

## Narrative of Events, 1870

### *January*

After all the time, labour and money expended on the Wetherstones deep shaft, the hopes of the promoters of that work have been disappointed.

St. Andrew's Church, at the corner of Walker and Melville Streets, is now nearly completed, forming a prominent feature in the view of Dunedin from the south. The Wesleyan Church, at the corner of Moray Place and Stuart Street is well advanced. It promises to become an elegant and most substantial structure.

In the quarter ending on the 31st December last, 770 persons-529 males and 241 females, landed at the Port of Dunedin. Of these 366 came from the United Kingdom 402 from the Australian colonies and 2 from the Fijis. During the same period 284 persons left the port.

The first dredge was to be launched on the Shotover last Friday. The Cromwell Guardian speaks of this as a most important work.

The formation of the new Racecourse at Forbury Park is progressing rapidly, about thirty men being employed on the ground.

### *February*

The first step towards the formation of the North Dunedin Cemetery has at length been taken. The timber for enclosing it has been carted to the ground, and the erection of the fence is being proceeded with.

Some of the starlings released in Oamaru a few days ago have found their way to Papakaio. A number of the birds brought from England for the Otago Acclimatisation Society, were submitted to public competition by Messrs. McLandress, Hepburn & Co. The prices averaged were, black-birds 30s; skylarks 30s ; and goldfinches from 30s to 35s. One of two thrushes realised £4.

About 40 prisoners are usually employed in breaking stones at the Old Botanic Gardens, and nearly double that number in broken weather when work cannot be carried on in Rattray Street. The ornamental portion of the New Botanic Gardens at the Water of Leith has not yet commenced, the nursery having hitherto monopolised attention. A special department of it is set aside for native plants.

An embankment, in continuation of Union street, is being formed across Pelichet. Bay by the West Harbour Road Board. It will be 27 chains in length and the side facing the harbour will be pitched with stone. An opening which will be left in the embankment about 3 chains from the shore at Black Jack's Point will be crossed by a bridge 81 feet in length.

### *March*

The School of Art has been opened in the New Post Office. The young ladies' class meets from one to four o'clock p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. A young men's class is attended by about 45 pupils from the High School and others. The opening of an evening class for artisans is under consideration.

A match between Mr. Walker's Tomboy and Mr. McDonald's Who'd have-thought-it for £20 a side, followed by a hurry-scurry for a saddle and bridle was held at the Ocean Beach at noon on Saturday when it was low tide. A number of the sporting community assembled to witness the races. Tomboy won easily and the hurry-scurry was won by a pony owned by Mr. McDonald.

A caution to boys and others who are in the habit of cutting the seats on the Town Belt. was given at the Mayor's Court when a boy charged with this offence was fined 20s. and costs. The Bench stated that they did not wish to send the delinquent to prison on account of his youth, but his case was not to be regarded as a precedent, as the next person brought before them on a similar charge would be sent to prison without the option of a fine.

St. Patrick's Day passed off quietly. At midnight some two or three hundred persons, preceded by a band of music, marched through the principal streets of the city.

### *April*

The asphalt pavement introduced here by Livingstone & Co. is rapidly superseding other modes of laying down sidewalks. Some merchants are using it for their warehouses, as it is an effectual barrier against rats.

A Boiling-down and Meat-preserving Company has been projected by some gentlemen in this

city interested in pastoral pursuits. A second Company is also in course of formation for the purpose of purchasing a Thomson's Road Steamer, and running it between Dunedin and Tokomairiro. Should the project prove a success, the operations of the Company will probably be extended.

Vauxhall Gardens were visited by a good many persons on Easter Monday when performances were given by members of the visiting Circus Company. A band was also present, and dancing went on briskly in the rotunda. The swings and merry-go-rounds were in great request among the youngsters, while of the oldsters some took part in the game of quoits, and others strolled about the grounds.

At the quarterly entrance examination for pupils wishing to join the High School seven boys from various town schools presented themselves for examination in the subjects recommended by the High School Commission. Two only succeeded in passing, two having failed more or less in all subjects, and three chiefly in arithmetic.

As a sign of the prosperous condition of the province, we may mention that there is not a single debtor in the gaol at present.

### *May*

Mrs. Howard reports that the labour market is very brisk this month, good female servants being in great demand and wages ranging from £26 to £40 per annum for servants of various abilities, good female cooks getting without difficulty from £40 per annum to £1 to 30s per week in hotels. The principal manual labour required just now are good ploughmen, at from £40 to £52 per annum, and found; shepherds from £50 to £60 per annum and found; good married couples for farm service from £60 to £75 per annum and found. English girls from the rural districts are in great demand.

In his Brockville Nursery Mr. Charles Sonntag has over one hundred and sixty varieties of apples, one hundred- of pears, sixty of plums and about forty of cherries, as well as vast quantities of other fruits and fresh varieties expected from the latest graftings. When the land was taken by Mr. Sonntag there were upon it a few apple and other trees, which are now some fourteen or fifteen years old. Upon one of these old trees—a sour seedling—there are twenty-six different kinds of apples—each sort upon three separate branches. Some ripen early, others late.

### *June*

The spire of the First Church, on Bell Hill, has been completed. The height from the base to the summit is 186 feet. The base course is composed of large blocks of Port Chalmers bluestone and from the top of the base it is entirely of Kakanui stone.

The reserve around the new Hospital is at last to have those improvements made upon it which it so much needs. A number of prisoners under the direction of their overseer, Mr. Strong, are engaged in erecting a picket fence around it, and it is to be levelled and formed into a garden. This will be a decided improvement on its present use as a pasture ground for horses, cattle and goats.

A great deal of anxiety is felt in the Northern districts of the province as to the renewal of the restrictions on crossing cattle over the Waitaki into Canterbury. It was understood when the Ordinance to permit sheep

to cross into Otago was passed in the Provincial Council that the Superintendent of Canterbury had agreed to remove the restrictions on cattle. Correspondence has been going on between our Government and the Superintendent of Canterbury on the subject, and as there is not a trace of disease in this province there can be no good reason why we should be prevented from sending our cattle into Canterbury, where at present they would command a better market.

During the past three months dredging operations have been carried on with a view of allowing vessels not drawing more than 12 feet to discharge at Stuart Street jetty. The channel will be continued at a depth of 12 feet at high water for 200 feet alongside the jetty. It is intended that vessels in the coal and timber trades shall be discharged at this jetty.

A meeting of carpenters and joiners was held in Mr. Sproule's schoolroom. From eighty to one hundred persons were present and the question of wages and the hours of labour formed the subject of discussion. It was agreed that members of the trade should form themselves into a Union for their mutual benefit.

### *July*

Early closing is the order of the day in Oamaru, the tradesmen there having almost unanimously agreed to close their establishments at seven p.m. daily, Saturdays excepted.

The ship Achilles from London (18th March) arrived off the Heads on the 3rd inst.; the wind being light and variable, she signalled for a tug, and the Geelong proceeded down in the afternoon, took her in tow, and brought her up to the quarantine ground, where (having powder on board) she was anchored. The Achilles is a ship of 1520 tons register, and is the largest vessel

that has entered our port with a full cargo direct from the home country. Her draft of water is over 20ft. and the fact that she came through the North Channel, and crossed the inner bar at least an hour before high water, plainly shows that our harbour is accessible to vessels of large tonnage, notwithstanding what has been said against it by Northern papers. The Achilles has upwards of 2000 tons of cargo on board and 42 passengers.

*Cold Escort for the six months ended 30th June:*

	ozs.	dwts.		ozs.	dwts.
Mount Ida	10,202	9	Waitahuna	2,312	15
Queenstown	9,420	8	Alexandra	2,037	11
Lawrence	8,736	11	Teviot	1,943	5
Cromwell	8,129	1	Woolshed	855	11
Waipori	4,311	5	Palmerston	447	17
Arrow	4,206	9	Macraes		—
Blacks	3,985	0	Ida Valley		—
Switzers	3,917	0			
Clyde	3,676	0	Total	66,958	19
St. Bathans	2,777	7			

*August*

A traveller on the Oamaru road complains of the detention of the coach at Palmerston. The Dunstan road is in a very bad state, and the coach is consequently late in arriving at Palmerston but why should the Oamaru passengers be detained on the road for nine hours on this account.

Under the Sunday Observance Ordinance John Brown was charged with driving a dray drawn by three horses along Great King Street on a Sunday. Mrs. Brown, who stated that her husband was up country, pleaded for him that he was near home, and that the weather was wet at the time. As the constable believed that the firewood was for defendant's own use and not for sale, the case was dismissed.

The first railway work in Otago was commenced when the construction of the Dunedin and Port Chalmers railway was begun, on section 1, by the sub-contractor, Mr. Packham. About 25 men were employed on the beach near the intersection of St. Andrew and Castle Streets in forming an embankment which will extend from there to the foot of Stuart Street jetty. The material for forming the embankment was taken from each side of the ground over which it will be made. When the work was begun, neither of the promoters nor a representative of the Government were present but Mr. Packham deeming it right that the initiation of so important a public work should not pass without some ceremony, however slight, smashed a bottle of wine over the first barrow-load as it was being tipped. Three cheers were given by those assembled, and all were then "treated". This constituted the sole ceremony of the occasion.

A race between Frederick Wain and Thomas Fairley was run on the Caversham Road and was witnessed by about 200 persons. The distance was 200 yards, and the money £10 a side. Wain came in a winner by about 3 yards. The time was variously taken, but 24 seconds appeared to be considered the most reliable. This is a little longer than usual, but the race had to be run over a metalled road, the footpath on the Anderson's Bay Road, which had been previously selected, being too muddy and slippery to run on.

*September*

We perceive that Cobb & Co.'s well-known line of mail coaches has changed hands. Mr. Chaplain has retired from the business, and Mr. F. P. Mansfield, so long and favourably known as the manager of this important service, has become proprietor.

The men employed on the Port Chalmers railway struck work for a rise to 8s. a day. The contractors offer 7s.

A special sitting of the Mayor's Court was held when a boy was fined 5s. for throwing stones in High Street at about noon the same day.

A large flour and saw mill is about to be erected in Kaitangata Bush by Messrs. Lawson and Macfarlane. The want of such an establishment has long been felt in the neighbourhood, and the erection of the mill is consequently hailed by the settlers with satisfaction.

The number of men at work on the road between Tokomairiro and Waitahuna is stated to be 250.

*October*

The authorities are not showing much judgment in the particular style of fence which is

being erected in the High School grounds, as a partition between the boys' and girls' schools. Instead of being an effectual partition, it is simply a low fence about five feet high, which—like the walls of Romulus—might be jumped over by an active urchin. The authorities, we believe, are fully aware of the, mistake, but plead economy. The saving will be an expensive one, if it should give rise to dissatisfaction among the patrons of the establishment.

A meeting of French residents, convened for the purpose of taking steps towards raising subscriptions for the relief of the widows and orphans of the slain in the present disastrous war, was held at the Otago Hotel on Saturday evening. It was agreed that subscription lists should be issued and steps taken to canvass the city without delay.

State of H.M. Gaol, Dunedin, during month of October : 161 Males, 16 Females—includes 4 debtors and 8 persons awaiting trial.

Six flax mills are now at work between Saddle Hill and the mouth of the Taieri River. Five of them are driven by steam power, and the remaining one by water power.

The Cadet Companies paraded and were reviewed by the Hon. Major Richardson who agreed to become Honorary Captain. The Company would always be kept up to the strength of one hundred—forty Cadets of the High School, and the remainder Cadets of the Dunedin District Schools in equal numbers.

### *November*

Goats are now so numerous on the ranges near Alexandra, that it is expected they will soon outnumber sheep in that locality.

His Worship the Mayor is endeavouring to raise a subscription for Mrs. Abernethy, whose husband died on board the "James Nicol Fleming" when the vessel was three days out. Mrs. Abernethy has been left by the death of her husband with eleven children to support, seven of them being too young to do anything for themselves, while she herself is incapacitated from work from the fact that she expects shortly to again become a mother. Subscription lists have been opened at the various banks as well as by His Worship the Mayor.

Police Street, which lies between the buildings formerly used as the Commissioner's office and the barracks in the old Police Depot, and which has been so long fenced across that hardly anyone save those accustomed to consult the plans of the city was aware of its existence, is at last being converted to its proper use. Prisoners are at present employed in filling up the street with material obtained partly from private property a short distance up Walker Street.

About 50 prisoners, the same by whom the work of forming the new Botanic Gardens has been done, are now employed in widening the Anderson's Bay Road to the width of 31 feet, with stuff which is taken from the flats between the road and the Bay.

The completion of the railway to Winton has already had the effect of raising the value of property in that township. At a recent sale two building allotments in Winton, measuring an eighth of an acre each, were sold for £54 and £50 respectively.

Work has started on the removal of the northern portion of Bell Hill. The material will be used partly for the further extension of the Rattray Street jetty and partly for the further enlargement of the reclaimed ground.

### *December*

A meeting of persons desirous of carrying on the Band of Hope, formed last week, was held in the school-room of the Wesleyan Church, Stuart Street. A Committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements for the successful working of the scheme, and it was resolved that meetings should be held every Friday evening, when all are invited to attend. The Committee earnestly solicit the co-operation of abstainers, as well as of the general public in Dunedin.

William Fox, the well-known prospector, has started with a party of miners on a prospecting tour to the head of the Shotover River.

American whalers continue to make a harvest in New Zealand waters. Two lately arrived at Hobart Town obtained between them 675 barrels of sperm, and 300 barrels of black oil besides about 1500 lbs. of whalebone off the New Zealand coast.

On the half-yearly Presbyterian Fast-day, the banks and public offices were closed, and there was a general suspension of business. Divine service was held in the various Presbyterian Churches, and the whole population seemed disposed to respect the day as one set apart from secular concerns.

The General Government has taken the first step towards the construction of the Clutha

Railway, tenders for the first section, from Dunedin to Caversham, being called for.

Swagmen are generally looked upon, says the Wakatip Mail, as a low type of men—ill-conditioned in body and appearance. Those we have met in numbers lately are fine strong-built men, most of them fit to be enrolled in any fine regiment of soldiers. It is strange that such well-built, cleanly-looking men should be on the "wallaby track". Something must surely be wrong, either in the efforts of the men, the absence of employment, or discrimination to adopt the vicissitudes of a mining life. One thing is certain, many are travelling about seeking work and finding none. The capacity for absorbing hired labour is limited, it would seem.