

RESUME OF LIFE OF DANIEL COTTON IN NEW ZEALAND.

Memoirs- 'Jottings of an Old Colonist' cover period 1832-29, 1910
Author, living in Napier the latter part of his
life, also appears to have had a sheep farm at Waipawa in the 1880's.

Mid-October 1857 : Cotton sails as crew on ship carrying
passengers from London, to Wellington, NZ.

February 1858: Arrives Wellington... on the ship 'Cresswell'.

February 1858: Deserts ship at Wellington & walks 50 miles to
first job, bridge building.

Then walks up country, staying first night in Masterton. Next
day crosses river and follows track across plain and over hills
into the bush. From the highest hill- bush as far as the eye
can see.

At the end of the second day- emerges from bush and sleeps
rough.

3rd. day- crosses 'beautiful fertile plain' and comes to
cottage by a navigable river where he is directed to the high-
est hill from which he can see the sea. Reaching the sea, he
follows the coast, arriving Castle Point late that night.
Stays the night in primitive hotel run by a man with wife and
7 children.

4th. day- follows coast as far as a river with cottage on
opposite side, where he is engaged a short time as ferryman.

March 1858: Engaged as general hand on sheep station not far
from Nairn's station, Blackhead- 'the station was situated over
a hundred miles from civilisation'. Four others constitute
the entire staff, incl. an old Australian suspected by Cotton
of being a former convict, and 'an old college chap, belonging
to one of the wealthiest families in Scotland and was there to
gather experience.'

The 'old college chap' was Captain George Douglas
Hamilton, who later owned- and lost- the Mangatoro station,
mentioned in 'Early Stations of Hawke's Bay'. Cotton later
recalls how his friend lost Mangatoro.

I also understand that Hamilton had, previous to taking up
Mangatoro in 1863, managed properties for a Dr. Featherstone
and for Ashton St. Hill- for the latter in the Porangahau
district- but have been unable to identify which stations.
Certainly Hamilton was working with Cotton on this first
station in 1858. I hope to learn more from the Douglas-Hamilton fam.

Other clues which might identify the station: 1. A schooner
came once a year with provisions and to carry away the wool.

2. In March/April 1858 they started work on a new homestead
a mile or so up the river.

3. Soon afterwards an escaped convict from Wellington gaol
called here and went on next day to get a job bullock driving
at Nairn's, Blackhead. A reward of £100 offered for him
under the name of Wood, he was later captured in Napier.

While Cotton remained on the above station the Manager (possibly
Hamilton?) left. Replaced by a man and wife from Isle of Skye.
From then on, only Gaelic spoken, neighbours also being Gaelic.

The station may well have been the one at Akitia, owned by Dr. Featherston,
where Capt. Hamilton is known to have been the manager 1837-8.

c. 1859 or '60: Cotton tires of Gaelic and moves on to work as a shepherd on a station on the coast.

I think this might possibly have been Whangaehu (also a St. Hill property) because he mentions an incident bearing an uncanny resemblance to an incident related in 'Early Stations...' in which he says some workers drowned when their boat capsized the year before his arrival. Unfortunately I have no date for this incident.

During Cotton's stay the runs are improved by burning off fern and grassing, enabling them to carry more sheep of better quality. Still on this station, it seems, Cotton is working as a solitary shepherd on an out-station 7 miles from the homestead when he is attacked by a Maori, who is seriously wounded in the ensuing fight. Cotton's boss, a Justice of the Peace, (was one of the St. Hills a JP?) advises Cotton to leave, giving him a good reference which enables him to take a job on another station 3 days later.

Some time between 1860-1863: Cotton is now working as a shepherd on a station on the east coast. Perhaps he means simply on the coast. He is injured when he chases wild dogs and falls into a deep gully.

Whilst on this station Cotton tends and befriends Rawhiri, a Maori man living alone for a year in the bush, tapu for making love to the daughter of a chief; he has broken his leg. Rawhiri tells Cotton the harrowing story of the near massacre of his tribe when a small boy in a revenge attack by a neighbouring tribe. The survivors, about 18 in all, afterwards joining a friendly tribe with our friend Hone as chief. Rawhiri is clearly a Christian by this time and thanks the missionaries and the pakeha for their influence in bringing to an end the inter-tribal wars of earlier years.

1863. Napier; I guess Cotton came to Napier from the (east) coast area at this point, where I believe relations with the Maoris were becoming rather tense at the time. When he first arrived (possibly shortly before 1863) there was a detachment of the 65th. Regiment quartered there, camped on Barrick Hill to protect the locals as 'there had been a little fighting between two chiefs, Te Maunauui and Te Hapuka over their land boundaries, and the lives of the whites were in jeopardy.'

Cotton states that in about 1863 they were busy with the Maori War, fighting going on all over North Island. He makes a special mention of the bravery of Fred Hodges, 'a sergeant in our B troop.'

Cotton was one of 130 volunteers to join in 1863 the Hawkes Bay Mounted Colonial Defence Force. J.G. Wilson's 'History of Hawkes Bay' has a picture of him at a reunion 50 years later. (Page 451).

Still based in Napier, Cotton goes on to mention the Hau Hau troubles which begin in the north at about the same time. He recalls killings at Mohaka, the bravery of Rowley Hill VC and the gradual spread of the conflict until Napier is threatened.

1866. Napier: Cotton describes the battle at Omarunui and the smaller simultaneous conflict on the Petane river- he himself took part in the latter with a small band of Militia.

Cotton relates that the Maori prisoners were sent to the Chathams only to escape 9 months later led by Te Kooti, landing at Poverty Bay, where they began to murder and pillage. Several of his friends in this area were killed and 'two young lady friends of mine were butchered and afterwards roasted on the still burning ruins of their home.'

He also refers briefly to the destruction of the English Church and the murder of the Revd. Volkner at Hicks Bay.

1868 Porangahau. Cotton marries Jane Handscombe. Children b. Napier.

c. 1871/2: Cotton is working as a contracting sawyer, cutting and sawing timber in the bush- still in the Hawke's Bay area, near Napier.

1873. Waipawa area: Cotton relates an amusing incident which takes place when two of his friends, Joe Price and Harry Baker, go shooting near Waipawa from their homes about 20 miles away. Other reminiscences of a similar period mention Mr. Dillon from a neighbouring sheep station. (See section on persons mentioned in the reminiscences.)

1884. Cotton owns 150 acres in Waipawa & has a cab-driving business with stables in Napier, also one acre in Cook County.

1884. Death of Cotton's wife. By 1887-remarries-Harriet Clements.

Date uncertain: Cotton worked at some point at Tautane near Cape Turnagain, and was in the habit of meeting friends at the Herbertville hotel. He appears to have known the area well, and I guess he is referring to the earlier part of his life in NZ after leaving his first sheep station. Unfortunately not all the events are in chronological order. He was ferried across the river to Herbertville by canoe, accompanied on one occasion by an old man, John McLevity (or possibly McLeverty) who later died of exposure one night whilst making the same journey alone the worse for drink.

Napier: At no point does Cotton say clearly that he lived in Napier, though he clearly went there during the early years of the third Maori War (early 1860's). Later accounts of conversations with sailors, and of a sighting of Bully Hayes the 'pirate' when he came ashore at Napier, suggest strongly that Cotton lived here later in his life. Certain phrases he uses point to Napier as the place where he chose finally to stay.

There is now firm evidence that he lived here.

September 15 1917. Cotton dies at Te Pohue and is buried in Napier.

SEE ALSO THE SECTION ON PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE REMINISCENCES

Member of Armed Constabulary

Daniel COTTON

- 1825 Born in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, England.
1851 Apprentice in London after the death of both his parents.
1852 Working on counting merchant vessels, England & Europe.
1854-55 Ordinary seaman in British Royal Navy, served in the two Baltic campaigns during the Crimean War.
Ships: HMS Nile & HMS Orion.
1856-57 With HMS Orion in Caribbean and Central America.
Flogged for deserting ship at Barbados.
- 1858 Arrives Wellington NZ as crew on passenger ship from London. Deserts ship and walks through bush to Hawkes Bay.
- 1858-63 Working as general hand/shepherd on sheep stations near Porangahau. Works on his first station with Captain George Douglas-Hamilton.
- 1866 Serves as volunteer in Napier area during the Maori Wars.
- 1868 Marries Jane Handscombe (born London) at Porangahau.
1868-84 5 sons and 3 daughters born in Napier.
Early 1870's Cotton works as contracting sawyer in bush.
By 1875 Cotton is a couch proprietor in Napier with stables in Waghorne Street.
By 1882 he also has 1 acre in Cook County and 150 acres in Waipawa where he keeps some sheep. A neighbouring farmer is A. Dillon.
- 1884 Wife dies, leaving 5 sons and 3 daughters:
Daniel b. 1874
Frederick Charles b. 1876, died 1886
Arthur b. 1881, died 1900
Albert b. circa 1882, died 1885
One other son, name not known
Alice b. 1870, died 1893 shortly after marriage to Edmund Stack
Louisa b. 1872
Fanny b. 1873
- Of these children only 2 daughters, Louisa & Fanny were still living in 1917.
- 1886/7 Marries Harriet May Clements or Clemence in Napier.
Known children from this marriage:
2 daughters- names not yet known
2 sons (one of whom, Horace Stanley, died 1919. Name of the other son, b. about 1892, not yet known.)
- Daniel Cotton is listed in local directories as cab proprietor, Waghorne Street, Napier until 1916.
1917 Daniel Cotton dies at Te Pohue (age 81 or 82) and is buried Napier Old Cemetery. His wife, Harriet is 57, daughters Louisa & Fanny survive from 1st. marriage and 2 daughters and 2 sons from 2nd. marriage.
- 1919 Death of son, Horace Stanley, clerk of Herschell Street, Napier. Buried Park Island Cemetery, Napier.

SEE ALSO THIRD SHEET: FRIENDS & ACQUAINTANCES MENTIONED IN THE RECORDS.

FRIENDS & ACQUAINTANCES MENTIONED IN THE MEMOIRS RE: NZ.

- Bob, and Harry Birch From a good London family. Drank away their father's money in Hawkes Bay!
- The Myhill Brothers From the south coast of England. Met by chance in a bullock drivers' camp after a separation of 15 years. Napier Area.
- Joe Price & Harry Baker Living in Waipawa area in the 1830's.
- Captain Hamilton From a titled Scottish family. Arrived NZ 1857. Worked with Cotton in Porunguhau area 1858. Bought Mangatoro station 1863, which he later lost. Fought his case unsuccessfully in the courts, which ruined him, and he lived in poverty in Dannevirke until his death circa 1913.
- Ruhiri Cotton finds this young Maori man with a broken leg alone in the bush in the 1800's. Cotton nurses him back to health and learns the story of the earlier massacre of Ruhiri's tribe during the inter-tribal wars.
- Alfred Eillon Sheep farmer in Waipawa area. Owned what became Putangata station and later became a member of Parliament.

Eusebi Cotton had relatives named Cotton and Moulden (his sister's name by marriage) in Hitchin.