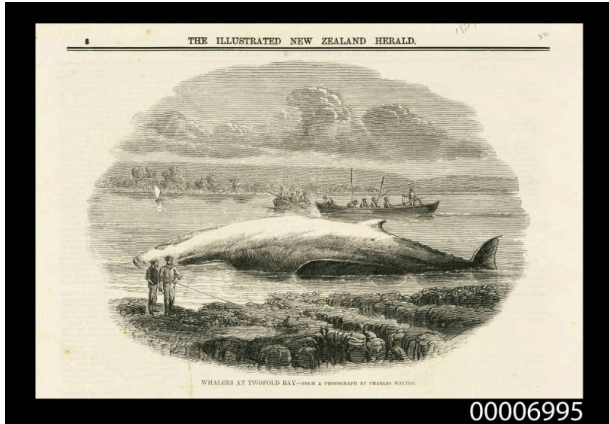


Basic Detail Report



00006995

Title

Whalers at Twofold Bay, from a photograph by Charles Walter

Date

1871

Primary Maker

Illustrated New Zealand Herald

Medium

Ink on paper

Dimensions

Overall: 215 x 281 mm

Name

Engraving

History

The accompanying article reads: "The whales caught in Twofold bay are mostly those known as hump-backs, but occasionally a few black ones are captured. They begin to pass to the northward between the months of May and August, and return to the southward between August and the end of November. The whale, monster though it is, has a number of enemies in the deep, such as thrashers, porpoises, and cow-fish; these are armed with teeth. On the contrary, the sperm, the fin-back, the Sulphur bottom, the Hump-back, and the Grampus whales have whalebone in the upper jaw but no teeth. Since Twofold bay was first settled by Europeans it has been noticed that "The killers" visit the bay every year, and watch for their prey at a point of the bay called by the whalers leather jacket. From this lair, as the whales pass along, they issue out and attack them, and very often kill the smaller whales and run them ashore. As soon as the unsuspecting monster is seen, the killers are off to the battle; forming themselves into line they swiftly swim until they have the prey between them and the shore, when they begin to close upon it, driving it into shallow water, attacking it with their teeth, which operation in whaling phraseology is designated "Propping". The whalers now come on the scene, and harpoon the worried fish and kill it, the "Killers" taking no notice of the boat but continuing their attack. As soon as the whale is dead they take it to the bottom (if not driven away by the....". This story refers to the killer whales of Twofold bay who, up until the 1920s, were said to herd whales into the whalers' hands. As reward they were allowed to take the tongue and internal organs of the whale. Note that some points in this article are inaccurate: sperm whales are toothed whales; the Grampus whale is in fact a Risso's dolphin which does have teeth."