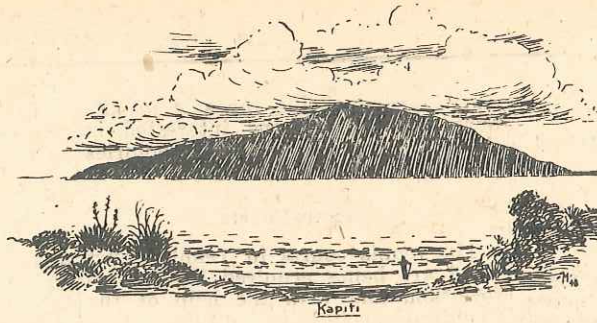


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HILL-TOP STATUE

Large Crowds

Witness Blessing

COMMEMORATES CENTENARY OF
LOURDES

Nearly three thousand Catholics were present at Paraparaumu last Sunday afternoon to witness the Blessing of the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes by His Grace the Archbishop of Wellington and Metropolitan of New Zealand (P. T. B. McKeefry).

A large, long procession left the main entrance to St. Patrick's school grounds and, moving via Amohia Street and the Presbytery grounds, slowly made its way up the hill, past the fourteen Stations of the Cross established on the path to the top, where another large crowd was already assembled.

Local Hymn

After the blessing, and as the congregation at the foot of the statue left on the downwards trek, a choir sang a new hymn, "Our Lady of Lourdes," composed specially for the occasion by Dorothy Curran, of Paraparaumu.

The ceremony at the statue and the hymn were broadcast over a loud-speaker system on the hill and in the school grounds, and were easily heard within a radius of a few blocks.

When all were assembled in the school grounds, the Benediction was pronounced by Rev. P. J. Herlihy, parish priest of Karori, and later the Archbishop blessed a group of sick and ailing people and then blessed the kneeling crowd.

O'Hagen Present

Patrick O'Hagen, the visiting Irish tenor, who is remembered by Convent pupils for his memorable rendition of "Davy Crockett" on a previous visit, sang two hymns—to the great delight of the multitude.

Easily Seen

The 47-foot-high white concrete statue is easily visible from most parts of Paraparaumu, situated as it is atop a small hill immediately behind the school. Sculptor was Mr. Martin Roestenberg.

The statue was erected to commemorate the centenary of the Apparitions which appeared to Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes (in the Pyrenees Mountains) in 1958.