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ACROSS THE ISLAND

N. Zealand Emigration Of 1858 Is Described

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AN UNDERTAKING by Sir Leon Gotz, then New Zealand High Commissioner to Canada when he was here last summer has borne fruit. A list of 89 Prince Edward Island people who sailed to New Zealand in 1858 was received here this week by the Guardian.

Sir Leon promised Frank Walker, chief editorial writer, he would endeavor to get the list of people who sailed from here more than 100 years ago on the brig "Prince Edward". Mr. Walker received it from the office of the New Zealand High Commissioner in Ottawa and has turned it over to me for use in this column.

Several names are spelled differently to the way we know them – for instance "Pendagrass" looks like our "Pendergast", but I am listing them the way they came from New Zealand.

I should add also that the accompanying letter explains that an old record says there were "one hundred souls on board" and the list contains "eighty-nine names . . . plus one female servant who was unnamed."

The information came, the letter explains, from the General Assembly library in Wellington.

Names Of Emigrants Listed

UNDER THE family name of Morpeth there are H.D., Mary C., W.J., J.B., Matilda G.R., Catherine H., H.D., T.S.

A Hazzard family had Robert, Moore H. and C.A.

A Smith group had Henry, Anne, Henry, John, Anne, Margaret, Catherine and Isaac.

Under Millner there were James, Bridget, Anne, Elizabeth, James, Augustus and Henry.

The Pendagrass family name included only one person, Kate.

Under Owen there were George, Annabella, T.C. and Charles S.

John Welsh, Roderick MacGregor, Joseph Sneeston, John McLeod, Alexander MacGregor, Joseph Webster, Donald Stewart, H. Auld, Neil McLean, James McDermot and Neil MacFagden are the other family names where only one person was represented.

Under the name Hazzard there are William, Louisa, Harriet, Amelia, Alexander, Elizabeth, William, Sarah, Anna and Sydney.

Oxley is a name which is unusual in this province now. There were J.P., Elizabeth, John, Dan, Frances, Charlotte, George, Mary, Anne and Margaret on that sailing.

UNDER MANN the names were Thomas, Caroline, Charles, Eliza and Edward.

Under Rigg there were Louisa, James J., John R., Louisa J., George B. and Evelyn. There were Angus and Margaret Stewart.

Nowlan is a name I do not know of in this province now, but on the "Prince Edward" 108 years ago there were Mary, Anne, Bridget, Margaret, Mary and the one female servant who is known to have been on the ship.

Many details are missing, addresses for example. But the list of names is reproduced exactly as it came from the High Commissioner's office.

Trip Took Five And One-Half Months

MR. WALKER'S research indicated that the "brig Prince Edward" under Captain Newlands arrived in Auckland five and one-half months later, with its cargo of settlers "in perfect safety, all hands in excellent health" an old newspaper clipping reported.

The immigrants had to be "persons of good character and sober, steady habits". That was laid down in the Auckland Waste Land Act.

They had to make the trip at their own expense, but on arrival in Auckland every adult was to select 40 acres of government land in any part of that province that was set apart for special settlement. The land was free of cost, except for the agent's fee of 10 shillings, and the expense of the survey that was needed to secure title.

Many of the people wrote back to their Island friends and relatives and spoke in glowing terms of their experiences in their new home. Most of them, apparently, were happy with the development.

The Prince Edward was only one of the ships that carried Island people to New Zealand, so far as I can learn from available information.

Snow Drift Advertised Sailing

THE BRIGANTINE Snow Drift, Donald MacKay commander, advertised back on February 1, 1858 that it would sail "direct for the gold diggings at Nelson, New Zealand. It would sail on or about the 20th July next", the announcement said.

Passage money was 33 pounds sterling, and that included "good and substantial provisions".

The owner was a medical man, would make the trip with his family "and will pay every attention to the health and comfort of the passengers". In addition a few hands capable of working their passage as seamen, or a cook and a steward would be taken on terms to be arranged.

I'm not posing as being well informed on the New Zealand immigration but I may come back to it later if I get additional information.

I know, for instance, that Alexander Dewar, one of the New Perth Dewars went to New Zealand, and in a ship which he and others built, or helped to build at Cardigan, if I am reporting Lincoln's story correctly. I know that a MacLeod man, a forbearer of Mrs. Wesley MacNevin, Hunter River and Jim MacLeod, who lived and kept a store at Hampshire also made the trip in the long ago.

My uncle, Murdock Matheson, went from Rose Valley. But I have no idea of any of the details.

Ghostly Figures In St. James Belfry

STRANGELY enough one of the old ghost stories of Charlottetown goes back to the same year of 1858. It's been told many times in print, but I'm repeating it now at the request of several people who have been talking to me. The version I'm using is in an old Guardian scrap book, and it, too, was compiled by Mr. Walker.

A certain Captain Cross was crossing Black Sam's bridge when a bell began to toll. (The bridge was below the location where the Armouries are now, close to the present Government House gateway). Nearing Pownal Street he heard it again.

At first he thought the sound was coming from a foreign ship in harbor, but he traced the sound to the St. James Church belfry. And sure enough, from the belfry came again, and unmistakably, the pealing of the bell for eight times.

At the door of St. James stood three women in white, with uncovered heads and bared feet. They appeared not to notice him as he moved toward them. The bell tolled once more and the women disappeared into the church.

THE SEXTON had arrived as he had also heard the bells, but the doors were locked when the two men tried to enter.

Through a window they could see the three women ascending the stairs to the belfry. The sexton got the key, opened the door and the two men went up the belfry stairs. They heard the bell once more, one version states, but nobody was visible as the men climbed to the height of the bells. Nor was anything unusual visible.

In the afternoon of that day, though, the steamer Fairy Queen went down in the Northumberland Strait near Pictou, N.S. Seven persons lost their lives – three of them were members of St. James Church.