eColenso

ISSN 1179-8351

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.

Past issues are at www.colensostudy.id.au/Newletter%20Masthead.htm.

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First journey to the Ruahine, February 1845

4 I left [Waitangi] for Patea at 8… at 20m. past 12 reached Okokoro, a small village… by ½ past 4 we arrived at Te Taheke, another small village… and, continuing our journey, I gained Te Rotoatara Lake by 8 p.m….

5 [left Te Rotoatara] at ½ past 11 a. m… travelled on, rather slowly, until 6 p.m., when we halted for the night at Mangaonuku, a small river on the edge of the great plain Te Ruataniẇa,

6 [at Mangaonuku River].

7 started [from Mangaonuku River] at 9 a.m., directly across the great plain [Te Ruataniẇa] and then up the stony bed of the River Waipaoa, this river we waded with difficulty several times... At 3 p.m. we arrived at the junction of this river with the R. Makororo, the former coming from the S., when we proceeded up the stony bed of the latter until ½ past 5, when we halted for the night in the bed of the river at Oparua.

8 Early this morning we recommenced our journey [from Oparua] and, at 3 p.m., arrived at the base of the immediate mountain range [Ruahine]... we commenced the ascent through the woods , and continued... until 6 p.m., when... halted in the dense forest.

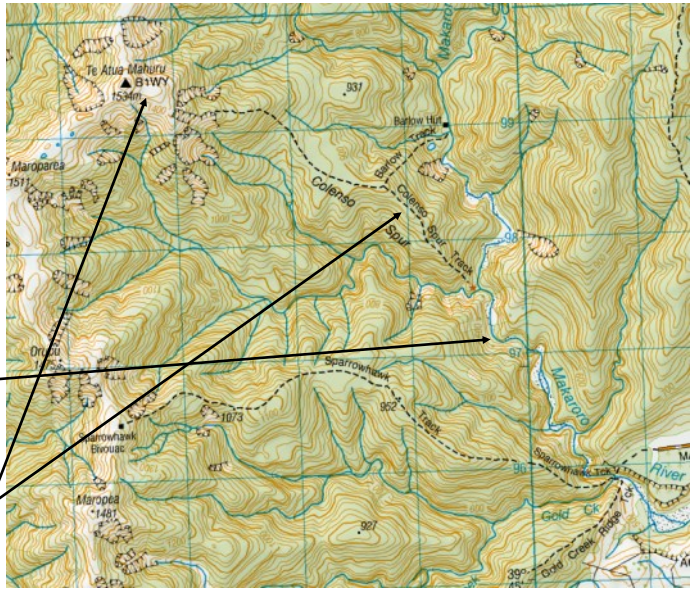
9 [on the Ruahine Range].

10 gained the top [of the Ruahine Range, passing] over two of the worst of the "passes" [and returned to campsite].

They ran out of food….

11 commenced our journey back to the Station... at 7 p.m., we halted for the night at Motuowai, a small wood on the back of the river Waipaoa, and on the SW. edge of Te Ruataniẇa plain... 104 times did we wade in this day's march across the <u>main</u> stream!

12 we resumed our Journey [from Motuowai] and at 1 p.m., reached the banks of Te Rotoatara Lake... crossing to the Island [by canoe] we slept there.



13 Starting early... we arrived at 8 p.m. at the Station [Waitangi]....

Second journey to the Ruahine, February–March 1847

February

9 At 10 a.m. I left the Station; at noon reached Ahuriri harbour.... At 6 p.m. we arrived at Orarotauira, a small village on Te Waiohingaanga river….

10 started at 8 [from Orarotauira]…. Near Sunset we halted at Wahianoa, a spot on the hills where there was water.

11 At 7 we started [from Wahianoa]... crossed Titiokura the highest crest in the afternoon, and gladly descended towards the R. Mohaka. Crossing the fearful pass "Mangaẇata" in safety, we arrived at Mimiha by Sunset.

12 started [from Mimiha] descending the steep cliffs of the Mohaka River... and... gained Tarawera [Pirapirau]... feet very very sore with the hot and deep broken pumice, which in this district abounds.

13-14 [at Tarawera].

15 started at 6. At viii. halted by the side of a stream [Opitonui]…. At 9 we resumed our journey, when our misery commenced – no track, – steep hills – over which the fires of the Natives had recently swept leaving nothing but charred sticks and ashes and prostrate trees [called at Moturoa].... At iii, p.m. we gained the edge of Taupo plains... [crossed] the great plain... [passing... the head of the Rangitaiki River...] gaining Ohineriu... about an hour after dark;

16 started [from Ohineriu], at 6. Travelled 3 hours, when we halted... near the head of the R. Mohaka... [breakfasted at Te Kotipu]... at noon, crossed Wai Haruru, a stream which suddenly disappears through a dark & awful chasm... the country around has a most desolate appearance, and is covered with volcanic remains... reached Orona, a village on the shores of Taupo lake about Sunset –

17 started [from Orona] at x, a. m… an hour and a half took us to Motutere, the next village, prettily situated on the immediate shores of the lake [reaching it at 1:30]... at 2 p.m. we left Motutere, and at 5 reached Waimarino, (another village, also on the shore of the lake)…. An hour after dark we halted on the banks of Te Waikato R. [= Tongariro R.].

18 started at 8 a. m… left the immense lake of Taupo, & made for Tongariro mountain... reached Rotoaira at ½ past 3….

19 [left Rotoaira]... and crossed the head of the Waikato R., which here has its rise, being the outlet of Rotoaira lake.... At 4 p.m. we crossed Te Onetapu, a desolate arid plain of volcanic sand, about 2 miles wide, on which nothing whatever grew... on the edges of this solitary & fearful-looking spot, a lovely & fine Gentian (G. bellidifolia, Hook.,) flourished... rain... obliged us to keep on. At last we halted at 7 p.m. by the side of a small wood in a deep gulley... not a scrap of fern or brush could we find to form a bed with....

20 a dirty lowering morning with furious wind... concluded to remain in our present uncomfortable situation….

21 LORD'S day [remained in same spot].

22 started this morning at 6, frost very heavy [found Logania depressa]... At ½ past 9 we reached the R. Moeaẇango… hence, on, on, on… up & down steep hills, – [ate] some berries of a species of Gaultheria... travelled on until 2 hours after Sunset, when we... found a few Kouka trees, (Cordyline australis), the soft branches

of which we roasted & devoured.

23 At 6 we started, and in 2 hours were welcomed into a little village containing only 2 huts... and proceeded on to Matuku... about 3 miles distant....

24 At noon left Matuku, and travelled until a half-hour after Sunset, when we halted by the side of a small wood…. The Rangitikei R., which we crossed runs in a valley or deep chasm, bounded on either side by perpendicular cliffs upwards of 200 feet in height, down which fearful precipice I was obliged to come, by a winding path among the bushes, assisted in several places by the Natives, and holding on by long vines & flax leaves, which they had tied together to assist them in their descent. The last 2 hours of our journey this day was most disagreeable, being up the bed of a mountain stream, now wading through the water, now crawling on all-fours under uprooted trees which the winter torrent had thrown across the river, or through thorny bushes, and over slippery stones.

25 resumed our journey towards Ahuriri, between which and us stood the great mountain range of Ruahine... our course lay up a very steep and high hill, which... we surmounted... continued our journey – up & down high and densely wooded hills which were very precipitous... till after Sunset, when we were obliged to halt in the midst of an ancient Beech forest not very far from the summit…. The Beech trees here on the exposed heights are of very curious growth, gnarled, stunted, & almost branchless.

26 recommenced our journey before 6 o'clock... a long and miserable scrambling of some miles up the mountain, not through but over trees & bushes, between which there was no passing. In 4 hours... we gained Te Atuaomahuru, one of the principal peaks of the range... concluded... to proceed on to Te Waiokongenge, a place half-way down the range... resumed our journey, and at 5, p.m., gained the bed of the river Makororo... travelled on... till 7 p.m., when we halted on its banks.

27 travelled on... all day in the bed of the river [Makororo]... entered on Te Ruataniwa plain; where we halted about 1½ hours after Sunset….

28 LORD's-day [at same spot on Ruataniwa plain].

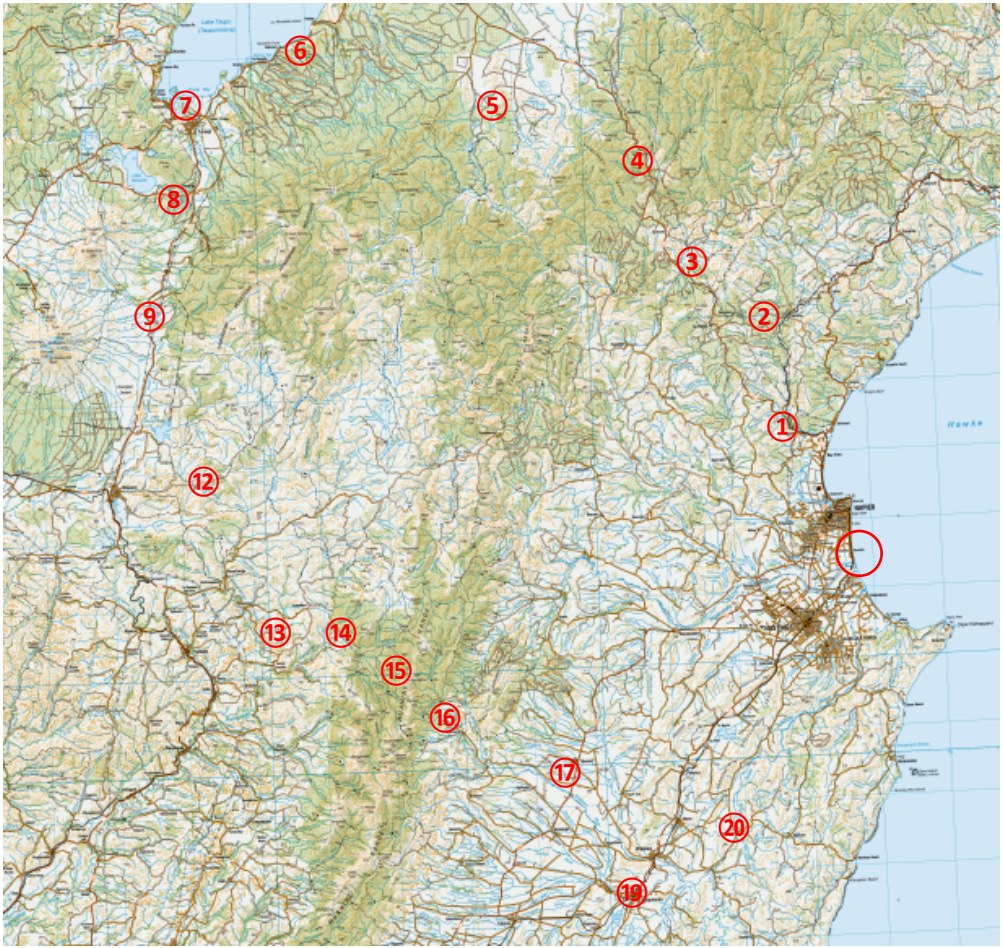
1847 ***March***

1 Left at vi; at xi gained the embouchure of the river [Makaroro?] and the road to Te Waipukurau... proceeded to the village...

2 At 11 a.m. we started [from Te Waipukurau] for Patangata, where we arrived at ½ past 6.

3 started early [from Patangata] for the Mission Station [Waitangi]....

The Colenso memorial cairn near the Te Awarua village site



Second journey

Colenso had earlier travelled (anticlockwise) as far as Tarawera ④ , and (clockwise) as far as Te Atua Mahuru ⑮, but this time spent the nights at…

① Orarotauira on the Esk river;

② Wahianoa on the Kaiwaka stream;

③ Mimiha village;

④ Tarawera;

⑤ Ohineriu between the Rangitaiki & Taharua headwaters;

⑥ Orona, Hallet's Bay, Lake Taupo;

⑦ Mouth of Tongariro River;

⑧ Poutu, Rotoaira;

⑨⑩⑪ Te Onetapu, Rangipo desert;

⑫ River Moawhango;

⑬ Matuku pa;

⑭ Rangitikei river;

⑮ near Te Atua Mahuru, Ruahine summit;

⑯ Makaroro river;

⑰⑱ Ruataniwha (Takapau) plain;

⑲ Waipukurau;

⑳ Patangata

Home to Waitangi the next day.

Third journey to the Ruahine, December 1847

27 Left the Station at 10, a.m., for Patea. By ½ past 8, p.m. we reached Raukawa….

28 started [from Raukawa] at noon. At 6, p.m. we halted in rain under some limestone crags in a desolate wild....

29 started, and travelled, 2½ hours, to the River Mangaonuku…. The great Ruataniwa plain lay before us.... Travelling steadily, we crossed an angle of it in 3 hours, when we reached Motu-o-wae... resuming our journey, we travelled on in the stony bed of the Waipaua River till Sunset.

30 at xi... left... travelled... in... the middle of the bed of the river [Waipaua]….

31 at x. we left. At iii, p.m., we reached the summit of the [Ruahine] range... [continued] our march until half past vi. when we halted on one of the lateral ridges of the range....

1848 ***January***

1 did not leave till x. a.m. and travelled steadily on until near ix. p.m., when, through great exertion we reached Te Awarua, a small village of the Patea district;

2 [at Te Awarua].

3 left [Te Awarua] at x , and at ii. p.m., we reached Matuku;

4-5 [at Matuku].

6 At ii. p.m., we left [Matuku], on our return... to Te Awarua... at vi. we reached that village.

7 left Te Awarua.... At ii. p.m., we were obliged to halt... on the banks of the River Wakaurekou...

8 at x... we started from our wigwam, and... made Ngaroto (our old sleeping-place) in 7 hours.

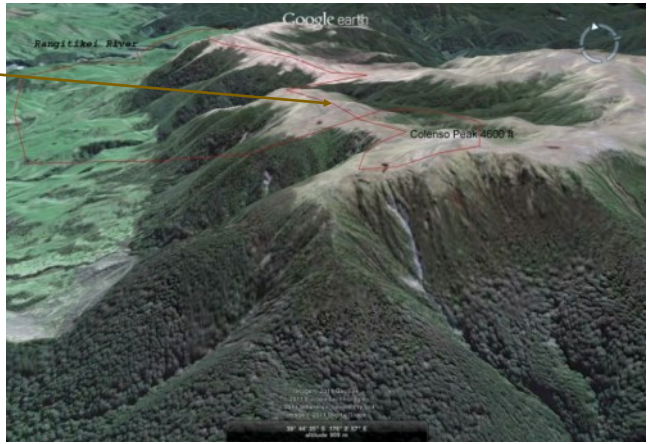
9 [at Ngaroto].

10 Travelled very leisurely over the heights [of the Ruahine range] all day.

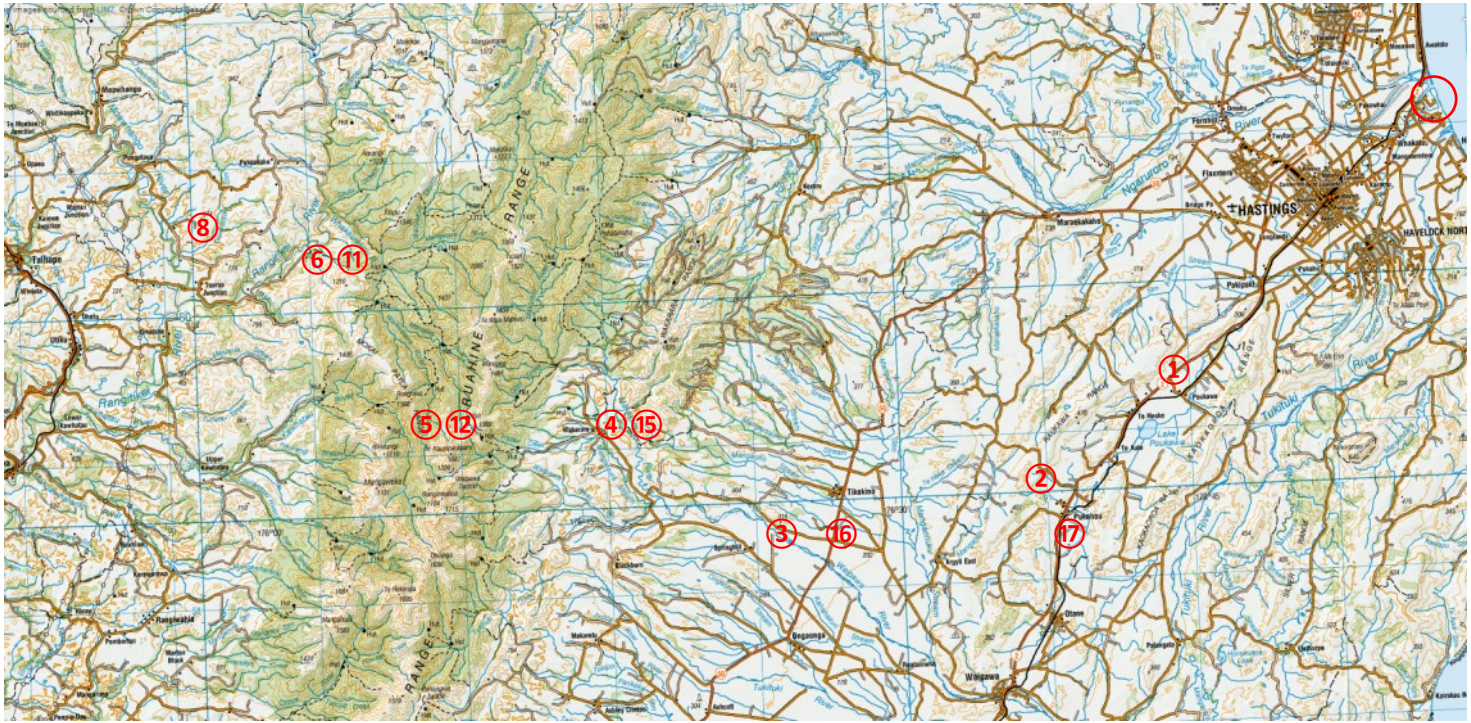
11 Ditto; and descended the mountain towards Hawke's Bay. At evening gained the bed of the River Makororo, where we halted.

12 travelled 2 hours [down the Makaroro river when the rain] obliged us to put up our tent, and to make a house to shelter ourselves;

13 travelled steadily on... until ½ past xi. p.m., when we threw ourselves down on the grass by the side of the Lake Rotoatara.



Third journey ① Raukawa; ② under some limestone crags in a desolate wild; ③ bed of the Waipaua River; ④ Makaroro river; ⑤ Ridge (Mokai Patea?); ⑥ ⑦ Te Awarua; ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ Matuku Pa; ⑪ Te Awarua; ⑫ ⑬ Ngaroto; ⑭ Ruahine heights; ⑮ Makaroro; ⑯ on the plain; ⑰ Lake Rotoakawa, and home to Waitangi the next day.



The inland Patea villages

The villages of Matuku and Te Awarua (and a number of smaller ones) were on the northeastern fringe of Colenso's "parish", east of Taihape; indeed, some Māori living there had already been baptised by Richard Taylor of Whanganui.

Taylor visited in 1845, when he made five sketches from Matuku pa.

Taylor, Richard, 1805-1873: From Patea. [13 March 1845]. Sketchbook. 1835-1860. Ref: E-296-q-093-1. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22805343

Taylor, Richard, 1805-1873: Tongariro from Patea in Þe interior 13 March 1845. Sketchbook. 1835-1860. Ref: E-296-q-095-1. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22771745 . The view looking northwest.

Colenso, at Matuku, wrote in his journal (October 1851),

> It snowed heavily during the day; the tops of the bare hills and the high plains all around are fast getting white, while the Ruahine chain (which lies between us & Hawke's Bay, and which we have to cross,) is pre-eminently so; at present they are quite impassable. Strange enough, the present has been an exceedingly mild winter at Patea, snow not having fallen here until now.... At Evening Service I preached ... to a small congregation of 17, who sat very quietly and attentively to the end, though the snow was coming in upon us through the broken roof. Past another cold day, in which I have scarcely known warmth, even in a small degree. The Natives however of the place, appear to be almost insensible to cold, the majority of them being but poorly clad, and yet they go sauntering about the village, or sit down talking together in an open shed with scarcely any fire, having half of their bodies uncovered. In this respect they differ greatly from the New Zealanders in general, who are mostly very impatient of cold. I, also, noticed some little children, who, leaving their garments in their hut, came out and frolicked naked about the village, regardless of the snow and sleet; nor did they return to their house and garments, until I had a second time ordered them to do so.

We drove there from Napier in early March, leaving Napier in hopeful blue skies but arriving at Hiwera road, leading up to the Matuku village site, in rain. I am no Colenso, so we decided to make the steep climb to the kaik for photographs on a better day.

We continued on along the impressively gorged Moawhango valley to the Colenso memorial and the browned off terrace of the Awarua village site. The memorial is impressive at 2m tall, nicely bedecked with fern now, as is the totara behind it.

There is nothing to indicate the village sites except the marks on the map. Extraordinary.

Where was the Waitangi Mission Station?

By Ian Cairns

This paper is written for fellow Colensophiles, to determine the location of Waitangi Mission Station (WMS), where William Colenso and his wife, Elizabeth Fairburn, lived from 1846 to 1853. Hawke's Bay landscapes and rivers are much changed since that time. Visible signs of the 11 Mission Buildings have long since gone, but we know from Peter Wells' *Hungry Heart,*

> *Te Awapuni Maori granted 10 acres (110 fathoms by 110 fathoms) to... (Bishop)... Selwyn for a mission station. It was a low spot… beginning at the canoe anchorage.* (p136)

And from Bagnall & Petersen that,

> *By the end of 1846, the Mission House was built, raised above the ground to keep it dry during floods.* (p190)

There are many references in both books indicating that the Mission Station was on the North of the Ngaruroro River. To quote but one from Bagnall & Petersen: Colenso, writing of his Wairarapa journeys,

> *… heading south from the Mission Station….first crossing the Ngaruroro River.* (p209)

And we have from contemporary maps, for example, p232 of Bagnall & Petersen, the WMS bounded by the Waitangi Creek to the North, the Waitangi Lagoon to the East (seaward side), and the Ngaruroro immediately to the South, with the Tuki Tuki further to the South again. ►

The Colenso Memorial is to the North of the Ngaruroro. But this does not sit with local knowledge placing the Mission Station on "Mrs Orbell's farm just South of the Waitangi Bridge", on land that is now farmed by the Hohepa Trust. Something does not add up. Is "local knowledge" wrong or is the memorial on the wrong side of the river? Again, Wells in *Hungry Heart*,

> *yearns to to link the Mission Station with the Hohepa side of the River (but could not do so).* (p415)

The location of the WMS is also important from the standpoint of the Hawke's Bay Regional Council Waitangi Regional Park Estuary Project. Stage One of the project opened on 20 March 2017. It has included earthworks and the construction of a celestial compass. Stage Two of the project will include funding for a new Colenso Memorial, a Colenso Garden, and Colenso-relevant signage. What should such sign-

Waitangi Mission Station, Bluff Hill Lagoon and shingle banks (from B&P)

age say about the Mission Station or indeed, about Colenso himself, his wife and his family?

I offer a review of Hawke's Bay's rivers then and now. The critical point is that the modern day Tutaekuri and Ngaruroro were simply not there in Colenso's time. Bagnall & Petersen are correct: the Mission Station was on the North Side of the Ngaruroro River. *But that river is the modern day Clive.* Local knowledge (championed by Mr Pat Parsons) is therefore fully consistent with Bagnall & Petersen..

Waitangi Creek

The Waitangi Creek would have been larger in 1850 than nowadays. The creek is now just a 1 metre wide ditch at the back of the Awatoto Fertiliser Works. Probably the 1850 Waitangi took overflow from the Tutaekuri (and the Ahuriri Lagoon) in times of flood. But it does appear from the old maps that the basic shape of the creek has not changed over the 167 years.

The Tutaekuri

In the 1850s the Tutaekuri flowed in to the Ahuriri Lagoon (North of Napier Hill). In times of flood, some of the flow may have gone South to the Waitangi lagoon via the Waitangi Stream.

Nowadays the Tutaekuri forks a few kilometres west of Waitangi. TheTutaekuri road bridge on SH2 crosses the northernmost fork of the river, which then has a direct exit to the sea. The southern fork joins the Ngaruroro, and flows under the SH2 Ngaruroro road bridge to the Waitangi lagoon.

The Ngaruroro

Maps circa 1850 show the Ngaruroro flowing to the Waitangi lagoon and thence to the sea; and the 10-acre Mission Station on the North side of the river. Hence, consistent with these maps and written material, at first sight it would appear that the existing Colenso Memorial Plaque is in the right place, viz. on the north side of the river.

However I would concur with Mr Pat Parsons (and others) that the WMS was almost certainly on the South side of the "modern" Ngaruroro, on land currently farmed by the Hohepa Trust.

The Clive

Confusion arises because of the signposting of the Clive River (and the Ngaruroro) on the Napier/ Hastings road (SH2). Viewed from the SH2 bridge, the Clive River appears to be as large as the modern day Ngaruroro. But this is deceptive because it is largely tidal. On the old maps, the Clive River does not appear at all—and with very good reason. *There was no such river: the modern-day Clive was the Colenso-time Ngaruroro.* The SH2 sign post for the Clive could perhaps read "Clive-Ngaruroro".

A number of strands of evidence support this conclusion,

- Discussion with Mr Pat Parsons, a Napier-based local historian.
- A distinctive U bend in the Clive near Farndon. This same U shape bend shows in Colenso-time maps of the Ngaruroro (see map).
- The signage for the recently opened Te Whakaora Te Wai riverside walk (►) that refers to the "Old Ngaruroro (Karamu-Clive) River".
- Signage at the Pakowhai Road Country Park opposite the Ruahapia/Pakowhai Road intersection, that records the Ngaruroro river channel diversion from Chester-

hope to the sea. At this park, the Clive and the modern Ngaruroro are only 50–100 metres apart.

As one cycles alongside our rivers, the contrast between a natural course and an engineered course becomes stark. The Clive has river bends, deep channels, whitebait fishing platforms, and a native fish species recovery programme. The modern Ngaruroro east of Chesterhope has a straight course with stop banks and a steady gradient to the sea.

Muddy Creek

Muddy Creek is on the South side of Clive township. As for the Waitangi, the basic shape of Muddy Creek does not appear to have changed since 1850.

The Tuki Tuki

The Tuki Tuki River was used by Maori (and Colenso) as a canoe transport route to the "interior": Patangata, Waipawa and Waipukurau. In 1850, the Tuki Tuki, along with Muddy Creek, the Waitangi and the Ngaruroro, emptied into the Waitangi lagoon with a mouth opposite the township of Clive. The Tuki Tuki now discharges direct to the sea near Haumoana, well to the south of Clive. Its lower reaches are again engineered.

I do not write about the Tuki Tuki any further in this article because it is not relevant to the question of the location of the WMS.

Concluding remarks

My initial purpose was to discover the location of the WMS to ensure that signage for the Waitangi Regional Park Estuary Project was not inaccurate. But as one "digs", one cannot help but become fascinated by Colenso, the man. I believe our Society must endeavour to capture the spirit of this multitalented man ("printer, missionary, botanist, explorer, politician"), his strengths and his weaknesses, within the context of the new park, and in a way that speaks to the lay public, young people in particular. In just a few years, the landscape, less than "110 fathoms" from that "wild and desolate shore", will look like this...

Postscript
Signage is on the agenda for discussion for Stage Two of the Waitangi Regional Park Estuary Project. While it may not be possible to change the bridge signs along SH2, at a minimum, signage for the new Park should inform the public of the history of the rivers that fed the estuary. In addition, perhaps a new sign is needed at the Pakowhai Road Country Park, informing when and why the diversion of the Ngaruroro took place. A wider signage review could also clear up the matter of the spelling of "Tuki Tuki". On local road maps and bridge signs, we have: the Tuki Tuki; the Tukituki; and the Tuki-tuki.

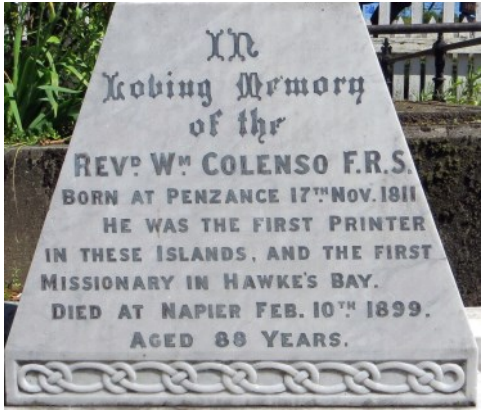
References
Wells, P. *The Hungry Heart: Journeys with William Colenso.* 2011
Bagnall, A.G & Petersen C.G. *William Colenso His Life and Journeys.* 1948, edited by Ian St George and re-published 2012.

Acknowledgements
Mr Pat Parsons, Local Historian, Napier

The scientific achievements of William Colenso FRS[1]

By Simon Nathan

In 1886 William Colenso was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London (FRS) for his published work on the ethnology, flora and fauna of New Zealand. This was a mark of high distinction within the British scientific community. At that time there were only three other Fellows in New Zealand—Walter Buller, James Hector and Julius von Haast (all of whom were subsequently knighted)—and they jointly signed Colenso's nomination, together with his friend and mentor, Sir Joseph Hooker in London. Those elected FRS are a select group—in 1886 there were 65 nominations, but of these only 15 were elected—and almost all were resident in the UK.



Colenso's election as FRS was all the more remarkable because almost all his work was undertaken in scientific isolation. Since 1844 he had lived in or near Napier, a small provincial town lacking a university, scientific library, and other professional scientists with whom he could discuss ideas. The FRS was Colenso's only international recognition, and his son Latimer, educated in England, must have been well aware of its significance when he designed the inscription on his father's gravestone.

Although Colenso was recognised within the 19th century scientific community, his scientific work has been largely overlooked by many later writers who have concentrated on his varied achievements as a printer, missionary, explorer, politician, school inspector and writer as well as the controversies that often surrounded him.[2] In this article I want to redress the balance by concentrating on William Colenso's scientific career and achievements.

At the outset, it is worth emphasising three of his personal traits that were important for his success as a scientist. Firstly, he was fascinated by all aspects of the natural world, and revelled in trying to understand the complexities of God's creation. Secondly, Colenso was a compulsive diarist and note-taker. He described everything he saw, and his journals were an invaluable source in the later part of his life

1. Talk given at conference, "The New Zealand Polymath: Colenso and his contemporaries", Victoria University, 17-18 December 2016.

2. Indeed the entry on William Colenso in the first volume of the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography (published 1990, p 87–89) gives considerable space to his perceived character defects, but fails to mention his FRS. This has been corrected in the online version.

when he was writing about historical and ethnographic topics. And thirdly, Colenso was an obsessive collector of objects that interested him, including plants, insects, shells, books, manuscripts, Maori material and historical objects. While some of his collections were lost or dispersed, what survives is a tangible record of many of the things he wrote about.

Early experience

There is little direct information about Colenso's schooling, but a recent research suggests that he attended Penzance Grammar School, leaving in 1826, aged 15, to take up a printing apprenticeship. It was a small school, with a traditional, classics-based education, but it did have the distinction of having produced two future presidents of the Royal Society.[3]

Colenso's interest in science was certainly stirred at an early age because immediately before leaving for New Zealand in 1834 he wrote of his intentions to collect specimens of different types, and send them back to the Penzance Institution for Promoting Useful Knowledge.[4] While he was aware of different scientific disciplines at this time, he appears to have had little practical experience.

Colenso's interest in botany was sparked by the six month long visit in 1838 by Allan Cunningham, government botanist from New South Wales. Having previously visited the Bay of Islands a decade earlier, Cunningham was already familiar with the local flora, and Colenso was an enthusiastic disciple, accompanying him in the field when he could find the time. Cunningham helped him to identify distinctive species, and showed him how to preserve and mount specimens in a herbarium. Colenso immediately started his own checklist of New Zealand plants, his *Glossarium Botanicum*, to which he regularly added as new information came to hand.[5] Ian St George has characterised Colenso's first plant lists as 'botanically naïve',[6] but Colenso was a quick learner and soaked up all the botanical information he could get his hands on.

A few months later he was devastated to hear of Cunningham's death in Sydney, but it acted as the catalyst for him to write to Sir William Hooker, then professor of botany at the University of Glasgow (but soon to be appointed as director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew). Hooker was happy to receive New Zealand plants from Colenso, and in return sent him copies of botanical publications. Colenso treasured his copy of Hooker's teaching text *Botanical Illustrations*, annotating and using it all his life.

William Hooker's son, Joseph Dalton Hooker, was also a botanist, and at the time he was a member of a British expedition investigating the location of the south magnetic pole in the sub-Antarctic region. By an enormous coincidence, the ships of the expedition anchored in the Bay of Islands between August and November 1841. Joseph Hooker sought out Colenso, and recorded his first impressions:

> "In the sitting room was a portrait of poor Allan Cunningham and a pretty pine tree in a bottle, and also some of my Father's botanical works on a table. Mr Collenso received us very kindly and talked of some very fine collections he had sent home and of the gratification this immediate acknowledgement gave him from Glasgow … Of shells Mr Collenso has 150 species with many insects and minerals …" [7]

3. St George 1 2015: Colenso at School. *E-Colenso 6(1):* 2–5.
4. St George I 2013: Getting past the receptionist. *E-Colenso 4(9):* 2
5. Earp C 2017: Cataloguing the new world: Colenso's *Glossarium Botanicum Novae Zelandiae. Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand* (in press).
6. St George I 2010: When did Colenso become interested in plants? *E-Colenso 1(8):* 11–12.
7. Antarctic Journal of JD Hooker, 19 August 1841.

Colenso and Hooker went on several botanical trips together, and by the time Hooker left the Bay of Islands Colenso was a competent botanist, not only able to identify plants, but to be aware of the significance of those that had not already been described. After the expedition departed, Colenso and Joseph Hooker were to correspond for almost 60 years,[8] and much of the plant material collected by Colenso ended up in the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew (where Joseph Hooker succeeded his father as director).

As Colenso travelled widely around the North Island on his missionary journeys over the next decade, he collected a huge volume of plant material which he mounted, catalogued and sent off to Kew for identification.[9] Although Colenso was not describing plants himself, by the 1850s he had an unrivalled knowledge of the botany of the North Island. Lydia Wevers notes that it is almost impossible to open a page of Joseph Hooker's *Handbook of the New Zealand Flora*[10] without Colenso's name on it.[11]

Moas and Colenso's first publications

Lady Jane Franklin, wife of the governor of Tasmania, visited Paihia in May 1841. During her stay she told Colenso about the Tasmanian Natural History Society, founded by her husband in 1837 to encourage cultural and academic life in what had been a penal colony. The society had started to publish its own journal, the *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics etc*, one of the first scientific journals in the British Empire outside the United Kingdom. For Colenso this opened up the opportunity to publish the results of his scientific work without having to send it halfway round the world to a British scientific society. From his correspondence with Cunningham and the Hookers, Colenso was aware of the requirements and style of scientific journals. Within a year he had completed two manuscripts: one describing several large moa bones that he and missionary William Williams had collected on the east coast, and recognised as the remains of a giant bird, and the other describing several new ferns from New Zealand. Colenso enclosed sketches of some of the bones to illustrate his paper.

Colenso sent off his manuscripts to Tasmania at the beginning of May 1842. On 3 August they were both officially noted at a meeting of the society, and Colenso was advised that his fern paper would be included in the first edition of the journal, already in production.[12] The moa paper was delayed, however, because of the technical challenge of reproducing his drawing of the bones. The delay was unfortunate. Had the moa paper been published promptly, Colenso would have got credit for being the first to describe the moa. But some of the bones collected by Williams had previously been sent to Richard Owen in London, and in January 1843 he presented a paper describing the moa as a huge flightless bird. Colenso's paper was not published until later in the year.[13]

The Dunedin Exhibition

Colenso's botanical work declined after his expulsion from the church in 1852, although he continued to correspond with Hooker and send him plants. In 1864 he was visited by James Hector, then organising New Zealand's first international exhibition in Dunedin.

8. The letters from Colenso to Hooker have been transcribed by Ian St George on a CD, "Colenso's Collections", available from the Colenso Society.

9. Endersby J 2008: Imperial Nature: Joseph Hooker and the practices of Victorian science. University of Chicago Press, 429 pp.

10. Published in 1867 by L. Reeve & Co, London.

11. Wevers L 2002: Country of Writing: travel writing and New Zealand 1809-1900. AUP, p. 37.

12. Colenso W 1842: Description of some new ferns lately discovered in New Zealand. *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Sciences, Agriculture, Statistics etc 1*: 375–79.

13. St George I 2016: The Tasmanian Connection. *E-Colenso 7(1):* 3–6

Colenso agreed to contribute an essay on the botany of the North Island. He was delighted to be asked to prepare this essay as it showed that his botanical expertise was recognised, and he immediately set to work.

The completed essay, subsequently published in the *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute*[14] gives a comprehensive review of the nature and distribution of the native vegetation of the North Island, concluding with a lengthy section on economic aspects including plants used for food, the potential of the flax industry, and the value of different tree species for timber.

Hector had previously asked Edward Shortland to write an essay on the Maori race. Shortland produced a brief manuscript which Hector clearly thought was inadequate, so he asked Colenso to write a more comprehensive essay. Although Colenso spoke fluent Maori and had a broad knowledge of tribes through the North Island, he had written little on Maori topics at this stage. The Reverend Richard Taylor, who had published *Te Ika a Maui*, was a more obvious choice. But Hector had already asked Taylor to write a biological essay which was never completed, and after receiving the botanical essay promptly from Colenso, Hector probably felt that he was the more likely to deliver on time. The completed essay, "On the Maori races of New Zealand", was a comprehensive review based on Colenso's 30 year experience in New Zealand, with major sections dealing with physical description, social organisation, beliefs and tradition, language and origins.[15]

The final section gave a chronological account of the impact of European settlement, ending with the statement, "… it would have been better for the New Zealanders, as a people, if they had never seen an European". In the context of the times, when settlement by the British was seen as conferring civilisation on indigenous peoples, this was an extraordinary statement—and a clear example that Colenso's conclusions were usually drawn from his own observations rather than the dogma of the times.

In addition to the main text of the essay (72 printed pages), Colenso appended over 30 notes, elaborating on specific points from quotations or from Colenso's experience. Dr Alfred Eccles, chairman of the Commissioners running the exhibition, took exception to three of the notes, feeling that they were unsuitable for a Victorian audience, and writing 'Beastly" beside them. To 21st century eyes the offending comments seem quite tame. Note 21 comments on the Maori attitude to modesty; note 22 describes the prostitution of Maori girls to pakeha men; and note 29 tells the story of a Maori chief who relieved himself on a mountain summit, thus bringing disaster on his party. Hector was in a quandary about whether to censor the offending text, and decided that the best solution was to omit the notes from what was already a lengthy article.[16]

All ten essays completed for the exhibition were published in the first volume of the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute* in 1868, edited by Hector. Never one to write briefly, Colenso's essays were longer than all the others, but both were recognised as wide-ranging, authoritative reviews. Although he had previously written short papers for a Tasmanian journal, these were Colenso's first major papers in a scientific journal that received wide circulation, and established his reputation as an experienced and wide-ranging scholar. The Maori paper, in particular, was widely read and quoted both locally and overseas over the next 50 years.

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14. Colenso W 1868: On the botany, geographic and economic, of the North Island of the New Zealand Group. *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* 1: 54 pp.

15. Colenso W 1868: On the Maori races of New Zealand. *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* 1: 72 pp.

16. St George I 2011: "Beastly"—Colenso censored. *E-Colenso 2(4):* 2-6

The Hawkes Bay Philosophical Institute

Colenso's political career ended in 1875, and he subsequently resigned as inspector of schools. It was the end of his paid employment, but he now had enough income to live on and he could devote himself to science. Like everything else Colenso undertook, he threw himself into it with obsessive enthusiasm, and produced a huge number of scientific publications over the next 20 years.

The New Zealand Institute, founded by James Hector and others in 1867, grew quickly into a national scientific organisation. Although Wellington-based, it was designed as a federal organisation with branches in the main centres that held regular meetings with lectures and discussion on scientific and intellectual matters. The annual volume of the *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute* published a selection of papers presented at branch meetings, and acted as a link for the scattered New Zealand scientific community.

Colenso played a leading role in setting up the Hawkes Bay Philosophical Institute in 1875, a Napier-based society that was affiliated to the New Zealand Institute.[17] By the following year there were 59 members who paid the annual subscription of one guinea, and regular meetings were being held. Although there was a governing council, Colenso held the key positions of Secretary and Treasurer, and it is clear that he undertook virtually all the administration to keep the organisation alive as well as setting up the museum and often presenting lectures.

Scientific publications in the *Transactions*

The *Transactions* provided a mechanism to get scientific work published in New Zealand. Before a paper could be considered for publication, it needed to be presented at a meeting of an affiliated branch, and recommended for publication by the branch committee. As Colenso effectively ran the Hawkes Bay Philosophical Institute, this was never a problem for him.

Colenso had 101 papers published in the *Transactions* between 1877 and 1899, an average of 4.3 papers a year over 23 years.[18] He clearly decided that if he was going to the trouble of preparing a talk, he would also submit it for publication. The papers themselves can be classified into three well-defined groups that I have called historical/ethnographic, zoological and botanical.

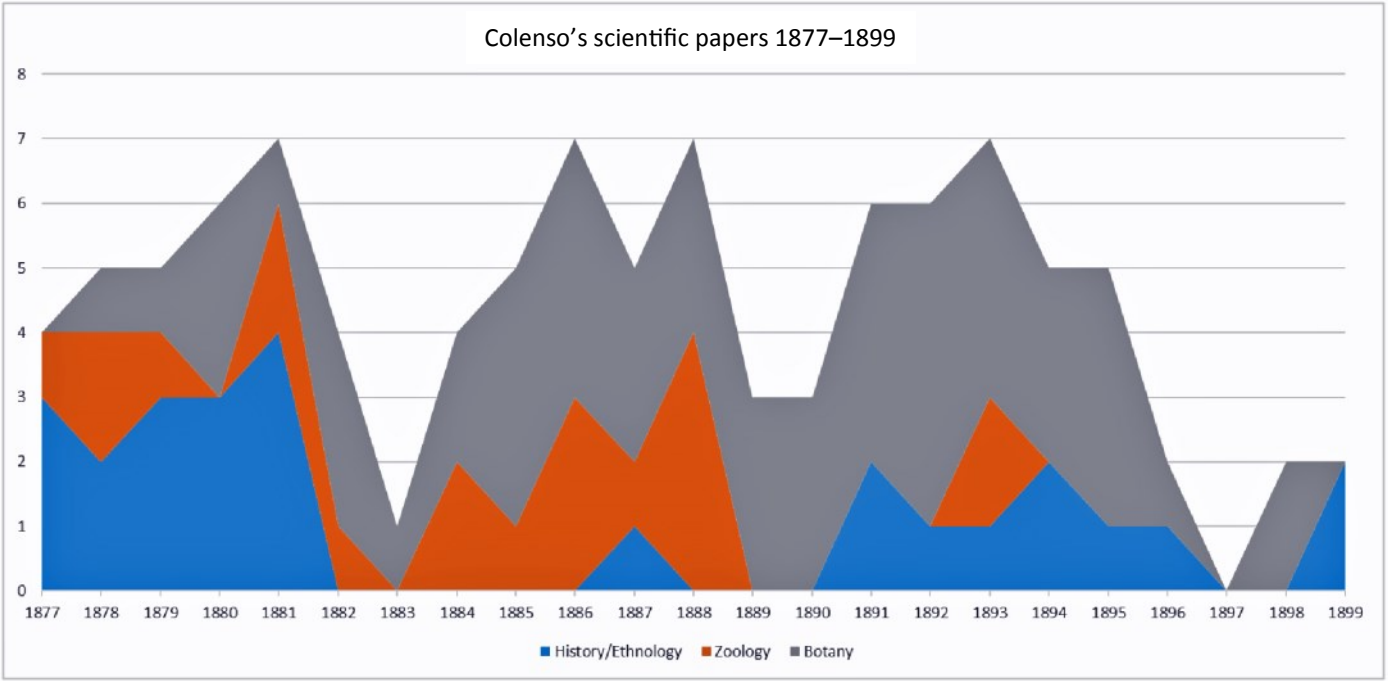
Before talking about the content of Colenso's papers, I would like to comment on his relationship with James Hector, manager of the New Zealand Institute, who edited the *Transactions*.[19] Colenso complained several times about Hector's unreasonable rejection of his manuscripts, but as Hector's biographer I can see things through his eyes. Colenso was a demanding correspondent, with a steady stream of manuscripts, queries, corrections and complaints. Hector was always keen to maintain the scientific focus of the *Transactions*, but as far as I can find out the total number of papers from Colenso that he rejected or asked him to substantially shorten is between 8 and 10—that is less than 10% of the manuscripts submitted by Colenso—and the other 90% were published with little or no modification. Few modern authors can achieve that success rate!

I have summarised Colenso's output of papers published in the *Transactions* in a graph. The major drop in 1883 is due to Hector's refusal to publish three literary manuscripts submitted by Colenso

17. Robinson, TZ 2013: For their Museum: shaping identity as "men of science" at the Hawkes Bay Philosophical Institute, 1874–1899. Pp 85–100 in "Gazing with a trained eye: fifteen aspects of William Colenso". MTG, Hawkes Bay.

18. Data taken from a CD compiled by Ian St George, "What I believe to be genuine and authentic": William Colenso's publications.

19. St George I 2014: Colenso and Hector. E-Colenso 5(10): 5 and Nathan S 2014: More on Hector and Colenso. E-Colenso 5(12): 5.



which he subsequently published privately. But despite Colenso's furious denunciation of Hector at the time, he quickly adjusted to what Hector regarded as acceptable topics for the *Transactions*, and regained his productivity.

Historical/ethnographic papers

The first two papers that Colenso submitted to Hector for publication in 1877 relate to the early exploration of New Zealand by Captain James Cook. They are a reminder that Colenso was one of the first local scholars concerned with Cook's voyages, and he was clearly familiar with published versions of the diaries. The third paper was concerned with the original of the Maori dog (kuri), with observations that Colenso had made 60 years earlier, and also quoting records from Cook's visits to New Zealand.

In following years Colenso contributed a sequence of papers,

"Contributions towards a better understanding of the Maori race", in which he progressively documented his knowledge of customs, legends, proverbs, poetry and the symbolism of the kumara plant. In a separate sequence, "Historical incidents and traditions of the olden times" he presents transcriptions of oral traditions that he had recorded over the years. Together these papers are an expansion of aspects of his earlier paper, 'On the Maori races of New Zealand', partly based on information he had collected decades earlier.

Zoological papers

The zoological papers are an eclectic mixture, mainly dealing with specimens handed in to the Napier museum for identification—shells, insects, the metamorphosis of moths and butterflies, a hitherto undescribed fish species, growth of lizards, bones of *Sphenodon* (tuatara) found in a local quarry, and the deformed beak of a huia.

These are an interesting record of the type of investigations that Colenso undertook and the time he was prepared to spend investigating specimens brought into the museum by members of the public. He was, in fact, one of New Zealand's earliest science communicators.

Botanical papers

Botany was Colenso's major interest, making up over 50% of his published papers. In the 1840s and 1850s he had been the collector, submitting his plants to the Hookers for expert classification and description. Colenso did not always agree with Joseph Hooker's decisions, and felt that he often lumped together distinct species. Now he was able to describe plants himself in the *Transactions*, and took the opportunity to correct some of the errors of earlier years. His days of mountain exploration were over, but from the 1870s to the 1890s he made many collections from Seventy Mile Bush, between Norsewood and the Manawatu gorge. By the 1870s and 1880 there were four botanists publishing in the *Transactions*—Buchanan, Cheeseman, Colenso and Kirk—with a degree of rivalry over naming species—and Colenso never hesitated to correct errors that he felt that others were making.

Colenso's botanical work fell into a pattern, with a group of three papers published almost every year: one on the description of new ferns, the second on new discovery of new vascular plants, and the third on cryptogams—small, spore-bearing plants such as mosses, lichens and fungi.

Here is an example of his botanical papers published in the *Transactions* in volume 19 (1886):

- A few Observations on the Tree-Ferns of New Zealand; with particular Reference to their peculiar Epiphytes, their Habit, and their manner of Growth (pp 252–59)
- A Description of some newly-discovered and rare indigenous Phænogamic Plants, being a further Contribution towards making known the Botany of New Zealand Pp 259–71)
- A Description of some newly-discovered Cryptogamic Plants, being a further Contribution towards the making known the Botany of New Zealand (pp 271–301)
- An Enumeration of Fungi recently discovered in New Zealand, with brief Notes on the Species Novæ (pp 301–13)

In addition to the first three topics noted above, there is an additional paper on fungi that Colenso had collected, and had been identified for him at Kew. For the first few years Colenso packed up the cryptogams and sent them to Kew for expert identification. In 1885, through the assistance of Hooker, he obtained a botanical microscope, so was able to undertake his own microscopic investigations, and started to describe cryptogamic plants himself.

Conclusion

As a scientist, William Colenso is best remembered for his botanical work. T.F. Cheesman, who revised many of Colenso's taxonomic names, nevertheless gave him generous acknowledgement in the introduction to his 1906 *Manual of the New Zealand Flora*:

> "The foremost place among resident botanists and explorers must be granted to the Rev. W Colenso, both on account of the number and variety of his discoveries, and the ardour with which, for a period of no less than sixty-five years, he continued to observe and collect facts and specimens in almost all branches of natural science, always giving the leading place to botany".

Although many of Colenso's plant names have been revised or reclassified, he is commemorated by the many species named after him.

Colenso's ethnological work was almost equally important. His writings were widely discussed in the 19th century, and were a source of information on Maori issues, especially for overseas readers of the *Transaction*s, but were gradually overtaken by the next generation including Peter Buck and Elsdon Best. However, his documentation of changes in Maori society over a period of 60 years is a record that can never be repeated.

William Colenso was indeed a polymath, fascinated in the world around him like his contemporaries James Hector and Julius Haast. He can be remembered as one of our leading nineteenth century scientists.

Acknowledgement

Anyone working on Colenso's publications owes a huge debt of gratitude to Ian St George for assembling a comprehensive list of his publications which was enormously helpful in preparing this paper.

The Parliamentary cdv

In *eColenso* April 2015 I wrote, of this Parliamentary portrait (our 2017 cover), "I think it likely Swan & Wrigglesworth, Wellington, took the Colenso portrait at left between 26 July and 30 October 1865, along with those of the other Members (Ref: 1/2-005028-F Alexander Turnbull Library)."

The carte de visite at left was auctioned recently by Art+Object, Auckland and confirms the date. It is the same image (showing rather more of the top hat on the table) and is signed *in verso* "W. Colenso A.D. 1865". Photograph by Wrigglesworth & Binns, Wellington.

—Ed.

Seriously, think about it now and write it in your diary:
the third contemporary Colenso conference will be held in Napier on Friday and Saturday the 22nd and 23rd of February 2019.