

# eColenso

eColenso is the free email publication of the Colenso Society, 32 Hawkestone St, Thorndon, Wellington 6011: please forward it to interested others. Contributions should be emailed to the editor, Ian St George, [istge@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:istge@yahoo.co.nz).

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*“All history is microhistory, accumulated and aggregated.”*

*Nile Green*





# The NZ polymath: Colenso and his contemporaries

Wellington 17–19 November 2016

## Call for papers

The nineteenth century was full of scholars who turned their intellectual interest to a dazzling array of subjects: botany, languages, geology, conchology, ethnology, religion. William Colenso was one of them, as were Sir George Grey, Lady Jane Franklin, James Hector, Julius von Haast and Augustus Hamilton. What were the worlds of knowledge these men and women explored? *The New Zealand Polymath* aims to deepen our understanding of nineteenth century knowledge, especially matauranga Māori, and knowledge networks. How was knowledge acquired and recorded? How did disciplinary fields intersect and inform each other? What interested nineteenth century polymaths? What were the networks? Colenso's regular papers to the Philosophical Society covered a huge array of topics from Māori vocabulary and social life to botanical description. How accurate were they? What do we know now about matauranga Māori in the early years of colonization? Who were the women scholars?

Papers are invited which address any area of nineteenth century knowledge making and collecting for a conference to be held at Victoria University from 17-19 November. We would particularly welcome proposals of panels, such as 'collectors' or 'flower artists'.

Possible topics might include:

- Māori knowledge
- Botanical drawing
- Astronomy
- Social and cultural practices
- Object making
- Fishing
- Cultivation practices
- Collecting
- Networks
- Women in science
- Women collectors
- Relationships between European scholars and their Māori collaborators
- Any other relevant field

Abstracts of not more than 200 words should be sent to [Deborah.Levy@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Deborah.Levy@vuw.ac.nz) by 30 April 2016.

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## The Tasmanian connection

Four of William Colenso's first scientific papers were published in Tasmania. They were

1842. Description of some new ferns lately discovered in New Zealand. *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics, etc* 1: 375–379.

1843. An account of some enormous fossil bones of an unknown species of the class Aves, lately discovered in New Zealand. *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics, etc* 2: 81–107. Dated “May 1, 1842”, amended on 4 November 1842, reprinted at Richard Owen's request in 1844: *Annals and Magazine of Natural History* 14 (89): 81–96.

1844. Memoranda of an Excursion, made in the Northern Island of New Zealand in the summer of 1841–2; intended as a contribution towards the ascertaining of the Natural Productions of the New Zealand Groupe: with particular reference to their Botany. Launceston, *Launceston Examiner*. 95p; republished in 1846 *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics, etc* 2: 210–234, 241–308.

1846. A classification and description of some newly-discovered ferns, collected in the northern Island of New Zealand, in the summer of 1841–2. Launceston, *Launceston Examiner*. 29p. Republished in *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics, etc* 2: 161–189. [1]

## Lady Jane

Lady Jane Franklin, wife of Sir John Franklin, Governor of Tasmania, met Colenso when she visited Paihia 1–14 May 1841. She wrote to him when she got home, [2]

Government House, Hobart  
27th July, 1841

My dear Sir

I thanked you only by proxy I believe on leaving New Zealand for your very kind and liberal presents to me—I fear you will think me very unreasonable when I tell you that I wish for still more at your hands, but I am now alluding solely to some written contribution to our scientific journal (“The Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Statistics, Agriculture” etc.) which you are so well able to supply. I make this application not in my own name alone, but as expressive of the wishes of the Society in which at the last meeting you were proposed and unanimously elected a corresponding Member. We do not wish to prescribe the subject but only to tell you that any observations with which you may favor us on the natural history of New Zealand, on the physical or moral peculiarities of the natives or on the philosophy and characteristics of their language, or upon any other topic relating to the country in which I know you take so deep and pure and interest will be very acceptable to us. I made the same request to Mr. Taylor on leaving New Zealand and hope he has borne it in mind. To him and to you I shall forward I trust before long the 1st if not the 2nd no. of the Journal, which has long been printed, but has been waiting the labours of the lithographic press for the engravings.

I hope the accompanying botanic microscope of which I beg your kind acceptance may be of use to you in your researches if you have not one already, and I assure you that I shall feel ex-

ceedingly happy if you will give me in any way an opportunity of being useful to you—As our colony has the advantage of yours in age (for I will not imitate the prevailing Australasian trick of self-puffing by making any higher boast) it may perhaps be in our power to furnish you with some things which in your youthful state are not to be found in New Zealand—You will prove to me that you have faith in the sincerity of my goodwill towards your interesting country as well as towards yourself and your brother labourers in the Missionary cause if you will put me in the way of being of any service.

Believe me, my dear Sir,  
very truly yours  
Jane Franklin

I shall be obliged to you to convey with my kind regards to Mrs. Burrows, my thanks for the kind note she sent me on my departure.

Hobart and Launceston were major centres in the 1840s. Hobart bookseller-publishers were involved in producing several early New Zealand prints and at least two Māori language pamphlets were printed there in 1841 [3]. The *Launceston Examiner* was co-founded in 1842 by Rev. John West and by 1845 was owned by J.S. Waddell and James Aikenhead.

## JP Gell and RC Gunn

The Royal Society of Tasmania was the first Royal Society outside the United Kingdom. It started as the “Tasmanian Society” founded by Sir John Franklin. It was responsible for much of the work in founding the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

John Philip Gell 1816–1898 clergyman, friend of the Franklins, was secretary of the Tasmanian Society. Ronald Campbell Gunn 1808–1881, botanist and public servant, was editor of its journal.

In 1839 Gunn was private secretary to Sir John Franklin in Hobart, but in 1841 he resigned to become managing agent of the estates of William Lawrence of Launceston. While in Hobart he helped found the Society and the *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science* and remained its editor 1842–1849. Volume 1 (1842) was printed by J. Barnard, Govt Printer, Hobart, but Volumes 2–3 (1846) were printed by Henry Dowling Jun., Stationer, Brisbane Street, Launceston.

Colenso submitted his four papers to the *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science* between 1842 and 1846. Two were also published as monographs, at his request, by the *Launceston Examiner*. Only one of the papers is accompanied by a drawing: his sketches of moa bones were published as lithographs (and later re-used in the *Trans*), but those of ferns were not published and are apparently lost.

He may have sent the first two papers in November 1842, for he wrote to Gell on 7 March 1843 [4],

Since my Note to you of November last, I have been honored in the receipt of yours of Augt. 6th, together with a copy of No. 9 of the “Tasmanian Journal”.

I now send you a paper containing an account of several new Ferns, which I have lately discovered and classified. I have had this ready some time ago, but have been waiting, expecting to see something of those papers already sent, and which, I suppose, will ere long, come to hand....

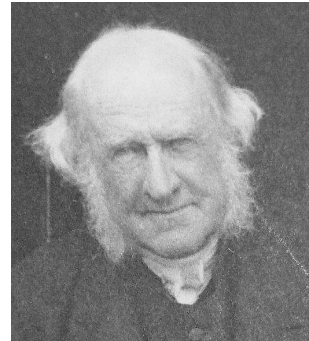
I have another paper nearly ready—“Memoranda of an Excursion in N. Zealand, with remarks on its Natural History, &c.”, which, I venture to suppose, will give more general satisfaction than the enclosed.



Lady Jane & Sir John Franklin ▲

JP Gell ▼

RC Gunn ►



He wrote to Gell again a fortnight later (20 March 1843),

I should much wish, (if it could be so arranged, and the extra trouble to the printer would be slight,) that this Communication, the one of the 8th. instant, (and if not too late) that on the Moa, made up into one continuous work, and a 100 copies strongly bound at my expense.—And, if not destroyed, a 100 copies of the Lithogs. of the Fossil Bones, and of *Lomaria nigra*, *L. linearis*, *L. rotundifolia*, and *H. Frankliniarum*. My old friend, Mr. W.R. Wade, would, I am very sure (if needed,) kindly superintend the Editorial department. An order on me, to the amount incurred, payable to any one here, or, on the account reaching me, my transmitting the amount of the same to Sydney, would be promptly attended to. I have several scientific friends at home, to whom I should much wish to send a copy. I intend writing Mr. Wade, by next opportunity, on the subject.

The letters politely request copies of the journal numbers containing his papers, and by 1846 his frustration is palpable,

Believing that, ere this, you will have seen some late numbers of Sir W.J. Hooker's "Icones Plantarum," and of Dr. Joseph Hooker's "Antarctic Botany" in which my name is mentioned as having published a description of cuta in filices novæ in the Tasmanian Journal, and which publication is in those works referred to as a kind of authority for such plants—I venture to write you, hoping that you will not deem it an annoyance in my requesting you to procure me copies of the numbers of that work containing the Descriptions above referred to, as well as my rambling Journey into the Interior, supposing the same to have been published: or, if that work has been discontinued (which I almost conclude to have been the case) to send me back those Mss., with a note from yourself as editor at the period when those papers were written and sent to Hobart, stating the time when they were re-

ceived and the reason why they were not published. I am the more constrained to exert myself in this matter, because, some other Botanists have subsequently described those Ferns, &c., whose synonyms Sir W.J. Hooker has kindly set aside, referring to my prior publication: it is, therefore, incumbent upon me to make some enquiry in the matter, and not knowing the gentleman on whom the Editorial department may have devolved after you, I am necessitated, as it were, to make this application.—

Colenso's first letter to Gunn is dated 31 December 1846. The overdue issues of the *Tasmanian Journal* and his printing order finally arrived at his Hawke's Bay mission station in December 1847.

He and Gunn continued to correspond: the last surviving letter from Colenso is dated 1864, when both were national politicians.

On 14 October 1893 Colenso would write to his old friend JD Hooker,

I don't know whether you get a copy of the Reports of the "Australn. Assn. for Advancet. of Science" – but in their 4th., just out (a bulky vol.) – the Governor of Tasmania as President at the annual Meeting held there, in his Address – mentions you & Sir G. Grey, & myself – as being the only 3 original corresponding Members still alive of the Society instituted by Sir J. Franklin!! How such an incident tells!

#### References

1. Republished in *William Colenso: the complete works. Publications*. CD, Colenso Society.
2. ATL 88-103-1/14.
3. Hobson had arrived in 1840 and Colenso's press was swamped with Governmental work on top of the already onerous missionary printing; the "outsourcing" to William Wade (the Baptist minister and printer who had accompanied Colenso to New Zealand in 1834) in Hobart resulted, however, from the CMS's disapproval of the content of Colenso's tracts (Parkinson P, pers. comm.).
4. ATL MS-Copy-Micro-0715: all of Colenso's letters to Gell and Gunn are there.

# Sampson Kempthorne

In an undated (but probably written in early 1868) letter to Donald McLean, Colenso wrote,

*Many thanks for the Papers: I sat up last night to read Kempthorne's letter—although I do not greatly like the man.*<sup>1</sup> —

Sampson Kempthorne was one of my 32 great<sup>3</sup> grandparents so I was interested in this. \* Kempthorne's "letter" was a vast and wordy five part rant about the necessity to retain the Monarch as head of the Church of England, generously given space by the *New Zealand Herald* between 31 December 1867 and 9 January 1868: it would have taken most of the night to read all of it.

History has judged Kempthorne a failure but a recent review (albeit by another descendent) suggests he was a minor but significant figure in the early years of the Diocese of New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> The story around this is summarised in a research paper by Lila Hamilton.<sup>3</sup>

In 1839 the Church Missionary Society in London decided to examine the state of the mission in New Zealand (there had been criticisms of the Williams' acquisition of land; a new Bishop was imminent). This attracted the attention of the architect and surveyor Sampson Kempthorne (who had married the daughter of Josiah Pratt, a founder of the CMS) who offered his services. The CMS asked him to "survey, map, and value the land belonging to the Society there" and hoped "to be able to employ his services in other ways in New Zealand, though they are not prepared at present to enter further into any specific arrangement."

\* The Kempthornes lived in Claybrook, Parnell. Their daughter Elizabeth married John Kissling, the son of Archdeacon George Adam Kissling; their daughter Ida Mary married Albert Evelyn Dewes and was my great grandmother, who, demencing in her late eighties, sometimes stayed with us when I was a child—IStG.

His arrival would be unannounced, lending his investigation an element of surprise. Hamilton writes, "The missionaries were certainly surprised; they were also inclined to be hostile, and the Society's omission of a warning of his coming only added to Kempthorne's problems." Kempthorne wrote of the "jealousy and dislike which persons, who are profiting by abuses, naturally feel towards those, whose business it is to reform such abuses."

Kempthorne duly reported to the CMS, listing the mission people by name and criticising freely—even Bishop Selwyn...

*The Bishop disavows himself of the holding Puseyite views and professes not to know what they are (which it appears is not an uncommon subterfuge in the case of those who do hold them) but you must be aware that the tendency of his School is in that direction and I feel convinced that he is quite under their influence. Both his Chaplains Revd. W. Cotton & Revd. H. Whytehead are decided Puseyites....*

When Kempthorne rendered his account the CMS denied it had any contract with him and the parties had to go to arbitration, resulting in a much lower payment than Kempthorne had expected.

Kempthorne had designed poorhouses in England, and churches in New Zealand in Selwyn's favoured neogothic style: the NZ ones collapsed, built of unsuitable materials (scoria with sea-sand for mortar, my family tradition has it) for these shaky isles. My mother had a pencil sketch of the ruins of St Stephen's, Judges Bay.

## Kempthorne and Colenso

Kempthorne's name appears much earlier in Colenso's surviving writing, in his Paihia printing office "Day & waste book". In November 1842 he recorded the sale of printing type to J. Kitchen, who paid £20 and signed an IOU ("note of hand") for the balance. A cou-



ple of months later, in December, Colenso sent Kitchen's IOU to Kempthorne (the CMS agent) to retrieve the money.

Novr. 1842	2	Sold to Mr. J. Kitchen 194 lbs. S. Pica Type @ 2/6      24- 5- 0 21 lbs ditto ditto      2/6      2- 12- 6 10 lbs Bourgeois Quads. @ 2/-      1- - - - By Cash, of Mr.K £20. Bal due      £7-17-6—for which I hold his Note of hand.	27	17	6
...		...			
Xmas		Mem. Sent Mr. Kitchen's note of hand to Mr. Kempthorne, Auckland, to obtain in the amount for C.M.S.— (£7-17- 6)—			

That incident is mentioned in Kempthorne's report to the CMS dated 29 April 1843,

*The following are some further instances of that want of care of the Society's property and interests of which I have already sent you some details.... Mr. Colenso sold some type, 2 years ago, (which I think he was not justified in doing) about £30 worth to a man named Kitchen, an Editor of the Newspaper at Kororarika, a drunken, worthless fellow, and allowed £7.17.6 to remain unpaid, which is now entirely lost, as the man has decamped to Van Diemen's Land.*

Kempthorne had more to say on Colenso in his 1843 reports,

*There is and has been a great want of union and good understanding between various members of the Northern Committee, on matters which generally arose from want of a controuling power: For example, The Revd. H.W.— and Mr. C. were for a long time without speaking to each other....* [see p13, this issue—Ed.]

*I regret to say that the translation of the Prayer Book is considered a very great failure. Mr. Colenso seems to have taken the responsibility of this upon himself in a way not quite justifiable. Mr. Puckey*

*translated the Psalms, but Mr. Colenso altered them so much in going through the Press, that Mr. Puckey declines to own the work as his. Mr. Colenso has also employed himself in composing & printing Tracts against Popery; his zeal in these matters cannot be questioned but his Judgment I fear must be....*

*Mr. Colenso the Bishop looks upon with a little suspicion and mentioned to me that he requires a good deal of pruning, (which by general consent of others is the case). Mr. C. wrote to the Bishop of Australia some time ago on the subject of ordination and in the warmth of his zeal, he expressed himself in such a selfsatisfied way, as certainly was very ill-judged; this letter the Bishop read extracts from: the affair at the Printing Office at Paihia also the Bishop spoke to him very sharply about. The Bishop intends that he shall reside at Waimate 12 months in preparation for orders....*

In the 1850s and 60s Kempthorne was surveying for McLean's land purchases in the central North Island. In an 1862 petition to Governor Grey about the Hawke's Bay mission land, Colenso wrote (about the disputed mission land at Waitangi),

*... in 1858, a Government Surveyor (Mr. Kempthorne) was sent by the Chief Native Lands Purchase Commissioner to survey the said piece of Land, in order to a Crown Grant being issued for same to the C.M. Society; to which Surveyor the Native Grantors pointed out the boundaries.<sup>4</sup>*

"I do not greatly like the man," Colenso had written to McLean in 1868, and it seems his opinion was not greatly groundless.

#### References

1. ATL Object #1007395 from MS-Papers-0032-0222.
2. Kempthorne R 1997. Selwyn's Samson: Sampson Kempthorne. Journeys: 27–37.
3. Hamilton, Lila, 1973? Research article and CMS records concerning Sampson Kempthorne. ATL MS-Papers-1972.
4. Archives Ref. No. IA1 242; Record 63/2384 in Colonial Secretary Record Book 244.



*Minutes of Meeting of Missionaries (Special) Nov. 10/40*

*Respectfully & firmly demand a competent, full, & perfect investigation into their conduct on the Land purchases, as necessary for their own vindication, the honour of the Society & of the Church, the satisfaction of their friends; and that until such investigation be granted they shall not feel justified in entering upon any measures or proceeding with their duties beyond maintaining their present position - the salary of Miss Williams increased to £30 p ann, and Mr. Colman to £40 p ann.*

### **Fighting words from the Missionaries' "union"...**

The minutes of the Central Committee of the CMS in London record a request from the New Zealand missionaries (decided at a special meeting on 10 November 1840) for a review of their land acquisitions (though by now Kempthorne was on his way). If such a review was not agreed to, they would start a go-slow...

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# Kempthorne's workhouses

The British Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 was responsible for the erection of 554 new workhouses in England and Wales. The Report of the Royal Commission into the administration of the poor laws had recommended the segregation of inmates into different groups (infirm males, infirm females, able-bodied males, able-bodied females, boys, girls, and children under seven), requiring new workhouses that kept them separate.

Sampson Kempthorne's name appeared on the list of Associates of the Institute of British Architects in 1835. At age 26 he was in practice in Carlton Chambers on Regent Street. Kempthorne's father was a friend of the Poor Law Commissioner, Thomas Frankland Lewis, a connection which probably led to his being commissioned to produce model workhouse plans published by the Commissioners in 1835.

Kempthorne came up with two designs, the cruciform or 'Square' plan (below left) and the hexagonal or 'Y' plan (below centre). Each featured a central supervisory hub from which radiated accommodation wings for the different classes of inmate defined by the Commissioners. The ground between the wings was used to provide separate exercise yards. Utility buildings around the perimeter gave the workhouse its distinctive square or hexagonal outline. Each design also featured an entrance/administrative block at the far end of one of the wings.

Kempthorne later developed a smaller version of the Square plan, known as the "200 Pauper Plan" (below right).

For more, see <http://www.workhouses.org.uk/buildings/Kempthorne.shtml>

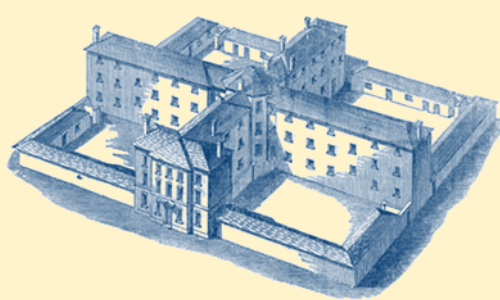
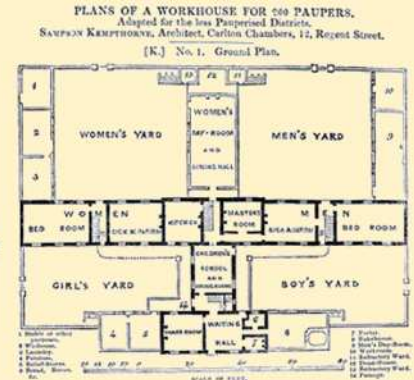


FIG. 10. PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF A WORKHOUSE FOR 500 PAUPERS. (L.)  
SAMUEL KEMPHTHORNE, ARCHT.,  
CARLTON CHAMBERS, 12, REGENT STREET.



# Josiah Pratt 1768–1844

“...the worthy Secretary... with his heart filled with love and compassion for the poor heathen; who has labored night and day to promote their welfare, and whose name will be handed down to posterity with honor, enrolled among the best friends of the Church Missionary Society.”<sup>1</sup>

The illustration at right shows a (digitally enhanced) page from the 22 year old William Colenso's 1833–34 notebook,<sup>2</sup> probably written in Cornwall on his farewell visit home in April and May 1834. It lists things to do, and in the list is an entry that reads,

{ Remember Mrs Garnon to  
Mr. Josiah Pratt—15 Finsbury  
Circus—

In April 1842 Colenso would write to the CMS secretaries, with a box,

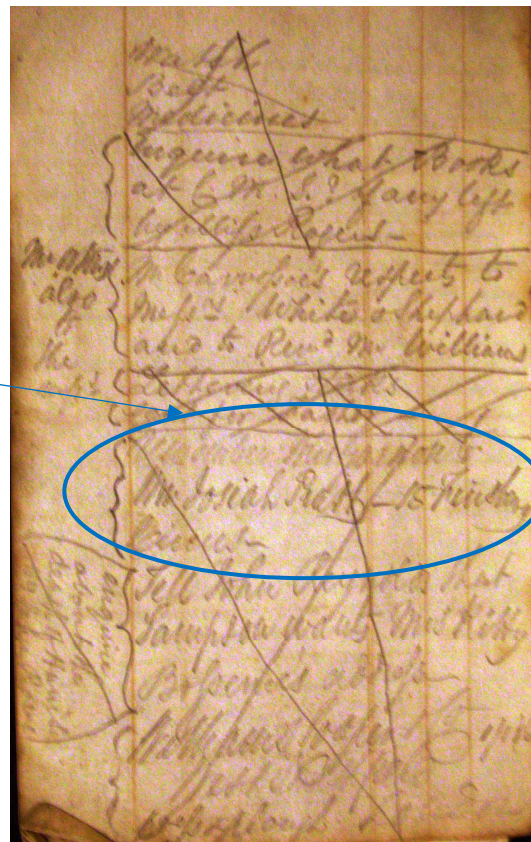
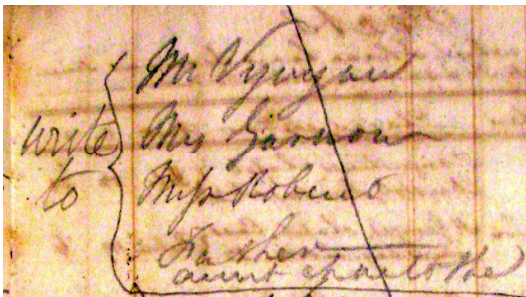
*There is also in the Box, a copy of my late Travelling Journal, with a few Sketches stitched up with it. This I would thank you to deliver to my old and much-esteemed friend Mr. Broughton, who having read the same will have the goodness to send it to my cousin the Rev. J.W. Colenso, Harrow, who will forward it to Mrs. Garnon, the person for whom it was written.*

Mary Dennis Garnon *née* Rock was the widow of the first chaplain to Sierra Leone who died in 1818 (*The Missionary Register* 1818: 481–484 relates the whole sad saga); she returned to Cornwall and Colenso must have visited her in 1834—and later written to

her, as the next page of his notebook suggests (detail at left). Ann Collins wrote about her in *eColenso* Aug 2013.

Her name is noted here among people important to Colenso—his pastor Mr Vyvyan, his father, his aunt Charlotte and a Miss Robins.

That, and his writing his travelling journal for her suggests a quite important relationship. Later she would write to the CMS supporting his application for ordination.





Josiah Pratt was one of my 64 great<sup>4</sup> grandparents: in 1838 his daughter Marianne would marry Sampson Kempthorne (see p.7). Much later, Colenso would write in his “autobiography”,

*I arrived in London towards the end of the year 1833.... in the course of a few weeks, and through some of my religious writing (small pieces which appeared in the “Pilot”), I became acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Pratt, and, subsequently, with Mr. D. Coates, the Lay Secretary of the C.M.S., through whom, in the course of time, I was engaged to go out to N.Z. as a Missionary and Missionary Printer etc. etc.*<sup>3</sup>

Josiah Pratt was one of the founding members of the CMS and its secretary from 1802 to 1824, and he edited the *Missionary Register*. Along with other members of the Evangelical wing of the Church of England, he played a major role in the expansion of Anglican foreign missionary efforts. Pratt claimed that the press was “the great engine acting upon society” and that the Evangelical clergy should use it to their fullest advantage. The press was to be used “as a most powerful auxiliary” in promoting the goals of the society. To that end, the first task of the CMS General Committee, and especially Pratt, was “to procure those publications, which relate to the history of missions; which point out the difficulties encountered, or display the success obtained, in the various attempts made to promote the Christian faith.” Also needed were printed works in indigenous languages, primers on Christian ideas, spelling books, and parts of the Bible.<sup>4</sup>

He retired as secretary of the CMS in 1824 and lived at Finsbury Circus. He met Colenso in 1833 and would have found the young man’s skills very suitable.

Pratt was acknowledged by his contemporaries for his unsurpassed organizational abilities and “practical view of all questions connected with the evangelization of the world.” He

steered the society through its formative years and, through his vast publicity efforts, was its chief liaison with the British public. Josiah Pratt’s contributions were critical in putting the CMS on a secure footing and laying the groundwork for the heyday of Anglican missions in the mid- and late Victorian periods.<sup>4</sup>

#### References

1. Birmingham Church Missionary Association, Two Sermons, Preached October 16, 1814, at St. Mary’s in the Morning, by the Hon. and Very Rev. the Dean of Wells, and in the Afternoon at St. James’, Ashted, by the Rev. T. T. Biddulph. With an Appendix, Containing the Proceedings of a Public Meeting, Held on Wed, Oct. 19, 1814, for the Purpose of Forming an Association Auxiliary to the Church Missionary Society (Birmingham: Thomas Knott, 1815), p. 92.
2. Hawke’s Bay Museum Trust Object Numbers m67/23a, 66309.
3. Colenso W. *Autobiography*. In Bagnall & Petersen, 2nd ed., OUP.
4. Barnhart WC 2012. The legacy of Josiah Pratt. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 36 (3): 154–157.



Josiah Pratt: mezzotint by Samuel William Reynolds, published by Dobbs & Co, 1826

# Colenso falls out with Henry Williams

Among the Donald McLean papers (I don't know why) is this...

Augt. 10<sup>th</sup>. 1839

*Memoranda of a Convn. which took place between the Revd. H. Williams and myself this morning—*

Revd. H.W. called on me and proposed my going to Kororareka tomorrow (Sunday) to hold service, to which I assented.—Some conversation about the proceedings of the R.Catholics ensued: I gave him a paper to read, contg. an acct. of a trial, in which a R.C. priest was the plaintiff, and, as it was 9 o'clock, rose to go to the Pg. Office, requestg. him, if he was agreeable, to sit & read the paper. He then sd. he wished to have some convn. abt. my lad's taking a blanket from one of his boys the evg. before—adding "it has never been the custom so to act when a lad did amiss, but to see the Master of the lad & acq't. him with the behavr. of the lad, &c &c," and that I had "acted very improperly" in so acting. Here I sd. that *he* had acted so many times—at which he got warm, and denied it, challengg. me to adduce an instance—I soon recollected the case of Kahukoka, &c, wch I related, when he declared, 'twas not so—I reminded him that in so doing "he charged me with a downright lie," whc he, slapping the table with his hand, repeated it, adding 'twas impossible for him so to have acted, as 'twas contrary to his principle—whc he had followed for near 17 years, &c, &c. I sd. since then you thus chge me with a downright lie, our convn. had better end here, &c.—For that affair took place between *us two*. He asked me to give up the lad's blanket—I refused to do so "unconditionally"—he sd. the cases

were not parallel—I sd. they were—he sd. the action of my lad was a "dirty trespass." I sd., allowg. that, I acted then as you wished me, gave an utu,<sup>1</sup> &c.—He sd. that no time had elapsed in that case, but in this I had gone quietly to bed, &c &c—I sd. that there, *I* went to him, here 'twas evidently his, or his lads, to come to me—as to time, that no time had elapsed in pt. of law—he havg. come as early as he could—I had the Natives talk. to at the time, more than 20, they left at past 8, P.M., 2 fr. Natives (Robert & John Tupe) were here *when they were leavg.* these 2 infd. me that H.W. ret'd. late from Korora. ill, slept in boat, and that tho he had fixed that p. at Korera., he was so unwell as to go to lie down—these reasons were sufft. to keep me (had it been my place) from going to him that night. He again asked me to give up the B., I refused "unconditionally"—as I had often taken his lad's clothes, and given them up, but now I wold. make an ex: especy. as I had often been insulted by his lads, and also, in this case, Messrs. F. & B's lads had restrained them selves from touching that wood on my speakg. to them & that in this, tho I had spoken to his lads, they went and cut it up. He sd. in thus speakg. I insulted him as the Master of his lads. I sd. No; for it was the fact, &c; at this he got warm, very warm & sd. "You are an Insolent Man" I sd. I had never insulted him in my life, that I had always respected him. He sd. "Your lang. has been most insulting"—I sd. "I am detd. Sir, not to be irritated by anything you may say; but I pray you don't use that language to me for 'tis more than old Adam will quietly bear, &c." "Why," sd. Mr. W. "did you not complain if my lads had insulted you" &c, I sd. that I had sevl. times, & that it had not been done lately, for when Mr. Ashwell was here, he was the objt. of yr. ridicule. He sd. "You and Mr. Ashwell are a pair of you," &c. I replied, "You must think, Sir, and let think on this matter," He sd. "for this 4 or 5 years you have behaved in this unbecoming manner &c" I sd. that I again repeated it, that his lads had ever behd. most insultingly

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1. payment

to me, and more than that, that no other Missy. wod. have retd. Natives in his employ that had so repeatedly behd. themselves amiss to a brother Missy. as his lads had behd. to Mr A & myself".—He sd. "I was never so insulted by anyone in all my life as by Mr. Ashwell, save yourself." I repeated—"Our convn. had better end here, after what he had sd." He sd. "Yr.

conduct has been most extraordinary"—I said—"That, Sir, is a mild & bland expressn. after what you have just said—I pray you don't back out of your repeated assertions in that kind of way Sir." At this he rejoined with increasg. warmth—"I tell you, that the strongest possible terms I know of cannot convey the Insolence of your language and your improper conduct to me before the Natives." (this was accompd. with peculiar gestures of his fist, the skirts of his dressing gown, &c &c, all which declamn. only convinced me more deeply that he was in a great passion)—I then sd. "You will bear witness of my calmness under all this—I have only to say, "I wish I had some witness to your repeated expressions, or that you wod. give me those words in writing"—He exclaimed, "Write them down, I'll sign them."—He was then going out, and he asked me again to give up the B., I firmly repd. not without an utu as I did in the affair of the pails. [He had before sd. that he wod. give the lad a new B. & chge it to my a/c—when I repd. I wod. not allow it—& sd. that if he gave his lad a new B. I wod. give mine a reward for doing what he had done,—he sd. that my lad wod. not have touched Pare's (?) blan-

# Benjamin Yates Ashwell

"... appeared somewhat temperamental (so) he was not at first entrusted with a mission station.... his temperament provoked hostility among the Maoris. Later he was allowed to open his own mission station at Kaitotehe, near Taupiri, where, to the surprise of his superiors, his ministrations met with instant and impressive success."

—*Encyclopedia of NZ* 1966.

ket, if he had he wod. have been "gobbled up"—I sd. if P. had laid hands on my boy I wod. have laid hands on P.—he said that P. was a Goliath—well sd. I gt Goliath was overcome by little David; that I knew not whose garmt. it was, save it was that of an offender, and that the boy was his, and that I blamed my lad for not bringing me more—he sd. if it had been so his lads shod. have been Muru for Muru<sup>2</sup>"]

I then sd. "You will please bear in mind, Sir, in conseq. of these assertions of yours, that all our convn. on any subject must henceforth be at an end."—to this he replied, "certainly so"—I again repd. the Sentence, layg. emphasis on "You will *please bear in mind, Sir,*"—and adding "Unless you retract those words"—to which he replied—"That I'll never do unless you make an apology"—To which I repd. "It is most laughable, Sir, to think you cod. suppose such a thing"—

Here our convn. ended.

Blessed be the LORD! for keepg. me throughout in calmness and collectedness. Oh, GOD, do thou pardon all thou didst see amiss in me, and do thou pardon thy servt. W. also, givg. him to see his errors.

"Exurgat Deus!"

(written within 2 hours after the convn. took place)

3. That is the log that was chopped; now the tide flow took it there.

4. Us

5. I did.

6. On the house cleaning day.

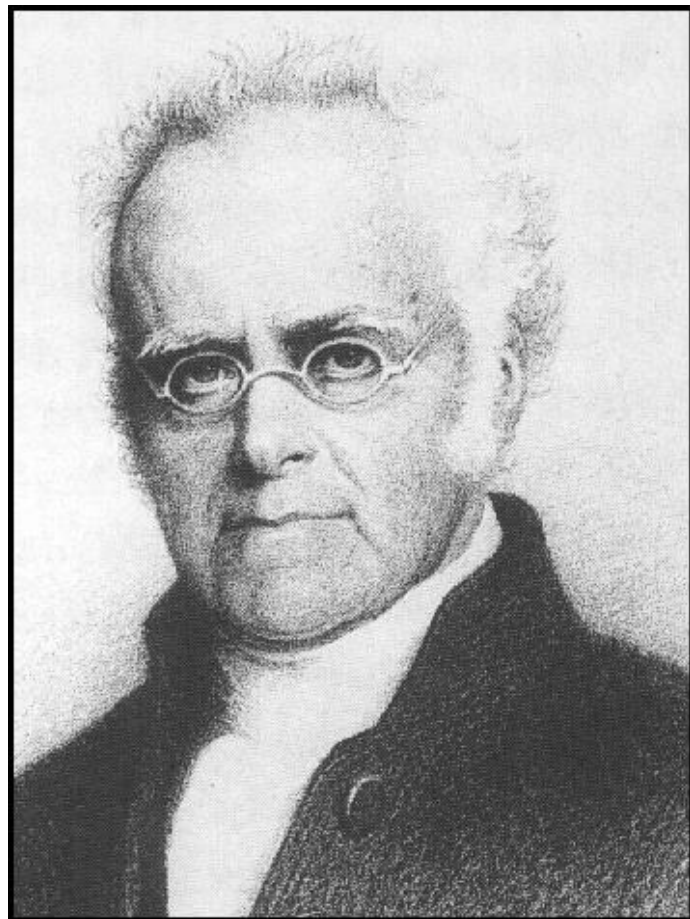
7. Last night

Augt. 10/39.—3 P.M., sent for by Revd. H.W. to go to see him at the Kotekotinga, to take also my lad Kauri, went, overtook him on the rocks—went on together, arrd. there, Mr. W. sd. “Now Mr. C. point out the 2 logs you spoke of”—I repd. “I had nothing to say *now* in the matter” My boy sd. “Tena te rakau i tatakia; na te tai ia i kawē ai ki reira<sup>3</sup>” went to it—Mr. W. asked my lad who had sawn it—“Matou<sup>4</sup>—who saw his lad chop it—“Naku<sup>5</sup>—when—“I te ra honi ware<sup>6</sup>—when did you muru him—“Nonapo<sup>7</sup>—why did you leave it so long—“Naku i mea kia purangatia nga wahie ki reira, nga wahie i tatakia ai, a muri iho haere mai ana ratau, tangohia ai, na reira au ka wakataka iri ai,<sup>8</sup> &c—”. Mr. W. turned to me & sd. “You see Mr. C. the damage done, &c—I repd. I had nothing to say abt. it—I had now for the first time heard the story from Kauri, I had not sent the lad to muru—and he (Mr.W.) had already from the morn’g’s. proceedgs. put the case out of my power. Mr.W. asked me to give up the B. I sd. No I would not give it up [unconditionally]—after what had already passed: that things were now come to a crisis. He sd. he shod. mentn. the matter to 2 or 3 indivs.—I repd. I intend to bring it bef. the Committee. He sd. “after being so many years in the work, I wouldn’t think of asking a second time such a boy as you”—I made no reply—but fell back a bit.

Ito—Nau i pokanoa ki nga rakau a te W.—. Na te riri i pokanoa ki nga r. a te W.<sup>9</sup>—

*As Kempthorne observed, “The Revd. H.W.—and Mr. C. were for a long time without speaking to each other.”*

Henry Williams►



8. I have to lay the wood to it, the wood may be near, and after they come and take it, but I shall be suspended.

9. An enemy interfered with W’s wood. Now the anger interferes with it.



Letters from Colenso to Coupland Harding contain a lot of information on early printing in New Zealand. On 5 February 1891 Colenso wrote to Harding, referring to a letter Harding had received from Archdn William Leonard Williams (nephew of Henry Williams),

There is one *ludicrous* bit in the Arch-deacon's extracts, about his Uncle—this I have pencilled: he only came to N.Z. in *Augt./23*, w. wife & family, & this land was *then* indeed wild: fancy *his* writing to Mr. Pratt (about 4 months or so after landing) about a *printing press*! Of all our Missionaries—*H.W.*, was perhaps *the least fitted* (naturally) for *anything* of that kind. He *never* attempted translation!—indeed, the lang. was little known: but this small incident truly shows *the char.* (not so much of *H.W.* as of his *wife*—who was (the *sole*?) writer of *all* that awful scribble used by son-in-law Carleton, in “Life of H.W.”) The diff. between *H.W.* & his brother *W.W.* (the late Bp.) was immense! *in everything*—phys. & mentally!! There is a *fine* portrait of *H.W.* in “the Early Histy”—but *no more like him* than it is of D. Sidey! it is *not* a photo: & perhaps *done by himself*. (There are 2 other *highly flattered* portraits in that work, Heaphy (w., of course the I.V.P.) & *Pompallier* to this last, almost a full page, abounding in French decoration & (as in *H.W.*) *not like the man*.—<sup>10</sup>

Colenso was a forgiving man, though: he had argued fervently with Henry Williams in the Paihia days, but on 3 March 1852 he told the CMS Secretaries that he no longer had confidence in their organisation, for (among other things) they had dismissed Henry Williams on account of his excessive land acquisition:

Your recent painful decision in the case of the oldest Missionary in New Zealand—and the one to whom (notwithstanding his failings) you, and all, (and none more than the Government,) are the most indebted—strengthens me in my opinion.

The last year—or, rather, 16 months, (from the time we first heard of our old Pastor being openly “Gazetted” in the Colonial Papers to the exultation of our numerous enemies,) has been a most particularly painful period to me (and to many more). I cannot tell you a tithe of what I have felt, and still feel. I cannot venture to write you upon the subject. For, “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,” and the hand writeth; and I know that “in multiloquio non deerit peccatum”; still, I dare not be altogether silent. Under these circumstances I cannot perhaps do better than give you an extract from a friendly yet confidential letter, which I wrote to our Archdeacon on his leaving N. Zealand, and which, I think, he has subsequently received in England;<sup>11</sup> “I assure you, (and it is with highly painful feelings that I write it,) that I have not that confidence in the Society which I had, and it may, ere long, grow to a separation.... If, as you truly say, the C.M.S. will not defend their Servants from the men of the world; then, I had better cease to occupy a situation, which, sooner, or later, must bring my disgraceful dismissal....”

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10. ATL qMS-0495.

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11. William Williams had gone to England to argue his brother's case.

# Nicholas Broughton to Henry Williams

We have mentioned Nicholas Broughton before this: he was proprietor of the Swan Inn where the intending missionaries, including Colenso, stayed in London awaiting departure and he continued to be a benefactor for Colenso in New Zealand. In the ATL microfilm of the CMS papers is a copy of a letter from Broughton to Williams.

*As from C.M.S. Novr. /39*

*My dear Sir,*

*I am glad that you got the Thrashing Machine safe. & if you had ordered a Theodolite Sextant &c as Mr Davis did you would have had it. It has long been said, God speed the plough, & I also say, the same by the thrashing machine—but I do not like to hear of Missionaries being great Farmers & I think when those excellent men, such as E.G. Wakefield, arrive amongst you that there will be a sort of cut & run upon landed property. They will take care of no 1 & 2 for themselves & their Sycophants. & it will be read in your Commee. “Who is on the Lord’s side, who”. If any man had paid the necessary attention that he ought to his missionary work he cannot be blamed but if he had encumbered himself with land as some of you have done he has brought disgrace on the Mission. The whole Mission itself is in a sadly disorganised state & by the failure of the New Zealand Mission the Society has lost many of its best friends. From all that I can gather the want of union among you arises from your arbitrary proceedings. & I think that had the Society done without you for the last few years it would have been much the better off. I think about two hours we were in company was all I saw of you. & that was a short time to judge of character, but talking to one about you after you left he was decidedly of opinion that you would want too much elbow room, which generally follows officers. If a Missionary loses sight of his high & holy calling he is sure to*

*bring a disgrace upon his profession. Therefore humble yourself under the mighty hand of God & retrace your steps or it will be asked of you at the great day. Didst thou do thy part to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? It must seem a strange thing to those Emigrants that an individual at home should send out property enough to purchase land sufficient to endow an Hospital & amongst all those miles & miles of land, that have been sold & resold, no Missionary could spare an allotment to endow such a useful asylum in N. Zealand, altho he was offered the value of such piece of land—Surely the by-standers will say that those noble land holders did not possess much of that spirit that so prevailed amongst the earlier Christians. & especially recommended by their Divine Master. The Society seems much at a loss for some one to go out that can set things to rights amongst you. I should almost recommend their declaring the New Zealand Mission defunct—discharge the whole lot. & then select from application such, & such only, as have proved themselves worthy of their holy vocation. Let those that are farmers retire to their ploughs, & those that are Ministers wait on their Ministry. But I fear like Messrs. Kendall & Butler they will keep a better eye on their pelf than upon their consecration oaths—bye the bye. Butler has been trying to get out again (so a relation of his told me some time ago) & if he sets his foot again in N. Zealand he will soon kick up a flame that the C.M.S. will not easily quench. Hoping that this will find self & family all well—I remain &c  
(Signed) N. Broughton.*

Henry Williams is said to have been a devout man, but his devotion was not one of self sacrifice or humility: he would “want too much elbow room”....

# The Briton's Land

From *Scissors & Paste*, 6 January 1915...

Should any grovelling wretch demand  
What country is the Briton's land,  
And any brute whose soul is dead  
Cast low reflections at his head,  
We answer that he always got  
All he could get—he took the lot;  
He jumped the land, he boned the gold,  
He snavelled all that he could hold,  
And from the Poles to far Carthay  
He faked things in a Christian way;  
And every article of worth  
He sneaked from every tribe on earth,  
And everything on earth he took  
Save one—he never took his hook;  
And every place that came to hand:  
That was the Briton's promised land.

Where'er the nigger asked for rum  
There did his cherished Scripture hum,  
And where brass gods were in demand  
That was the Briton's favoured land,  
And 10 per cent. reduction he  
Allowed upon a quantity;  
And where the black inhabitants  
Were badly off for pants,  
He came—and cleaned the Pagan out,  
And put his country up the spout;  
Where'er men wanted guns on trust,  
He sold them guns that always bust,  
And, by way of security,  
He grabbed the earth, and stole the sea;  
And when he found the tribes at strife,  
He bore to them the Bread of Life.  
And to each Heathen he did preach,  
And sold a rusted axe to each,  
And when they caved each other in,  
And each man stole the other's gin,

And cut each other's uncle up,  
And used his skull for a drinking cup,  
And the tribes grew thin on the blood-stained  
strand—  
That, too, became the Briton's land.

He spread the Gospel near and far  
(He was not too particular,  
But he always took the Word along—  
On this one point he came out strong),  
He lifted up the Pagan's eyes  
To mansions that are in the skies,  
And then he knocked him on the head—  
That Heathen aforementioned;  
Or shot him on some dusty plain,  
Or hove him in the rolling main,  
Or smashed him in a general way,  
Then over his remains did pray  
That, at the Resurrection, he  
Might live again by the Jasper Sea,  
And wander round amid the flowers  
That blossom in Valhalla's bowers,  
And sing an everlasting song  
The groves of Paradise among.  
Or sometimes he put dynamite  
Beneath that "brudder" in the night,  
And scattered him, like grains of sand—  
And his fields became the Briton's land!

But now and then it chanced he fell  
Upon some warlike Infidel—  
Some unregenerate son of gore—  
Some mail-clad fiend on a lonely shore,  
And to him there came a sadder fate,  
For that fiend became a Syndicate,  
And the Briton taught him how to be  
A Loan and Mortgage Company  
And in his fastnesses and hills  
He fooled around with notes and bills,  
And the Infidel was floated then  
In shares paid up to one-pound-ten,  
And eighteenpenny calls fell due  
Unfailingly, each week or two,  
Till the Buddhist's clothes went up the spout,  
And the Bailiff sold the Moslem out,  
And the Parsee saw his rose-strewn vale  
Foreclosed beneath a bill of sale,  
And the Brahmin looked from his mortgaged  
towers

At the execution within his bowers,  
And a lien was on the Sacred Cow,  
And they were all broke—they knew not how;  
Then they fell like leaves on the arid strand,  
And their plains became the Briton's land!

And thus it was the Briton spread  
On many an isle far sundered;  
And still the Pagan wants to know  
Where the lands of his swindled fathers go?  
And how they swapped for a rusted gun  
The fairest vales beneath the sun.  
And why he pays an endless tax,  
Because his uncle got an axe;  
And how, in a general sort of way,  
Things are as they seem to-day,  
And wherefore the oily preachers tell  
That the nigger who steals makes tracks for  
Hell!  
And, in short, he fails to understand  
That the earth should be all the Briton's land!

Among the Colenso material in the Auckland Museum Library collection (MS-76, folder 20, box 3) is a manuscript fragment, not in Colenso's handwriting, of verses called "Briton's Land". On the back, in another hand, is an annotation, "Poem: Shewing Colenso's hatred of the early land grabbing of some missionaries."

It is a transcript of "The Briton's Land," (author "Titus Salt") which first appeared in the (Sydney) *Bulletin* of 21 February 1891 and was reprinted by other periodicals; Titus Salt was the pen name of journalist James Edmond.

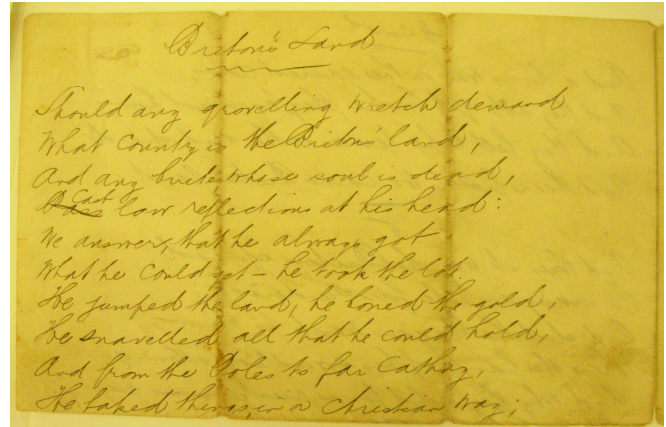
The 1890s was a period of rising international tension with power blocks dangerously emerging. In Australia there was a strong current of racism. This was the heyday of Social Darwinism and eugenics. The Sydney *Bulletin* was proud to proclaim “Australia for the white man”. There was unease at the use of Chinese and Melanesian labourers in the sugar plantations of Queensland. They were thought to be uncouth and slovenly. The desire to colonise the Pacific Islands was partly based on the idea that the Polynesians were lazy and inefficient and not making the most of the bountiful land they lived on. There was also the inconvenient presence of Aborigines. It was easier to justify this empty island theory if the aborigines were not considered as humans at all. Social Darwinism allowed them to be considered as some kind of missing link between humans and gorillas. The colonial parliaments showed less concern for the treatment of non-whites than Westminster had done in the past.

[<http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/australia.htm>]

James Edmond 1859–1933 migrated in 1878 to New Zealand, where he worked in a sweets factory before moving to Australia. He worked for the *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin* and began sending comment on financial matters to the Sydney *Bulletin*—“lucidly and cogently, but also with a dry and pungent humour”. In 1886 editor Archibald invited him to join the full time staff.

Fun was an integral part of the *Bulletin's* most serious business. Edmond's humour—discursive, sometimes ponderous, always erudite, inclining to grotesquerie—balanced Archibald's finer mischief in the orchestration of the journal, while his editorials gave it range and strength. From 1890 Edmond was associate editor. He also contributed dramatic criticism, paragraph material throughout the paper—some of it carrying his pseudonym “Titus Salt”—and occasional short stories.

[<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/edmond-james-6090>].



Not all of the papers in the Colenso boxes at Auckland Museum belonged to Colenso (there is a newspaper clipping about Ruapuke Island, for instance, that is dated some years after his death). Nor can I think of any example in his own writing where he would wound with such steely irony.

But after his friend Coupland Harding had gone to live in Wellington in 1891 they were exchanging letters every week or two: letters full of comments on what each was reading, enclosing clippings and documents (eg, Colenso to Harding, 1896, “With your last paper came a portion of a poem by Mrs Hemans kindly copied by you for me....”)

But “The Briton’s Land” is not mentioned anywhere in Colenso’s letters to Harding and furthermore neither the manuscript nor the annotation are in Colenso’s or Harding’s handwriting.

Its provenance therefore remains a mystery.

# I, myself, am but a plain man of common observation [1]

Let me have men about me that are fat,  
Sleek-headed men and such as sleep a-nights.

In 1833, 22 year old printer William Colenso,  
... walked to Ludgvan church to hear Revd. Mr. Vyvyan  
preach a Missionary Sermon: if all Church (or Dissenting)  
Ministers were like him what a blessing 'twould be; plain,  
unassuming, meek and mild. "When unadorned, adorned the  
most". [2]

He retained that admiration for plainness all his life and his writing  
on what makes a good missionary and what makes a good teacher  
reflect his views about both professions. In 1838 explorer Colenso  
wrote from Poverty Bay,

*Here is a wide field for usefulness—an open door for a real  
Missionary—a working man, a simple man, a man who can  
renounce the world, become all things to all men, love the  
Natives, and seek their good, not his own.* [3]

In 1874 school inspector Colenso wrote from Napier to a "Mr.  
Compton, Teacher, Sunny Bank Newton, Auckland" who had en-  
quired about "any vacancy among the offices of School Teachers in  
Hawke's Bay."

*... this brings me to the other portion of your letter, wherein  
you (rightly) mention your scholastic qualifications, Classi-  
cal, Mathematical, &c,—and, knowing their value, I will  
congratulate you in your possessing them: still, at the same  
time, what is really more required at present, in our new  
country—and especially in its small scattered humble village  
schools, is, an aptness to teach (i.e. to educe the capacities*

*and to impart plain & useful elementary knowledge,) and a  
real love, or zeal, for the work—in all its daily, and, too often,  
dry routine, accompanied with temperate and regular habits:  
these qualifications are in my opinion essential to success.* [4]

In 1840 catechist Colenso had written from Paihia to the CMS Secre-  
taries in London,

*... all (missionaries) should be first tried in the field of labour  
before they be admitted to the solemn and sacred office of the  
Ministry. Be not offended, with me, my dear Sirs, when I say,  
from what I have seen, and heard, and known, during more  
than 5 years of practical experience in the Mission Field, it is  
my decided opinion and firm conviction, that it is actually  
more needful for Missionary Students to be on probation in  
the Fields of Missionary Labour, than for them to be on trial  
within the walls of a College or Institution. A man may be  
able to compose a most excellent Discourse, he may write an  
elegant and classical Latin Essay, yea, he may pass his Greek  
Examination with ease and applause, and, yet, be very unfit  
for a Practical Missionary; and make, after all, but a very  
sorry figure in the field....* [5]

Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look.  
He thinks too much. Such men are dangerous.

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2. Diary 4 August 1833. ATL MS-Papers-9131-1.
3. Journal 28 January 1838.
4. Letter to Compton 3 February 1874. "Correspondence and Returns Book, Hawke's Bay Provincial Council Inspectors of Schools" p80. Hawke's Bay Museum Trust, Ruawhoro Tā-ū-rangi #67845.
5. Journal, 24 January 1840. Hocken Library Ms Vol 63; ATL qMS 0491.