

# Colenso to Balfour



**Orchid extracts from  
William Colenso's letters to  
David Balfour 1875-1889**

Cover: *Pterostylis patens* Col.

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Compiled by Ian St George

No. 16 in the New Zealand Native Orchid Group's *Historical Series*, Wellington, 2008  
ISSN 0114-5568



## Introduction

William Colenso is one of the very important names in early New Zealand botany, and especially orchidology. An earlier issue in this series covers much of his unique contribution [1], and his orchid descriptions are reproduced there.

Bruce Hamlin wrote, “Colenso's collecting can be divided conveniently into two periods: (1) the missionary years 1836–52; and (2) the years preceding and including his retirement from 1879–99. The lack of activity between these periods is explained by the necessity of his earning a living after he was unfrocked.

“The early years are those of the great journeys: to North Cape, East Cape – Bay of Plenty – Waikato, and then, after his move to Hawke's Bay, the journeys across the Ruahines to Taupo and the bi-annual walks down the Wairarapa Coast to Wellington and back via the Wairarapa valley....

“After his retirement in 1884, Colenso renewed his interest in botany. Collecting was nearly all done in southern Hawke's Bay, in the old Seventy-mile Bush, roughly from Takapau to the Manawatu Gorge.” [2].

In the first period he sent many orchids to Kew, and Hooker described 20 of them. In the second period Colenso described 36 orchids. This issue refers to that second period. Colenso collected avidly in his retirement – albeit in a more limited geographical range than his earlier foraging, but in this second period he was helped by an “enthusiastic band of amateurs” who sent him specimens.

Table 1 shows the orchids Colenso described, who collected them, and where.

## Colenso's collectors

**David Paton Balfour** 1841–1894 sheepfarmer, station manager, roading supervisor, diarist, was born in Scotland, worked for a shoemaker, then for a ropemaker, and at the age of 10 or 11 he became a cowman on a farm, working from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day. He left when he was 13 to become a high country shepherd at Glenisla. His father took the family to Australia, and David found odd jobs before moving to a large sheep station; there he was given the responsibility of tallying and pasturing the sheep. He joined the goldrush to Otago in 1862, worked on a sheep station at Moeraki, and attended night school in 1864 and quickly became literate. He supported himself with work on various South Island stations. Balfour moved to Hawke's Bay in 1866, purchased a rough tract of land miles up the Mohaka River. Later he managed Gwavas station, and in 1873 took up employment with John Kinross who owned Mangawhare station and Glenross. He married Elizabeth Roberts on 18 November 1876 at Puketapu; they were to have three children. Balfour studied astronomy and botany, the latter enabling him to collect plants for William Colenso. He had accumulated an extensive library, which in 1878 he made available to the station staff and community; they had previously contributed money of

<b>Table 1: Species described by Colenso</b>	<b>Found by</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Dendrobium lessonii</b>	WC	Norsewood, Cape Turakirae	1845-6
Sarcophilus brevicauda	WC Balfour	70 Mile Bush Glenross	1881 Sep
<b>Pterostylis emarginata</b>	WC Winkelmann SW Hardy	Ruahines Te Aute Hampden (Tikokino)	1882
<b>Bulbophyllum ichthyostomum</b>	H. Hill	Forest near Kumeroa, R. Manawatu, County of Waipawa	1883 May
<b>Corysanthes hypogaea</b>	WC	Norsewood	1883 Sep
Corysanthes papillosa	Balfour	Hawkes Bay and Glenross	1883
<b>Earina quadrilobata</b>	WC A. Hamilton	Norsewood Heights Mt Kaweka	1883 desc
<b>Prasophyllum pauciflorum</b>	WC	West of Napier	1883
<b>Microtis longifolia</b>	WC	Norsewood, Dannevirke	1883-84 Feb- Mar
Pterostylis patens	WC Balfour	Norsewood Glenross	1884
<b>Microtis papillosa</b>	CP Winkelmann	Kaipara Heads	1884 Oct
<b>Pterostylis rubella</b>	RW Rawson	Whangaroa, Manganui	1884
<b>Thelymitra formosa</b>	WC	Waipawa	1884 desc
<b>Earina alba</b>	WC	Banks of R. Maungatawhainui	1878-85
<b>Pterostylis tristis</b>	H. Hill	Open turfy spots. Flat lands, south bank of Waipawa river.	1885
Thelymitra alba	Balfour	Glenross	1885,
<b>Thelymitra cornuta</b>	Winkelmann	Pouto Point, N. Kaipara	1885
<b>Thelymitra nemoralis</b>	WC	70 Mile Bush	1885 desc
<b>Thelymitra purpureofusca</b>	WC	70 Mile Bush	1885 desc
Orthoceras rubrum	WC Balfour	Hills between Napier and Mohaka Glenross	1870-76 1885
<b>Gastrodia leucopetala</b>	WC	Norsewood, Dannevirke	1886 desc
Prasophyllum variegatum	Balfour	Glenross	1887,
<b>Thelymitra concinna</b>	A. Hamilton	R. Mohaka	1887
<b>Thelymitra nervosa</b>	"a visitor"	Ruapehu	1888 desc
<b>Thelymitra fimbriata</b>	?	Fortrose	1888
<b>Caladenia variegata</b>	WC	Top hill near Norsewood	1889 Dec
<b>Orthoceras caput-serpentis</b>	H. Hill	Near R. Moawhango, E. Taupo	1889
<b>Pterostylis auriculata</b>	?	Fortrose	1889
<b>Pterostylis speciosa</b>	H. Hill	Near Mt Tongariro, E. Taupo	1889
<b>Pterostylis polyphylla</b>	H. Hill	Near Mt Tongariro, E. Taupo	1889
<b>Corysanthes orbiculata</b>	H. Suter	Black Birch Creek, Mt Cook village	1890
<b>Bulbophyllum tuberculatum</b>	A. Hamilton	Forest near Petane, Hawkes Bay Woods near Palmerston	1893 1889
<b>Caladenia macrophylla</b>	A. Olsen	Ruahine mountain range, E. side	1894
<b>Pterostylis venosa</b>	A. Olsen	E. side Ruahines	1894
<b>Pterostylis subsimilis</b>	A. Olsen	E. side Ruahines	1896 desc
<b>Pterostylis trifolia</b>	A. Olsen	E. side Ruahines	1899

their own to buy books for winter reading. A poignant diary entry on 13 May 1883 shows us the farmer-scientist: “Tried to mount some things for Microscope but did not succeed very well. Tried to burn off some Manuka in old Station paddock and succeeded better”. When Kinross became bankrupt owing him over one thousand pounds, he was forced out of Glenross in 1889 and moved to Puketapu. Balfour became a Hawke's Bay County Council roading supervisor. He drowned at Puketapu on 13 July 1894 while trying to rescue a sheep from a drain; he had been weakened by influenza. Balfour wrote an account of his life for his children, and that, together with a number of letters and his diaries (begun in the 1880s), are valuable sources of information about contemporary life in New Zealand [3]. He collected for Colenso the orchids *Sarcochilus breviscapa* (1881), *Corysanthes papillosa* (1883), *Pterostylis patens* (1884), *Thelymitra alba* (1885), *Orthoceras rubrum* (1885) and *Prasophyllum variegatum* (1887).

**Augustus Hamilton** 1854–1913 was a scientist and collector, latterly Director of the Dominion Museum. He was born in 1853 at Poole, Dorset, England, educated at Dorset County School and at Epsom Medical College, but did not complete his degree. In 1876 he came to New Zealand and became a teacher. He taught in primary schools at Thornodon, Okarito, and Petane. At Petane he joined the Hawke's Bay Philosophical Society, becoming secretary, and established the first Napier Museum, founded largely on items of ethnographic interest which he had collected from Maori sources. The museum was destroyed in the earthquake of 1931 and many valuable pieces disappeared; but those that remained form the basis of the present collections. In 1890 he was appointed Registrar of the University of Otago, and the most productive period (1890 – 1903) of his life began, with a long list of papers on botany, zoology, and ethnology in the *Transactions*. He also began his outstanding work – *The Art Workmanship of the Maori* – which dealt with all aspects of Maori material, culture, and life. In 1903 he was appointed Director of the Colonial (later, Dominion) Museum and from then until his death, 10 years later, he worked on increasing that institution's ethnological, historical, and entomological collections [4]. Hamilton collected *Earina quadrilobata* (1883), *Bolbophyllum tuberculatum* (1893) and *Thelymitra concinna* (1894) for Colenso.

**SW Hardy** is listed as a member of Hawkes Bay Philosophical Institute in 1878 (he was then at Clive), and in 1883 and 1886 in Hampden. Tikokino, north of Ongaonga was originally named Hampden, after Sir John Hampden and was settled in anticipation of the main railway line from Napier to Wellington passing through the town. But the railway was never to come through Hampden, and the town eventually became known for the milling of totara and kahikatea from the surrounding bush. At one time 20 timber mills were working in the area. Eventually, the timber ran out, partly through milling and partly as a result of the bushfires, and the town became a service centre for the surrounding farms. Old Flynn's Store, built in 1894, still stands on SH50, and the hotel, the second on the site after the first was destroyed by fire, still has the name The Sawyers Arms after the many mill workers who used to congregate there [5]. Hardy collected *Pterostylis emarginata* (1882) for Colenso.

**Henry Thomas Hill** was born in England, was a gifted educator, and succeeded Colenso as chief district school inspector in Hawkes Bay. He had 38 papers on various subjects published in the *Transactions*. He was Napier Mayor 1917–19. He then embarked on a rigorous programme of school inspections. The diaries Hill kept indicate that he had a very deliberate pattern of visiting to enable him to cover his 8,578 square mile district on horseback twice each year. On these trips he had to spend nights either camped in the open or in substandard backblocks accommodation. “There are three aspects of life in this district – town, country, bush,” he wrote in his annual report for 1880. He pointed out that “the modes of life, the surroundings, and the pursuits of the people” were different in the three environments, and that accordingly so were “the conceptions of the people.” Makaretu school teacher William Howlett won high praise from Henry Hill for his innovative curriculum, in which the children “learnt by doing.” The majority of his pupils were Scandinavians, wrestling with the English language. A keen scientist, Hill had a particular interest in the volcanic plateau of the central North Island. He is thought to have been the first Pakeha to climb to the crater of Mt Ruapehu. In retirement Henry Hill divided his time between his Napier home and the property he had purchased at Lake Taupo. [6]. He collected the orchids *Bulbophyllum ichthyostomum* (1883), *Pterostylis tristis* (1885), *Orthoceras caput-serpentis* (1889), *Pterostylis speciosa* (1889) and *P. polyphylla* (1889) for Colenso.

**Andreas Olsen:** A. Olsen collected many plants for Colenso, mostly from “E side Ruahines, Waipawa county”. The *Bush Advocate* of Thursday 6 Sep. 1888 reported that, “Mr. A. Olsen of Norsewood is confined to his bed through the effects of a cold caught by getting wet and remaining in his wet clothes.” I googled Olsen/Colenso, and found a paper [7] which said, “My father, H. A. Olsen, ... as well as being a bush farmer, was very interested in anything related to the bush and the wildlife in it. He had been brought up in the Seventy Mile Bush in southern Hawke's Bay, and his father, A. Olsen, was one of an enthusiastic band of amateurs, led by Henry Hill, who collected botanical specimens for Colenso in 1880–1890”. Ninetyseven year old Malcolm Olsen still lives in Levin. I spoke with him by phone, and he told me his grandfather was Andreas Olsen, known as “Painter Olsen” to distinguish him from Carpenter Olsen (who built the Lutheran church) and Butcher Olsen, among the other Andreas Olsens living in the region. He had a property in Garfield Road, on the north side near the railway at Makotuku, but his collections were all made on excursions to the Ruahine ranges. Colenso named *Veronica olsenii* (now *Parahebe hookeriana* var. *olsenii*) for him. He collected *Caladenia macrophylla* (1894), *Pterostylis venosa* (1894), *Pterostylis subsimilis* (1896) and *Pterostylis trifolia* (1899) for Colenso.

Of **RW Rawson** I can find nothing. He sent *Pterostylis rubella* from Manganui, Northland in 1884.

**Henry Suter**, who came to New Zealand from Switzerland in 1887, began to work on local molluscs shortly after the beginning of the century. He compiled descriptions of all



the known specimens of molluscs in the region, and in 1913 he published his *Manual of New Zealand Mollusca*. This work contained descriptions of 1,079 species, and it also served to bring the nomenclature used in New Zealand into conformance with international standards. Suter's *Manual* is viewed as the classic reference source in New Zealand conchology to the present day [8]. He sent *Corysanthes orbiculata* to Colenso from Black Birch creek, Mt Cook village, in 1890.

**Charles Peter Winkelmann** was a teacher at Te Aute. He wrote a paper in the Transactions, "Notes on the Hot Springs Nos. 1 and 2, Great Barrier Island, with Sketches showing the Temperature of the Waters" which concluded with the words, "To the botanist and geologist I venture to promise an excellent field; and to the lover of nature abundance of material will be found, enough at any rate to prove the mighty workings of a strong but unseen hand." He collected several plants there, described by Colenso in Trans.N.Z.Inst. He had dispensing qualifications and was later a teacher and a native dispenser at Otorohanga, and later again in Northland [9]. He named his son Walter Colenso Winkelmann. His brother Henry Winkelmann was a famous Auckland photographer [10]. He visited Balfour at Glenross, and also sent orchids to Colenso: *Pterostylis emarginata* (Te Aute 1882), *Microtis papillosa* (Kaipara 1884) and *Thelymitra cornuta* (Kaipara 1885).

## Colenso and Balfour

Colenso's letters to Balfour are in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington [11]. Balfour's station and personal diaries are preserved in the Napier Museum and Art Gallery. Balfour's letters to Colenso seem to have been lost.

Balfour joined the Hawkes Bay Philosophical Institute in 1875, and Colenso wrote to him as secretary on 17 March.

*Napier March 17/75*

*Mr Balfour*

*Dr Sir*

*I have just received your note of enquiry of this date – I am sorry you should have had the trouble to write it. I duly received your letter, ditto the chq (enclosed) for £1.1.0, and you have been admitted a member, – our rules are now in the printer's hands, & I hope soon to be able to send you a copy.*

*I am*

*Dear Sir*

*Yours truly*

*W. Colenso*

*Hon. Sec.*

On 20 August he wrote again, sending a volume of the *Transactions*, and asking for ferns, and so began a correspondence that lasted fourteen years, ending apparently in 1889 when Balfour left Glenross. The early letters are full of references to ferns, hepaticae, lichens, insects, fungi, moths, cropstones, fossils, bones, liverworts, cures for tutu poisoning and so on – even a date stone. Colenso refers in these letters to making drawings, and indeed to colour drawings, but I am not aware of any surviving botanical drawings done by him.

The letters are a strange mix of bonhomie, botany, gossip, Hawke's Bay Philosophical Society activities, political comment and introspective complaints about his health. Balfour should have become heartily sick of the old man's grizzles, demands and reprimands, yet there are tender and revealing (albeit self-centred) passages in Colenso's letters, and it seems each valued the other's friendship.

*How I go with you – when you speak so feelingly of the want of a “kindred spirit” & of your therefore, “living in a world of your own entirely alone”; – Ah; I do understand you; but do, for a moment, think of me. No wife, no bairns, no visitors – I, too, am living in a world “Entirely alone” as to human society....(29 June 1883).*

*Then, as to your experience of thinking awe when on the mountain tops alone & meeting those menacing masses of clouds!! This is capital! Now, I well know, (if I had dared doubt before) of your sympathising with me generally. Good. (12 Aug 1884).*

*Should your heart be overflowing with love and good feelings, and so lead you to write to me in the Bush, address to me at Norsewood, as that will be my head quarters. (15 June 1885).*

Colenso was a conservationist long before the term was coined....

*No doubt you are fully right as to the improving of the wilderness, & posterity will owe you, & other early settlers more than they can ever pay! But, on the other hand – it would be a really good thing if every plant – however useless or noxious, or insignificant, – could first be known, and accurately described before it gets polished off! For all such (animal & vegetable) are wanted to make up the unbroken chain; – that links animate & inanimate nature together. – (13 July 1886).*

He had his highs ...

*Yesterday, 3 p.m. we had rain! With thunder & lightning!! Quite awful, tropical. It frightened the “auld wifie” here, & elated me, sky-high! I always rejoice at such times with a most exuberant overflow of spirits. (I am also, at sea, in a gale, or storm)....*

*I am pretty (or very) well again. A great change with me, for the better took place on Sunday last, & yesterday, Electricity clinched the nail. I have for 50 years been a great believer in electricity, – & am of the opinion, that future ages will make wondrous uses of it, & also find it a great curative power. I should like to go off to the woods again! “My heart is in the Highlands!” (30 Nov 1886).*

... and his lows...

*I love the quiet of the woods but I do not intend to do much (or to attempt to do much) in Botany this time. Perhaps I may relinquish it altogether. I assure you, I have felt worn & tired last night when I steered my lonely way from the Atheneum, at 10.45. I got hither with difficulty – of weakness of legs & body – & much sadness of spirit. Can you possibly understand this? (13 Nov 1888)*

Too many medical historians have been tempted to make retrospective diagnoses of the perceived character traits of great men — but was Colenso bipolar?

He could be callous...

*For my part I do not think much of “the Eruption” at Tarawera, and the numbers of people losing their lives “under such fearful circumstances” (as you say), – because such, aye & far worse happen every day in shipwreck, fire, flood, cyclones, & war. I believe their deaths were easy, comparatively, with those by shipwrecks etc. (13 July 1886)*

Colenso used repetitious Scots idiom for the benefit of the Scottish Balfour, referring to his children as “bairnies”, writing “bide a wee”, “hie thee to the Hielands” and the like, in an almost patronising manner. Balfour was a busy sheepfarmer, and spring was taken up with lambing and shearing, but Colenso admonished him for not writing more often, and repeated over and over his desire for specimens.

Perhaps the correspondence ended acrimoniously, as a result of Colenso’s “almost pathological confidence in the justice and correctness of his own actions” [12], and indeed there are no letters after 30 April 1889. Balfour was facing financial ruin and their baby daughter had died; Colenso knew that – and he, that selfrighteous, judgemental, opinionated, insensitive, narcissistic, pulpit banging, Pope bashing, and ultimately unsympathetic preacher wrote back,

*I write a few lines to you – to thank you for your letter of 24th Feb., and to express my hopes that Mrs. Balfour is again quite well.*

*I had seen in the Papers the Birth & the Death, and while I know the Mother would naturally feel it, I cannot say that I was grieved at it, (in burying many infants in past years, although at times, I have even shed a tear at their graves, I have always considered them better off,) and in this particular case of the infant being diseased. I look on it as a great mercy & one that I feel thankful for.*

Then, as a post script, the unkindest cut of all...

*In your letter you say:– “I sent for a Doctor and for Mr. Tukes. Mr. Tuke just arrived in time: we gave her the name of Grace Elizabeth, and 10 minutes after the Baptism the poor little thing left for the Throne of Grace: where we hope she now is”.*

*I cannot tell you how greatly – how very strangely, these words have affected me! Day & night they have been running in my mind. It is a long long time since I have heard of such a strange medley: and bearing in mind, that you are a good Scotchman & a man of sound mind & strong reasoning powers, I cannot help thinking that you wrote them down hastily, never once considering their real meanings, and correct inferences.*

*I look on them as containing most erroneous, most pernicious doctrine! Just what your brave Countrymen with John Knox at their head once drove out of Scotland. To think for a moment, that Mr. Tuke in sprinkling a few drops of water on an infant send straight to glory!!! And, if without the water, What then? This is the Papist opus operatum with a vengeance! But there is also much more behind it. To me, there is something awful in the thought of it and therefore constrain myself unwillingly to write. (3 March 1889).*

Balfour's reply, if there was one, is not on the record.

At the height of their collaboration Balfour collected and sent to Colenso many specimens, among them the orchids described by Colenso as

- *Sarcochilus breviscapa* 1881 (*Drymoanthus adversus* [Hook.f.] Dockrill 1967),
- *Corysanthes papillosa* 1883 (*Nematoceras papillosum* [Colenso] Molloy, D.L.Jones & M.A.Clem. 2002),
- *Pterostylis patens* 1884,
- *Thelymitra alba* 1885 (*Thelymitra longifolia* J.R.Forst. & G.Forst. 1776),
- *Orthoceras rubrum* 1885 (*Orthoceras novae-zeelandiae* [A.Rich.] M.A.Clem., D.L.Jones & Molloy. 1989),
- *Prasophyllum variegatum* 1887(*Corunastylis nuda* (Hook.f.) D.L.Jones & M.A.Clem. 2002).

Colenso made frequent mention of these orchids and others in his letters to Balfour: those orchid extracts are reprinted here, along with a few interesting botanical and other snippets.

In his diaries Balfour mentions letters to Colenso, but he gives little hint as to actual sites of collections at Glenross—except that “Conical Hill Bush” seems to have been a favourite botanising spot, where he took guests.

Ian St George  
April 2008

### Key

References to the literature are numbered sequentially in square brackets.  
References to orchids are given capital letters in superscript, as follows

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>A</b> | = <i>Sarcochilus breviscapa</i> (the “divot” plant) [13] |
| <b>B</b> | = <i>Corysanthes papillosa</i> [14]                      |
| <b>C</b> | = <i>Caladenia variegata</i> [15]                        |
| <b>D</b> | = <i>Pterostylis patens</i> [16]                         |
| <b>E</b> | = <i>Prasophyllum variegatum</i> [17]                    |
| <b>F</b> | = <i>Gastrodia leucopetala</i> [16]                      |
| <b>G</b> | = <i>Orthoceras rubrum</i> [16]                          |
| <b>H</b> | = <i>Thelymitra alba</i> [16]                            |
| <b>I</b> | = <i>Pterostylis tristis</i> [18]                        |

## The letters

**Napier Jan 20/81**

(2pm)

Mr. Balfour

My dear Sir

Last night I received your welcome note & enclosure dated 13th ins. thank for it – or for all of them – to which I must add your little packet of plants of last week – I am now waiting (on my oars) to go down to our Council at 3 o'clock, & in the meanwhile I write you this, for I am very busy....

Now to your plants. The first lot contained an Orchis, probably Earina mucronata, small & starved, – but as the flowers are unexpanded, I cannot possibly say; these plants com. throughout N.Z....

(2) the second one, just to hand, is another Orchis<sup>A</sup>, but it is impossible to say if it is a new species, or an old one, from this small spn with three leaves. This little plant has pleased me much, and, dry though it was, I have been coaxing it with water and have partly resuscitated this “dry bone”, and hope to succeed in getting it to live. I purpose tying it (loosely) in the garden to a tree, & watering it daily etc, etc.

You say you have planted two – no good; sure to die; these fine aerial gentry wont live in the earth; if you have a mossy branch of a living tree near you, or a good fork, tye them there, or send them on to me (or some more of the same specie)....

I was a wee bit disappointed in not seeing you on that Monday, and I thought of the bairnies & the tutu.

Yours truly

W.C.

**Feb 28/81**

How are you? And all the rest of kind enquiries. – I find it more than a month since the date of your last letter, – which I have again this morning perused carefully, – wondering what on earth your (Gaelic?) “Divot” really means; I suppose, that specimen sample, or the thing in question already mentioned or understood, is what is meant, by your wonderfully expressive word; my auld wifie here (Scotch, of course) cannot well explain the Cabalistic & hidden term to me, – though I fancy she knows its meaning....

I should not omit to tell you that the little orchideous plant<sup>A</sup>, with a broad leaf, that you sent me, is still living. I kept it indoors in a cup (tending it like a sick child) until Friday last, when I tied it to a tree in my garden, there to take its chance, watering it, of course, and now this rain has come it may live; it has but one leaf left; & I know its Genus flowers in Oct–Nov.

Keep a good eye ever yours....

### **Napier March 28<sup>th</sup> 1881**

My conscience will no longer allow of my deferring writing to you – though I am again, very busy (indeed, was writing all day, Yesterday; scarcely caring to be disturbed for food).

I returned on Wed 16, and found two letters of yours (4 & 11) with a box of specimens awaiting me; and further, that you yourself had been here the day before; I was to have returned on that day – but the crush of gamblers, etc, etc, coming to the races was too great, so I went back to my lodgings....

Now in reply to your two letters. “Divot” I soon found out, inland, from my old acquaintance John Stewart (& afterwards, from P. Gow), – you might have called it a turf, or a sod, – or a matted layer of Epiphytal vegetable roots from the trunk of a tree; I opened the box the day I arrived; found the Divots all right....

I have secured your Divot containing the 2 leaved Orchideous plant<sup>A</sup> to a tree here, and am watering it nightly (during this drought), – I hope it may flower; but the former specimen in the letter, was the one – as it had frequently flowered in past seasons, having some 6–7 old spike panicles. Keep a good lookout for flowers from this plant, as it may prove to be new. A large Divot of another Epiphytal Orchis Epidendrum autumnalis, which I brought last year from the Bush, is now flowering on the Ngaio tree, where I had fixed it. It is larger than E. mucronata, & is very sweet scented....

Your spn (*Metrosideros scandens*)... was spoiled – being ½ rotten and mouldy.... Better put up all flowering spns in a letter, or in a bit of paper, so that they may dry quickly, or send one or two in a newspaper. I have little doubt but you have several new things in your Bush – but the access is difficult for me, as compared with the 40 mile one....

### **Napier June 24<sup>th</sup> 1881**

... also the last lot of plants (Orchid living<sup>A</sup>.) I received from you – though I did not know until P.D. told me, that you had been to town, & also brought them. I thank you for them, and as I have managed to secure them pretty well & naturally to a tree, I hope they may flower.

### **Napier Sept 16<sup>th</sup> 1881**

...I am writing you at this time, mainly about your little divott plants<sup>A</sup>; as this one I have here is flowering, and I intend to cut off the flower stalk tomorrow for close examination; and I want for you to look at yours & see if they (or some of them) are not also flowering, – and if so, then to cut me off 2 or 3 stalks with the flowers (not the leaves), & send them me – but do not send them in a letter, rather put them in a wee bit of old rag, or cotton wool, & put them loosely in one of those small tin match boxes, tied round, & with a hanging label attached on a bit of card, or parchment with a 1d or 2d. stamp on it – the label. In handling the pair wee bits of flowers, you must do it carefully,

so as not to bruise them or disturb their “pollen masses” – which, in their original undisturbed state, is of great consequence for examining.

Yours however, may be a week or so later, than mine, but let them be all fully open before you cut them off.

You will also find on your plants, dead old flower stalks of last season (at least I have 3 or 4 on mine, 2 on each plant) cut me off some (or all) of them, close to the juncture with the living plant (but not so as to cut the plant) and send them to me, they will be useful, – these being dry, you can enclose in a letter should you have nothing else to send....

Let me have a line from you early, and with kind regards & best wishes ....

### **Napier Oct 17<sup>th</sup> 1881**

....Keep a good look out for your Divott Plants<sup>A</sup> – mine have flowered, – 3 plants did so, and by daily watching I secured fair specimens; – but I wish to see others; and should yours flower, leave two or more stems for to seed, as I wish also to see the seed pods. I have a portion of an old seed pod from the Bush. As you say, it is difficult to get at these plants in their own home – I think I shall try some of the Bush where men are felling timber trees – that is, not this visit of mine to Bush, but my next trip (a month or five weeks hence) after our meetings are over for the season.

Should yours flower & you dry me a specimen or two, just take out the flowering specimen as low down as possible (it has a bract at its very base), & dry it within leaves of any book, not pressing it much.

I suppose you have not commenced shearing yet. Weather here delightfully fine of late, with gentle rain now & then – the whole of Napier looking charming in her spring garments....

### **Napier Friday Nov 25/81**

I had intended, & hoped to have been far away inland today – but the weather (here) & Rheumatism have prevented me; so I scribble you this, – to thank you for your kind note of 19<sup>th</sup>, also for the green lizard. But first to your note.

(1) Don't trouble yourself any more (for the present, at least,) about the “Divot” plant<sup>A</sup>; 3 of mine have flowered (long ago), & Hamilton, also, brought me immature flowers of one from Petane; I have fully described it, in a paper (read at our last meeting) & exhibited its flowers, etc, – very small.

(2) The Lizard; its arrival surprised me; My man came in with a bottle, saying, “Heres another bairn (or wean) for you”; It is a different species from those I had (very likely Naultimus elegans the com green one, but a very fine one) – I also lament over it, as I fear I must kill it. You ask about the others!!! Surely you have forgotten, or have I forgotten? they all came to grief, one after another, through the extreme carelessness of

my people in my various absences; also another very pretty spotted one, kindly sent from Wellington– all have perished.

(3) I had a sad time of it up in the Bush. I arrived there on the 21st at noon, went into the woods (2 miles off) that afternoon, it came on to rain, & I was drenched; Saty rain; Sunday rain; Monday rain; Tuesday rain, but I again ventured out to the woods, & again paid for it worse than before. Wed rainy– nevertheless I (who was half cranky with so much confinement, in a small room and a terribly smoky chimney which prevented me having a fire, & so kept me cold & miserable;) – I again went to the woods, & again got wet – worse than ever. Thursday was at last, fine, but I could do nothing – save to walk up & down a bit in the sun – for I had caught a dreadful cold – which remained on me 2–3 weeks, so that I dreaded our last meeting night (before it arrived) having no one to help or aid in any way. That however passed off pretty well, but next day, again Lumbago & Rheumatism, & I am scarcely well yet; Verily I have had a full month of it.

And yet (methinks you will say) – Going again to the wet woods; Yes, it is true, but the weather will be warmer there now, (that is when it is settled), and I saw several nice wee little Crypts, and I am going to hunt them up ere the summer heats fall on them.

The folks up there told me, they had not had such a week of weather during the whole past winter. It not only rained, but hail, and snow abound on the hills, & the cutting cold Southerly winds; – and then there was no butcher within 6–7 miles, & the weather being so bad, he did not come round to the outlying huts; I was glad to get away, & would have done so earlier if I could.

You say you are busy shearing (perhaps, not, just now,) good news from Home in rise of wool. Hope you are all well, & with kind regards.

### **Napier March 1st 1882**

Many thanks for your kind, & full, & welcome letter of the 24th Feb, & for its accompanying packet – all right to hand Sunday evening,– (26th)....

First, to the remark in the Report re “2, Orchid plants, from you & Mr W”. – these were quite distinct – One, (yours) Epiphytcal (your divot lot<sup>A</sup>) only in leaf from you – (but in flower from Mr Hamilton & self) – and I wish greatly for more flowers, which however are very small & insignificant, almost hidden under leaves; his were terrestrial (from Masons run) finely in flr, & a large single flower too, for the plant, but not new (one, no doubt, of Hookers Corysanthes, which are all much alike, at first sight, and are difficult of discrimination) – and were, unfortunately, too much crushed (squeezed together flat) in his pocket book to be of any use;– he has now (on Saturday last) sent me a lot of the same in spirits (as I had requested at the time) – but all long past flg & so (again) useless; – W is zealous, but needs a little instruction. ...



### **Napier Wednesday March 8/82**

Last night I received your truly interesting letter\* of the 5th 6th, with accompanying matchbox packet, & thank you for all; particularly for all your kind & zealous pains in the good cause of Nat Science, & most particularly for your valued closing expression that you “consider it to be a pleasure to do anything I ask”. Well, I would there were a few more like you – in good truthful wishes, & honest zeal – and, we would soon know a little more of Natures Stores, hidden, yet awaiting in the rich, and prolific fields around us. Believe me, your letter, is a treat, & real pleasure.....

The 2 small plants, with a single leaf to each, are 2 Orchideous ones<sup>B</sup>, (very similar, in leaf & size, to those of W,) but flowering spns are needed which wont be until next Summer. I fancy they have also been described in Ws.....

### **Napier May 30<sup>th</sup> 1882**

....I am pretty well; hope you & yours are quite so. Keep your eye on your old Divot plants, as the spring comes on....

### **Napier Sep 13<sup>th</sup> 1882**

....I am glad to hear off your new lot of our Divot plants<sup>A</sup>, be sure you send me a lot of flowering specimens, by & bye, some fully open, & some not open.

Curiously enough, my good friend and Co-worker (like yourself, & doubly so, being also “fra the land of Cakes”, or “blue heather”, – which you will) John Stewart of Takapau, last week sent me a ½ doz. good leafing spns, & some w. old fl, & fit on them, – of another & closely allied Sarcochilus, – it may be S. adversus of Hd Bk....

P.S. In sending me any flowers etc of the divots – dont press them – put them up in a little box, with Moss....

### **Napier Saturday Oct 21st 1882**

I have been thinking much of you during this week – and this day Hamilton of Petane kindly called and brought me several nice wee things (of Springs gifts), among them a flowering branch of your famed Divot plants<sup>A</sup>....

I hope to get away to the woods next week. Keep a good lookout for flowers of your Divots, and in drying any, let it be done early, and without much pressure, just in a book, changing place daily.....

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\* Balfour wrote in his diary on 5 March, “Was nearly all day writing to Mr. Colenso, sent him some liverworts and a description of Libellula holes”.

### Napier Feb 13th 1883

Your (long expected) letter of the 9th Feb came to hand yesterday. Do not think, that, in my replying at once, I am overflowing with the milk of human kindness; or, that I am not something more than a wee bit vexed, at your treatment of me. I am vexed, & no mistake. I would not (could not) be vexed at your long silence (21<sup>st</sup> Oct. to 9<sup>th</sup> Feb – 110 days!!!) had you but saved me a few of your dear Divot plants flowers<sup>A</sup>; on this I had relied, & that kept me quiet, or I should have written long ago, over & over, indeed I would have gone to Glenross myself, to have seen, admired, & fetched them, if I could have for a moment supposed that my friend D.P. Balfour could have served me so.

I did as much (or more) in Dec, to secure some Orchids I had marked away in 70 mile bush, in Nov. I had given strict charge about them etc, to my Scandinavian friend residing there, and as the weeks passed by & no response I rushed in – in time too; & got them.

In this case of yours (re those plants) it is worse – a 1000 times – for I had so much depending on you as a kindly loving naturalist – had mentioned it in my letters to Dr Hector, & to Sir J.D. Hooker; & now – all is gone.

For my part, I would that in this instance, you had acted more “Cannily” (as your people are said to do), & not have told me of your “28 flowers”; then I should not grieve, & have to grieve. However it is no use grieving over spilt milk; – so I give in; having said my say, now I must een sleep quietly....

P.S. If there are any dead flowers or seed vessels to your Divot plants, gather & send them.

### Napier 26 Feb 1883

I am glad to know you have so much good feed with & around you – here it has been quite the contrary till now – the long-wished for rain came at last, on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>, mild, thick, “dripping fatness”, & continued for 2 days, – also, since in showers, doing a great deal of good, the grass here on the hills, has grown 2 inches already. Your account of the fast growing of the ferns is surprising, one would suppose there must be good strong roots below....

I thank you for the flg stems, & for the one capsule<sup>A</sup>; this latter I prized, & set it carefully aside to dry. I had noticed, at first, a small worm hole just where the little flower had fallen, and, today, on going to look at it (in replying to your letter), I found the said little rascally worm had eaten away right to the base; being snugly ensconced within. Wasnt I vexed.

My attention was doubly attracted to the last capsule of the year; through your saying “the plant had a longer narrower leaf” this accords with several specimens sent me last year or Xmas 81, by J. Stewart from Takapau, none were in flower, the season having passed; it may prove to be S. falcatus (see your Hand Book) – let me have a leaf when you next write, also a few more flg stems – although dry....

### Napier Sunday night March 25th 1883

... Now to your letter; 1. I have little doubt of your Divott Plant<sup>A</sup>, with long leaves, being distinct from the former one, but we must wait for flowers – to decide it.

### Norsewood June 5th 1883

I am thinking you will be a little surprised on seeing (above) my place of abode!– here still!! I wrote to you shortly before I left Napier (on 23rd ulto) and then I said, I hoped to return in a day or two. However I came here in rain, and had plenty of it the first few days – then the wind was fearfully high, so that there was no going out (for me) much less venturing into the forest – where among so much of dead standing trees it is very dangerous at such times, especially after heavy rains. Indeed the turnpike or Mail road was in many places strewn with trees and big branches – 2 or 3 men employed in clearing the line, so I had to wait – having come hither for a specific purpose, I was determined (if possible) to accomplish it.

There was little change in the weather till the night of the 1st, then it became cold with snowing on the hills around, though not here. That night a hard frost, very cold, 2nd fine; 3rd fine; 4<sup>th</sup>, a glorious day but very cold; the roads & ditches have frozen, & the frost on the shady side not thawed by night. I went yesterday to Matamau by coach, arriving there I took a snap & a glass of beer & away 2 miles to the woods. How cold & wet & dark in them; there I worked till evening when I returned to the Inn – pleased with my days work.

It was truly a glorious day; Sunday was also a very fine one – but this was super. From sunrise to sunset not a single cloud, no wind, and the air so balmy, and the sky such a heavenly blue. I stood on an open hill top among the woods, & with an overflowing heart joined the tuis in praise. I returned this morning to Norsewood, & away to the woods this afternoon and now have not done my work here – I fear a change for rain is again at hand, & so I have been trying to make hay while the sun shines. Tomorrow I hope to go forth again, also (if possible) on Thursday – and return to Napier on Friday.

Sir J. Hooker wanted particularly for the Roy Bot Gardens all our N.Z. epiphytal Orchids, & I have succeeded in getting good spns of all, save the little Divott plant you have<sup>A</sup> – of this I have but 2 poor or small spns. I want you to send me two or 3 plants, just as they are with the bark & all; lap them up well & send separately by post – I will repay all postages. I purpose packing a lot to go by English mail next week, so I write now to let you know in time.

I am keeping tolerably well, better I think than at Napier. The Bush air agrees with me, but I felt the cold by day & night especially yesterday & this morning, having no fire in my sitting room (of course my own choice ).

**Napier June 29 (83) (night late)**

I have been most diligently employed since my return from “Bush” in sorting & packing specimens; only this afternoon dispatched my last lot (2 cases) living & dried, to Port, to go tomorrow to Lyttelton, thence per “Ionic”, Home. Among the living ones are your 2 “Divott” plants<sup>A</sup>....

**Napier, Wednesday Sept 5th 1883**

And dinna forget the divott plants<sup>A</sup> – which will soon flower – Oct or Nov – with you (shearing time).

P.S. A few of the flowering stalks of your Divott plants (*Sarcophilus*) cut off close to plant, & put carefully into a small bottle with whisky – other few dry in usual way.

**Napier Wednesday night Oct 17/83**

I write a few lines to go to you by your weekly mail tomorrow to remind you of your Divot plants<sup>A</sup>.

Ours have flowered (Hamiltons, at Petane, & mine here) a fortnight back & though yours may be later, they wont be long behind.

**Napier Nov 14/83**

I returned from the Bush on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> (night), and though I found your prized letter & tin here (with others) awaiting me, I could not possibly write to you by next mg mail.

I had my usual “luck” of wet; I got there in driving rain w S wind, riding too, 6 miles from station in open express; & out of 8 days there only 2 were really fine; however, I both endured & worked & I got a few things I was in quest of; notably a new *Fagus*, which I had detected in leaf only last year....

You, my dear botanical friend and man of nature,– you will understand me when I say I am at home up in the woods; not so here.

Your tin with bottle and Orchid in spirit pleased me much<sup>B</sup>; if possible let me have more flowers, fresh, put into damp soft & clean Moss, in a box, match box will do – never mind leaves or roots. It may prove to be a new spn. We have 4 or 5, Corysanthes – curiously enough, the one I had so long sought, & only got by going to the Bush in Sept, is very near to yours, but much smaller\*. I should like also, to have a few spns of the wee little slender thing put up with it, – we have it here (from Petane) but yours may prove to be distinct – it is smaller....

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\* *Corysanthes hypogaea* Col.

### Napier Tuesday night Dec 4th, 1883

I purpose leaving for the Bush on Friday & returning that day fortnight (before the Xmas, to allow of my people here having holiday), & I see, I must write to you tonight, if I write to you at all before I leave. I thank you over & over for your last kind present, they came in at a time when I was done up, fagged out in court all day with the badgering, bothering, Lawyers, (not that they bother me – they do, one another; & the old Judge sits quietly by!!.) Of course you will see a little of it in the papers....

Your little gem like flowers enchanted me<sup>B</sup>; their little Red Riding hood bonnets, of such a charming hue. I freshened them with water (also a little Hepatica) & left them until next day when I quietly had my (selfish?) feast – but I had no one to partake with me & you were not nigh. Curiously enough, it was only the day before, that I, despairing of hearing from you again in your busy time, & anxious to send off my Bot Ms to Dr H, – I had taken out those 3 you had sent in sp, and had spent a mg in drawing up their descriptions, after ascertaining they were distinctly new spn, & not one of those of Australia; & now these fresh beauties came to hand, so I had to go over my work again, & add a little, & write out a fresh fair acct. And so w the Hepatica (which I had also had before, but not in such perfection as these).

I would give a golden guinea to see those Orchids, etc, growing. I am sure there are other good little wee things w them.

I marvel at 2 things – your doing as much in the shearing way, & your doing so much in the Bot way at this time. I saw Mr K in town today (my first day there), and I said to him, how pleased I was to find you had done so much in the wet weather, etc, in which he also agreed, & I thought seemed pleased....

P.S. Were I staying at home, I would gladly accept a few more Corysanthes, but if sent in my absence, would only rot.

### Napier Xmas Day 1883

If I am to write to you by this weeks mail, I must e'en do so today. I returned on Friday last (21st) to N, from the "Bush", & found your ever-welcome & friendly letter awaiting me, with a lot of others!. Yours I read the same night; some of the English ones I did not. I was glad to find you had finished your main shearing, & were, all hands, so well & hearty. How you managed to get through I cannot understand – that is, if you had anything of the wet weather we had little further S.

I had my usual luck (!) of rain & high winds, only 1 really fine day!! that was Saturday 15th, – still, I did my best – fighting for it, & getting wet etc, etc. I got 2–3 additional Orchids, which I hope are new – one in particular greatly pleases me, from the fact of my not having seen one for more than 40 years. It is a Caladenia<sup>C</sup>, & a rare beauty, though, apparantly, closely allied to N.S.W. species. I came upon it unawares in a thick wood; many were growing erect (8 – 10in) from a rotting Moss covered log – Fagus. C. minor is pretty common in the Bay of Islands, on the open clayey fern hills, &

is much smaller than this spn. Then I have also a Microtis, & a Thelymitra (or2?) – but I was too early for them – as, owing to the wetness & coldness of the season, everything was late; Frost, one night. Strawberries only just colouring; fire in my room, & wearing my cloak, etc, indoors!.

Here, however, today (& yesterday) it is just a little too hot; Therm at 75, & close & sultry, with a little rain this afternoon.

I regret your “Divots” not blossoming this year<sup>A</sup>; are they in a natural position? ie sheltered from high winds, & not too much exposed to sun?

#### **Napier Feb 26/84**

... Now if you are, or have been, very busy, crops etc, I'll forgive you, but I do think I ought to have a line from a friend for I have had to go through deep waters, & am not yet landed on dry land....

#### **Napier Wednesday night March 5th**

... You have raised my curiosity respecting your new “find”<sup>D</sup> – a plant about a foot high, “with a lattice beacon on the top of the stem”! You also say you have 2, & kindly offer me one, & so I am writing asking you to let me have it, say, by Thursday mail next week; (I hope to leave early Friday morning). I leave it to you to pack it, etc. I have a fancy, that it is similar to one I found last month, but I was too late for it, flowers were all withered, and it appears as though it had been trodden on by a cow, or something, when young.

You think that yours had a bulbous root; I hope you have marked the spot, so as to know it again, etc, etc....

#### **Napier March 12/84 night**

Last night I received your kind letter of the 9th, and with it no less than 3 small parcels; and when my man returned from P.O. (which he regularly does at VIII pm) & placed them on the table I, seeing at a glance, who they were from, anticipated a feast.

When I last wrote to you, I did not expect to hear from you in reply before Thursday night; and then I feared I should not be able to write again to you before I left for the Bush; but now through your prompt kindness, I am able to do so; – and I hope to tell you all (or nearly so) about your plant.

First, then, it is an Orchid. 2nd of the genus Pterostylis<sup>D</sup>; – 3rd it may turn out to be a new spn, Pt emarginata, (Trans.N.Z.Inst.Vol. XV,p328), but scarcely I think it is, from what little remains of the withered plant sent, or, it may turn out to be Pt Banksii, (Handbook, p.268,) but this must remain in doubt until we see its flower – next early summer, or say Xmas, that is its flowering season, – or, it may prove to be a new species.

I found one – a beautiful specimen; in flower & perfection on 20th Dec in the Bush, on a hill top, where, in all my years there, I had never seen one before. Pt Banksii was very common at the North, & so some other species; they are sometimes met with, a lot together!!! Harvey found several at Hampden, and so did Winkleman at Te Aute. W sent me a lot of good fine specimens but in his packing he crushed the flowers (and saved the roots. One of the roots I put into a pot, and it flowered very well here this summer. I have been making another coloured drawing of another spn (there are several, both in N.Z & Australia), and they have all, in the flower, a great family likeness; but Pt emarginata & Pt. Banksii, are very much larger than this drawing, & with longer & finer red tails. I have planted the 2 little roots, in my Orchid Pot (with others), and I hope they may grow, etc. Winkelmann's were 3–4 times the size of yours. I may add, I was led to make the drawing partly on account of your little son, who, when the season comes round again, with his sharp eyes, and keen scent (or resirs), will be sure to detect & recognise it....

I hope to leave on Sat morning for Bush, returning by (say) 2nd April. I do not expect much at this season, I go for change & health.

#### **Napier Monday night May 19th 1884**

Although I know my letter will not be sent off by P.O. to you before Thursday next, still I will write tonight – ere I commence Eng writing.

I have now before me your kind & most welcome letter of April 21st; which I saw for the first time last Friday night – on which day – or night, I returned from “70 mile Bush. I left here on 2nd April, & had fine weather all the time, except on two Thursdays (8th & 15th inst), when we had rain; in the first entire week of May it was very cold, frost every mgn, & now around on high hills.

I went a far S as Woodville, where, however, I had a very short stay (only one clear day) owing to constant crowded, overloaded coaches; I enjoyed myself, much in the woods, but the season was not good, the Mosses, hepatica, etc, not yet being in fruit. I had capital health too, but in returning caught (as usual) a dreadful cold, cough, & a straitness of chest, etc, in train – owing the perverseness of 2 yg women who would have the sash down, even into the dark night; I am only rallying a wee hit today my poor pipes wheezing awa like a “Kist o’ whistles”; I had left instructions for all my letters, etc, to be retained; consequently I found a pile – nearly 30 (too many), – but yours was one of the very first I opened – ditto your little box. – The contents of box (packed on 7th) were as dry as dust, but I have been soaking and cleaning your 2 little plants<sup>E</sup>, which please me much – from general appearance, the flowers being past recovery, & perhaps were so (much advanced) when you gathered or dug them up. If you can send me any more, please do do, in damp Moss – not soil. If not flowers, a root or two; & if not roots (undisturbed) then, mark the spot, & next season look out betimes. It will, I think, prove another new spn of Orchid, or a rare one – . I have cleaned & put into spirits for exam the two plants, & their roots into my Orchid pot of soil....

### **Napier Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> 9pm**

Your welcome letter of 13th with two packets, have just been brought in by my man (who had halted somewhere on his way back) and as I purpose coming to town tomorrow, I must write a line now to cover the stamps I have for you, – though I have little new to say.

First, thanks for your kind remembrance of me with specimens forwarded... I am glad to hear of your Orchids showing well – so with some of mine here in pots; by the bye keep a lookout for your “Divott” ones<sup>A</sup>....

### **Napier Tuesday evening Oct 21st 1884**

...I do not know if you have commenced shearing – but, even if you have not – you are busy, and I almost fear you will be too much so, to have an eye for your Orchids, of which the Spring ones must be in flower; I have had two beauties here flowering, one very fine, & I think, new; they both belong to your “Beacon like” specimen<sup>D</sup>; one I received from Winkleman, & it also flowered last year. I should like for you to see these. Should you preserve any flowers of Orchids for me, dont press them; put them into a little spirits, or dry them loosely and open hanging upside down on a nail. I mention this as I am about leaving. I would much rather have them fresh.

I find that three of my papers, containing some of your plants, were lately read at a meeting of the Scty at Wgn, & now, my very large paper on some new plants, I have also sent them.

### **Napier Sunday night Nov 23rd 1884**

Very likely you have been expecting a line from me before now, – and in order that you may not be disappointed by next mail your way, I write to you this night. I think my last to you was about a month back – the week before I went to the “Bush”. I left there on the 28<sup>th</sup> Oct, and returned last Wednesday night, Nov 19th – and found a rare lot of letters, papers, Books, etc waiting me – among them your letter of 15th inst – a bottle, a box, and a book! – aye, & a small thin packet!!!. Well done Glenross; and I may add that I opened all of yours among the very first. – and now to your letter\*. The “Lattice” Orchids complete (in 3 lots – blossoms, leaves, and roots) are just what I supposed the plant to be – a Pterostylis<sup>D</sup>, and very near to Pt.Banksii, but may be a diffit species, – this I cannot say until I examine & dissect the hidden inner fine column of the flower; it seems to be a new one. One I reared here, (of which I suppose I must have told you in my last), I cut off the flower (unwillingly), and put it into spirits the day of my leaving; it is much larger than these 2 of yours. I fear the roots (tubers) you so carefully sent, will be of no service – as to growing again – because it is the wee new white one that is the tuber for next season, and this, I think, has been taken up too early! But I will try it.

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\* Balfour wrote in his diary that they shore 694 sheep on 15 November. On 16 November he wrote, “I was busy writing all day to Mr. Colenso sending him 10 Lattice Beacon orchids”.



The “barren seed stem of the Divot Orchid<sup>A</sup>,” is (as I take it) not such, but an old flowering stem that bore flowers. I do not think that the reason of your D plants not blossoming is to be found in their being (now) on dead wood, as they are all always so in the Orchid Houses at Home; but, perhaps, owing to the change from shade to sun, or from damp shelter to open dry exposure;, or to winds. Your “Corysanthes<sup>B</sup>” I should like to see – “lock stock and barrel”. You could put them up loosely in thin paper, each sort separate & marked 1, 2, 3 etc, first marking on the papers in pencil, or ink, putting fine damp (not wet) Moss loosely below & above, – & put all into a small tin box, no earth. Better so than in spirits for first exam, as I can then see their natural colours, and can report to Glenross....

I left the Bush on Saturday (15th), for Waipukurau & stayed there till the 19<sup>th</sup> – fine weather every day; I purpose returning to the dense bush 1<sup>st</sup> week, or so, in Jany, Orchid hunting; in quest of my big Gastrodia<sup>F</sup>, mentioned in “Ruahine”.\*...

#### **Napier, Saturday night, Dec 6th 1884**

I was glad to see your writing & packet (as I always am) although I knew you had been, & still were, necessarily busy. I was delighted when I opened the tin and found your little beauties smiling & looking charming<sup>B</sup>; we seemed to know each other. (Judge Gillies, who was here last night, was greatly pleased with them; I don't think he had seen any of the Genus before). They were not, however, new; & though varying in size were all 4 of one species – the same as you had sent me last year, & described at p.377, “Trans” Vol XVI Corysanthes Papillosa – see p8 “In Memoriam” for a notice of the described species....

As the season advances, dinna forget these 2 very long stalked Orchids<sup>E</sup>, with a few small flowers at top, you sent me last Autumn in Spirits; They were, however, too far gone, & you said you would look out for more this season. I have recd one wee, new plant from Mr Hill, & have been working on it....

#### **Napier Dec 22nd 1884 (Monday)**

.... I am pleased at your finding that Pterostylis with tails reflexed<sup>D</sup> – just as mine here was. ... As to the “long-stalked Orchis<sup>E</sup>”, – I fancy you will not find that in flower before Autumn. I have now before me the 2 spns you (I think) sent me last season, and very late – just past flowering. Their stems are very slender, & quite one foot long, one with five small flowers at top, and the other with only 2, and a little ½ inch leaf just below them. There is a common green one, something like, but stouter, with a long onion like leaf, & a longish spike of flowers at top of stalk. This is very common & of no use.... (*Microtis—Ed.*)

### **Norsewood Jany 22/85**

Two days back I received your kind note of the 14th inst\*, (postmarked however "Napier 20th"), also the little packet containing the Corysanthes<sup>B</sup>, and I thank you for both. I may say I was doubly pleased to see your well known hand writing, for, in addition the letter being from you, it had only one stamp, the only letter or paper so ornamented (out of a big lot) since my arrival. Mr Grubb & myself have before now had some talk over it, but he says "it is the law (or rule)", so I give in – unwillingly; all my Eng letters – also those from Wgn & the S, etc, etc – (some big fellows) pay the extra postage, which on the big'ns comes heavy;. What a world of words about nothing;.

.... I have found spns of the Orchid I have long been seeking<sup>F</sup>, but unfortunately, just past flower. One spn however had three flowers on top open – good; It is the Gastrodia – I have mentioned near the end of the Ruahine book – Not the "Appendix"....

The Corysanthes<sup>B</sup>, is (I think) the same spns as those larger ones you sent me; they not only vary much in length of flower stalk, but all elongated after flowering; (see C. hypogaea – of mine, in yr "N.Z. Inst" where, I think, this fact is mentioned). I trust you may find the short leaved Orchid....

### **Napier, March 3rd 1885**

....I hope to get away again to the Bush after mid of month. I may truly say (in words of one of your old Sc songs) "My hearts in the Highlands". ... I brought down with me a little plant of the "Divot" orchid<sup>A</sup>, sawing off the branch of the tree (Rimu) on which it grew.

### **Napier March 24th 1885**

....The little Orchid, I fear, we shall not see now for this season....

### **Norsewood, Sunday night, April 19, 1885**

I have been thinking of writing you a letter (not that I owe you one) although I have not very much to say – of novelty or news – in writing from the woods.

....I had hoped to find our Orchid....

### **Norsewood, Sunday night April 26th 1885**

Two days ago I received your long, & prized letter, of the 18th, and I thank you for it, & for the little "Botan" parcel that came with it.... First, I will notice your specimens; the little Orchid<sup>G</sup> I know well (as to genus) having gathered, (and admired

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\* On 14 Jan 85 Balfour wrote (enigmatically) in his diary, "Wrote... to Mr. Colenso sorry I had been DeadSwear".

and left growing) scores of them at the N, where in clayey soils they are rather common. I have also seen them among fern on the hill tops between Tangoio and Waikari; and also at Wairarapa. I have all about the genus in books at home, so I defer a full reply until I refer to them; the little flowers were full of sand, or dust, no doubt from the Moss; however by washing with Camel-hair pencil I got them tolerably clean etc....

#### **Napier, Tuesday night May 26th 1885**

.... A little plant<sup>G</sup>, that you sent me also at Norsewood, having an erect stem, 3 flowers at top, and a tuberous root, – is an orchid, and very close to Orthoceras Solandri. It has given me a world of work; (Several hours if not two good days) at Norsewood & here, – cleaning, disinfecting, & going into many books & Authors, who have written upon it, in various languages, or rather upon O. Solandri (N.Z.) and O. Strictum (Australia) – who also had confounded the 2 species. And now Bentham has more lately made one of them again; saying “there is no difference”; but between this of yours (also found here, by me on the high clayey ridges between Tangoio and Waikari) & those, there is a difference. I would I had more of them now.

#### **Napier Tuesday night Sept 29th 1885**

....And now to your letter; – First your remark – ”afraid to send me anything for fear of distracting my attention – and not find time to look at them”. – “Man” do you think I am made of steel?. Neither my regular life is just this – breakfast 7-30 – in my back room, on Botany till 10 – then front room, Dicty till 1pm – table cleared for dinner, then at 1-30 or so, at Dicty again till 4-30 or 5. – When I shut up tired evening, from 6 – till 10 or 10-30 writing – letters – papers, & what not. I do not go out – don't have any visitors (don't want any)....

#### **Napier Tuesday night Oct 13th 1885**

....Another small plant I should like to get some specimens of, is your little Orchid – Corysanthes Papillosa<sup>B</sup>, this day, in packing up my case for Sir J.D. Hooker to go by “Arawa”, I put up what I had. I cannot tell you how glad I am to get rid of this lot, it has been too long on hand “Getting ready” & yet, never ready. It contains some hundreds of Fungi, Hepatica, & Mosses, also of flowering plants, – Perhaps it is the last that I shall ever send....

#### **Norsewood (70.M. Bush) Sunday Night 1/11/85**

... Please send me some of your Corysanthes<sup>B</sup> – in damp (not very wet) Moss. Here, I find the other & closely allied spn has already flowered; ....



### Napier Nov 16th 1885

It is late & I am tired (writing) but before I go to bed I will write to you, to thank you for your welcome letter (w packet of Orchids) of the 8th inst.\* – A good letter, and flowers in first rate condition – and have been admired by several, indeed I sent over 8 of each (of the Corysanthes<sup>B</sup> & the green Pterostylis<sup>D</sup>) to the Mayors lady Mrs Spencer. If you should have any more of this Pterostylis – that you can spare, I could take them for preserving in spirits for England; this Pt is Pt Patens, Col. (my description drawn up last year &, I suppose, will be published with the other plants, in Vol.XVIII. Your Corysanthes – was your old one, C. papillosa (Trans XVII). And the 3rd is a Thelymitra<sup>H</sup>, very near to T. nemoralis (Trans XVII), and to a Tasmanian sp, T. nuda, but not agreeing with any; these are very troublesome things to decide on, – differences in this genus mainly depending on microscopical belongings to the internal column, in which are the Anther and Stigma etc., etc. I wish, too, that I had more of this; as it is shy in opening flowers. I have tried hard with these, and only on one day, did I succeed in getting 2 flowers to expand, and it has taken up some of my time – but I cannot always be quill driving.–

I greatly wish you could get me a spn or two of that peculiar long stalked & slender Orchid of last year.

### Napier Dec 1/85

Being in town this mg, I early got your kind note of the 29th Nov, & the packet of Pterostylis, which, (though you had done your best by writing on the outside) was all in pieces; crushed to smithereens!! No doubt in carriage to P'tapu. I brought it away, and on reaching here opened it, (or, it fell to pieces) and I got one good & perfect flower out of the lot. Don't trouble yourself about any more of this genus – unless something very curious should turn up.

I don't know if I told you of a peculiar species<sup>I</sup> Mr Hill found between Waipawa and Ongaonga, on the open dry plain among the low Manuka bushes; he brought away a big tuft of moss, & in it were 2 or 3 little grey leaves thus. Or scarcely as big;  I saw they were Orchids, partly from their little tubers, and carefully planted them before I went inland in Oct & they grew fast; on my return they were  $\frac{3}{4}$ in in height & about to flower (2 on one & 3 on tother) – flowers small thus; At first I supposed a new genus; and more trouble. However on dissecting carefully one fl, I found it was a true Pterostylis, & allied to an Australian one, (or two), small & reddish (like this) and without tails. I was much pleased with this novelty. 

I hope now that your shearing (as you say) is over today, you may find time to look about you – in nooks and unvisited spots. I mean by sheep – if there are any such left – and obtain that long-stalked Orchid<sup>E</sup>. However Dinna forget the one with a red open mouth, and the long narrow stiff leaves<sup>G</sup> you sent me whilst at Norsewood last

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\* Balfour's diary for 8 Nov 85: "I was rather bad a.m. Made up a packet of Corysanthes, Pterostylis &c for Mr. Colenso".

autumn, I should much like to see more of it....

It is no use sending spns in Paper boxes – better perhaps in soft rolls – better still in tin. I shall send you 3 empty tins of a very good size, and they weigh light. – I have a lot of them – I forage down in town for old tins, & old bottles etc etc.

Winklemann sent me a thumping lot of Orchids (all large size) from Kaipara\* – in a very stout & big tin box (larger a good deal than this page) and that was crushed out of all shape, askew, like a billy cock hat. I never saw such a crushed, & twisted stout tin article; the plants were all utterly useless, owing to his sacking them up, tubers & earth as they came out of the ground. I gave them two hours, but not one flower could I make anything of – rotted – sanded – & crushed. However I got a large supply of tubers, some nearly 1¾in long & ¾in thick, & I have planted them in pots.

What of your divot Orchid?

### **Napier Sunday Mar 28/86**

...I now have 2 letters of yours before me (6th & 20th† inst), and also “small lots of specimens” – to thank you for, & to reply to letters as best I may....

The plant (old flg. stem) is, as you supposed, a sp of Orchid – Gastrodia<sup>F</sup> (HdBk. p.263) but probably not that spn, more likely to be identical w mine of last year’s paper, which was sent to Dr.Hector with the last, and may be published in Vol.XVIII. It is a very striking plant, I have long known it (see also, “Ruahine” jy, pp 61, 62) but have rarely ever found it in full flower – always, too late, or too early; it flowers in January – Thanks for offer of Tuber, but it would not live here, & may not w you; it likes the shade of dark woods. Should you have perfect flowers next season (and I here) remember me.

I, too, lately found plenty of broad leaved Moss barren; and several little “Divott” orchids<sup>A</sup>, all past flg. Keep a lookout for your Autumnal red-flg, gaping mouth Orchid<sup>G</sup>, on a high stalk (9–15 inches) and long narrow grassey leaves, grows in the open claylands amongst fern. I enjoyed my rest and quiet in the Bush, came awa with regret. My home is more there than here....

### **Napier November 16/86**

...You say “You are busy”. Good. You (and I) are always so. The drying winds are doing mischief – as they always do here on this hill. I fancy you were too early for Gastrodia<sup>F</sup> – say mid or end of January. Perhaps Pigs got at their roots, which are edible.

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\* C.P. Winklemann sent *Thelymitra cornuta* Col., and *Microtis papillosa* Col. from Kaipara in 1884-5.

† Balfour’s diary for 20 March 86: “Repaired a spade and took the handle out of another. Set a saw and went to Manga for a fern that the Nurse girl pulled yesterday and was visiting the sick p.m...”.

### Napier March 1/87

As I have received your note of 20<sup>th</sup>. (but here on 26<sup>th</sup>) I suppose I must answer it: – but to tell you the honest truth, – Mon, you scarcely deserve it! Your own words – from it, I quote: (1) “reply to my letter of 4<sup>th</sup> Jan.”! (2) “I am not so busy now.” Well, well, we all have our faults, & I, at all events, will not “follow suit” & serve you out after that fashion, & so reply 6 weeks or 2 months hence. – Your Drought is our Drought: – just now (2 p.m.) it has commenced raining! how sad! The poor trees, etc., outside look! It Comforts me under my Rheumatism, which has been hanging about me these last 2 days – in shoulder joints & wrists – just enough to make everything unpleasant!

I was in Bush over 3 weeks, from 28<sup>th</sup> Jany – 19<sup>th</sup> Feby. Found it dreadfully hot (worse than Napier) until the rain came. – There I had no rheum., & enjoyed myself, save one day when I was lost! – (Some day I may tell you of this.) I did not do much in the general plant way, – though I obtained a few good things – among them, the fem. of a tree I discovered in '85, male only, & curiously enough, at each time only one of each kind! – I enclose a spn. Put it into water over-night in a glass, & look at it in mg., flowers minute, those of the male a trifle larger. I described the male one last year. I also got a very handsome fern, which I believe to be new: and a lot of small plants, (mosses, Hepaticae, & Fungi,) from creeks & gullies. – One thing in particular pleased me and caused me to think of you – in a tangled brake, in a wood, I saw 13 spikes of Gastrodia, all near ea. other, 2 I measured above 3 ft. high, but all past flowering. I marked that spot....

### Napier Tuesday night Dec. 27/87

...I wish I had more of your wee plants – particularly the Gaultheria-like one, and the Pterostylis (1 flower only). I believe these 2 are both new but I should like to see more, and if you can send me any, do so, but the Pterostylis should not be crushed or squeezed – this one is badly! I put them in soak yesterday, & have spent a long time today in endeavouring to loosen their internal parts. ...



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Number 16 in the New Zealand Native Orchid Group's *Historical Series*