

Mesoplodon layardi (Gray), (Pls. I.—III.).

Specimens *A* and *B* were collected in November 1873 at the Cape of Good Hope by Mr H. N. Moseley, F.R.S., one of the naturalists of the Expedition, and specimen *C* was obtained by the same gentleman at the Falkland Islands in 1875. Mr Moseley has with great courtesy placed at my disposal his notes on these specimens.

Specimen A.—“The skull of *Mesoplodon layardi* was obtained from John M’Kellar, Esq., of Cape Point. The animal came ashore at that place about 1865. Mr M’Kellar reports that it was about 18 feet long, black on the back, white on the belly, and with a conspicuous line of demarcation on the side between the black and white colours. The animal yielded a large quantity of oil, which was of a very superior quality, selling for more than twice the price of ordinary whale oil. It had long tusks in the lower jaw, and Mr M’Kellar thinks that he gave this bone with the teeth to Mr Layard, so that it is probable that this is the specimen to which Mr Layard’s tooth belongs. The skull had lain exposed for eight years on the beach, and was found with the beak stuck in the sand, the skull having been put up as a target for rifle practice.¹ The fused cervical vertebræ, and one or two dorsal vertebræ, were lying with the skull, but the remainder of the skeleton was not to be found.”

Specimen B.—The animal to which the rostrum and lower jaw with teeth belonged “was captured by the men in the employ of Mr Alexander Michael Black of Simon’s Town, Cape Colony, who presented the specimens to the Oxford Museum. The animal came ashore at Walwick Bay in 1869. It was from 16 to 18 feet in length, and yielded 80 gallons of oil.² The entire head was brought to Simon’s Bay as a curiosity, but it smelt so badly that the snout was sawn off with difficulty, owing to the density of the bone, and the head was pitched overboard.”

Specimen C, which I have recognised to be a young example of *Mesoplodon layardi*, “was obtained at the head of Port Sussex, on the west coast of East Falkland Island. The animal ran ashore late in 1875. It was measured by Mr John Bonner, and found to be exactly 14 feet in length. It had a greyish-white colour below, but was black above. The oil was especially clear and good. The paddles were cut off, along with masses of blubber, and dragged to a distance. Mr Bonner gave me the head, which he had separated from the trunk as a curiosity.” Mr Moseley carried the head and bones of the trunk on a pack horse from Port Sussex to Stanley,³ where the Challenger was lying, but the paddles were not recovered. A similar whale was said by Mr Bonner to have come ashore at the peninsula known as Lafonia in 1866.

¹ See also Notes by a Naturalist on the Challenger. By H. N. Moseley, F.R.S., London, 1879. In these Notes, obviously by a misprint, the animal is said to be only “about 10 feet in length.”

² See also Moseley’s Notes above cited, p. 158.

³ See Notes, p. 559.