

CAPE KIDNAPPERS AND THE GANNETS

A HAPPY PILGRIMAGE IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS TO SEE ONE OF NEW ZEALAND'S MOST CHARMING NATURAL WONDERS

By V. MAY COTTRELL

NINE o'clock of a beautiful summer morning, one of Napier's very best, brilliant sunshine with a slight sea breeze to prevent the heat from being too oppressive, sees a gay party of picnickers packed into their various motor-cars and ready to start on the trip to Napier's now famous scenic attraction, the Gannet Nursery at Cape Kidnappers.

Those beautiful sea birds, the Gannets, have made their summer home on this rocky promontory for many years, and it is a most interesting and inspiring sight to see thousands of these graceful birds going calmly about their ordinary affairs, quite unmindful of their human observers.

After making sure that all the

necessary gear is safely aboard the cars, eatables and drinkables,—especially the latter, as it is a thirsty trip—taking care also to see that some of the party are armed with cameras, we are off and away at last. The run out to Clifton is interesting. For the first few miles the road hugs the seafront and visitors have an opportunity to admire our really fine Marine Parade, with its row of beautiful trees.

These stately Norfolk Pines are a much-prized legacy from our early city fathers, and we in our turn are endeavouring to add to their good work by extending the plantation for the full length of the seafront.

Soon the road cuts inland and we

are driving through picturesque country, whose hawthorne hedges, cultivated fields and fine trees remind one of an English countryside. The stately poplars, which appear to march across the fields like well-drilled soldiers on parade, are a notable feature on the landscape.

IN less than an hour we arrive at Mr. F. L. Gordon's homestead, find our way out on to the sea front and, after negotiating some heavy shingle, where it is often necessary for the gentlemen to get out and push, we park the cars beneath the trees at Clifton.

Each member of the party is now loaded up, but not too heavily, with something which will help to satisfy the cravings of the inner man, when we arrive at the Cape, after our six-mile walk along the beach.

This walk is taken some three hours after high tide, which allows us about two hours each way, for the walk, and an hour and a-half to spend at the Gannet Nursery.

Look Out for the Tide

VISITORS are urged to seek advice from seasoned travellers before taking this trip to the Cape. The tide has been known to catch the unwary and some parties have had some very unpleasant experiences because they did not consult the tide time-table, or seek advice from those who know.

There is no great danger even at the worst, but it is impossible to

work the beach at high tide, as one gentleman knows. He was an over-sea visitor and was caught by the tide and compelled to spend the whole of one cold August night out at the Cape.

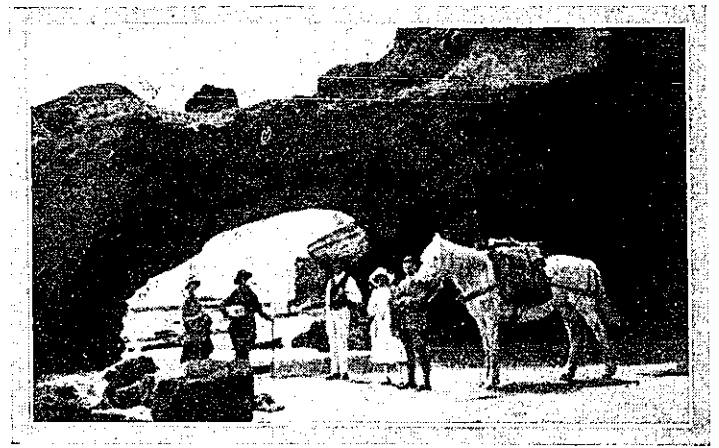
On his next trip, a few days later, he made due enquiries beforehand.

Another party consisting of some dozen young people, had to spend six hours in one of the ravines, waiting for the tide to go down. They had no eatables with them, and I have no doubt that the time seemed long to one and all, especially when they thought of anxious ones at home, who would be waiting and wondering whatever had happened to keep their young people out so late.

After this warning to others not so well informed of local conditions, our party will now proceed along the beach, walking easily on the hard, golden sand. This hard sand makes a good cycling track, which reduces the time between Clifton and the Cape to about forty-five minutes. But sometimes after a storm the going is not so good for cyclists because of the heavy shingle thrown up by the high seas, and the big slips which come down from the cliffs during rough weather. A bicycle becomes a hindrance rather than a help when it has to be carried over many rocks and rough places.

Our party, divided up into groups, takes its way along the beach, stop-

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Along the seashore en route for Cape Kidnappers and the Gannets
H. S. Cottrell, photo



General view of nesting ground
H. S. Cottrell, photo

LATEST MODEL CITROËN

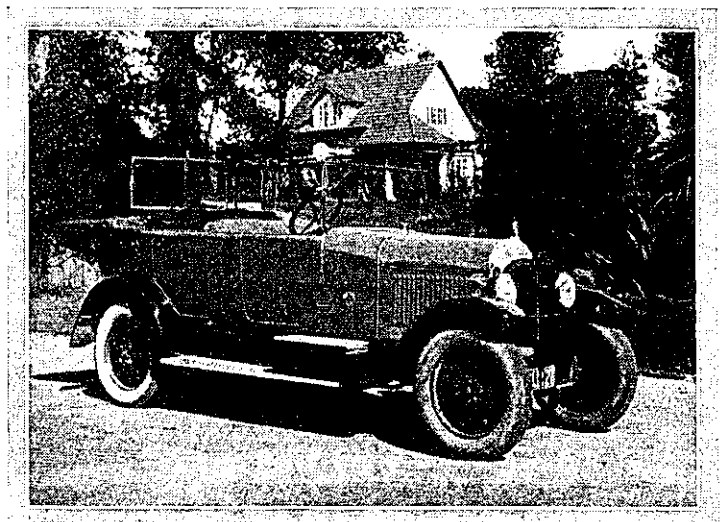
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