

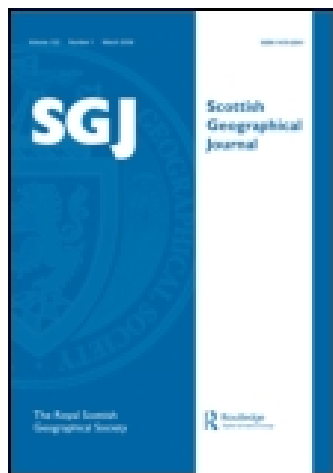
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Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954

Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Scottish Geographical Magazine

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rsgj19>

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Published online: 30 Jan 2008.

To cite this article: Hon. Sir Thomas Mackenzie K.C.M.G. (1919) The history of the New Zealand fiordland, with a reference to the history and development of the dominion, Scottish Geographical Magazine, 35:4, 121-129, DOI: [10.1080/14702541908554181](https://doi.org/10.1080/14702541908554181)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14702541908554181>

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THE SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE.

THE HISTORY OF THE NEW ZEALAND FIORDLAND, WITH
A REFERENCE TO THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THE DOMINION.¹

By the Hon. Sir THOMAS MACKENZIE, K.C.M.G.,
High Commissioner for New Zealand.

(With Illustrations.)

MAY I, at the outset, strike a personal note? My father left Scotland with his young family in 1857, and landed in New Zealand within nine years of the foundation of the settlement of the Province of Otago. I have therefore seen the development of the country from its earliest days, and have been associated with much of its life and history; my experiences, which have been full of variety and interest, ranging from the occupation of a fern-tree hut in the primeval forest to the present day.

The Hon. W. P. Reeves, one of my predecessors in office, writing of New Zealand, states: "From the day of its annexation, so disliked by Downing Street, to the passing of those experimental laws, so frowned upon by orthodox economists, our colony has contrived to attract interest and cause controversy."

Geologists tell us that New Zealand is one of the oldest countries on the globe. There is no doubt that it was at one time connected with the Antarctic, with South America, and probably, more recently, with some of the islands lying to the south, east, and north-east of the mainland. Plant life in some respects corresponds with that of South America; indeed some of the species are found nowhere but in South America and New Zealand. On the adjacent islands to which I have

¹ The opening Lecture for the Session 1918-19, delivered before the Society in Edinburgh, on November 14, 1918.

alluded, plant and animal life correspond, with certain variations, with that of the mainland. A great variety seems to exist as regards the stratigraphical geology of New Zealand. Schists, sandstone, and shales are the principal mountain rocks of the country. The oldest rocks are found in the south-west of the South Island and in Stewart Island; they are gneisses. There are three classes of lakes, those of the glaciated district, of the volcanic country, and the lagoons near the sea-coast.

New Zealand, which has an area of about 106,000 square miles, rather less than the area of the United Kingdom, is situated between 34° and 48° south latitude and 166° and 179° east longitude. The climate is temperate, and the rainfall over the greater part of the country fairly uniform, except over a small portion of Otago, where it averages only 15 to 20 inches per annum; on the western coast, however, it rises in some parts to 200 inches. The mean annual temperature in Auckland averages 59° , in Wellington, the centre of the Islands, 55° , and in Otago 50° . Napier is said to have an average daily sunshine record throughout the year of eight hours.

A great mountain range traverses the whole of the South Island; indeed it might be said to be continuous from the East Cape in the North Island to the West Cape in the South Island, with the exception of a break at Cook's Strait. From this snow-capped mountain range is derived the name given by the Maoris to the country—Ao-tea-roa, which means "The Long White Cloud."

So far as we can gather, the Maoris were the first inhabitants, and a word or two might be said on the history of this race. The opinion is held that the Maoris are descendants of Aryan and Mongolian peoples, with a strong strain of the Caucasian. We are fairly satisfied that they originally came from the uplands of Asia, and that they were driven out by Aryan races about 1000 years before Christ. They became great navigators, explored a vast part of the Pacific, many of the islands of which they peopled. But the most authentic record we have is of their arrival in New Zealand about 1350, although a great navigator named Kupu is said to have discovered the country in the fourth century. They are a strong, vigorous, intellectual race, and proved worthy foes in the wars that raged during the early days of the white settlement. They lived under a treaty made with the colonists (the Treaty of Waitangi), which preserved to them certain lands, fishing rights, game shooting rights, etc. The original treaty has since been modified, but in the main its terms have been observed. The Maoris sit in our Parliament, have held, frequently with great credit, ministerial rank, and, as we know, they are fighting with us in the present war, and have worthily maintained their traditions.

New Zealand was discovered by Tasman in the year 1642, although the French claim that the islands were visited at an earlier period, namely in 1504. This claim is, however, not supported by sufficient evidence to warrant our accepting it without question. Captain Cook followed about a century and a quarter later, in 1769, and from that time may be dated the history of our country, although it was not until nearly three-quarters of a century later that real colonisation began.

New Zealand is the most British of the Overseas Dominions. Its population is slightly more than 1,000,000, and 98 per cent. of the people are British born or of British descent.

The only indigenous quadruped in the islands is a small, harmless rat, but the deficiency in mammals is made up by the great variety of birds. Indeed it has been said that from an ornithological point of view New Zealand is the most interesting country in the world. A very large bird called the Moa at one time inhabited the country. The Kiwi (*Apteryx*) is a living representative of the species on a small scale. The Moa was first brought to the notice of the British public through Professor Owen receiving a thigh bone, which he declared to have belonged to a gigantic bird, some representatives of which must have attained a height of 14 feet. Controversy arose as to whether the Moa and man were contemporary; but we have on that point definite information of an affirmative character gathered from the Maori stories and legends associated with these birds. In my own explorations in the Tautuku forests I found in Maori middens bones of the Moa and Kiwi, as well as other bones, all mixed together, those of the Moa having been broken for the marrow; and I also found Maori implements made in whole or part from Moa bones. In addition to the Kiwi we have many flightless birds, such as the Kakapo (*Stringops habroptilus*), and in some of the islands there are flightless ducks. A very rare bird called the Takahe (*Notornis mantelli*), which is a large rail, is said to exist, but I believe only three specimens have been found. The Kea (*Nestor notabilis*) is a bird requiring passing notice, as showing that new opportunities develop new characteristics. This bird formerly lived on insects and berries, but after the introduction of sheep into New Zealand it developed the habit of attacking the animals for their fat, especially that in the region of the kidneys. Our "creeping things of the earth" consist almost entirely of lizards, there being absolutely no snakes in the country. Even lizards are represented by only fifteen species. But among the reptiles is the famous tuatara. It is not a true lizard, as in structure it shows an affinity to the crocodile, and its ribs have bird-like characteristics. It stands apart from all the rest of its class, and if ancient lineage, combined with unchanged habits, mark the aristocrat, it is the most aristocratic animal in the world.

New Zealand has large and valuable forests. The finest of all our trees is called the Kauri (*Agathis australis*), which grows to an immense size, the largest specimens reaching a circumference of 66 feet, with a clear trunk running up sometimes as high as 150 feet, without a branch. The gum that is found exuding from the trees in old Kauri forests, and which is dug from the earth in open country formerly covered by Kauri forests, is valuable.

The country has many minerals and much mineral wealth, but, with the exception of gold, they are largely undeveloped. The total exportation of gold from New Zealand from 1853, when mining operations commenced, until quite recently, is valued at £86,751,563. We have extensive coal-fields, which it is computed contain 520,000,000 tons, but our water power will in future probably be of more import-

ance to us than coal. Iron is found in parts in close proximity to the coal deposits, but except in Taranaki no development has taken place in mining this mineral. New Zealand is undoubtedly destined to become a great manufacturing country by reason of its great water power and of the abundance of its raw materials, and of the great quantities of food which can be grown there. Our chief industries in the future will probably be the manufacture of woollen goods, the working of iron, and the raising of agricultural products. These last have already, by reason of the excellence of their quality, taken a leading place in the world's markets. During the war they have been exclu-



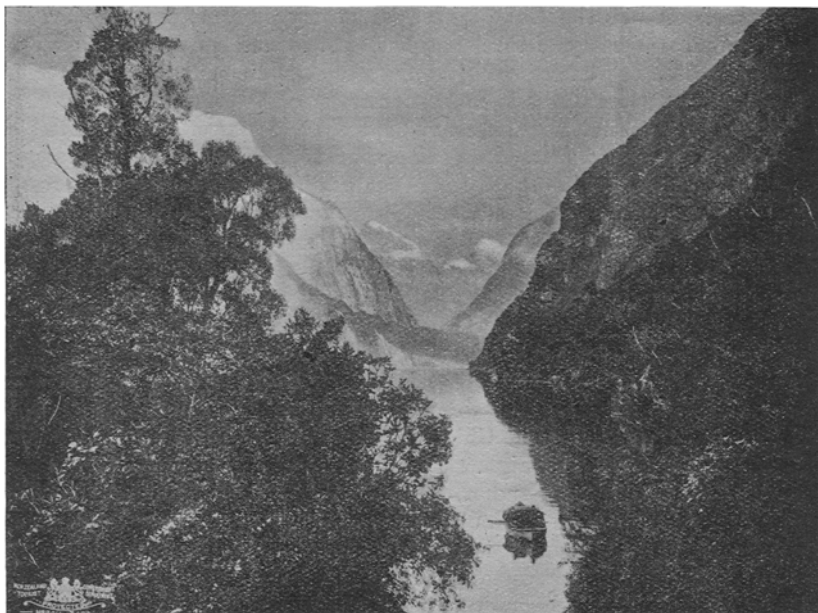
Sawing a Kauri Tree.

sively reserved for the British people, and before the cessation of hostilities probably £100,000,000 worth will have been supplied to the Home Government. I would here parenthetically remark that we have sent more than 100,000 men to fight for the Empire—that is, three times the number of British who fought at the battle of Waterloo. And the expenditure we have incurred and will incur in connection with the war will probably reach £100,000,000. We have lost by death 15,000 of our soldiers, and that is the heaviest of all the losses our country has been called upon to bear. But our men have, I believe, nobly borne their part, and, whilst the loss of our loved ones is deeply

mourned, their work, together with the work of others, will, we feel sure, have enduring results.

New Zealand may be said to be a pocket edition of many portions of the globe. In our thermal districts of the North Island we have the wonders of the Yellowstone Park of America; in our burning mountain we have the volcanoes of Italy; in the long range of mountains traversing the South Island we have the Alps of Switzerland. The highest point of that range is Mount Cook (12,346 ft.), or in the native language Aorangi, which means "The Sky Piercer." Its summit was reached by Messrs. Fyfe, Graham, and Clarke in 1894, although previous unsuccessful attempts had been made in 1882 by the Rev. W. S. Green and others, and in 1890 by Messrs. Mannering and Dixon. Huge glaciers descend the eastern and western slopes of this range, the largest being the Tasman Glacier, some eighteen miles in length, and with a varying width of from one to two miles. It has many laterals and magnificent icefalls, the greatest being the Hochstetter, which comes

from the summit of Mount Cook. Farther to the south-west are the fiords, resembling those of Norway, the coast being exceedingly abrupt on the western side. The sounds are very deep, reaching a depth of 1750 ft. or more, and are twelve or thirteen in number. The most northern of them is named Milford Sound, and it is regarded by some as the finest of them all, although, in my opinion, there are others which vie with it in grandeur. A professor of Harvard states that it seems possible that Milford Sound possesses elements which at some future time might bring it to be regarded as one of the world's great scenic types. The Sound is a product of glaciers. The great cliffs, which lend so



Milford Sound from Windbound Point.

weird a picturesqueness to the *ensemble*, are like the channels that are being cut to-day by the great glaciers of the Southern Alps.

I propose next to say something of my explorations in the New Zealand Fiordland. Milford Sound is situated on a portion of the west coast with which the Provincial Government of Otago had always been desirous of opening up communication. Prior to 1888 various attempts were made, but they were unsuccessful. About 1860 Mr. James M'Kerrow, F.R.S., who had accomplished most important reconnaissance work in the interior of Otago, reached the mountains overlooking the western coast, one of which he called Mount Pisgah, and he supplied valuable records of his work. In 1887 Quinton M'Kinnon and a companion named Tucker crossed from the north fiord of Lake Te Anau to the west, the first occasion upon which any one had reached the Western Fiords overland. Milford Sound, however, was still the great desidera-

tum ; and later in 1887 Quinton M'Kinnon set out to endeavour to find a pass leading to that fiord. He returned after suffering great hardships, and supplied a rough map up to the point which he had reached in his explorations, and from which he hoped finally to cross to the west. In 1888 the Chief Surveyor of Otago organised a strong party to go round the west coast by steamer and to explore the locality. His work was to include the measuring of a high waterfall. He asked me to join his party, which I was very pleased to do, as I had long desired to try to find a pass over the mountains from the west to the east. I immediately accepted his invitation, and was the more pleased to do so as my old travelling companion, W. S. Pillans, agreed to accompany me. I told the Chief Surveyor of my plans, stipulating for an extra man, as a party of three was the least in number that could safely undertake the important work required of it, which involved exploring from the western coast and endeavouring to cross to the interior. He agreed, adding that he himself proposed to get overland if possible. At the same time we were to endeavour to find M'Kinnon, who had been out for a considerable time, some anxiety being felt regarding his safety. We arrived at Milford Sound in October that year, and the headquarters' camp was fixed there. After waiting a day or two I decided to proceed inland with a small party as a preliminary to attacking the heavier work. We carried with us a small canvas boat. With difficulty we crossed a lake, which was really a submerged forest. Two rivers came in from the head of the lake, one from the east and the other from the south, the latter being the larger. This we followed for seven or eight miles until we reached a high waterfall, named the Sutherland Fall, which the Chief Surveyor subsequently measured and found to be 1904 feet high. This waterfall had been the subject of considerable discussion, and some people had asserted that its height was 5000 feet. Here we found Sutherland, after whom the waterfall was named, and his companion, and they were astonished to see us. I may mention that Sutherland has accomplished a good deal of pioneer work in the valleys falling down to Milford Sound. The shape of the country towards the east indicated the possibility of being able to cross over the mountain range. We therefore returned to the Sound with a view to obtaining proper equipment, to reporting the situation to the Chief Surveyor, and to making known to him our decision to attempt to effect a crossing from the point near the waterfall. He however thought, judging from M'Kinnon's rough sketch, that it was improbable we should find a pass there, or come across M'Kinnon, whose sketch seemed to indicate that he would be farther to the north-east. But the Chief Surveyor said he would give me a third companion in order that we might follow up the river coming into the lake from the east. We agreed to carry out his proposal, and followed the river up a considerable distance, when our third companion objected to going farther on the score of danger. We were greatly disappointed, as we saw ahead what I thought to be a negotiable pass. We were in a wild and inhospitable region, it was impossible to separate as a party, for, having only one tent, we had either to proceed with that tent and leave the third man

without one, or to give him the tent and go without ourselves. We therefore had reluctantly to return. But I made data of the surroundings, and the pass has since been traversed by, I think, Mr. Park of the Geological Department. We returned to the Sound. The Chief Surveyor was still of opinion that the route we had originally selected ought not to be followed. He gave us another man, and we took a fresh route, which however eventually proved to be quite inaccessible at that time of the year owing to avalanches and snowslips. Time was passing; the steamer was expected to call at Milford in order to take the Chief Surveyor and his party back to Dunedin; but our own little party were resolved to find, if possible, a way over the mountains, so we returned to the spot we had originally selected, east of the falls, determined to try our luck there. We set out, and to our great delight found stuck in a tree in the forest a small piece of paper bearing the signature of Quinton M'Kinnon. Our joy was great. We knew M'Kinnon could not go beyond a certain distance without the aid of a boat; we therefore proceeded down the river, and at night-fall we found him. He thought it advisable to report to the Chief Surveyor, and, having done so, joined forces with Pillans and myself, and we proceeded overland. Unfortunately we experienced great difficulty in finding the pass again, and it was not until I had climbed the mountain on which was a glacier,



Sutherland Fall, Milford Sound. The fall (1904 ft.) is the highest in the Southern Hemisphere.

which I named after our then Governor, Sir William Jervois, that I was able to make an observation which enabled us to reach the summit early next morning, when we pursued our course. It was our great desire to reach civilisation if possible before the steamer carrying the Chief Surveyor touched a point from which he could telegraph the news of the whereabouts of his party, and we succeeded in doing this.

I have spoken at some length on the work of M'Kinnon, because I gather that an attempt has been made by some one to rob him of the honour that attaches to his name, of having been the first to cross that range of mountains. A few years later poor M'Kinnon was lost, and I had charge of the relief expedition which was organised to endeavour to find him. Although we never found his body, yet we were able to furnish a full account of the manner in which he met his death.

The history of the exploration of the country around Milford would

be incomplete were I not to refer to another attempt made to reach the Sound from a river called the Holyford, which traverses a valley immediately behind the great beetling cliffs that guard the north-eastern side of the Sound. I ought to explain that whilst the route discovered *via* Lake Te Anau was of great value, it was very much desired that Milford should be reached from the valley of the Holyford River, which falls into Martin's Bay. Insuperable difficulties presented themselves, but it was felt that an attempt ought to be made, for were this route found possible, it would connect with Lake Wakitipu *via* the Greenstone Valley, and then a connection would be established with the interior of Otago, its roads and its railways. In January 1891 a young surveyor called William Quill attempted to cross alone by a saddle named Homer's Saddle from the Holyford Valley. He ventured too near the edge of the cliff, his foot slipped, and he fell over the precipice, which is some 2000 feet high. All that was ever found of him, after a patient search of forty-two days by his brothers, was a small piece of his jaw. It was he who climbed the face of the Sutherland Falls, and discovered the lake from which the falls issue, and which now bears his name. The following is his last written communication: "Gone to Lake Gertrude Saddle, am trying to get down to Cleddau Valley. Will Quill, 15/1/91, 7 A.M." Quill failed, but the feat has since been accomplished. I am not sure of the date, but I should say about the year 1906, a party which had done a great deal of exploration in the neighbourhood of the Sounds, with valuable results, finally succeeded in getting over. I can remember the names of only two of the party, Messrs. Graves and Lee, but I think there was a third. I have telegraphed to New Zealand for information, but have not yet received a reply, and I am unable to find a record of their work. However, they succeeded in crossing, and it was a bold and adventurous undertaking. It is possible that a track can be cut in the rock, but until this is done this route is of no use. The mountains are high and abrupt here, and a very short tunnel of some 1200 yards pierced through them would connect the interior of Otago with Milford Sound.

I have now come to the end of my information regarding the explorations in the neighbourhood of Milford Sound, and I will now speak of other undertakings for connecting the Western Fiords with the interior of the country. After our return from Milford in 1888, a Professor of the Otago University, called Mannering Brown, met me one day and told me that he intended once more to attempt to cross from the south-west branch of Lake Manapouri to Hall's Arm. I strongly advised him not to venture that season, for it was an exceedingly bad one; in the spring there had been heavy falls of snow and sudden meltings, and the dangers to be encountered from avalanches and landslips would no doubt be great. He replied that, as we had succeeded in getting through from Milford (a more difficult country), surely he would succeed in his attempt. We then parted, and the next I heard of the Professor was when sitting one evening in the theatre. Mr. Malcolm Ross, who is now war correspondent in France with the New Zealand Forces, entered, and touching me on the shoulder, said, "Mannering Brown is

lost, and we want you to lead an expedition for the purpose of finding him, if that be possible." Two members of the explorer's party, Major Goring and Mr. John White, had made a long and trying search before leaving the locality. Mr. White had suffered very much in consequence, so that Major Goring and he had to return. The relief party was organised, and we set out. We had great difficulty in even finding the part of the country where Brown had been lost, but we eventually discovered the spot, and although we searched thoroughly we could find no trace of the missing man, and so we pursued the work which he would have carried out had he been spared, and finally reached the place, immediately above the fiord, which was to have been the goal of his journey. Hall's Arm was below us some three miles away. We did not descend, as our object was to search for the missing man, but we named a mountain and a lake after him, Lake Mannering and Mount Mannering. Some years later a surveyor, when making a more complete survey of the country, discovered a much lower pass which led to the Sound (Hall's Arm). We had skirted that part of the country, but never for a moment thought that a pass so easily negotiated existed. I named the river flowing through it the Dashwood, after a friend of my companion Pillans.

Another connection with the Western Fiords was discovered in 1894 by a party consisting of Mr. Pillans, Mr. Robert Murrell, the Honourable Mr. Earnshaw, and myself. We started from the south-west branch of Lake Manapouri with the intention of connecting with Dusky Sound. Dusky Sound is the most historic of all our Western Fiords. It was there upon two occasions that Captain Cook established his headquarters, and accomplished valuable work, records of which appear in his journals. It was at Dusky Sound that New Zealand's first shipbuilding took place. Dusky Sound was the resort of whalers and sealers in early days, and with it is connected a most interesting account of a ship named the *Endeavour*, the remains of which were found in a small bay called Facile Harbour. It appears that the vessel had left New South Wales late in the eighteenth century with a number of escaped convicts and time-expired men on board. Disputes arose on the voyage; the ship was taken into Dusky Sound and scuttled, the men intending, no doubt, to remain in New Zealand, but, owing to our impenetrable forests and to the barrier formed by the great mountain range, they did not succeed in reaching the interior, and ultimately had to fit out craft in which they returned, some to Norfolk Island, and others to New South Wales.

During this last exploration our party discovered three passes which were named Murrell, Pillans, and Mackenzie. In 1896 I connected from the west with the work done in 1894. This completes my knowledge of the discovery of the chief connections with the Western Fiordland of New Zealand. Others have done good work, but I am sorry to say I have no record of it.
