

distribution as kikuyu (Fig. 3B). It is a very distinctive plant, growing to about 70 cm tall, and with fleshy leaves that are more or less rhomboid-shaped in cross-section. The inflorescence can be 50–70 cm tall, with globose female flower heads near the base, and similar male flower heads above. When in flower the white stigmas and stamens are eye-catching. The crowded fruits then develop, also in a spherical form. Obviously, this is not a common plant and it is struggling to hold its own.

This then, is the kikuyu dilemma (Fig. 1). Is it better to fence the lakes, or leave them grazed, to give these, and other wetland plants, a chance to thrive? When recording the terrestrial flora of the Awhitu dune lakes Cameron & Aspin (2011) discussed the same dilemma regarding grazing to control kikuyu and the semiaquatic exotic Mercer grass (*Paspalum distichum*).

Acknowledgement

I thank the Editors for organising Figure 3 A & B).

References:

- Cameron, E. K.; Aspin, P. A. 2011: Flora of eight southern Awhitu dune lakes, southwest Auckland. *Auckland Botanical Society Journal* 66(1): 33-44.
- Johnson, P.N.; Brooke, P. A. 1989: *Wetland Plants in New Zealand*. DSIR Publishing, Wellington, New Zealand.
- Times Online 27 March 2013: "Kikuyu – get on the grass". <https://www.times.co.nz/lifestyle/gardening-lifestyle/kikuyu-get-on-the-grass/>
-

Thomas Kirk in Auckland: geographical, botanical and biographical notes

Rhys Gardner

Introduction

This article clarifies some of the place names used by botanist Thomas Kirk (1828–98) in the first part of his residence in New Zealand, when he lived in Auckland, from 1863 to January 1874. He then moved to Wellington, established himself as a teacher, scientist and forestry administrator, and hardly ever came north again (Hamlin 1965; Moore 1973; McKelvey 1991; Macleod 1993; Note 1).

Some of these place names appear on Kirk's collections, the others in a comprehensive article on the botany of the Auckland region (Kirk 1871). I have not been able to pinpoint them all—along the way, however, several facts about the Kirk family in Auckland have been rediscovered (Note 2).

Kirk's itinerary

Thomas Kirk was already a very good field botanist when he arrived in New Zealand in February 1863 (Godley 1999). During the next decade—essentially, until he published his 1871 article—a fair proportion of his collecting was done close to Auckland (with the notable exception of the Waitakere Ranges (Notes 3, 4). From then until January 1874, when he and his family left for Wellington, he ranged further afield (Rotorua and various South Island

localities, etc.), and made relatively few collections from the Auckland region.

It was nearly unknown for mid-19th C. collectors to use a consecutive numbering system (except when packeting up specimens for consignment overseas) but fortunately Kirk's specimens often have an exact date and locality. In this way Hamlin (1965) was able to prepare an itinerary of Kirk's collecting in New Zealand. Hamlin said that he had collated the label data from "about 85 per cent of Kirk's herbarium", that is, of the Kirk collections at WELT (National Museum of New Zealand); he did not investigate other herbaria, such as AK (Auckland War Memorial Museum), which has just under 1600 Kirk collections (all vascular plants).

The WELT specimens, including some apparently not seen by Hamlin, have now been data-based, so we are now able to follow Kirk in his collecting around Auckland. Most of these collections are of ferns and fern-allies, gymnosperms, or flowering plants. Kirk in 1871 also treated just these groups, although he did note in the article's first paragraph that "the lower Acrogens [mosses, etc.] and the Thallogens [fungi, algae and lichens] will, it is hoped, form the subject of a subsequent paper" (Kirk 1871: 148) – as it did, see

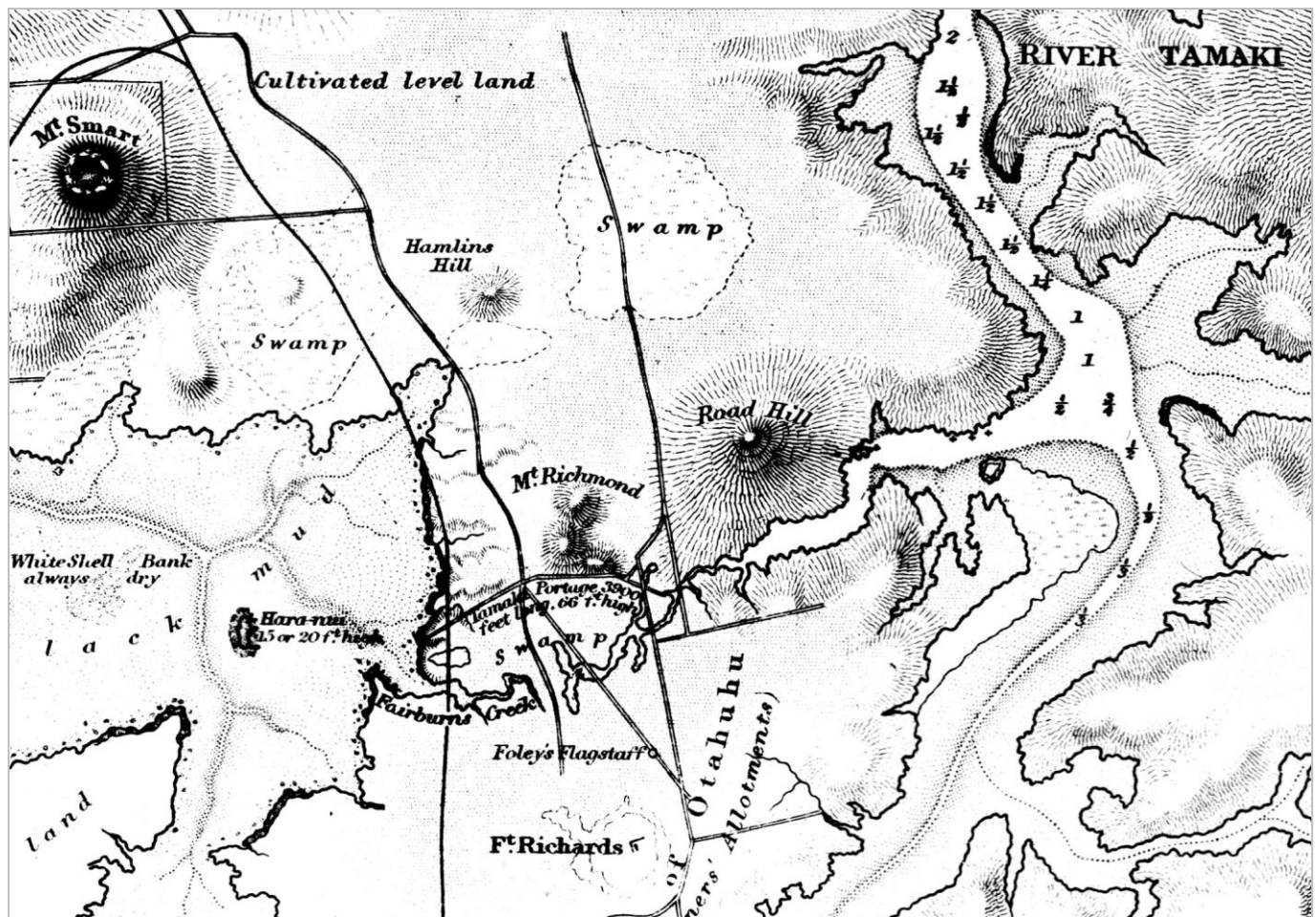


Fig. 1. Location of Fairburn's Creek. Detail from the 1853 chart "Manukau Harbour" by B. Drury *et al.* Note that the McLennan Hills scoria complex east of Mt Richmond has been labelled "Road Hill". From a copy with later annotations in possession of the author, source unknown. See Auckland Libraries Map 9313.

Kirk (1872). Presumably he would have needed to have been collecting at least some of this material for specialist identification, and this is perhaps now mainly at Kew and in the Mitten herbarium at the New York Botanical Garden, with a few pieces elsewhere, e.g., at the Allan Herbarium, Landcare Research New Zealand (CHR).

Because Kirk did not use a consecutive numbering system, at least for the vascular plants he retained in his own herbarium, only an estimate can be made of the quantity of material he collected in his Auckland years. Not only is there the possibility that he could have been sending (selling?) some of it overseas (Chaudhri *et al.* 1972; Large 1994) but also there is the complication of sorting out which of his specimens duplicate one another.

His Auckland higher-plants article (Kirk 1871) lists more than 400 indigenous taxa and about half that number of non-native ones. A coarse sampling of the

WELT database (accessed several times during June 2021) indicates that about half the native species recorded in that article, and about a third of the non-native ones, have WELT vouchers.

The localities

Not discussed here are a number of Kirk's old but relatively well-known Auckland place names: Dedwood (Ponsonby towards St Mary's Bay, with *Astelia grandis*, *Rubus cissoides* and *Tetraria capillaris*); Ligar's Gully (middle part of Queen Street, with *Coprosma autumnalis*, *Gahnia lacera*, *Juncus edgariae*, *Schefflera digitata*, and also the liverwort *Chiloscyphus mittenianus*, Kirk 557, CHR 4892); St Mary's Cliff (coast at St Mary's Bay, with *Linum monogynum*, *Ficinia nodosa* and *Machaerina sinclairii*); and the Tamaki Sandspit (Tahuna Torea, one of the few places that had *Coprosma acerosa*).

A. In these paragraphs I discuss the names Kirk (1871) gave in delineating his "Isthmus of Auckland" and "Takapuna district".

In that article he stated, firstly, that the Isthmus of Auckland was bounded on the west by the Whau portage, that is from the Whau Creek on the Waitemata Harbour south to the Manukau Harbour's "Motu Karaka". The latter name has long been replaced by Green Bay (but is retained for the large sandbank offshore). For more about "Te Whau" see locality 10 in **B**, below.

The southern boundary of the Isthmus, Kirk said, was also an old Maori portage, between "Fairburn's Creek" on the Manukau and "Halswell's Creek" on the Tamaki". The former name is recorded on two well-known sources: the 1853 chart "Manukau Harbour" by B. Drury *et al.* (Fig. 1), and the 1864 map by Hochstetter of the geology of Auckland (Fig. 2).

Halswell's Creek I have not found on any map, but Kirk's mention of a portage indicates it to be the arm of the Tamaki River southeast of Mt Richmond, today usually mapped as Otahuhu Creek. Note that Mt Richmond itself in the earliest days was (apparently just for a very short while) called Mount Halswell, after an early New Zealand Company commissioner of the 1840s (Anon. 2014; Fig. 2).

Kirk (1871: 149) placed the north-eastern corner of his Takapuna district at "Omangaia Bay", which he says was less than six miles from the head of Lucas' Creek. According to Simmonds (1980) this locality is correctly known as Omangaia Bay and is now called Deep Creek (or, I would add, Torbay). Various newspaper references indicate that this part of the coast was also

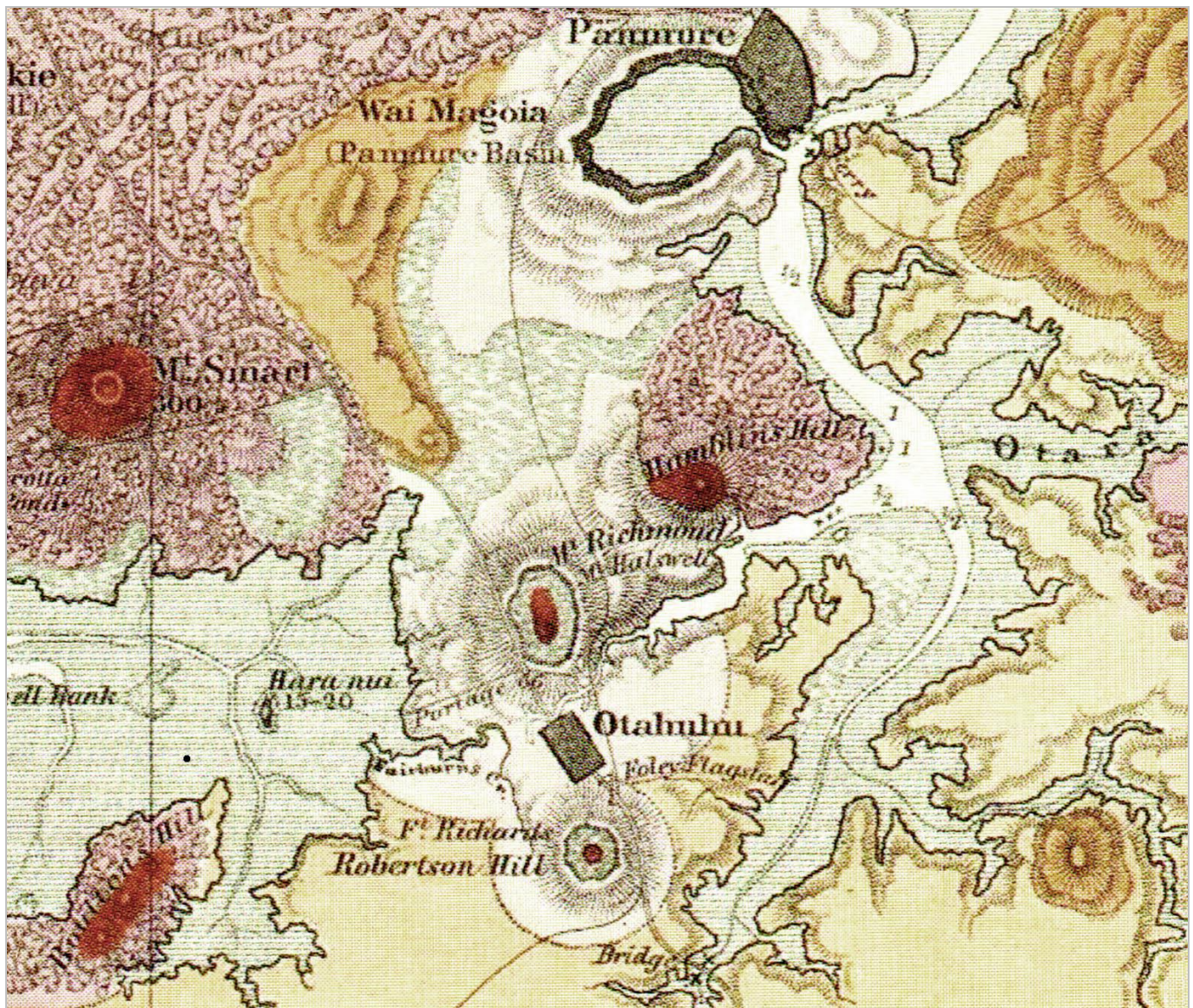


Fig. 2. Location of Fairburn's Creek and Mount Halswell. Detail from Hochstetter & Petermann's "Geology of Auckland map of 1864", this map reproduced in Johnston & Nolden (2011: 46). Note the mislabelling of the McLennan Hills complex east of Mt Richmond/Mt Halswell as "Hamblins Hill".

known as "Chisholm's Bush" but is now called Kirk's Bush, a name that relates to the landowners at the start of the 20th C. and not to T. Kirk.

7. Mr Bassett's farm, Papatoitoi Two extensive blocks of land at Papatoetoe were owned by Mr William Bassett in 1862, on the southeast side of Crater Hill and Kohoura Crater back south to Puhinui Road (Anon 2012: fig. 12). Kirk collected *Dichondra brevifolia* there.

8. Mt Hamilton This is Tamahunga mountain, inland from the Whangateau Harbour, northeast of Warkworth. Kirk's several WELT collections (all but one in the database just as "Tamahunga") include the moss *Tayloria callophylla*. And in CHR there is a single specimen (Kirk 530) from here, of the above-mentioned liverwort *Dendromastigophora flagellifera*. In his article on the region's botany and conchology, Kirk (1873) noted the abundance of *Pittosporum kirkii* at the mountain's summit, a situation which, alas, is no longer true (Wilson 2017). Maureen Young's online account (Young 2021) of Kirk's exploration here gives some interesting historical information.

I do not know how and why the name "Mt Hamilton" came about. Possibly it was given by Charles Heaphy in his surveying of the Mahurangi Peninsula in 1854.

9. Peter Grace's Gully, and [Joseph] Scott's Gully According to newspaper references of the 1860s (B. Goodwin, pers. comm. June 2021) each of these men had a property on Ponsonby Road. Further research would refine this statement but hardly seems worthwhile, Kirk's finds just being of *Muehlenbeckia complexa* and *Cordyline pumilio* respectively.

Nevertheless, Scott's Gully was the scene of a short, rather sad newspaper story "The Capture of Bloomfield" (*New Zealand Herald*, Volume IV, Issue 1003, 31 January 1867, p. 3), which contains more botanical information than would be usual nowadays.

10. Te Whau Hamlin (1965) glosses this as "Avondale". It is more likely that Kirk was referring to the headland of this name on the western side of Blockhouse Bay, an ancient landmark. At Te Whau Kirk found, in addition to a host of gumland species, the red alga *Bostrychia harveyi*, the moss *Dicranella vaginata* (CHR 532384), *Juncus holoschoenus*, *Alseuosmia quercifolia* in a great variety of forms, and *Centipeda minima*. Also, there is a specimen (WELT P006901, Kirk, 4 March 1865) of *Lindsaea viridis*, a fern which would have required a bush-covered, swift-flowing stream, like the Wairaki Stream east of the headland.

Notes

Note 1. Kirk's death was given only the briefest mention in the *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute*, and no fuller eulogy appeared later. Perhaps this was by request of Kirk himself, as an expression of his Baptist faith, a last abjuring of the world and its vanities?

Note 2. The *Daily Southern Cross* newspaper for 10 Feb. 1863 recorded the arrival the day before at Auckland's Queen Street wharf of the "good ship *Gertrude*, 1300 tons, Captain J. C. Congdon, from London....the fourth vessel chartered for conveyance to this port of the non-conformist special settlers". This refers to the formation by enterprising young Methodist William R. Brame (1833–63) of Birmingham of a "Non-conformist Special Settlement party" to New Zealand, in coincidence with the two hundredth anniversary of the expulsion of non-conformist ministers from the Church of England (Brett & Hook 1927; Herd 2004). Among the *Gertrude's* 365 passengers were Thomas Kirk of Coventry, then aged thirty-five, his wife Sarah, and four young children, listed as George, Thomas William, Harry, and Amy. Thomas Kirk's widowed mother Sarah Kirk is listed separately. She died at a residence in Karangahape Road in 1865 (*New Zealander*, Volume XXII, Issue 2411, 24 April 1865, p. 1).

Many of the *Gertrude's* passengers were to go on to the Albertland settlement (Brett & Hook 1927). But Kirk (who is said to have suffered from lung trouble all his life) must have felt that he and his family were not suited to pioneering. Because almost nothing of Kirk's early correspondence has survived we know very little about his daily life in the Auckland years.

According to the current Wikipedia entry for Thomas Kirk (accessed 23 June 2021), he and Sarah Kirk had nine children. Those that reached adulthood—the two younger sons and three daughters—made for themselves useful lives in science, education and public policy. This was denied to George, the eldest son, however: he and Jesse Davis, a slightly older and adventurous young Albertlander, were drowned together near Paparoa Point in the Kaipara on June 17 1868, when bringing in a shell-laden boat from Pahi (Brett & Hook 1927: 292). The short *New Zealand Herald* account (Volume V, Issue 1443, 3 July 1868, Page 6) of this all-too-common tragedy notes that George was "the son of Mr Kirk, surveyor, of England-street, Freeman's Bay". Hamlin's (1965) itinerary contains no mention after this year of Thomas Kirk ever visiting the Kaipara again.

In WELT there are 23 specimens collected by George Kirk (sometimes with his father). All are from the Kaipara region, with the dated ones coming from the spring and early summer of 1867. His specimen of *Pterostylis banksii* (WELT 003433) is labelled as coming from "Black Birch". This might mean that there was some *Nothofagus* s.l. here, but the only candidate collection in WELT (SP 037291, *Nothofagus* sp., Paparoa Bay) lacks a collector or date.

Note 3. According to Hamlin (1965) Kirk collected from the Waitakere Ranges only three times, at Huia, "Parua [Parau] Bay, Manukau", and the Manukau Heads. The most interesting of his rather few collections is that of *Lindsaea viridis* from Huia.

Note 4. Kirk started to collect in Auckland slightly more than a month after getting here, his first collection (19 March 1863) being of *Pseudopanax lessonii* from Mount Eden. This might have been a souvenir of what was probably a very short spell of rock-breaking at the mountain's government quarry (Brown, cited by Mackelvey 1991: 17). Such work seems to have been regularly offered, or at least was readily available, to all new settlers of the time (Brett & Hook 1927: 56).

Note 5. Hamlin (1965: 94) gives this locality as "Ahatawapa—Ouraki [Orakei ?] Bridge". Since the two localities, Ahatawa headland and Orakei Bridge, are on opposite sides of the Waitemata Harbour, something seems amiss. Cameron (2001) has suggested that "Ouraki" might be a mistake for "Hauraki", but this is not compatible with "Bridge", nor with Kirk's "Ouraki Bay" (Hamlin 1965: 94) for a collection made a year earlier. The WELT database has images only for Kirk's collections of *Kunzea linearis* from "Ahatawapa,

Waitemata Harbour", so I cannot comment further on what the other labels might be interpreted as.

Note 6. Apostrophes can play the devil in database searches. Here, in searching WELT "Collections Online" under "Hobsons AND Glen" one turns up two Kirk specimens of *Elatostema rugosum* and one of *Linum bienne* (collector not stated but presumably Kirk). If the apostrophe is included eleven Kirk specimens appear, though not the previous three. Savvy searchers would then enter the minimum into their search boxes, using a wildcard symbol (here an asterisk) to replace the rest of the search phrase. But doing this in the WELT system, using "Hobs* AND Glen", was fruitless.

Similar non-results come when searching for "Ligar's Bush". The WELT data has been entered with the "s" but without the apostrophe (so obscuring the fact that the person the bush was named for was Ligar, not Ligars. And again, a search using the wildcard asterisk symbol fails ...

And how infuriating it is to search "Kirk AND Waitakere" to find that a Kirk collection only occurs once among the eleven results (though these include the bonus of an object from the New Zealand Quilt project). Searching with "Kirk AND Waitakeres" produces nothing. How then to determine what Kirk found in the Waitakeres? The simplest way is to consult Hamlin (1965) and search using the collection date he gives.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to: Ben Goodwin for sharing his local knowledge; Leon Perrie for checking the label of an unimaged WELT specimen; Ewen Cameron for checking Kirk's collections in the AK database.

References

- Anon. [Auckland Council Heritage Unit] 2012: *Papatoetoe Historic Heritage Survey: Survey Report*. Auckland Council.
- Anon. [Matthews & Matthews Architects et al.]. 2014: *Otauhu Historic Overview*. Report to Auckland Council.
- Brett, H.; Hook, H. 1927: *The Albertlanders*. Brett Printing Co., Auckland.
- Cameron, E.K. 2001: *Korthalsella salicornioides* discovered close to Auckland City. *Auckland Botanical Society Journal* 56: 53–54.
- Chaudhri, M.N.; Vegter, I.H.; De Wal, C.M. 1972: *Index Herbariorum* II (3) Collectors I–L. Regnum Vegetabile 86. Utrecht.
- Gardner, R.O. 1981: Some species lists of native plants of the Auckland region. *Tane* 27: 169–174.
- Godley, E.G. 1999: Biographical Notes 34, Thomas Kirk and England. *New Zealand Botanical Society Newsletter* 56: 27–29.
- Hamlin, B.G. 1965: Itinerary of Thomas Kirk's botanical expeditions. *Records of the Dominion Museum* 5: 93–100.
- Herd, L. 2004: The promised land. *New Zealand Geographic* 70: Nov–Dec [online unpaginated version at <https://www.nzgeo.com/>].
- Hutton, F.W. 1884: Revision of the land mollusca of New Zealand. *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* 16: 186–212.
- Johnston, M.; Nolden, S. 2011: *Travels of Hochstetter and Haast in New Zealand, 1858–60*. Nikau Press, Nelson.
- Kirk, T. 1871: On the flora of the isthmus of Auckland and the Takapuna district. [Part I] *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* 3: 148–61.
- Kirk, T. 1872: On the flora of the isthmus of Auckland and the Takapuna district. Part II. *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* 4: 228–38.
- Kirk, T. 1873: On the botany and conchology of Great Omaha. *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* 5: 363–369.
- La Roche, A. 1990: Bishop's Creek dame school. *Auckland-Waikato Historical Journal* 56: 3–5.
- Large, M. 1994: Thomas Kirk; his collections at Oxford. *Oxford Plant Systematics* 2: 15.
- MacLeod, A. 1993: Kirk, Thomas. *New Zealand Dictionary of Biography*. <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/2k10/kirk-thomas>
- McKelvey, P. 1991: Thomas Kirk in New Zealand forestry. *New Zealand Journal of Forestry* 35: 16–22.
- Moore, L.B. 1973: Thomas Kirk, botanist. *Tuatara* 20: 51–56.
- Platts, U. 1971: *The lively capital*. Avon Fine Press, Christchurch.

Te Moehau Plaque

Maureen Young

Before her death on 9 June 1987, botanist Lucy B. Moore had arranged that her niece, Frances Hintz, would handle the winding-up of her affairs on that occasion. As I had also received instructions from Lucy on post-mortem favours, Fran and I interacted somewhat, and this resulted in my receiving two gifts from Lucy's estate – one was a watercolour painting by Nancy M. Adams of the alpine buttercups, *Ranunculus lyallii*, *R. sericophyllus* and *R. buchananii* (published in her book, *Mountain Flowers of New Zealand*), and the other was "The Moehau Plaque".

The Moehau Plaque is made of wood, 290 x 115 mm, with the front worked in marquetry (Fig. 1). There is an intricate border patterned in various native timbers, the background, I suspect, of burr kauri, and the words "TE MOEHAU 1929" in pale kahikatea. Handwritten on the back (Fig. 2) is the message:

*To Lucy B. Moore
 In memory of a Windy Sleep on Te Moehau
 o te Tamate Kapua
 Xmas 1929
 From L.M. Cranwell*

"Moehau" means "windy sleep". Tamate Kapua was the captain of the waka, *Arawa*, and on his death his sons buried him on the summit of the high peak at the end of the Coromandel Peninsula, which became known as Te Moehau.

The exploits of "the two Lucies" (Lucy Cranwell and Lucy Moore) and their explorations on Te Moehau have been well documented, and Leonard Cockayne, the leading botanist of the day, took a great interest in their botanical discoveries there. In a letter from Lucy Cranwell to Dr. Cockayne (kept in the Moehau Box in the Auckland Museum Library), dated 21 May 1929, she describes the windy sleep commemorated by the plaque thus:

"It would be impossible for me to describe the rare beauty of these southern ridges [.....]. Equally impossible would it be for me to describe the cruel nature of the going. We scrambled over occasional rocks, under great mossy roots, over prostrate limbs, through tangles of Astelia and Gahnia. Sometimes I felt that my head would be pulled off when I got stuck between unyielding limbs. The packs were especially awkward as they would jam where shoulders could



Fig. 1. "Te Moehau Plaque", 290 x 115 mm, marquetry by Sam Beatson. Photos by Vivienne Paterson.