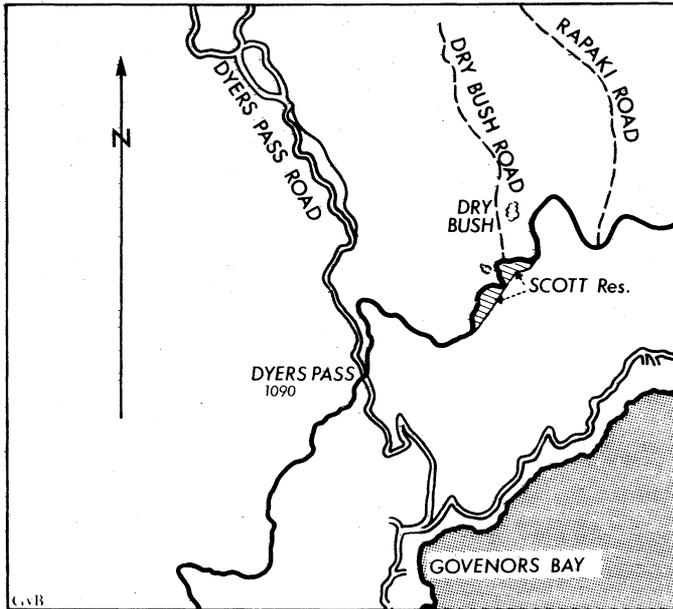


DRY BUSH, BANKS PENINSULA

N.Z.M.S. 1 S84 027490

M.J.A. Simpson



At the time of the settlement of Canterbury the vegetation of slopes of Port Hills, Banks Peninsula exposed to the dessicating northwest winds was predominantly grassland, but pockets of bush were present in the more sheltered valleys. One such valley, included in an area of 50 acres, R.S.127 selected by T.F. Peel on September 2nd 1850 was the locality known as 'Dry Bush' in the Province of Canterbury list of sections (see map). In 1854 it was advertised as consisting of "50 acres of freehold land, 12 acres of which are beautifully timbered ...." (Anderson 1927).

G. Ogilvie (1974) records that this bush was largely chopped out in the first two decades of settlement for firewood and fencing, but J.F. Armstrong (1870) could still list 98 trees, shrubs, herbs, lianes, parasites and ferns, 11 mosses, 2 lichens and 4 fungi from Dry Bush, of which he commented - "Another interesting locality in the neighbourhood of Christchurch and visible from our streets, is the so called Dry Bush, which from the numerous fires having passed through it, has a scorched appearance. Although there are some large coniferous trees in this small forest, it has more the characteristics of that portion of our bush vegetation which invariably edges our larger forests, of which Mount Pleasant bush is a still more characteristic representative ...".

In 1939 W.R. Boyce studied the grassland vegetation on the slopes near Dry Bush and included in his thesis a contemporary photograph of the diminishing patch of forest. The caption reads:-

"The tall dead trunk is a Podocarpus dacrydioides and behind it are two trees of P. spicatus. A single P. totara remains in this bush. Other trees are Plagianthus betulinus, Myoporum laetum, Hoheria populnea, Pittosporum eugenioides,

Suttonia species, Fuchsia exorticata, Nothopanax arboreum. The monotypic, endemic Tetrapathaea tetrandra is abundant. Altogether there are about 50 species other than grasses, sedges, and rushes. Cattle and sheep have destroyed all undergrowth and no regeneration is taking place. Severe wilting occurs during the summer months. The former limits of the bush are indicated by the trees on the hillside".

In 1968 the Summit Road Scenic Society agreed that the remnant of Dry Bush should be saved if possible; at that time stock had free access to the bush and the only regrowth was of stinging nettle and elderberry (C. Holdsworth pers.comm.). After negotiations with the then owner, Mr. Gibson, a line of fence was agreed upon to enclose an area of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres (0.6 hectares) and by late 1969, although now sold to the owners of the adjoining property, fencing was completed. Weeds became a problem with winged thistle prolific. This was cut down and a large patch of californian thistle was hand pulled to check seeding. Claytonia perfoliata formed a dense ground cover within the bush, especially on the eastern side. One season a prolific strike of kowhai seedlings was noted but they did not survive. In the following years the society carried out some planting on open grassy areas with a view to assist regeneration. Some details of the plantings have been provided by Mr. Cliff Holdsworth.

(a) From nursery grown plants:

akiraho (Olearia paniculata) well spread through open parts  
flax (Phormium tenax) gully  
toe toe (Cortaderia sp.) near gully  
cabbage tree (Cordyline australis) west side and gully  
houhere (Hoheria populnea) west side, north end

(b) From various sources:

ngaio (Myoporum laetum) east side, from Motunau  
ngaio (? M. serratum) west side from New Brighton  
koromiko (Hebe salicifolia) east side, north end. ? smothered  
by grass and died  
karamu (Coprosma robusta) west side, from local garden seedlings  
five finger (Pseudopanax arboreus) one, north end, east side  
of gully  
flax (Phormium tenax) gully, from plants higher up slope  
white pine (Podocarpus dacrydioides) one, netting around, n.end  
totara (Podocarpus totara) one  
lancewood (Pseudopanax crassifolius) two  
broadleaf (Griselinia littoralis) a few  
fig (Ficus carica) one

On March 27th 1975 Bryony Macmillan and I first visited Dry Bush on a day when persistent low cloud reduced visibility so that we had to follow a stone dyke, shown on the map (N.Z.M.S. 1 S84), from the road to locate the bush. Two previously planned trips had been abandoned because of rain. Some large trees are still present but the sole remaining white pine is outside the fence, isolated and unprotected from drying winds and extremes of temperature. Its continued survival seems doubtful. Inside the fence there are two healthy matai trees although one shows signs of recent wind damage. Otherwise some titoki, broad-leaf, milk tree and lemonwood are all that remain of Armstrongs 'Forest Trees'. The shrubs and small trees are better represented and most appear to be healthy. A small trickle of a stream that runs down the valley no doubt has beneficial effects. We recorded more herbaceous



1975  
W.R.B. 1939  
J.F.A. 1870

SHRUBS

SHRUBS AND SMALL TREES:

- + Hebe colensoi (?)
- + Hebe salicifolia
- + Helichrysum aggregatus
- + Hoheria angustifolia
- + Hoheria populnea
- + Leptospermum ericoides
- + Macropiper excelsum
- + Melicope simplex
- + Melicytus micranthus
- + Melicytus ramiflorus
- + Myoporum laetum
- + Myrsine divaricata
- + Myrtus obcordata
- + Olearia arborescens
- + Olearia paniculata
- + Pennantia corymbosa
- + Pittosporum colensoi
- + Pittosporum tenuifolium
- + Plagianthus betulinus
- + Pseudowintera axillaris
- + Sophora microphylla
- + Teucrium parvifolium
- + Urtica ferox

PARASITES:

- + Loranthus micranthus
- + Korthalsella lindsayi
- + Tupeia antarctica

LIANES:

- + Clematis paniculata
- + Clematis foetida
- + Clematis afooliata
- + Convolvulus tuguriorum
- + Metrosideros fulgens
- + Muehlenbeckia australis
- + Muehlenbeckia complexa
- + Parsonia capsularis var. rosea

1975  
W.R.B. 1939  
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- + Parsonia heterophylla
- + Rubus australis (?)
- + Rubus cissoides
- + Rubus schmidelioides
- + Rubus squarrosus
- + Passiflora tetrandra

HERBACEOUS PLANTS:

- + Acaena anserinifolia
- + Acaena novae-zelandiae
- + Aciphylla squarrosa
- + Angelica montana
- + Astelia fragrans
- + Cardamine debilis
- + Carex diandra
- + Carex forsteri
- + Carex solandri
- + Carex ternaria (?)
- + Carex virgata
- + Colobanthus sp.
- + Dichondra repens
- + Epilobium alsinoides subsp. atriplicifolium
- + Epilobium macropus
- + Epilobium nummularifolium
- + Epilobium pallidiflorum
- + Epilobium rotundifolium
- + Geranium dissectum (?)
- + Geranium microphyllum
- + Geum urbanum
- + Hydrocotyle moschata
- + Hydrocotyle novae-zealandiae
- + Hydrocotyle distegus
- + Hydrocotyle effusus
- + Hydrocotyle sp.
- + Libertia ixioides
- + Luzula banksiana var. orina
- + Montia fontana
- + Oxalis corniculata

1975  
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HERBACEOUS PLANTS:

- + Pelargonium inodorum
- + Phormium tenax
- + Poa caespitosa
- + Poa sp.
- + Pterostylis graminea var. rubricaulis
- + Ranunculus pinguis (?)
- + Scandia geniculata
- + Senecio glomeratus
- + Senecio quadridentata
- + Senecio sciadophilus (1)

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(1) Of this species Laing (1919) says - "It was reported from Dry Bush (Lyttelton Hills) but is probably now extinct there".

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- + Senecio wairauensis
- + Solanum laciniatum
- + Stipa arundinacia
- + Tillaea sieberiana
- + Uncinia leptostachya
- + Uncinia sp.
- + Wahlenbergia gracilis

FERNS:

- + Asplenium bulbiferum
- + Asplenium flaccidum
- + Asplenium flabellifolium
- + Asplenium hookerianum
- + Blechnum "capense"
- + Blechnum fluviatilis
- + Blechnum penna-marina
- + Ctenitis decomposita
- + Pellaea rotundifolia
- + Polystichum richardii
- + Polystichum vestitum
- + Pteridium aquilinum
- + Phymatodes diversifolia
- + Pyrrosia serpens

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MOSSES:

- + Bryum truncorum
- + Campylopus introflexus
- + Camptochaete ramulosa
- + Ceratodon purpureus
- + Cratoneuroopsis relaxa
- + Dicranum (?Dicranoloma) dicarpum
- + Funaria hygrometrica
- + Homalia pulchella
- + Leucobryum candidum
- + Macromitrium erosulum
- + Polytrichum sp.

LICHENS:

- + Sticta latiflorus
- + Sticta filicina

FUNGI:

- + Agaricus campestris
- + Geaster fimbriatus
- + Lycoperdon novae-zelandiae
- + Polyporus sp.

ADVENTIVE SPECIES (1975)

- Agropyron repens
- Agrostis tenuis
- Anthoxanthum odoratum
- Bromus diandrus
- Bromus unilioides
- Carduus tenuiflorus
- Callitriche stagnalis
- Cerastium arvense
- Cerastium holosteoides
- Cirsium arvense
- Cirsium vulgare
- Cotula australis
- Dactylis glomerata
- Dryopteris felix-mas
- Euonymus europeus

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ADVENTIVE SPECIES (1975)

Galium aparine  
Holcus lanatus  
Juncus bufonius  
Leontodon sp.  
Lolium multiflorum  
Lolium perenne  
Montia perfoliata  
Ranunculus repens  
Ranunculus sclereratus  
Rumex sp.

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Sambucus nigra  
Sisymbrium officinale  
+ Solanum nigrum  
+ Sonchus oleraceus  
Taraxacum officinale  
Trifolium pratensis  
Trifolium repens  
Urtica urens  
Vicia sp.

NOTE:-

Permission is needed to visit Dry Bush - from Mr. Brent Elder.

35554

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