

THE MUSEUMS OF NEW ZEALAND . . .

high days and holidays, but such 'occasions' have already occurred often enough to shew how much we all appreciate it. I may therefore in the name of my mess mates thank you most sincerely for your very kind present and assure you that nothing could be more acceptable. Our wine caterer (Dr. Wilson) is so stony hearted that I shall have to shew him your note to prevent the liquor being annexed as 'medical comforts.' We shall very cordially drink your health in the magnams and feel most grateful to think that you are honouring us at the same time. With thanks for your good wishes, believe me, Yours sincerely R. F. Scott." The missive, which bears the British Antarctic Expedition's royal-blue crest, a ship's lifebelt enclosing a solitary penguin standing on an ice-field, is now among the treasures of the Turnbull Library, Wellington.)

Some of Sir Joseph's cloisonne and jade curios are in the Chinese collection, which includes the late Staff-Sergeant-Major Sutherland's treasures from Peking, gathered after the Boxer rebellion of 1900, and the Bailey collection of primitive metal ware (the pewter vessels belonging to the Ming period (1368-1644) being lacquered), early glazed ware dating from the T'ang, Sung, and Yuan dynasties (681-1368), and brilliantly-glazed Imperial porcelain of the period of Ch'ien Lung (1736-1775).

Contributions from Rewi Alley

Among the articles forwarded from time to time by Rewi Alley, formerly of Christchurch and founder of the Chinese Industrial Co-operatives and famous Bailie School and experimental

farm at Sandan, Central China, is an iron helmet worn by a Mongol warrior who fought under Genghis Khan, a bronze bowl and socketed adze belonging to the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.), T'ang bronzes and baked clay figures (681-906), sword coinage, the gold embroidered uniform of a Manchu Banner commander, a mandarin's hat and buttons of rank, and figures of deities from a lamasery in Inner Mongolia. Since the outbreak of civil war in China he has sent various additions to this material, which have been brought back to New Zealand and personally delivered to the museum by CORSO officials and members of the Friends' Ambulance Unit, his latest gifts being a celadon bowl of Sung porcelain (960-1279) and a piece of Chinese pottery of the neolithic period. Thanks largely to Rewi Alley the museum in his home town now has a complete display of Chinese ceramics from 3000 B.C. to 1700 A.D.

Mrs. Moore also contributed to the exhibits of English and Continental pottery, the late J. H. Seager being another benefactor. This section contains one of the 50 existing copies of the Portland vase reproduced by Josiah Wedgwood. The original, of carved onyx glass, was found in a Roman emperor's tomb; it was once the property of the Duke of Portland and is now in the British Museum, its purchase price being over 30,000 guineas.

Ships Modelled to Scale

Of particular interest to masculine visitors is the series of ships modelled to scale, specially noteworthy being the Viking long boat from the period



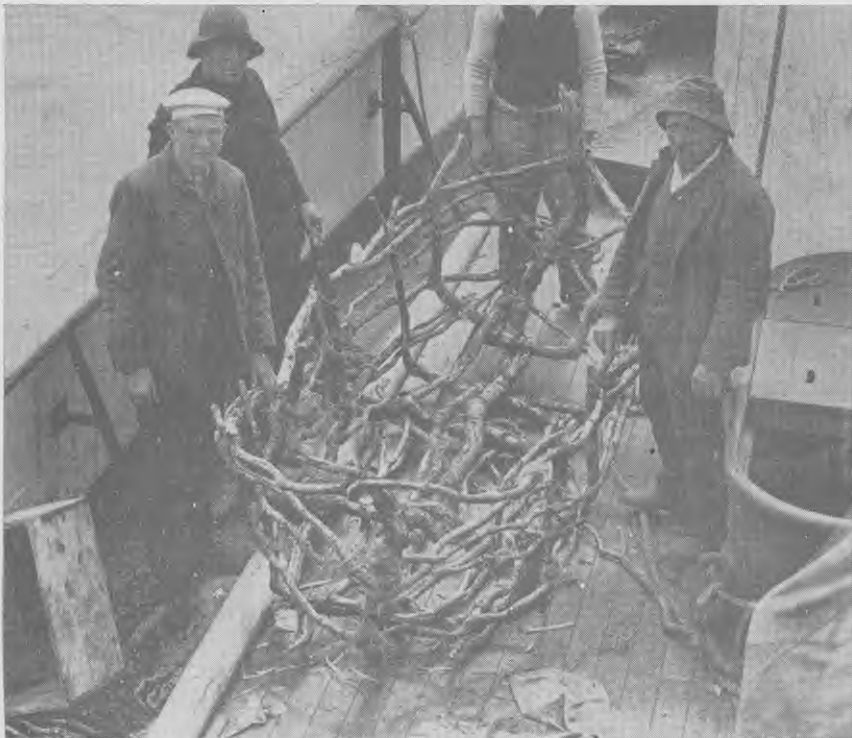
[Frank McGregor photo.]
One of the 50 replicas made by Josiah Wedgwood of the famous Portland vase. This replica, which is now in the possession of the Canterbury Museum, is the only one in New Zealand.

600 A.D., the Santa Maria of Christopher Columbus (1492), a sailing ship fashioned in bone by French prisoners of war during the Napoleonic campaigns, Captain Cook's Resolution, in which he made his voyages of exploration in the Antarctic and the Pacific, the Bounty, commanded by Captain Bligh, whose crew mutinied on a trip to the South Seas to obtain specimens of the bread fruit tree, and the East Indiaman Charlotte Jane and her three sister ships which brought the first settlers to Canterbury in December, 1850.

Dundonald Coracle

Most amazing of all is the Dundonald coracle, the crude framework being constructed of crooked sticks and covered with skin or cloth. It conveyed the castaways from the barque Dundonald, wrecked on Disappointment Island, west of the Auckland group, in March, 1907, to the main island, where there was a depot containing clothes and food. The museum is particularly rich in mementos of polar exploration, as Lyttelton was frequently a port of call for such expeditions.

A valuable Polynesian collection was obtained by the present Director during the visit to Britain which preceded his appointment. Acquired by gift or exchange from British museums, the artifacts include relics of the voyages of Vancouver and Cook and collections made by the Rev. William Ellis and other early workers of the London Missionary Society. The collections come from Hawaii, the Marquesas, Tahiti, and the Cook, Austral, and Tongan groups.



The rough coracle used by the castaways from the barque Dundonald in 1907 and now an exhibit in the Canterbury Museum.