

It is clear that the totara selected for the Society's ceremony was planted in Kennedys Bush in the first place, along with others, probably in the early 1950s. Now even its origin seems to be unknown. These points illustrate the confusion that can arise when "foreign" native species are introduced, albeit with good intentions, into reserves of natural vegetation.

Notwithstanding its dubious origin and mistaken identity, the Arnold Wall totara will no doubt continue to flourish. Indeed it could become a management problem if it is not wisely pruned and is allowed to spread and layer normally, like the large specimens in the Cockayne Memorial Garden. At present it is a slender tree with a single leader about 3.5 m tall and 10 cm wide at the base, with typically strong basal branches. The leaves are characteristically narrow (less than 2 mm wide), needle-like and olive green (new growth tends to bronze). Moreover it is a male tree which has flowered quite heavily each year for the last four, usually during the first week of November (P. acutifolius) is dioecious like our other species of totara, that is it bears male and female flowers on different plants).

It is a pity perhaps that the Arnold Wall tree planting falls within the second hundred years of 'the Gardens'. Thus the tree is not listed among the historic and commemorative ones in the book "A Garden Century 1863-1963" published by the Christchurch City Council. Nonetheless it should stand as a permanent memorial to a notable student of the Canterbury flora. In particular it should remind us all that valuable botanical information will continue to be gathered by talented amateurs. Arnold Wall lived a long and productive life - 97 years - and many of his botanical activities were carried out after he had retired from Canterbury College. It is significant that this Society has recognised his contribution. Can we follow his example?

Acknowledgement

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Type locality of Schizeilema pallidum (Kirk) Domin

or

Where is Pukunui Creek, Canterbury?

M.J.A. Simpson

The type locality of Schizeilema pallidum (Kirk) Domin is given as "Pukunui Creek, Canterbury", and the collector, "T. Kirk 19/1/76" (Allan 1961). So far as I am aware Pukunui Creek does not appear on any present day maps, and the name is not mentioned in "Maori Place Names of Canterbury (Beattie 1945).

Hamlin (1965) in his itinerary of Thomas Kirk's botanical expeditions gives for January 18th and 19th 1876, "Broken River - Pukunui Creek". J.D.G. Enys, owner with his brother Charles, of Castle Hill Station, Canterbury from 1864-1890 records in his diary (Richards 1951) for January 19th 1876 "With Kirk to Murderers Creek". Earlier entries in his diary read

"1867. February 13. Heard a body of a man had been found.
February 14. Took the man who found the body to show me
[Murderers Creek now Blackball]. February 15. Dug up the
murdered man [Enys was a J.P.] ..."

Presumably the comments in square brackets are those of the author, but the reference to Blackball is difficult to explain. In a later entry in his diary Enys mentions liberating trout - "January 16. Turned out 25 at Springs, 50 Moth Creek, 50 Broken River southern branch. January 17. 96 Murderers Creek. Hunt took me with 100 for Mt. White to Craigieburn". It would seem that Murderers Creek of Enys is in the near vicinity of Castle Hill not Blackball on the West Coast.

Dollimore (1957) lists "Murders Creek: A tributary of the Waimakariri crossed by the East-West highway. A successful digger returning from the Westland goldfields in 1867 stayed here in a hut together with a party of Chinese prospectors. Some time later his body was found buried on the banks of the river. An inquest disclosed no further information beyond the fact that the murdered man bore the sobriquet "Jem". Near Castle Hill".

Mr. H. Talbot, headmaster of Springfield School for some twenty years and now of Richmond, Nelson tells me that Cave Stream, a tributary of Broken River, was locally known as Murderers Creek when he lived at Springfield. Therefore, it would appear that Kirk's Pukunui Creek is probably Cave Stream or somewhere in the near vicinity.

References

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