

The background of the cover is a repeating pattern of stylized flowers. At the top, there are large lilies with white petals speckled with brown dots and red stamens. Below them are smaller blue flowers with yellow centers. The foliage consists of green leaves and stems, some of which are curled into elegant, Art Nouveau-style scrolls. The overall color palette is muted, featuring greens, yellows, blues, and browns on a light background.

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COLENSO

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Frances Mary Simcox (nee Colenso) 1844–1928

By Gillian Bell

When William Colenso returned from the 4 month expedition to the East Coast on 14 February 1844, he found he had a 2 week old daughter and his young wife was still debilitated from a difficult confinement. Bishop Selwyn baptised the infant Frances Mary with Mr and Mrs Thomas Chapman as god-parents and the baby was a joy to her parents and a welcome distraction to the frustrations of their position at St John's College, Waimate.

By December, with William finally ordained, the family was preparing for the task of setting up a new mission station at Ahuriri. The brief stay at Otahuhu for Elizabeth and Fanny, while the *Nimrod* was loaded with stores, stock and other missionary families, was the start of a long separation from the comfort of family. The trip down the coast was slow and tedious with the Colenso's arrival delayed by a storm so that the first night, after clambering up through mud and bushes, the family spent on an open veranda amongst their wet boxes, without fire, candle, food or water.

Fanny's first home was an earth-floored raupo whare without windows, door or chimney and as her mother was fully occupied, her care was with the devoted housegirl, Ripeka who would later carry the 18 month toddler on the 3 week trek to Turanga for her brother's birth. That time with the William Williams family would be the first and last time for many years that Fanny would have the company of another white family and she would not see another white woman for seven years. Maori was her first language as her mother was too busy to do much teaching of her own children and a brief note written to "dear Papa" when Fanny was seven, shows a very adult hand in written English while a postscript written in Maori, is a childish scrawl.

In 1851, her uncle, John Fairburn came to take the two Colenso children to Auckland, leaving by canoe and then a carrying palaquin. It was a sad parting on many levels as William never saw his daughter again and his son only after he had grown to manhood. Fanny recalled the kind uncle comforting the out burst of weeping as the children were bedded down in their tent while they waited at the Hamlin's Wairoa Mission for a boat to Auckland.

Once there, as her grandfather was leaving for England and her grandmother had died prior to her birth, she joined her mother at Mr Benjamin Ashwell's mission at Taupiri. Fanny recounts,

"The ladies of Parnell who took an interest in the children of missionaries, arranged for Mr. Ireland a teacher at Waipu, to escort Hannah Buttle and myself on the journey. At 3 p.m. two very shy little 10 year olds were taken by lumbering wheezing coach to an inn at the Strand of Manukau harbour and a kindly landlady fed us and told us to lie down in our clothes as we would be woken at 2am to catch the tide. We went on board an open-decked cutter and in much misery, we crouched amongst the cargo whilst all about us we heard the curious noises of the sailors until we realised we were stuck on a mudbank. At daylight Mr. Ireland rowed us to shingle bank where we could stretch our legs and eat a breakfast of

wild cape gooseberries. Reaching Waiuku and Mr Maunsell's kohanga, we then carried on by canoe and horse-back to Taupiri. Mother engaged a governess for myself, Mary and Sarah Ashwell and we often went walking through the bush reading poetry and collecting ferns which we pressed and mounted to be sold at church fetes in Parnell. The Ashwells had the first piano in NZ, so we learnt to play and sing. We girls also helped to teach the 80 odd Maori girls domestics and gardening. I learnt to swim in the fast-flowing river, starting by dogpaddling around the canoe-landing until my mother decided this was not good enough and instructed an old Maori lady to teach me to swim which she did by swimming far further into the river and letting me go. After a terrifying moment, I realised I was not drowning and thereafter, joined the others in balancing on the underwater snags while racing to get the peaches thrown in by the others. One time a huge block of pumice floated down river and with the big Maori girls, we swam after it for ¼ mile then had to walk back as no one could swim against the flow, except whitebait. I was a good swimmer but was always wary of the strong, swirling green water”.

Every year Mr. Ashwell did a canoe trip up and down the river visiting his laymen. One year he took Mary and Fanny who describes her pleasure at lying in the canoe on rugs and pillows in the moonlight while the paddlers sang in their soft crooning voices until the Māori greeting rang out and they went ashore to the guesthouse with its central fire, a meal, sweet sleep and so on the next day.

When Dr. Hochstetter and Dr. Julius von Haast, the Austrian scientists, made the Mission their base, Mary and Fanny helped in preserving the insect and bird specimens while working on a table on the veranda. Another interesting teacher at the school for two years was Mr. Kerr who had been on a British survey ship. He taught astronomy, geography and the Latin names of plants. “My job was to tidy away the many interesting newspapers sent to him so that, by the time I went back to Parnell in 1859 and an excellent teacher, a Mrs Glover—I knew much more than the average pupil.”



Frances Mary Colenso aged 8 or 10

In 1861, the three Colensos went to England and on the voyage, the lively Fanny who celebrated her 17th birthday on board, was a popular passenger. She recorded “My first sight of the White Cliffs of Dover brought back memories of the white cliffs of

Cape Kidnappers of my childhood". Once settled in Tottenham, Fanny attended Queens College, Harley St, a private school with pupils 13 to 18 for the advancement of women's education particularly in art and literature. While helping her mother in parish duties, Fanny read every day to a blind lady, played the organ in Billingshurst church and often accompanied her mother who was in demand as a translator and escort for visiting Māori. On one occasion Fanny and Elizabeth were shown through Windsor



Frances Mary Colenso at 19

Castle and attended a chapel service, meeting the Royal photographer, Mr. Bainbridge whom they had met in NZ. In fact Fanny had the opportunity for a varied social and educating life. However, a copy of *The Young Ladies Book* (pub. 1839), "a manual of elegant recreation, along with exercises and pursuits," given to her by friends, gives a daunting list of desirable moral and mental "deportments" along with advice on the aviary, minerology, entomology etc!

Returning to NZ in 1867, the Colenso women stayed with the Ashwells at Devonport. One day a tall, young man with a large, golden beard who was staying with his cousin, Sir William Martin at Judges Bay, in the house, Taurarua (which he later inherited), sailed his boat across to visit the Ashwells. William Henry Simcox, 2nd son of a well-to-do legal family of Birmingham, had come to NZ to learn farming. He had just done nine months boundary-riding alone at Tutira—where, he records in a letter, only his accordin kept him sane—

and now he was enjoying his favourite pastimes, cricket (he had played against W.G. Grace's team in England) dancing, picnics, shooting, music etc. He asked Sarah Ashwell if she knew a popular sacred song called "Too Late" and Fanny was called to the parlour, produced the music, played and sang while Will turned the pages.* Sarah was called away and the two young people talked for a long time. Fanny later wrote, "This was my first meeting with my future husband".

In 1868, Elizabeth and Fanny returned to the Mission house at Paihia after an absence of 24 years, with Fanny and Will now engaged. A riding party of ten from Paihia rode through to the Hokianga staying overnight with Judge Manning's daughters at Onoke, and taking their names from *Pilgrims Progress*. Fanny was named "Hopeful" and Will. "Greatheart." After their marriage in the Mission House at Paihia in 1870, the

*As a child, I often heard Fanny's daughter, Edith, my grandmother, singing "Too late, too late" but I never knew what was too late until I recently found an ancient copy of the music by chance and it was those Vestal Virgins who were too late!

couple left for England as Will's father and sister had died. They took passage on a fast uncomfortable steamer, the *Ajax*, to Honolulu, Fanny and a stewardess being the only women on board. From San Francisco, they crossed America on the St Louis Railway to New York, stopping at Salt Lake City where two of Brigham Young's wives waited on them. Fanny noticed the sunflowers everywhere as well as Brigham Young's 40 children.

Three weeks were spent in New York and visiting Toronto before they arrived in England and stayed at Birmingham before spending Christmas with Uncle John Fairburn in London, her brother Lattie joining them. The Simcoxes stayed three years in the family holiday home at Conway, Wales, Will speaking Welsh fluently and there their daughter Edith was born, in 1871, followed by a son Martin in 1872.

On their return journey aboard a fast clipper the *Waikato*, their ship was prevented from entering Wellington harbour by bad weather and for three weeks tacked up and down in sight of land. This was a very stressful time for Fanny as although she had the help of a steerage passenger with the children during the day, steerage passengers were locked in cramped and unhygienic conditions overnight so each day brought fleas and lice into their quarters. Fanny, very pregnant, had a fall and a daughter Millicent was born prematurely at sea, her birth registered 9 days later, at Stepney England. The family eventually reached the Mission house at Paihia in 1874 where another daughter, Christine, was born, and stayed on when Elizabeth left for Norfolk Island as Will was asked to teach at the school at the Ti Tii that Elizabeth had run.

In 1878, the family left Paihia and came to Otaki to go sheep farming with John Hadfield, the journey by coastal boat stopping at Auckland, Tauranga, Gisborne, Napier and Wellington. Travel by coach from Wellington was an arduous business with holes in the floorboards to allow water to escape as the numerous streams were often flooded. The sheep run consisted of 3,000 acres of coastal land between Otaki and Manakau leased from numerous Maori owners so the family rented a home for five years in Otaki. One Christmas, Fanny went to Wellington taking Edith to mind the latest baby. At the Paekakariki hill, the road was blocked by a slip so riding one of the coach horses with Edith behind and holding her baby, Fanny rode the snorting, trembling animal around the narrow ledge, down to a waiting coach.



Francis Mary Simcox in 1885, aged 41

Fanny described herself as strong as a pony and did not have a toothache till 26. She had inherited the boundless energy of both her parents as she was up at 6 a.m. and rarely in bed before midnight and as well as organising a large household, she taught her first six children until a governess was employed. This incredible work load must have taken a toll as Edith recalled her mother saying she was sure she was going to Hell because of her temper and on occasions, a small switch brought her brood into line! By now Fanny had three more sons, who gradually took over the running of the farm, assisted by three generations of a former whaling family—which was fortuitous as Will was really a “gentleman farmer” and Fanny the practical one in their partnership. As the family continued to grow, a 14 room home, Riverslea, was built on the south side of the Otaki river on six foot piles as it flooded at times, the cattle milling about under the house with their horns scraping the floor boards.



Riverslea, the first home Fanny and Will Simcox owned, south of the Otaki River

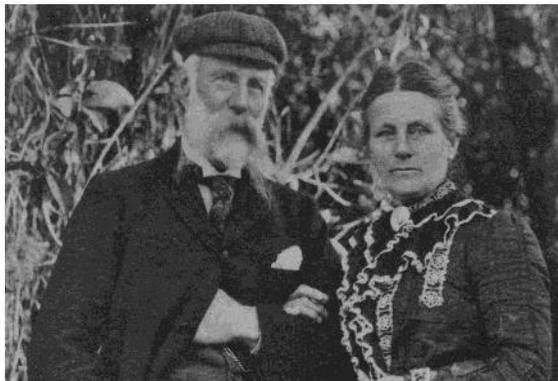
Fanny had learnt much of both Maori and pakeha medicine, and despite her large family which had increased to nine, she was a familiar and welcome sight as she rode around the pa and township with her saddlebag of medicines and homeopathic tinctures. Many times her skill brought people through typhoid, scarlet fever, influenza, measles and mumps. She took in those dying of consumption and opened her home to Māori or pakeha alike who had suffered misfortune. The household always began and ended the day with communal prayers and Bible readings, with attendance obligatory on all—and Thursday was an open day for visitors to come and share a meal. There was always some needy person given home and shelter often for years and Fanny, on occasions, nursed them till death. On Sundays, the Simcoxes travelled by horse and

open carriage to church twice a day with their children singing in the choirs. Will was the County Chairman, riding 25 miles to Foxton once a month, coroner, JP, church organist playing the first organ in Rangiatea Maori church, Sunday school superintendent, the instigator of a library, rifle, tennis and croquet clubs and both he and Fanny raised money for a local hospital. The Simcoxes were enthusiastic starters of the Otaki golf club on their land and Fanny was put in charge of the building of a golfhouse to replace the original whare. Often in February, the family would load up row boats which were manned by former whalers and go to Kapiti Island and camp for a month. Fanny never lost her love of camping. and in her 60s and 70s, “Grannies Camp” as it was known was something Fanny would do with her many grandchildren and her small dog, at the Waitohu stream at Otaki Beach and she taught all her children and grandchildren to swim with the Maori side ways crawl, or breast stroke.

Eventually the Simcoxes were able to purchase an acreage in an area overlooking a large lake north of Otaki and to house their large family, a substantial home was built costing £811.10.0 and called Forest Lakes. An enthusiastic gardener, Fanny created a large garden using the native vegetation to advantage, and maintained it with the help of Ah Chee their Chinese cowman-gardener for 30 years, while Will built a long, elegant brick wall. In all the many difficulties of arranging leases and purchases, Fanny played a leading role explaining in Maori and translating for the sometimes reluctant owners the legalities of documents. Fanny’s last child, Constance born in 1880, was intellectually handicapped but stayed with her parents most of her life. In 1893 there was a sad death in the family when Heath their 3rd son, contracted pneumonia after being sent home from Whanganui Collegiate with measles and Fanny’s letter to Edith describes her desperate efforts nursing him. Soon after she went on the mission schooner *Southern Cross* to visit her mother on Norfolk Island, The eldest son, Martin, went to the Boer war in the 4th contingent “Rough Riders” who provided their own horses, and a daughter, Millicent went to nurse in Cairo. In 1905 Fanny journeyed alone to Buenos Aires to bring home her widowed daughter, Christine and baby Lillian, to live at Forest Lakes. They had to wait in Tenerife for a boat which was then diverted to the rescue of Norwegian sailors shipwrecked on the Crossett Islands. Not wanting to miss anything,

Fanny slept on the deck, and all were surprised to see the men waving from the beach. Three hours before their ship arrived, the sailors’ dog had been racing up and down the beach barking furiously and the marooned men thought it had gone mad.

In 1920 Fanny and Will celebrated their Golden wedding with a gathering of some 300 people at which the speeches spoke of their fine characters and exempla-



Fanny and Will Simcox, Golden Wedding, Forest Lakes

ry lives, lived by unostentatious Christian principles. Will Simcox died in July 1923 while Fanny, having shifted into Otaki township and into one of the two houses she had built with her £2,000 inheritance from her father, died in 1928. She would say she had travelled by canoe, clipper, steamer, been carried by Māori, horses, coach, trains and cars. She and her husband are buried near Elizabeth Colenso on the top of the Mutikotiko Hill at the Rangiatea Cemetery, Otaki. In contrast to her mother, Fanny married for love, had a large family and owned her own homes. She ends a letter to her eldest grandchild in the Māori way, “heoi ano e hine naku na to tupuna” (ended all, O girl mine, from your forebear.)



Osneloc—“Colenso” in reverse—one of the houses Frances Mary Simcox nee Colenso built with the inheritance from her father: estranged so strangely named. See <http://kapitiindependentnews.net.nz/home/otakis-living-history/> —Ed.



eColenso is a free email Newsletter published irregularly by the Colenso Society. Please forward it to anybody. Past issues are at <http://www.colensostudy.id.au/> The editor invites contributions on any matter relating to the life and work of the Rev. William Colenso FLS FRS.

Such contributions should be emailed to ian.stgeorge@rnzcgp.org.nz. The cover of this issue is based on a William Morris wallpaper design.



Post mortem

(from *Papers Past*)

Hawke's Bay Herald 8 March 1899

IN THE MATTER OF THE WILL OF
WILLIAM COLENZO, DECEASED,
AND IN THE MATTER OF "THE
TRUSTEE ACT, 1883."

PURSUANT to an Order of the Supreme Court of New Zealand, dated the 7th day of March, 1899, NOTICE is hereby given that all creditors and persons having any claims or demands against or affecting the estate of WILLIAM COLENZO, late of Napier, in the Provincial District of Hawke's Bay, Clerk in Holy Orders, deceased (who died on the tenth day of February, 1899, and Probate of whose Will was granted to the Executors therein named, namely, EDWARD WILLIAM KNOWLES, JOHN BECKETT FIELDER, and CHARLES HOWARD EDWARDS, all of Napier aforesaid, on the fifteenth day of February, 1899), are required to send by post prepaid the particulars in writing of their claims and demands to us, the undersigned, Solicitors for the said Executors, on or before the 12th day of April, 1899. AND NOTICE is hereby given that after that day the said Executors will proceed to distribute the Assets of the said deceased among the persons entitled thereto, having regard only to the claims of which they shall then have had notice, and they will not be liable for the Assets of the said deceased, or any part thereof, so distributed to any person or persons of whose claims or demands they shall not then have had notice.

Dated this 7th day of March, 1899,

SAINSBURY & LOGAN,
859 Solicitors for the said Executors.

Hawke's Bay Herald 7 April 1899

According to a London correspondent, "News of the death of the Rev. W. Colenso, F.R.S., of Napier, having been received, all the London papers sympathetically notice his early work in New Zealand, both as missionary and printer, and as a student of Maori myths and antiquities."

Hawke's Bay Herald 24 April 1899

According to a London correspondent, "During his brief stay in Oxford Mr W. P. Reeves had the pleasure of lunching with Professor Dicey, at whose table he met Professor Max Müller, who spoke in high terms of the work accomplished by the late Mr Colenso."

Hawke's Bay Herald 30 May 1899

Notices.

NOTICE.

TRESPASSERS on the Property of the late Rev. W. COLENZO will be prosecuted,

By order of the

EXECUTORS AND TRUSTEES.

May 20th, 1899. 757

Hawke's Bay Herald 30 June 1899

Nature, of March 2nd, has a long and most appreciative article on the late Rev. W. Colenso, in which his life work is reviewed. The notice concludes: "It is greatly to be hoped that the preparation of a biography of this remarkable man may fall into thoroughly competent hands."

Hawke's Bay Herald 13 July 1899

We understand that the late Rev. W. Colenso's Milton-road property is shortly to be out up, and placed into the market.

Hawke's Bay Herald 18 July 1899

Mr Horace Baker has completed the survey of the late Mr Colenso's sections in Waipawa in readiness for sale by auction without reserve. He is now cutting up Mr H. H. Bridge's run (Fairfield) near Onga Onga into small farms.

Hawke's Bay Herald 20 July 1899

From Mr J. B. Fielder, and the executors in the estate of the late Rev. W. Colenso, notifying that on the execution of the proper documents they were prepared to pay over legacies to the extent of £2500, to be thus applied in trust:—Twenty poor families, £1000; poor prisoners, £500; distressed seamen and strangers, £500; prize fund Government public schools, Napier, £500.—Referred to Finance Committee.

Hawke's Bay Herald 25 July 1899

AUCKLAND, Monday.

Arrived at 11.30 a.m.—Elingamite from Sydney. Passengers for Napier—Messdames Colenso, Yardley, Benjamin; Messrs Bee, Colenso, Currie, Johnstone, Prebble, Robjohns, Harding.

Auctioneers.

BAKER & TABUTEAU'S SALES.

LAND SALE
BY PUBLIC AUCTION
(UNRESERVED).

WAIPAWA TOWNSHIP
VALUABLE
BUILDING ALLOTMENTS.

BLACKHEAD TOWNSHIP.

IN ESTATE OF WILLIAM COLENZO.

BAKER & TABUTEAU

Have been instructed by the Executors in the above Estate to offer for Sale by Public Auction, at the

ODDFELLOWS' HALL, WAIPAWA,
At 2 p.m.

W E D N E S D A Y,
THE 10TH OF AUGUST, 1899—

WAIPAWA—
7 ACRES 2 ROODS 33 PERCHES

Divided into 19 Allotments.

BUATANIWAH-ROAD—Sections 8 and part 9 will be offered subject to existing leases, particulars of which can be seen in the conditions of sale.

14 SECTIONS, 43 to 46 and 49 to 58 inclusive, have a frontage to Waverley-street, and are situated in the centre of the township. These are all first-class Building Allotments, several of them having high sites overlooking the town and surrounding country.

3 SECTIONS, 64, 65, and 66, have frontages to Kenilworth-street, are also situated on high ground and are good healthy residential sites.

These Sections are the only remaining unoccupied lots in the Township of Waipawa. As a sound investment, and having also a speculative value, an opportunity is now afforded for securing centrally-situated Allotments in the most promising Inland Town of Hawke's Bay.

BLACKHEAD TOWN ALLOTMENTS 39, 41, 55, and 57—

Lots 39, 41, and 55 have each 66ft frontage to Canning-street, by a depth of 165ft.

Lot 57 is a Corner Section, having a double frontage—66ft to Canning-street and 165ft to Hunter-street.

Plans will be distributed at an early date. Further particulars can be obtained from the Auctioneers,

BAKER & TABUTEAU.

Auctioneers'

C. B. HOADLEY & CO'S SALES.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE.
IMPORTANT SALE OF NAPIER HILL
BUILDING SITES.

C. B. HOADLEY & CO.

Have received instructions from **B. L. COLENZO, Esq.,** to offer for sale by Public Auction, early in October,

A ALL THAT MAGNIFICENT HILL
PROPERTY,
Formerly the Residential Estate of the late Rev. W. Colenso.

This Property is something over 30 acres in extent, and will be subdivided into suitable-sized Building Allotments, commanding most beautiful land and seascape views.

C. B. HOADLEY & CO.,
Auctioneers.

Hawke's Bay Herald 8 September 1899

Messrs Angus and Robertson, publishers, of Sydney, have secured the valuable library of the late Rev. W. Colenso. Messrs Crerar and Sons negotiated the sale. Mr H. Hill had been making endeavors to secure the library for the town of Napier, but without result.

Hawke's Bay Herald 9 September 1899

Mr Ridley L. Colenso writes as follows:—"Sir,—A paragraph in your Friday's issue re the late Rev. W. Colenso's library, is correct but misleading. A Hawke's Bay Philosophical Institute deputation viewed the library, and came to the conclusion that there were far more books than they would know what to do with, especially as of some of the more valuable works duplicates were already in their possession. They consequently decided to approach Messrs Angus and Robertson's representative in order, if possible, to secure those books they required. The town of Napier could have had the whole collection at Angus and Robertson's prices."

Hawke's Bay Herald 22 September 1899

The Rev. E. Robertshawe to move,—
"That this Synod desires to place on record its deep sense of loss in the death of the Rev. W. Colenso, F.R.S., whose kindness and liberality endeared him to all classes of the community."

Hawke's Bay Herald 31 October 1899:
"As soon as roads can be formed"

PRELIMINARY NOTICE.

IMPORTANT SALE OF NAPIER HILL BUILDING SITES.

C. B. HOADLEY & CO.

Have received instructions from B. L. COLENZO, Esq., to offer for sale by Public Auction, AS SOON AS ROADS CAN BE FORMED, **ALL THAT MAGNIFICENT HILL PROPERTY,** Formerly the Residential Estate of the late Rev. W. Colenso.

This Property is something over 30 acres in extent, and will be subdivided into suitable-sized Building Allotments, commanding most beautiful land and seascape views.

C. B. HOADLEY & CO.,
Auctioneers.

Hawke's Bay Herald 2 November 1899

Auctioneers.

BAKER & TABUTEAU'S SALES.

AUCTION SALE.

IN THE ESTATE OF WILLIAM COLENZO, DECEASED.

ALLUVIAL LAND

AT

CLIVE GRANGE.

BAKER & TABUTEAU

Have received instructions from the Executors in the above Estate to sell by Public Auction, at their Rooms, Tennyson-street, Napier, at 2 p.m., on

THURSDAY, THE 2ND NOVEMBER,

9 ACRES OF FIRST-CLASS LAND,

Being part of Suburban Section 216, Clive.

The above described Land is situated on the borders of the Clive Grange Estate, adjacent to Mr Leyland's Property.

TERMS. — 25 per cent Cash, balance in one month.

A diagram showing the position of the Land can be seen at the Offices of the Auctioneers, from whom particulars can be obtained.

426 BAKER AND TABUTEAU.

Hawke's Bay Herald 13 November 1899

IMPORTANT SALE

OF

NAPIER HILL BUILDING SITES.

COLENZO HILL PROPERTY
(UPWARDS OF 30 ACRES IN EXTENT).

BY AUCTION.

WEDNESDAY, 18TH DECEMBER, 1899,
At 2 p.m.

C. B. HOADLEY & CO.

Have been instructed by B. L. COLENZO, Esq., to offer at their Rooms, Napier, on above date—

THE WHOLE of his Magnificent Hill Property, subdivided into about

75 ALLOTMENTS,

In areas from quarter-acre and upwards in extent, according to aspect and situation.

Each Allotment will be laid off to command delightful land and seascape views. The roads running through the property from the western end of Tennyson-street to the Napier-terrace are now being formed, metalled, and mostly reserved 40 feet in width, so that ample space will be available for planting and converting the thoroughfares into avenues of shade and exceeding beauty.

The Estate, although so contiguous to town, possesses all the rural delights that can be desired, and town and country settlers should take advantage of this opportunity of securing an Allotment, either as an investment or speculation, as the well-to-do and retired classes must in time be attracted from all parts to this salubrious and fashionable locality, which fact ensures a considerable prospective value for every section.

The house will be sold, together with about an acre of plantation and rare native bush—the home of the blackbird, the thrush, and the tui.

It may be mentioned that all the soil is very rich in character.

SPECIAL TERMS OF PAYMENT—
Quarter Cash at time of Sale,
BALANCE IN TEN YEARS
BEARING 4½ PER CENT,
Or all Cash can be Paid Any Time.

Plans are being prepared, and will be issued with this paper a week before the sale; at that time the property will be open to the public for inspection.

C. B. HOADLEY & CO.,
Auctioneers.

MESSRS WILLIAMS AND WHITE,
Solicitors.

Snippets from Colenso's private letters

William Colenso began writing to his friend, land agent Andrew Luff, when the latter returned in 1875 with his family from Hawke's Bay to London, where their sons were educated at Dulwich College. Colenso appears, with Grubb and Cotterill, to have managed some of Luff's business while he was abroad, and reported frequently on business matters, local affairs and gossip. Luff returned to Wellington, and Colenso continued to correspond with him there until 1892. The 60+ Luff letters vividly portray late 19th century life in Napier, and rival the collected letters to RC Harding in importance.

Typhoid fever: William Colenso to Andrew Luff 5 May 1875

"... of the sad mortality, which has been too common here ever since Jany. 1st. As I told you in my last, it was mostly young children at the beginning, but for the last month or so it has been young men & women,—healthy, strong, apparently—and youths—& children too. The no. of deaths is largely in excess of the births: I will just note a few whom you know:—

Mrs Orr (young Orr's wife)

Tim Sullivan

Young Northe

Young Lingard

Young Garry (3rd son)

Young Webb (*eldest* of H.E.W's.)

Young Jacob: a clerk in the N. Bank.

A young man at Dolbel's, whom he brought out!

Minnie Parker!

Miss Firth (F's. niece, 7 months out)

& Several young Immigrants, newly arrived.

Edmund Sutton (Watt's) was all but gone—but is now convalescent. At P.D's. there are 7 down *now* with severe illness—& P.D. and his Brother shadows! just worn out: it is feared his niece must also succumb.—

The disorder appears to be a kind of low fever,—which begins insidiously, & in a few days all is over! It is common every where—inland—S. at Wellington and *all* the S. Provinces, & just as fatal: also in Melbourne, where, too, the deaths exceed the births.—

"Our med. men are nearly worn out; charitable aid—for sick, suffering, families (Immigrants) deprived of fathers, &c &c—much called for,—& a good response made.

"W.W. Yates' son, *nearly* gone; is now recovering slowly—his nephew is in danger:—I never knew of such a time here, & never expected to see such; it has tended (as you may suppose) to put a gloom over every thing.—I have often thought it is *well*, perhaps, that your family are away from it.—"

Typhoid was especially prevalent in fast-growing towns, where cesspits often leaked into water supplies. Infants and young children were especially vulnerable. Registered typhoid deaths in New Zealand peaked at 323 in 1875 (<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/epidemics/3>). Measles and scarlet fever were also epidemic in that year—Ed.

The rabbit plague:

Colenso to Luff 14 October 1877:

“I was amused the other day in passing by Conroy’s (late Hague’s) Shop—to see 52 couples of Rabbits!! The weekly Coach brings them every week now, from Wairarapa. I note, from Returns, that on some Runs, 1000 *a day* are killed, on a *single* Run! & in Dunedin 1000 per week are regularly sold.—I fear our foolish thickheaded know-nothing & thoughtless Acclimatisation Societies have done great mischief in N.Z.—*future* times will show.”

Future times certainly have—Ed.

NAI (non-accidental injury) in the doctor’s house? Colenso to Luff 31 January 1878

“Mrs. Gibbes & child are going to Engl. by ship, hence, in hopes of the voyage doing *her* good; their only living child has been very “unlucky”; first through carelessness of girl nurse, had its teeth knocked in (or out), then an arm broken and last week the Dr. was summoned home from Napier as the child had fallen & broken the other arm!”

Two broken arms and its teeth knocked in? Was it the nurse or the mother? And “their only living child”?

Hawke’s Bay Herald 22 February 1877 (a year earlier):

“GIBBES.— At Napier, on the 21st Februnry, Heneage Murray, infant son of Florence Hyde and John Murray Gibbes, aged 10 weeks.”

I wonder what “good” it was hoped Mrs Gibbes would gain by the voyage—Ed.

Influenza in pregnancy:

Colenso to Hill 14 February 1892

First, of your good & respected wife Mrs. Hill: I hope & *believe* that this important domestic event you are waiting to see over will also be *a sure means of establishing Mrs Hill’s health*: my best respects to her.—

Colenso to Harding 16 March 1892

I suppose I told you in my last that Mr. Hill had determined to leave *at once* on his N. tour—well he did so: and yesty. Mrs Hill delivd. daughter *still-born*: I hope the good lady may recover: I almost conclude, their severe loss was owing to her severe attack of Influenza & its distressing effects.—

Indeed, it may well have been: there is a link between maternal influenza and still-birth. Hill was away inspecting the northern Hawke’s Bay schools. Mrs Hill overcame this setback and continued her efforts for women’s equality (see next page)—Ed.



Emily Hill: Napier suffragette

William Colenso wrote privately to his friend and confidant Coupland Harding on 30 May 1893: “I see in Herald of this mg. that the Woman’s League (Franchise & what not besides!!) of Napier have finished their Petition 14½ yds. long, not reckoning heading & 1442 signatures—the members do not desire any electl. privileges that are not extended to men, but simply electl. equality w. men, nothing more & nothing less!! ‘Mrs Emily Hill President’, Ugh! for the rule of the Houhynhym!!—or Amazons!!!”

He was referring to the column at right (downloaded from *Papers past*). He was also referring to Emily Hill, the wife of Henry Hill, who had taken Colenso’s place as School Inspector, and about whom, consequently, Colenso was somewhat ambivalent. And he was referring to the talking horses of *Gulliver’s travels* and to the famous nation of woman warriors of Greek history and myth.

Emily Hill

Emily Hill (b. Knowles) 1847–1930, teacher, temperance worker, suffragist [1]. The *Hawke’s Bay Herald* of 23 September 1883 carried, “The meeting in the Athenæum Hall last night under the auspices of the Napier branch of the Women’s Franchise League was well attended, the hall being filled. Mrs Henry Hill, president of the league, occupied the chair.” So she had been working away at equality for at least 10 years before women’s suffrage was achieved in 1893.



Emily Hill

Colenso wrote to Andrew to Luff on 12 June 78: “Mr. Hill came out in the same ship w. Willie [2] to Canterbury, and both he & Mrs. Hill speak highly of him; and, as he says, — ‘I saw at once he (Willie) was a superior lad to either the Capt. or the Chief Officer, and I took a great fancy to him.’ *Curious, is it not?* I have heard much of the same from Canterbury, from Clergymen & ladies who were also passengers.—”

WOMEN’S FRANCHISE LEAGUE

The Napier branch of the Women’s Franchise League held their final meeting this season at the Athenæum.

The president, Mrs Emily Hill, reported as follows:—“The time at our command has been far too short to do complete justice to the country districts in canvassing for signatures, and some members have omitted to send in their forms. Norsewood and Hastings have returned a splendid number, and we hope that the Woodville League will take up what have been omitted in other places. The total number of signatures at present is 1432, to which will be added ten or twelve others, so that the total may be set down at 1442. The members of the league cannot fail to be satisfied with their success, having registered such a splendid total of signatures, especially when it is remembered that only about 300 were obtained last year. As president I beg to thank each member for her untiring efforts in obtaining signatures for the petition. And I think it is necessary to bear in mind also that though it is decidedly a separate affair, it originated through the Women’s Christian Temperance Union. We feel assured that our sympathetic friends will wish us success in the presentation of our claim in Wellington. If it is not a success we must try again. In the name of the League I beg to thank very cordially Mrs Brown for her services as hon. secretary, and Miss Sley for acting as treasurer.”

The report was adopted.

It was unanimously resolved that the secretary should forward to the Hon. Mr Oliver, M.L.C., the League’s desire to have no electoral privileges not extended to men, but only to be placed on a perfect electoral equality with men.

Women's suffrage

Women's suffrage was achieved after about two decades of campaigning by women such as Kate Sheppard and Mary Ann Müller and organizations such as the New Zealand branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union led by Anne Ward. They felt that female voting would increase the morality of politics; their opponents argued that politics was outside women's "natural sphere" of the home and family. Suffrage advocates countered that allowing women to vote would encourage policies which protected and nurtured families.

By 1893 there was considerable popular support for women's suffrage, and the Electoral Bill passed through the Lower House with a large majority. New Zealand was the first modern nation to embrace women's suffrage [3].

Talking horses

The Houyhnhnms were talking horses in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. One might think they would appeal to Colenso, since they represent an ideal of rational existence, a life governed by sense and moderation, contrasted with humanoid Yahoos (Colenso repeatedly referred to "larrikins" in his letters) who were chaotic and unruly. They rejected light entertainment and vain displays of luxury, and appealed to reason rather than to scripture to guide their actions. They had no need to lie nor any word for lying. They used exhortation rather than force. Their subjugation of the Yahoos appears more necessary than cruel and they seem like model citizens.

But the Houyhnhnms had no names nor any need for names, since they were virtually interchangeable, with little individual identity. Their lives seemed harmonious and happy, although quite lacking in vigour, challenge, and excitement. Swift chose to make them horses rather than human types and in doing so was perhaps hinting, to those (such as Colenso) more insightful than Gulliver, that the Houyhnhnms should not be considered human ideals at all [4].

After women's suffrage, temperance?

A prevailing view among misogynists (and imbibers) was that women wanted the vote to close liquor outlets and keep their husbands at home, so the boundaries between temperance and suffrage were blurred.

A *Hawke's Bay Herald* editorial following the 1897 Licensing Election opined,

"Mrs Hill and Mrs Begg, who were on the last committee, find themselves at the bottom of the poll. Opinions, of course, differ as to whether women should sit on a committee of this description. Personally, we think it is work best left to men. We do not believe that the two ladies who sought election will feel much disappointed in not being returned, but shall rather be pleased that they have been relieved of duties which they must have found irksome and inconvenient to attend to."

("I am glad—those 2 women are *out*, & at *bottom!*" wrote Colenso to Harding).

He wrote to Emily Hill on 6 September 1898, in similarly paternalistic style. His letter, alas, requires no further explanation...

Napier, September 6th, 1898.

Dear Mrs. Emily Hill

Your long letter of the 5th. inst., on behalf of what you (following others) are pleased to term, “Woman’s Christian Temperance Union of New Zealand,” has reached me, and I am driven to reply. I would rather, however, *you* had not written it,—not that it shall, or possibly can, alter the high regard I have ever entertained for you, but, believing you are in error, I feel called on to write to you more fully and plainly, than I have either time or inclination for such matters.—

And, here let me tell you, (1.) that *I am* a “Christian Temperance” man (to borrow your own rather strange term); I have *always* been such; and more than 60 years ago, joined in establishing a Temperance Society in New Zealand; an account of the meeting, &c., being also the first English book ever printed in New Zealand; which, together with its writing, was done by me. (2.) That I, too, have had the misfortune to have had a “brother” (and other *near* relatives) who suffered long and seriously from drunkenness [5]; but I must not allow that to blind my eyes or pervert my understanding from what is right.—

With you I acknowledge and deplore the habit and vice of drunkenness, but in my doing so, I dare not allow myself to be carried away with the strange notion—or “*fad*”, that such is the crying sin the greatest one of our day! for, far beyond such in my estimation (and taking the word of GOD for my guide), are the sins of Gambling, of Mammon-worship (in its meant seductive and “respectable” forms), of idleness, of “*being lovers of pleasure more than lovers of GOD, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof,—from such*” (said the Apostle Paul to Timothy) “*turn away*”;—an awful and far more perilous state than that of drunkenness, and, I regret to say, *far more common!*

You ask me, to consider “the Union described as a heading in your letter”: I do—I have done so: and I hesitate not to say it has nothing whatever to do with *true* Christianity; and therefore I cannot conscientiously aid you with a donation. It is only one more of those specious “False Prophets,” in the garb of sheep’s clothing: of whom Our Lord *repeatedly* warned his disciples; as the Apostle also says concerning them,—“Of this sort are they which creep into houses and lead captive silly women laden with sins led away with divers lusts, ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth; to them belong the misguided “Army” mob (and other deluded sects) here among us. Indeed, I have repeatedly told them (their high “officers”(!!), when calling on me for money)—“Put away your “religion” (falsely so called) and I will gladly help you; *that*, unfortunately for you, *is the Devil’s Jam*”.—

You, Mrs. Hill, further tell me, that “your Union is far from being an ostentatious or Public Womans affair, it being about the only question suitable for Wives and Mothers to take up quietly”, &c. Was such, indeed, the case last season, when those strolling women were here declaiming, publicly, to the merriment and mockery of the public of Napier? Are the self-sufficient *Miss* Powell, and *Miss* Kirk (named in your letter) either “wives” or “Mothers”? Pity it is that such women do not better know their proper position and *true women’s work*, and so remain at home, refraining from gadding and spouting and tale-bearing. All your vain attempts,—your infatuation, will never suc-

ceed, never become of real lasting service. You can never obtain GOD'S blessing on your endeavours, just because they are unsuited for mankind, and against His expressed will. Gladly would I join a *true* "Christian Temperance" Society, and did it heartily with pen, voice, and money, but it must be and wholly in accord with true Christian principles, as taught both in word and deed by Our Lord, and supported by his Apostles. I am a little too old a bird to be caught by plausible irrational chaff.

I have recently read in one of our leading English Newspapers, (I think, the "Standard,") of a Rector in one of the midland counties, who makes the following statement: that he has been the owner of the Inn in his parish for more than 30 years; that on his being placed there he found that Inn to belong to the Rectory endowment and that he could not alter it; so he turned his attention to making the Inn become what it should be, and after some trouble & loss, &c., the parish, which was formerly a drunken one, became the very opposite, and the Inn doing well. Now *that* is what I could both wish and aid; for many years I have held and taught,—that our hotels are *needed*; that they should be kept by *fitting persons*; sell only *unadulterated* liquors, and *be open* (as at home in England) *two hours on the Sunday*.—

I enclose a clipping from an English Newspaper to hand by last Mail, it contains some solid truthful authoritative statements on the subject in question, which I think well worthy your attention.—

Permit me, dear Mrs. Hill, in conclusion to say,—that I wish you could clearly see your way, to have nothing more to do (at least *publicly*) with this *fad*, this unnatural Union.—

And with every respect,

Believe me
Yours faithfully
W. Colenso.

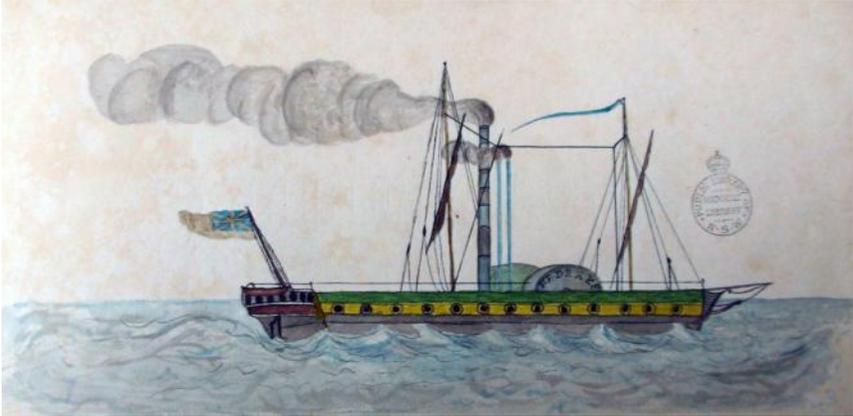
Notes

1. Upton V. Dictionary of NZ Biography. http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/dnzb/alt_essayBody.asp?essayID=3H26
2. Colenso's son Wiremu, by now a mariner.
3. Based on http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women's_suffrage_in_New_Zealand
4. Based on <http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/gulliver/themes.html>
5. Probably his brother Samuel, with whom Colenso flatted in London.



Hawke's Bay Herald, 1876.

The paddle steamer *Sir Francis Drake*



A naive watercolour in a sketchbook by William Colenso in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, depicts a paddle steamer called the *Sir Francis Drake*. Colenso must have painted it before June 1834 when he left for New Zealand (see next issue for more on these sketchbooks).

The story of the *Sir Francis Drake* was published in the periodical *Maritime South West* No. 9 (1996) in a paper by the late Judith Godfrey. The editor, David Clement, sent a lithograph by Allon of *Sir Francis Drake* as she was built with three masts, at Sutton Pool, Plymouth (overleaf). See the website www.swmaritime.org.uk/.

What follows is extracted from that paper, and is published here with permission.

The establishment of the Sir Francis Drake steam packet, to run between Plymouth and Portsmouth touching also at intermediate ports, may be hailed as a new era in the navigation of our southern coast.

Woolmer's Gazette, 21 June 1823.

The *Sir Francis Drake*, 113 tons, was solid framed and copper fastened. She had three masts, an immensely tall smoke stack, and was schooner rigged. Her figurehead was a bust of Sir Francis Drake himself. The vessel measured 103ft. 8 inches x 18ft. 8 inches x 7 feet. She had sleeping accommodation for 40 passengers. There was a library and chess board for their entertainment. More passengers could be carried in steerage and space was available for baled goods, carriages and animals. She was scheduled to run to Portsmouth and back every week with calls off Dartmouth and Cowes, wind and weather permitting.

In June 1831 in compliance with the wishes of a great number of ladies and gentlemen of Falmouth and Penzance an excursion to the Scilly Isles was arranged. The *Drake*

left Plymouth on the evening of Saturday 25th., for Penzance and sailed for Scilly the next morning returning in the afternoon. The round trip fare from Falmouth was 10s., and from Penzance 6s. At some point she was reduced from three to two masts.

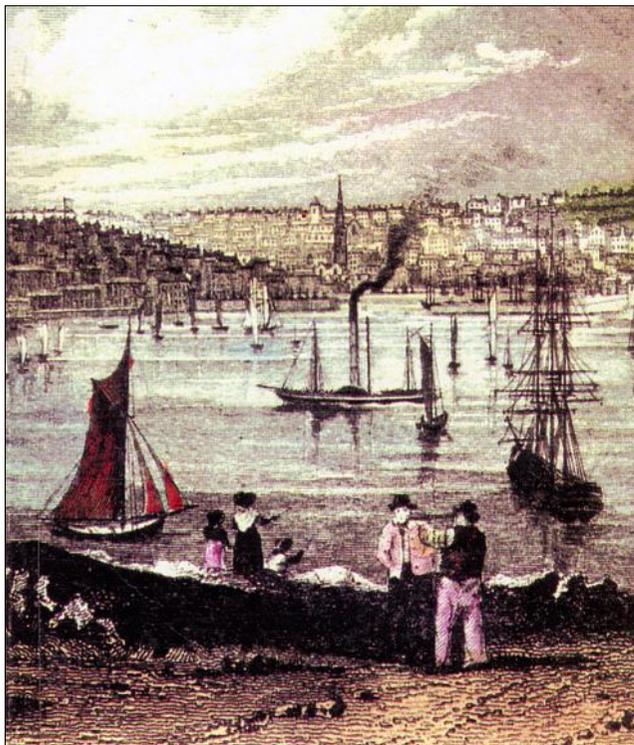
It would have been at Penzance in 1831 when the young William Colenso, nearing the end of his apprenticeship with John Thomas, painted his watercolour of her.

In August a trip from Plymouth to Torquay was advertised. Over 100 persons availed themselves of the opportunity to view *one of the most delightful and picturesque watering places on the coast*. On a later trip to Torquay with ten *fashionables* on board, the *Drake* encountered a head wind at Prawle and was forced to turn and run into Salcombe. The ‘natives’ were delighted with the unexpected visit. The Devonport Amateur Band on board enlivened the place by playing their favourite airs. *These aquatic excursions give great satisfaction* gushed the *Plymouth Herald*.

She continued to run local routes, enduring gales, collisions, changes of ownership and rebuilding, and in 1862, after a period of inactivity, she was sold. She sailed for Rio in 1863, thence to Mariom, Falmouth, Rotterdam and Gravesend. In 1864 she left England for the last time, bound for St Helena, Table Bay, Ichaboe, Simon’s Bay, Algoa

Bay, Madagascar and Mauritius; thence to Port Chalmers. There she obtained some coastal cargo, but when entering the Hokitika River on 29 June 1865 she struck the bar, was hove to on the beach, and became a total wreck – 42 years after her launch: “a truly remarkable vessel”.

I wonder if Colenso knew the ship he had sketched in his old home town of Penzance had come to grief in his New Zealand?



The *Sir Frances Drake*, still three-masted, at Plymouth, c. 1830.

William Colenso and Andreas Olsen

Andreas Olsen collected many plants for Colenso, mostly from “E side Ruahines, Waipawa county”. Olsen’s grandson wrote, “My father, H. A. Olsen, ... as well as being a bush farmer, was very interested in anything related to the bush and the wildlife in it. He had been brought up in the Seventy Mile Bush in southern Hawke’s Bay, and his father, A. Olsen, was one of an enthusiastic band of amateurs, led by Henry Hill, who collected botanical specimens for Colenso in 1880–1890”.

I spoke with 97 year old Malcolm Olsen in Levin by phone in 2008, and he told me Andreas Olsen was his grandfather. He was engaged in painting the *Høvding*, the Danish migrant ship, on her way to New Zealand in 1872, so they called him “Painter Olsen” to distinguish him from Carpenter Olsen (who built the Lutheran church at Norsewood) and Butcher Olsen, among the other Andreas Olsens living in the “the Bush” region. He had a property in Garfield Road (aka Friberg Line), Norsewood, on the north side next to Mortensen’s “Fernhills” (where Colenso stayed when visiting the district), but his collections were all made on excursions to the nearby Ruahine ranges.

Colenso named *Veronica olsenii* (now *Parahebe hookeriana*) for him. He wrote, “*Hab.* Ruahine Mountain-range, east side: *Mr. A. Olsen*; 1894–95.... Named after its discoverer, Mr. A. Olsen, of South Norsewood, a zealous collector and lover of plants, as many of them detected by him and described by me in this and in several preceding volumes of the ‘Transactions of the New Zealand Institute’ bear ample witness. Of this genus, this species, with others, and many other plants from the mountain-ranges, flourish admirably in his well-stocked garden, the proximity to the mountain and its altitude being so suitable.” (*Trans.* 1895; 28: 607).



Parahebe hookeriana (syn. *Veronica olsenii* Col.): photograph by Phil Garnock-Jones

Michael Stone, Woodville teacher and historian, told me that Olsen’s grand-daughter lived in Napier, and gave me her contact details. Joan Fitzmaurice replied (May 2011), “Thank you for your email. It was most interesting to read your mention of my grandfather in your book. Malcolm Olsen is my cousin and at the beginning of August he will turn 101 years old. My sister, Margaret, and I went to his 100th birthday celebration last year and were amazed how sharp his mind still was. His brother, Ian



"The First Class Frigate 'Høvdning' of Tønsberg, 355 Com Læster, mastered by Capt. C. Berg will sail directly from here to New Zealand on May 30th with emigrants. Sponsored by the New Zealand government. Vacant seats can be put down at the authorized

Gunnestad & Co.
 Skippergaden 27
 Christiania.

Those already signed are asked to address us for further instructions."

Advertisement for 1872 *Høvdning* voyage in Norse newspaper *Morgenbladet*, 2 May 1872: (from Norsewood Cemetary Project website <http://www.norsewoodcemetery.co.nz/ships/1872-hovding.php>).

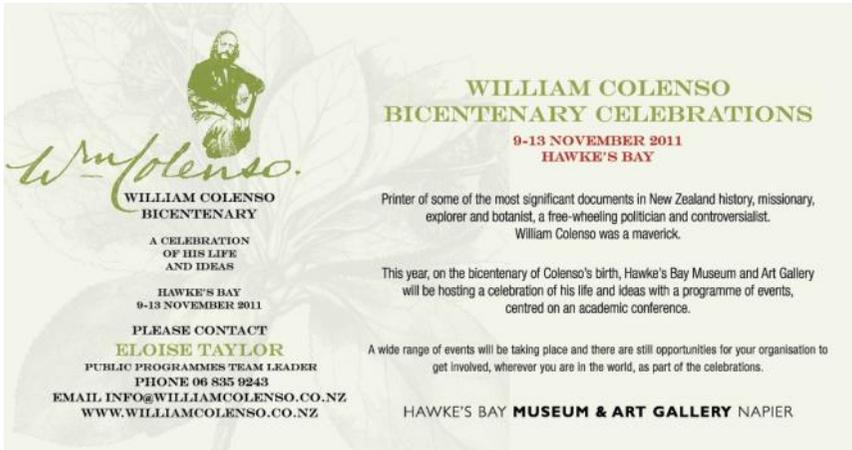
aged 97, had driven by car from Wanganui that morning and planned to drive back again that same day. We are quite a long-lived family it seems as another cousin (daughter of Hilda) is 96 and in a retirement home here in Napier. I only hope I have inherited the same family gene.

"I was also very interested to read the attached (May 2011 *eColenso*) newsletter. On page 8 in a letter of Colenso's dated 8th June there is a list of people beginning with 'Miss Buchanan and her sisters'. Third on the list is 'Athenius Olsen (son of A.Olsen)'. It should be spelled 'Othenius Olsen' and he is my father. He was a couple of years older than Harold, Malcolm's father, and after training as a pupil teacher in Norsewood, moved to Gisborne in 1899 where he continued his career until retirement in 1946. It was Colenso who urged my grandfather to support his son into this field and in one of the letters I have he mentions Othenius."

Mrs Fitzmaurice has two letters from Colenso to Andreas Olsen. In one Colenso writes, "I thank you for those nice specimens of flowers—from your garden—the pretty neat little *Veronica Olseni* in full flower, looking charming...."



Andreas Olsen, Hanna Alette Olsen nee Hansen & Lieut. Othenius Olsen MC in 1916

The poster features a central illustration of William Colenso, a man with a long beard and a hat, holding a book. To the left of the illustration is the name 'William Colenso' written in a large, elegant cursive script. The background is a light green color with a faint, large-scale pattern of leaves or petals.

**WILLIAM COLENSO
BICENTENARY CELEBRATIONS**
9-13 NOVEMBER 2011
HAWKE'S BAY

Printer of some of the most significant documents in New Zealand history, missionary, explorer and botanist, a free-wheeling politician and controversialist.
William Colenso was a maverick.

This year, on the bicentenary of Colenso's birth, Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery will be hosting a celebration of his life and ideas with a programme of events, centred on an academic conference.

A wide range of events will be taking place and there are still opportunities for your organisation to get involved, wherever you are in the world, as part of the celebrations.

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HAWKE'S BAY **MUSEUM & ART GALLERY** NAPIER

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pencilart@terrie-reddish.co.nz

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