEPHERD  
1849, "Ajax."

MR. AND MRS. ALEX. ARCHIBALD AND BOY  
1849, "Ajax."