

ISSN 1179-8551

COLTS: SKY.

VOL. III, ISSUE 1
JANUARY 2012





TE URUNGA MAI O TE IWI WIWI



This stunning new book *The French Place in the Bay of Islands* presents very human stories of conflict, ambition, struggle, success and failure, shedding new light on Māori-Pakeha relations at the time of Treaty-making at Waitangi and of the founding of the New Zealand we know today.

These are stories centred on the enduring French and Catholic influence in the Bay of Islands, specifically the work of Bishop Pompallier and of the Marist missionaries whose South Seas headquarters and printery were then in Kororāreka Russell.

Kororāreka's sensational reputation as a "hellhole of vice" has long tended to mask another, more compelling narrative. Illustrating some of the commercial, religious and political rivalry amongst Māori hapu and between Western nations at the time, this book highlights that narrative and makes persuasive reading for all.

www.thefrenchplaceinthebay.com

email: sales@thefrenchplaceinthebay.co.nz

RUINOUS NEGLECT

The disgracefully neglected Paihia ruin shown here is one of the important buildings in New Zealand history.

William Williams wrote to the Church Missionary Society in November 1830, “I have commenced a stone building with walls half a yard thick, which I am building with my own hands.” The building was completed by a mason sent from Sydney, with stone shipped from Waitangi, and the Williams family lived in it.

William Colenso had arrived in Paihia on 30 December 1834 and when Williams moved to Waimate in May 1835 Colenso occupied part of the stone house: from there he wrote to Allan Cunningham, calling his home “Bachelor’s Hall”. The Ashwells also lived in the stone house, but moved out, and in March 1840 the printing press was moved in with Colenso. Colenso married in 1843 and left to study for holy orders at Waimate; Telford had taken over as printer in 1843, and the press went to Auckland in 1845; the building became vacant but later that year it was used as an infant school.

The CMS press had occupied part of Baker’s house between 1835 and 1840, so it was there that much of Colenso’s early printing was done. The New Testament, for instance, was published in 1836-7, and the Treaty early in 1840.

For three years from March 1840, however, the stone house was the “printing office”, and there Colenso printed publications on behalf of Hobson, among them many of the founding documents of our nation.

The *Beagle* was in port in December 1835 and Colenso spent Christmas day with Darwin. Allan Cunningham was there April to September 1838. He wrote to Colenso,



“Have a little fire in the room, and I ... may get more briskly to work among your remaining specimens.” The two spent many days together. Du Petit Thouars spent a month in the Bay. Wilkes of the American Antarctic Expedition was there with Asa Grey for three months in 1840. Dumont D’Urville arrived in April 1840, Dieffenbach in December.

Lady Jane Franklin visited in May 1841 and was so impressed with Colenso’s potential she sent him a microscope; JD Hooker arrived in August—he wrote to his father, “...asking for Mr. Colenso’s from an intelligent native, we were directed to a square brick one storied cottage with a high roof in which was the printing establishment as well as the owner’s dwelling. Entering... I was surprised to find how complete all the arrangements were, they all seemed very busy and the sheet of native language well struck off and ready to be dried emitted a smell strongly reminding me of the time when going backwards and forwards to school, I was wont to act as printer’s devil to my father. In the sitting room was a portrait of poor Alan Cunningham and a pretty pine tree in a bottle, as also some of my father’s works on a table. Mr. Colenso received us very kindly and talked of some fine collection he had sent home and the gratification this immediate acknowledgement gave him from Glasgow.... of shells Mr Colenso has 150 species with many insects and minerals.”

Andrew Sinclair arrived October 1841 and joined Hooker and Colenso plant-hunting.

The stone house was more than just an important printery. This dilapidated pile was, during Colenso’s time, a neat cottage, visited by several of the great men of science of the midnineteenth century, and in its rooms were held the first meetings of scientists in New Zealand.

It deserves better than its current derelict state. We New Zealanders and other colenso-philos deserve better than to see it so.

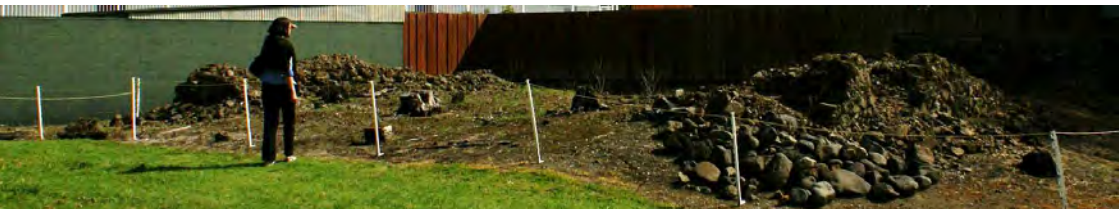
Resources

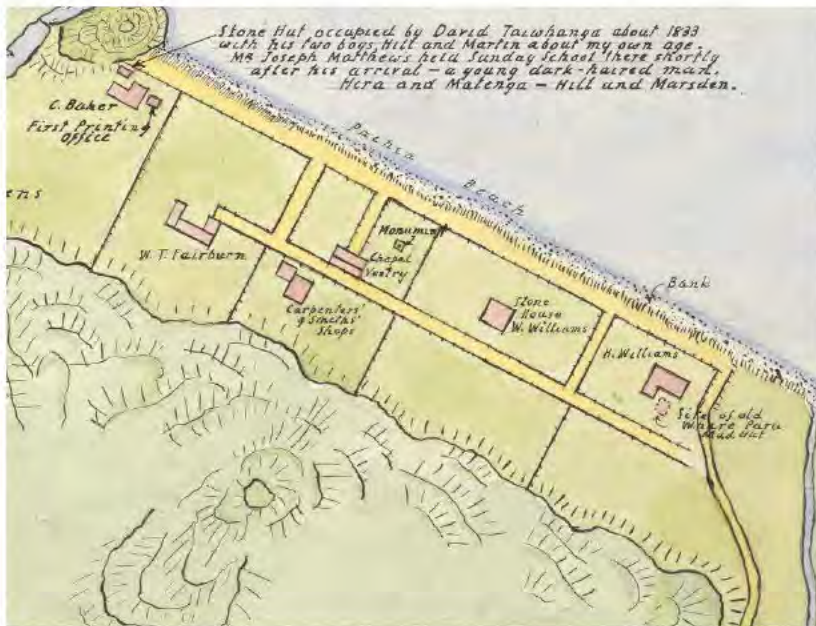
Burnett RIM 1972. Colenso’s printing office ruins (contains references to primary sources). Bulletin 76. Hamilton City Library.

Nobbs KJ 1989. William Colenso and his scientific friends at Bachelor’s Hall. Bulletin 73. Hamilton City Library.

Footnote

A “Paihia Haven of History Charitable Trust” was set up in 1999, setting out to raise funds and build a museum, but while its brochures are still available from an unstaffed building on the site, its website, telephone and email numbers do not work.





Edwin Fairburn 1827-1911: detail of "Sketch map of CMS Mission Station Paihia - as in early times" (c. 1833). Note the first printing office beside Baker's house, and the stone house of William Williams. ATL MapColl-832.11a/1833/Acc.39923.



GOING... Date unknown, photographer unknown: ATL 1/2-021688-F. Permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, must be obtained before any re-use of these images.



GOING... 1902-1915. Photograph by Edward Joseph Darby. Colenso's printing office



GONE! c. 1915. Photograph by Frederick George Radcliffe 1863-1923. ATL 1/2-003178-G. Permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, must be obtained before any re-use of these images.

Copy of this letter from Colenso's biographer
GC Petersen to Colenso's grandson
WM Simcox was kindly sent by Gillian Bell.

19. New Here Avenue,
Palmerston North.

12th February 1949.

Dear Mr. Senior,

I was very pleased to receive your letter of the 3rd with helpful notes. You certainly have read the book very closely. One would think after typing and re-typing, checking and re-checking the ms., scrutinising the printer's galley and then the proof that all the little errors of grammar and spelling would be eliminated, but they seem to lurk in hiding and then leap forth to laugh at you when the book comes forth, you fondly hope sans error, and it is too late. Frequently the error is not the author's - sometimes the printer is sure he knows better and sometimes when he removes a line of type to make an author's correction he makes another ^{mistake} of his own somewhere else in the line and nothing can be done about it if it is the final proof. Hence in a book of 500 pages some mistakes are

bound to occur.

I have been checking up on your notes - you may be interested in my comments.

Pepepe. p. 175. This was a bit of a hansen and got me scratching. Bolenso's diary note for 30 Jan 1844 reads "paddled down river passing Ngamawahia at 3 pm. and arrived at Pepepe, Ashwell's station at 4." This would, I should think bring him to the vicinity of Te Kaititike, Ashwell's station opposite Taupiri. Are Pepepe and Kaititike identical? In any case Bolenso was right for George French Angas in "Savage Life and Scenes" Vol 2 p. 37 gives a sketch of Pepepe Station and relates how in the spring of 1844 he visited the Ashwells there. From his description it would appear that Pepepe was close to Taupiri for he relates climbing the hill to get a view of the surrounding country. Unfortunately I have no good maps to guide me.

nr. 273. Yes. Sagnall slipped there - obviously should be autumn.

p. 429. Thanks. I don't know where Sagnall got the 3 children from. I did not check this.

p. 356. McLean must have made a mistake in his letter. The names sound alike and he must have got it a bit mixed.

p. 78. Maraetahi. There were two Maraetahi's. One on the Hauraki where the Fairburn was stationed and the other near Hauraki Heads where Maunsell was stationed. In 1859 he moved his station further upstream to Te Kohanga.

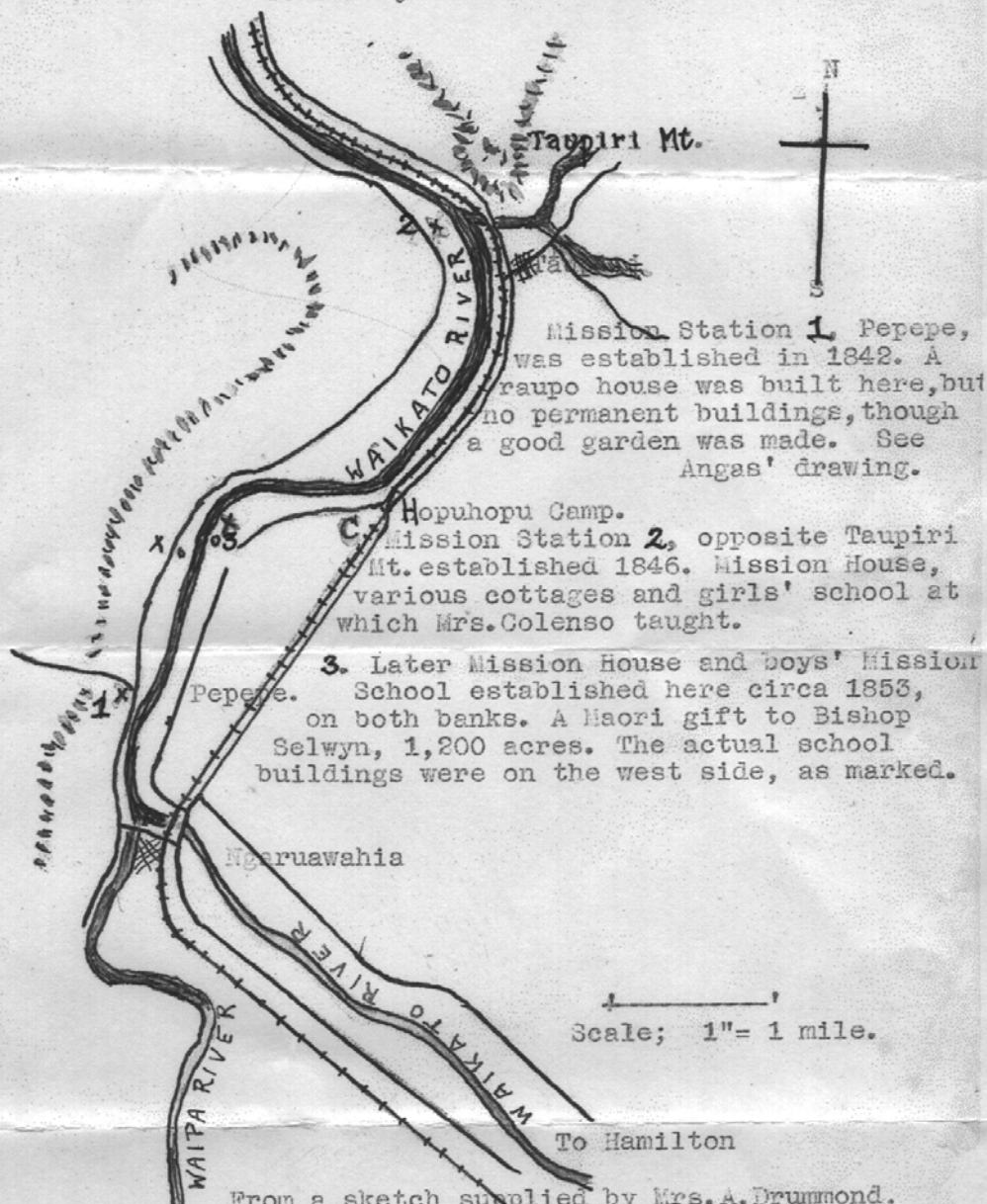
Yes, it was a big job but both Mr. Bagnall and I felt it was worthy of the best effort we were capable of. It was never our intention to make it a "popular" book but rather one, if possible, of permanent historical worth. After all Colenso was an eminent scientist apart from his other high accomplishments, and well worthy of the best we could give. We are aware that the work is not perfect. I must say that so far as I personally am concerned my greatest pleasure after publication

of the book has been to learn that you and your family - the people most intally concerned - feel that we have not used the assistance you have given us in a way that you feel unfair to the memory of your grandfather. After having worked for five years in such intimate association with him I must admit I have developed an affection for him that I could not have had he been more perfect and less human. I do not know if you read Hamade's review in the Evening Post. I am enclosing a copy, not because it is flattering, but because it affects his reading of the book apparently had a somewhat similar effect on him. His criticism that the book is too long may have some merit but no one who read it was able to tell us what to cut out. Perhaps the details of Napier's early life are not of as general interest as other portions, but they were part of Colenso's life - and we were writing his biography.

With kindest regards and best wishes.

Yours sincerely,
J. Peterson

To Huntly and Auckland



From a sketch supplied by Mrs. A. Drummond,
Middlemarch, 1 R.D. Hamilton.

Colenso sent the list overleaf to the Church Missionary Society in March 1849. He would later boast that he had the best-equipped dispensary in the Colony.

It is said that all medicines are tiny doses of poisons, but this list contains some very nasty substances indeed.

Calomel was mercurous chloride, a very heavy, soft, white, sweetish-tasting mineral. Once the most popular of laxatives, calomel has been used in medicine since the 16th century. The recognition of its toxicity led to a decline in its use in internal medicine. It is used in insecticides and fungicides.

Quassia amara is a shrub native to Brazil. Its heartwood, the bitterwood or quassia, was ground and used to reduce fever.

The **blue pill**, also called the *pilula hydrargyri*, was a remedy prescribed for various ailments, particularly constipation. It contained 1/3 elemental mercury by weight, mixed with marshmallow, honey of rose, liquorice, glycerin, and inert ingredients to form pills of about 48 grains in weight. A combination of the blue pill, and a mixture called the common black draught, was a standard cure for constipation in early 19th century England and elsewhere (a big problem then, when flour was being refined).

***Conii folia*, B.P.** *Conium* or hemlock leaves have the disagreeable odour of mice, which is accentuated by the addition of solution of potassium hydroxide. *Succus Conii* was used internally for its sedative and antispasmodic properties. Externally, as *Unguentum Conii*, it was a soothing application to haemorrhoids and other painful or irritable conditions of the rectum and anus.

An ointment for mange and lice had this recipe: **oil of turpentine** 3 oz., oil of vitriol 1 oz.; mix cautiously, avoiding the fumes, and add melted lard 8 oz., train oil 4 oz., oil of turpentine 2 oz., flowers of sulphur or **sulphur vivum** 4 oz.; stir till cold; apply daily for 3 or 4 times, and give an alterative powder twice a day. Colenso's biggest order was for turps and sulphur, suggesting treatments for mange and lice were common.

Opium was used for any pain relief, including infants' teething.

Dover's powder was a traditional medicine against cold and fever: "Powder of Ipecacuanha and Opium: prepared ipecacuanha, 10 g., powdered opium 10 g., lactose 80 g."

Quinine was the first antimalarial, but was used as a general antipyretic.

Ipecacuanha has a long history of use as an emetic, for emptying the stomach in cases of poisoning. It has also been used as a nauseant, expectorant, and diaphoretic, and was prescribed for conditions such as bronchitis. Ipecacuanha was also traditionally used to induce sweating. A common preparation for this purpose was Dover's powder.

John **Newberry** was a writer and bookseller who became well-known for publishing children's books. He also established *Lilliputian Magazine*, the first magazine for children, in 1751. He also owned **Dr. James' Fever Powder**, a very successful and popular health remedy which made Newberry a fortune - but which has also been blamed for causing King George III's insanity. One of Newberry's children's books publicised the powder by having the character Little Goody Two-Shoes benefit from a dose.

201
List of Medicines wanted for
Akuriri Station.

Calomel, 8 oz.

Quassia (raspings) 3 lbs.

Tartarized Antimony, 2 oz.

Extract Conii, 1 pound

Blue Pill, 1 pound.

Sulphur Vivum, 10 pounds.

Turpentine, 2 gallons.

Opium (crude) 8 oz.

Specacuanha Root, (Brown), 1 pound

Antimonial Powder, 4 oz.

Dover's Powder, 1 pound.

Quinine, 4 oz.

Newberry's James' powder, 1 bottle.

Sulph. Potash (pulv.) 1 pound.

Line Sulph., 4 oz.

Line Hyd. 2 oz.

2 Lancets

1 Mortar (wedgwood)

William Colenso
March 2/49.

James' Powder was one of the most ubiquitous patented medicines from the mid-eighteenth century to the early twentieth century. Patients included George III, Oliver Goldsmith and Horace Walpole, who claimed the powders 'can cure most complaints that are not mortal, or chronical'. Patented in 1746, the remedy was the subject of numerous attempts to establish its formula. A private analysis (i.e. not on behalf of the Royal Society) established that the powder consisted of antimony and calcium phosphate. Since antimony was often contaminated with arsenic, the powder was also responsible for arsenical poisonings.

Potassium Sulphate is a fertiliser, also used to reduce muzzle flash in night fighting. You can however still find "New Era Kali. Sulph. (Potassium Sulphate) Tissue Salt (No. 7) 450s" online (£4.47 for 1), "a biochemic remedy for maintaining skin condition and skin eruptions with scaling or sticky emissions, falling hair, diseased nails and catarrh."

Zinc sulphate was used as an astringent and emetic.

Zinc oxide as a mixture with iron oxide is called calamine. Fine particles have deodorizing and antibacterial action and for that reason are added into various materials including cotton fabric, rubber, food packaging, etc. Zinc oxide is widely used to treat a variety of skin conditions, in products such as baby powder and barrier creams to treat nappy rash, calamine cream, anti-dandruff shampoos, and antiseptic ointments. Zinc oxide can be used in ointments, creams, and lotions to protect against sunburn.

For pharmaceutical use, the mortar and the head of the pestle were usually made of porcelain, while the handle of the pestle was made of wood. This is known as a **Wedgwood mortar** and pestle and originated in 1779.

Rev J Ralph wrote to the Church Missionary Society in 1853, ordering 75 different medicinal items for Otaki (Alexander Turnbull Library Ms-copy-micro-0198). Most of Colenso's items are there, but also many more flavouring agents and dressings.

I have referred to Wikipedia and Encyclopedia Britannica—Ed.



eColenso is a free email Newsletter published irregularly by the Colenso Society.

Please forward to anyone. Back issues here: <http://www.colensostudy.id.au/>.

Please email contributions on any matter relating to the life and work of the Rev.

William Colenso FLS FRS to Ian St George (istge@yahoo.co.nz).

The cover of this issue is based on a 1902 design by Charles Rennie Mackintosh.



HOOKE ON COLENSO

[YEARBOOK OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, No 5, 1901]

WILLIAM COLENSO, born at Penzance, Cornwall, in 1811, was the eldest son of Samuel May Colenso, who married Mary Veale Thomas, both being natives of that town. On his father's side he was cousin to the late Bishop Colenso, of Natal, and on his mother's to Sir Penrose Goodchild Julyan, a colonial official. As a youth he was apprenticed to a printer of Penzance, from whence he went to London, where he was employed in the same capacity by the British and Foreign Bible Society. This led to his being sent by the Society to New Zealand, whither, in December, 1834, he carried the first printing press that was established in that group of islands. This occurred five years before they became a British Colony.

The mission station was at Pahia, in the Bay of Islands, where, within six weeks of his arrival, though hampered by an incomplete outfit, he printed the Epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians in the Maori language. By the third following year he had printed the whole New Testament in Maori, and, with the assistance of natives only, had bound the copies with his own hands.

In 1844 he abandoned the work of printer, left Pahia for Hawke's Bay, took to missionary work, and after a training by Bishop Selwyn at St. John's College, Auckland, was ordained to a church in Napier, where he resided till his death in 1899.

From the date of his arrival in New Zealand Mr. Colenso took an active interest in the history, folk-lore, habits, languages, &c., of the natives, and being gifted with the love of natural history and of travel, a cultivated mind, an iron constitution, and methodical habits as an observer, collector, and recorder, all of which he used to the best advantage during a long life, it is not surprising that he was regarded as the Nestor of science in a colony his arrival in which antedated its foundation.

It was by a visit to the Bay of Islands in 1838 by Allan Cunningham,* the celebrated Australian botanist and explorer, then in charge of the Botanical Gardens of Sydney, that Mr. Colenso's attention was first drawn to botany; and to this visit, and those of Darwin in the "Beagle" in 1835, and of the Antarctic Expedition under Sir James Ross in 1841, he ever afterward referred as the most memorable events in his scientific career. From the latter date, after his philological and linguistic studies, that of the vegetation of the northern island was paramount. During the many journeys which he made, often through previously unvisited mountain regions, he observed and collected continuously, making discoveries that shed unexpected light on the affinities of the New Zealand Flora with those of Australia, South America, and the Antarctic islands. Nor did his zeal diminish with age, for, as the result of an expedition made in his eighty-seventh year, he sent to Kew specimens and observations of plants made *en route*. His botanical writings, though numerous, are, as those on other branches of biology, fragmentary. They commence with one on Ferns, communicated to the 'Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science' in 1844; others occupy many volumes of the last-named work, of the 'Transactions of the New Zealand Institute,' and of the

Hawke's Bay Philosophical Institute. Of these latter, the most important are: An account of visits to the Ruahine Mountains in 1845 and 1847, which is a repertory of information on the geography and vegetation of the previously unexplored regions visited; the first account of the discovery of the *Dinornis* bones; on the ancient (now extinct) dog of New Zealand; on the Maori races; on the vegetable food of the ancient New Zealanders; on the traditions of the Maoris, and on their sense of colour. Altogether, Mr. Colenso is credited with the authorship of thirty-two articles in the Royal Society's Catalogue of Scientific Papers down to the year 1883, and many have since appeared in the volumes of the New Zealand Institute.

For upwards of sixty years Mr. Colenso systematically took advantage of his unique opportunities for collecting information regarding the language, customs, myths, proverbs, songs, &c., of the Maoris, subjects that had a special fascination for him, and as the information obtained was direct from native sources—some of it from men who remembered Captain Cook's visits, and antedated the corruptions introduced by Europeans—the collection is of unique value.

In 1861 Mr. Colenso entered Parliament as representative of Napier, when he moved and carried a resolution that the time had come for the State to make an organised attempt to rescue the dying language of New Zealand from oblivion. Being at the time unable to undertake such a work himself, he offered to present the Government with his whole collection of materials for it. In 1865 the Government took up the subject, and in 1866 Mr. Colenso, then being more at liberty, was successfully urged, as the one man in New Zealand thoroughly qualified, to take up the work. Seven years was fixed for its completion, the remuneration to be £300 per annum. Before half that period had expired, another Ministry, with other views of the value of a Lexicon, had supervened, by whom its author was informed that, half the time allowed for the completion of the work having expired, one-half of the work itself should have been in the press. On the unreasonableness of this view in the case of a work requiring numerous cross references being represented, a committee of qualified persons was appointed to examine and report on the progress made. The report was to the effect that the author had advanced further in his work than was due up to the time employed, that thousands of pages had been written from the first word to the last, and that seven years was too short a time for the completion of a work of such magnitude. The report was withheld from Parliament, funds for proceeding with the Lexicon were refused, and the unfinished materials were thrown upon the author's hands, one finger of which was permanently disabled by writer's cramp, due to his labours on the Lexicon. A sample portion was, however, demanded to be laid before the House, and letter A produced, but this was "lost," and not discovered till eighteen years afterwards in a departmental pigeon-hole. It was then printed and distributed by Government, partly at its author's expense, in the year preceding his death.[†] Its appearance, dedicated to his old friend Sir George Grey, has been followed by urgent representations to the Colonial Government, that the whole materials, which are bequeathed to the State, should be entrusted to a competent editor for publication.

In 1890 he published an authentic history of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, of which he was the sole surviving witness, a document regarded in the Colony as of great historic value. Towards the close of his life he offered his valuable library and all

his collections to the town of Napier as the nucleus of a museum, together with £1000 as endowment, on condition that a suitable site and building were provided. The site proposed was, however, unsuitable, having an ocean frontage, the salt-laden atmosphere of which would have been detrimental to the collections; he therefore withdrew the offer, and transmitted the amount of the endowment to his native town of Penzance to form a fund, to which he subsequently largely added, for the relief of deserving poor.

In person, Mr. Colenso was, in 1841, as remembered by the writer of this notice, a man of medium height, brisk, active, and with a frank, winning address. Later in life he was conspicuous for his abundant long white hair on scalp and face. Only two years before his death, which occurred at Napier in February, 1899, he was thrown from a carriage, and, besides receiving a severe shock, had his right arm shattered at the elbow. Though then in his eight-seventh year he recovered the use of the limb in so far as to wield his pen with his wonted energy, but with no little pain. He married in middle age, and left a family. He was elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society in 1865, and of the Royal in 1886.

JDH



In May 2010 the US auction house [Spink Shreves Galleries Sale](#) auctioned items from the Joseph Hackmey Collection of New Zealand stamps (1855-1872). Included were three stamped envelopes addressed to William Colenso, illustrated below. The blue envelope sold for USD170; the other two were not sold.



MR COLENSO ON DAYLIGHT SAVING

In a letter dated 15 November 1895, Colenso relayed to Henry Hill, Coupland Harding's account of the October meeting of the Wellington Philosophical Society. He wrote

"From Harding I have a *nice* & full account of *scena* at their meeting: (not very unusual!) A yg. Member, called Hudson—rather forward—introduced a Paper to *alter time!* so as to make people rise 2 hours earlier & to be done by *law!* Hudson got it, hot & heavy! but the pachyderm could not, would not, take it! asseverating—we (they) were old Tories, & that *his* scheme would by-&-by be adopted by the wiser generation of young N.Z.!!! How this stiltified talk serves to remind me of the Teetotallers & prohibitionists...."

This was GV Hudson FES, whose paper was briefly reported in *Trans* 28:

ABSTRACT.

The author proposed to alter the time of the clock at the equinoxes so as to bring the working-hours of the day within the period of daylight, and by utilising the early morning, so reduce the excessive use of artificial light which at present prevails.

Mr. Travers said the clocks could be managed by having different hands. He did not think we were far enough advanced to adopt the plan advocated by the author of the paper.

Mr. Harding said that the only practical part of Mr. Hudson's paper had long since been anticipated by Benjamin Franklin, one of whose essays denounced the extravagance of making up for lost daylight by artificial light. Mr. Hudson's original suggestions were wholly unscientific and impracticable. If he really had found many to support his views, they should unite and agitate for a reform.

Mr. Maskell said that the mere calling the hours different would not make any difference in the time. It was out of the question to think of altering a system that had been in use for thousands of years, and found by experience to be the best. The paper was not practical.

Mr. Hawthorne did not see any difficulty in carrying out the views advocated so ably by Mr. Hudson.

Mr. Hustwick was of opinion that the reform spoken of would have to wait a little longer.

Mr. Richardson said that it would be a good thing if the plan could be applied to the young people.*

Mr. Hudson, in reply, said that he was sorry to see the paper treated rather with ridicule. He intended it to be practical. It was approved of by those much in the open air. There would be no difficulty in altering the clocks.

Hudson's paper had attracted attention, however, and a thousand copies were printed and circulated in Christchurch in 1896. Hudson submitted the full paper with commentary and it was published in *Trans* 31: 577–583.

* *I do like Mr Richardson's suggestion—Ed.*

DEATH IN THE FORTY MILE BUSH

William Colenso's account of the decimation of the Ngatitutaiaaroa

Reprinted with permission from New Zealand Doctor.

2011 marks the bicentenary of the birth of one of New Zealand's greatest polymaths: the Rev. William Colenso, printer, missionary, politician, botanist, educationalist, liberation theologian, who boasted that he once had the "best equipped surgery in the Colony," and the best library.

In May 1857 Colenso wrote to the Hawke's Bay Superintendent who was planning a road through the Forty Mile Bush, along Māori tracks that Colenso had repeatedly walked on his return to Napier from making his twice-yearly report to the Church Missionary Society in Wellington. Colenso advised against the planned route through low-lying and unhealthy country, and he related the sad experiences of the Ngatitutaiaaroa in support of his position.

The Ngatitutaiaaroa tribe of Natives, who, for several years (i.e. from 1846,) dwelt at Te Hawera, lived, before that time, at a village called Ihuraua—a place about 14 miles distant in a N.E. direction through the forests from Te Hawera, but situate on very much higher ground.—

This truly isolated little party (many of whom had never before seen a white man,) proposed to me, on our second meeting, in 1846, to remove their dwelling to Te Hawera, if I would regularly visit them (in common with the other Native villages of the District), as, by their so doing, they would save me several additional miles of heavy forest travelling up and down on the same line. So that, instead of returning to Hawke's Bay from the village near the head of the Wairarapa valley (Te Kaikokirikiri) via Whareama and the Coast, as hitherto, I should henceforth travel towards Te Hawera and Ngaawapurua over pretty nearly the present track; which, at first, was particularly heavy owing to the (then) trackless state of the forest, as well as the open Fern Lands at the head of the Wairarapa valley; a journey which (from Te Hawera to Te Kaikokirikiri) invariably took, at first, in fine weather and no floods, three long and toilsome days.

On their removal to Te Hawera, in 1846, I noted down the names and number of the tribe; which amounted to,
men 25: wom. 20: childn. 6 = 51.

The whole party settled quietly down; built their huts, and also a little rustic chapel; cultivated different spots of the forests around; and, in the course of two or three years, had all professed the Christian Faith. They rarely visited, and when they did only went to the nearest villages—Mataikona (E. Coast), Te Kaikokirikiri (Wairarapa), and Ngaawapurua (Manawatu).

This little simple and wholly isolated party had a large share of my attention; as, at first, I had sanguine hopes, of their becoming an increasingly pleasing community.—

From several of the Native Xn. teachers of this District (whom I often sent to visit them), they had also much attention: Te Hawera village was altogether No. 1, in our estimation.—

At that early time (1846) I knew nothing of the truly deadly nature of the site they had chosen. The Lands thereabouts were their own, and I could not but suppose that they were the best judges in such matters.—

Finding, however, that several deaths had invariably occurred between every interval of my visiting: that their disorders were constantly of one, or two, types,—Fever, both intermittent and Rheumatic, and Pulmonary Consumption: that the living were greatly altered in appearance, although largely possessed of good food, both animal and vegetable: and, that the floors of their huts were always more or less damp; and, also, having, by this time, both noticed and experienced what I have already written, I began to suspect the true cause of their ailments, and earnestly urged their speedy removal to some better (higher and more open) Site; this, however, I could not now effect. They would not (or, rather, could not,) believe their daily lessening number was caused by the unhealthiness of the spot; but (wholly in accordance with N.Z. ideas) by the male-diction and enchantments of their old enemies because they had received the Xn.

Faith: which Faith, however, they would never abandon, and consequently (reasoning as New Zealanders) the *first* little Chapel of their Tribe, and their dead relations who lay buried around it.—The end is soon told: up to May, 1851, the number of deaths of this small party (including their principal man then lately deceased), amounted to *men*, 14: *wom.* 14: *childn.* 4 = 32

and the sorrowing remnant were then, at length, yielding to my advice, (or, more properly speaking, commands,) and were about to depart for the open country in the lower Manawatu. In March, 1852, (when I last went that way,) one of the tribe had come from their new place of abode to meet me at Te Hawera; who informed me, that, before that they had left the place, another male had died, making a gross total of 33 (thirty three) out of 51 (fifty one) in the space of 5 (five years)! several of whom were young, both of males and females.

The number of births during the same period was only six, of which, four had also subsequently died.—

The resting-place of a number of these dead, is strikingly indicated in the Chief Surveyor's Sketch Survey, as "*Graves*"—in the little Fern oasis of Te Hawera.—

The rude little chapel of this people, being the last house built, had been erected on much higher grounds, at some little distance from their huts (and close to the present "*graves*"). There, although at least three feet higher, the ground had also been flooded.—

In time of floods the inhabitants used to escape to a high terrace on the edges of the forest a little beyond their chapel; where, indeed, they were safe, but quite cut off from all human aid.—

With hopes of alleviating their sad situation some of the party made a cultivation and erected houses on the river's bank at Pahiatua; from this, however, they were also driven by the floods, when they made another attempt upon a steep hill not far off.


At this last mentioned place my (then) principal N. Teacher from Ahuriri found a few of them with their chief, on a visit he made to Te Hawera, when, and only with great difficulty, he got so far as this place, but could not go any further....

Māori, like many indigenous peoples, were decimated by illnesses brought by colonisers, and though it is not entirely clear what destroyed this small community, it seems certain that pulmonary tuberculosis was at least partly to blame. But what were “Fever, both intermittent and Rheumatic”? The word “rheumatism” was used for almost any musculoskeletal pain, but was “Rheumatic fever” used more specifically in 1847?

Sydenham described chorea in 1686. Rheumatism was associated with carditis in 1812. Sore throat was recognized as a precursor to rheumatic fever only in 1880, scarlet fever in the early 1900s, and it was not until 1944 that Jones compiled his criteria for the diagnosis of rheumatic fever.

Did Colenso’s reference to “fever... rheumatic” have the same meaning as “rheumatic fever” would now? were the Ngatitaiaroa all but wiped out as a consequence of that peculiarly Māori susceptibility?

1. “Te Hawera” = modern Hamua, on the Woodville-Masterton highway, north of Ekatahuna. The name “Hawera” is still preserved in the district.
2. “Ihuraua” Stream flows past Alfredton, 16 miles by road east of Ekatahuna. Colenso never visited the village.
3. “Te Kaikokirikiri” = Modern Masterton: the village site is on what is now the Masterton golf course.
4. “Ngawapurua” is located on the north bank of the Manawatu River immediately to the east of the junction with the Mangatainoka (of Tui Beer fame).
5. “Ahuriri” = Napier.



GEORGE ROBERTSON.
 THE PEOPLE'S CLOTHIER AND MEROB
 (LATE HASTINGS-STREET), NAPIER,
HAS REMOVED TO MORE SUITABLE
PREMISES IN EMERSON-STREET,
 NEXT TO BLACK BROS. PAINTERS,
 WHERE HE WILL BE GLAD TO MEET OLD FRIENDS AND ATTEND TO THE
 WANTS IN THE WAY OF CLOTHING, &c.
 FOOTBALL JERSEYS (CLUB COLORS) IN STOCK AND MADE TO ORDER
 PRICES TO SUIT ALL.
TAILOR-MADE SUITS, FROM £2 10s.
 Note the Address—EMERSON-STREET, NEXT BLACK BROS.'

A BRIGHT SCHOLAR

There is a series of letters in Puke Ariki museum in New Plymouth from William Colenso to a girl named Ethel Florance.¹ On Saturday night 18 November 1893 he wrote to her from Napier,

Dear Ethel,

For several days I have been thinking much on you and on Woodville, and now I have determined to write you a little letter, that you and your brother may know—I have not forgotten you.—

Perhaps you may wish to know, why I should be thinking on you, and on Woodville: and I will tell you. It was on this same Saturday in last year, 1892, that I was at Woodville for the last time,—and, I think I said something in my last letter to you, written in September, about this month of November,—and, early last week, I wrote to Norsewood and to Dannevirke, saying, I should be there this week, and stay at Dannevirke tomorrow and, perhaps, go on to Woodville next week: but on last Sunday, 12th., I was taken very unwell, and so on Monday, that I could not commence my long journey on Tuesday, and then the heavy rain beginning (which has continued ever since), caused me to put off my intended visit to the Bush until the first week in December, when I hope to do so.—

And now, dear Ethel, you know some of my reasons for having you and Woodville in mind. But I have another reason, I have lately heard, that the children at Woodville were suffering from Diphtheria, and so I thought on you, and your brother, who, when you last wrote to me, was laid up with Measles: I hope, however, you are both well and happy, and getting on nicely at School.—

I suppose you have been having plenty of rain at Woodville: I do not know if fruit is early there, but here, they have Strawberries and Red Currants and Apricots in the fruit-shops, and, today, hot-house Grapes, very fine but very dear, 4s/6d per pound. I suppose you have plenty of fruit in your Father's garden, I hope so, for your and your brother's sake.—

If you are quite well, and have any spare time, between next week and the first day of December, I should like for you to write a letter to me: perhaps you have long ago found out the answer, or the meaning of what I wrote to you about the sun.

If I may be able to go to Dannevirke in December, as I have mentioned, I shall also try to go on to Woodville, and if I cannot do this, then I will write to you again.

Give my love to your brother, and my kind regards to your Parents, and with a full share of love to you:

I am, Dear Ethel,

Yours sincerely,

W. Colenso.

In 1888 (I can find no earlier reference) Ethel's father R. Stone Florance was a Wood-

ville solicitor and Church of England vestryman. Colenso would have known him on his church locums there. In 1898 he was appointed as Stipendiary Magistrate at the Chatham Islands. In 1904 he became S.M. to the Bay of Islands, and in 1912 became District Land Registrar at Gisborne, also assisting in magisterial work. In 1918 he retired from the East Coast judicial circuit. Ethel must have been about 12 years old in 1897.

On 10 June 1897 Colenso wrote again to Ethel & Edgar Florance,

Dear E & E

This was set apart in mind for you when you last kindly called on me! please accept with much love my first writing note (!!) & in pain & w. difficulty yours always
*W. Colenso.*²

The note is accompanied by a specimen of Acacia, labelled, “Note the *two different growths* of the flowers in these 2 species of *Acacia*:—one, *A. armata*, a single head of flowers, rising from the axil of a kind of curious appressed & wrinkled leaf. A pretty shrub.”

On 5 December 1897 Colenso wrote to Harding

*I went to town last week (by trap as usual) to call on Mrs Florance & daughter Ethel at Criterion (Ethel, here examn. Scholarship)....*³

...and then on 21 December 1897 to Ethel again,

Dear Ethel

My hopes my wishes have been accomplished! and you—my dear young friend, are again at the head of the List. I congratulate you most sincerely; even as I had the pleasure of doing on that former & similar occasion at Woodville. More I cannot say at present—my heart & mind are full. Excuse this hastily written note. Kindest regards to all with you at Home, I send with the evening paper, just now to hand. And a treble lot of xxxxxx — — — which you must get Edgar to multiply by 450!—or “666.”

Believe me ever

Yours sincerely

W. Colenso.

This letter carries an undated annotation by “E.J.M.” (Ethel J Moffat née Florance),

“This congratulatory note was written to me just after I had topped the list of candidates for the Scholarship examination in Hawke’s Bay. At that time there were no free places at secondary schools—Parents had to pay for their children’s education. High Schools were “run” by a board of Governors. I won a £50 a year scholarship bursary to the Napier High School & a gold medal. The previous year I was Dux of the Woodville day School.

“I do not hand over these letters of Mr. Colenso’s—nor yet my notes on them—from self-aggrandisement—but to give you an insight into the character of my old friend that was not generally known to the public. I was grieved that Miss Matthews, the Principal of my school, slighted him in any way. It wasn’t until years after-

wards I learnt why & I felt it was mean to treat an old man that has paid the price for a lapse in early life & altho' he was completely deprived of home & family life for the rest of his life, his Bishop gave him absolution & he was once more established in favour & Church life & loved & respected by many. He always predicted great things for me but at the end of two years my health gave way & on my return to my home at the Islands my Mother's health was such that I had to remain with her & thereafter became her mainstay & could only lead a domestic life.—

"I am getting old—am nearly blind & in poor health—have to give up my nice home & lovely garden & retire somewhere I can be looked after—I cannot bring myself to destroy things I've treasured for years & am trying to sort out photographs, books etc, & send them where they, I hope, will be of interest, as my young folk don't seem interested in things gone by. They live in the present & look in their way, to the future. E.J.M."

On 13 November 1898 (by now her parents were in the Chathams) he was visiting her at secondary school, and wrote,

Dear Ethel

I have been thinking on you very much of late, owing to the information I received from Miss Matthews concerning you, when I called at the High School last Thursday, I trust however you are recovering surely, and will soon be again well.—⁴

I did think of calling at the High School tomorrow, or Tuesday, but on second thoughts I will put off my doing so until Thursday afternoon—when I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you well. I trust you are bearing your seclusion cheerfully.—

With kind regards,—

I am, yours sincerely,

W. Colenso.

But his tone changed—on 20 January 1899 he wrote from Waipukurau,

My dear Ethel

(I trust you will fully forgive me, If, in addressing you again in my old old way before you ever left your parental Home at Woodville, I have done so too freely: this, too, it may be, my last open & friendly note to you.) Your very kind letter to me—from your own true self, as always of old,—from Christchurch dated Decr. 28, duly reached me, & I thanked you heartily for it. I fancied I followed you, from Jany. 1st., looking on the map, & calculating your daily progress, & not forgetting you in my prayers: looking, also, at the photo. your Brother sent me, of their House & dog, & themselves (3), & fancying your reception! And I leave you to guess—how delighted I was, to find in Edgar's letter to me of your safe arrival; I must quote your dear Brother's words:— "Ethel arrived safely & got here on Tuesday, a little bit shaky from her voyage, but is now as lively as a cricket.... My pony Zoe knew Ethel again, and Jock the dog made friends directly."—(There is no date to this concluding part of Edgar's letter—the beginning was written on "19th. December".) There has been a Mail to the Chathams since, but I (or we, at Napier) only knew of it on the day before the Mail was to be made up at Lyttleton, so I had no chance of writing to you (all): and so, again, this last or presently leaving Mail, only a few hours notice given here.

I know well you must have enjoyed your visit—I trust you will be able to come away trusting GOD for a future happy meeting: I can can however just fancy one item of sadness, your dear Mother not enjoying good health, (as per both your Father's & brother's letters) but she may have recovered before you leave. I see by Dr. Sidey's advertisement in paper today, that your School re-opens on 7th. Feby., so, I suppose you may have but a short stay at Christchurch, and so I write you this note to greet you on your arrival.

I thank you for sending me my scrapnote to you of Decr. 5th.—to show me my little mistake as to my having, also, informed you of my visit to the H. Sch. on Monday, if I failed to do so on the Thursday; so far you were quite right, dear Ethel; but I am certain I told Miss Matthews, that, if (owing to weather on that wet week) I did not visit on Thursday, I should on the Monday, for I recalled well why I did not say, on the next day—Friday: because Miss Matthews had told me, that the Friday was a non-visiting day. I am sorry, very sorry, my dear young friend, that I consider myself obliged, driven, to hold to my determination—not to visit you again at the H. Sch., unless in case of serious illness, which, GOD grant, may never occur. I can not write any more, at present, on this distressing, distasteful subject. I write early to you at XChurch, hoping you may have time to write to me openly & fully, as of old.

I came hither on the 12th.—to go to Ormondville to take the Ch. Service for Mr. Wills, who is gone to Nelson: I went there on Saturday 14th., staid at Vicarage, was very kindly received by Mrs. W. who is a nice lady, and a specially clever painter in water colours, both of landscapes, and our indigenous Maori flowers—she has two albums filled with them while her lovely N.Z. sketches, in frames & glazed, decorate all her rooms: I am sure you would be delighted to see them: the Sunday unfortunately was a rainy day, yet I managed to hold the two Ch. Services; returning hither on the Monday: on Tuesday I went over to Waipawa, & shall go back to Napier tomorrow—Saturday.

Edgar—dear loving fellow! (bearing in mind our old loving meetings—all 3 of us!) says, “Won't Ethel have such a lot to tell you, when you meet.” Alas! when may that be?

Yesterday I had a long letter from Mr. Burnett—he had been very ill laid up some weeks with sciatica, obliged, at last, to go to Nelson to the salt water baths there, and is now returned to Woodville: Mrs Burnett had gone to Nelson. Mr. Eccles, too, had been very ill, so that Mr. Bolton took Church Services. Should you come to Woodville on your way back, which I don't expect, you may see some of your old friends there. Good bye, dear Ethel, so kind to me—in my distress. May our Heavenly Father ever preserve you.

With kind regards, Yours sincerely

12 x 12 = 144. W. Colenso

P.S. I haven't your exact address here with me—it was in your former letter: I hope this may find you.

P.S. Please remember me very kindly to your dear aged Grandmother.⁵

On 27 January 1899 John Anderson, Colenso's manservant, wrote to Ethel,

Miss Ethel Florance,

Sitting by Mr Colenso's bedside, I write you a few lines to let you know he is unable to write, having been seriously ill, but he is now a little better, with hopes of amendment. He cannot write at present, nor indeed read.

This is written to let you know that he has been so very unwell, and that is the reason why he did not write sooner, as he promised he would do, in his note to you from Waipukurau.

*He hopes you left your father, mother & brother, all well, at the Chathams.
With kindest regards*

For the Revd. W. Colenso,

John Anderson.

Mrs Anderson found Colenso dead 14 days later, on 10 February 1899.

In the spring of 1914 Ethel, by now perhaps 29 years old, married Arthur Moffatt, Vicar of Tapanui, ("Moffatt-Florance", Poverty Bay Herald 30 September 1914, p.3).

References

1. Puke Ariki, New Plymouth, accession number ARC2005-335.
2. The writing is uncharacteristically uneven and shaky after Colenso's fall.
3. ATL qMS-0499.
4. Annotated, "I was in quarantine with Measles!"
5. This is the last surviving letter from Colenso.



