



*The site of the mission station.*

These trees—and a walk round Kerikeri in daylight will confirm the impression that there are a great many of them—are not old. They are the mark of the new Kerikeri, the Kerikeri of to-day. A few years ago you could look for miles across undulating country to an unbroken horizon. Then pines and blue-gums were planted to shelter citrus-fruit farms. Fifteen years ago they grew round the homes and infant orchards of about thirty people. To-day they shelter 500 acres of fruit-trees and vines and the houses of 700-odd people. And with this expansion into one of the largest orange and lemon-growing districts in New Zealand it may be said that Kerikeri is emerging from its second pioneering period since the European settlement of New Zealand began.

The Rev. Samuel Marsden, Senior Chaplain in the colony of New South Wales and superintendent of the Mission of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, walked across this district on his first visit to this country in the year of Waterloo. He travelled from his ship, the "Active," lying in the Bay of Islands, in a Maori canoe, and stepped ashore at the head of the Kerikeri River in a potato-ground belonging to a brother of the great chief Hongi. The land was

treeless, fern-covered. Marsden liked the look of it. "I considered this district the most promising for a new settlement of any I had met with in New Zealand," he wrote, "the soil being rich, the land pretty level, free from timber, easy to work with the plough, and bounded by a fine fresh-water river, the communication by water free and open to any part of the Bay of Islands, and safe anchorage for ships of any burden within about two leagues of the settlement."

Accordingly, when Marsden came to New Zealand on his second visit in 1810, he bought from Hongi for forty-eight "falling axes" 13,000 acres of this land, and there, at Gloucester Vale, as the white men first called Kerikeri, he established the second mission station in New Zealand. (He had established the first at Rangihoua, about 12 miles from Kerikeri, on his first visit in 1814-15.)

The first buildings were to consist of a public store, a house for James Kemp, an artisan missionary, and a blacksmith's shop for Kemp to work in. But before any permanent buildings could be erected the missionaries had to build themselves a boat to carry the timber up the Kerikeri River. This vessel, the first, as Marsden says, "ever built upon the northern island of New Zealand," was a 20-ton flat-bottom punt. It was launched on September 13, 1819, and the next day took its first load to the site of the new settlement.

The house then built for James Kemp stands to-day as the oldest wooden building in New Zealand. It is a pleasant two-storied English farm house looking across the broad reach of the river to tree-covered rising country on the other side. The land behind it rises,