



Expedition's Study of

## The Wild Sheep of Campbell Island

**A**N inter-departmental expedition organised by the Wildlife Service, Department of Internal Affairs, visited Campbell Island in January to build a fence across the island, shoot feral sheep, and make various scientific observations. The following article describes the work of the expedition in the 6 weeks it was on Campbell Island and the possible effects this may have on the island's vegetation.

**C**AMPBELL ISLAND, about 400 miles south of Bluff, is the most southerly of New Zealand's sub-Antarctic islands. It was discovered in 1810 and was at first the haunt of sealers and whalers and then became a sheep run for 35 years. During the Second World War coastwatchers were based there, but in recent years the only regular inhabitants have been annual parties of about 12 meteorologists. The 42-square-mile island is the main breeding

ground of the southern royal albatross and, because of its climate and isolation, supports many other interesting animals and plants. It was declared a reserve for the preservation of flora and fauna in 1954. (For a full account of the island see "Subantarctic Campbell Island", by A. M. Bailey and J. H. Sorensen, and published by the Denver Museum of Natural History in 1962.)

The New Zealand Government first granted a pastoral lease for the island in 1894, and it was then stocked and burnt and sheep increased to about 8,000 from 1910 to 1916.

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Heading illustration: The western cliffs of Campbell Island, where the dividing fence was started.

[M. F. Soper photo]