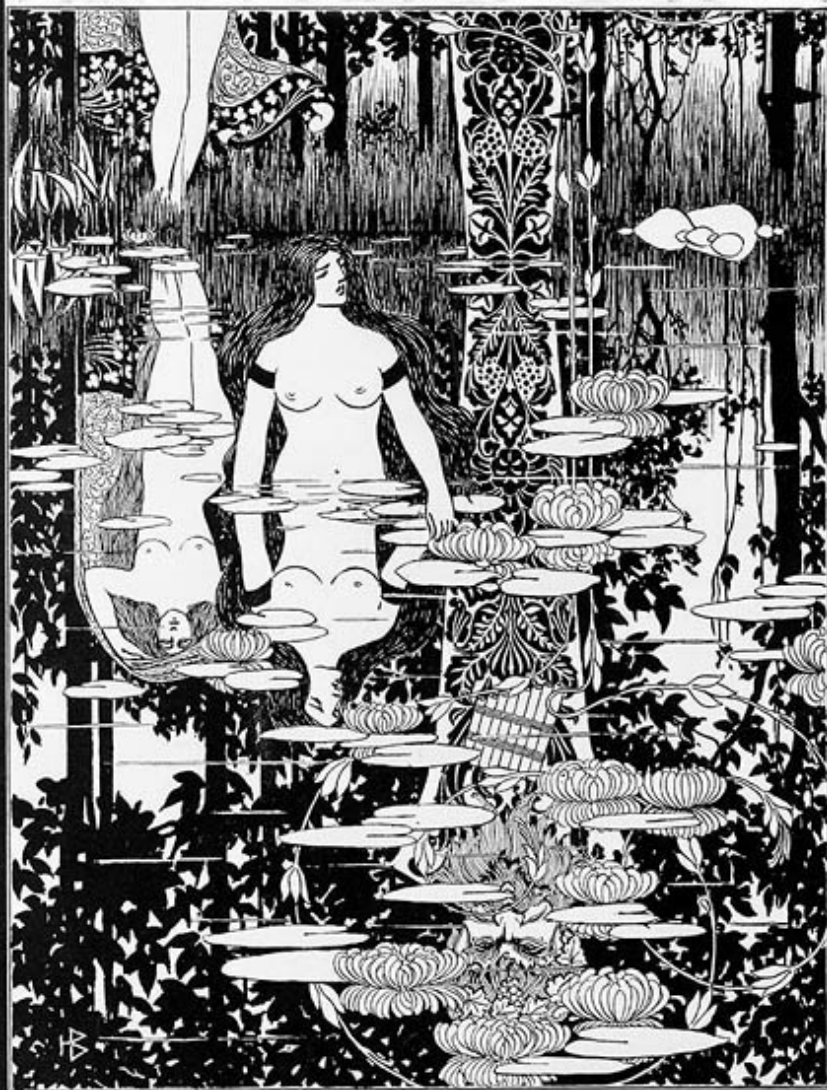


COLENZO



FROM NATURE, 18 AUGUST 1898

COLENSO'S MAORI DICTIONARY.

A Maori English Lexicon. By the Rev. W. Colenso. (Wellington, 1898.)

MR. COLENSO'S Maori English Lexicon, being, as stated on the title-page, a comprehensive dictionary of the New Zealand tongue, including mythical, mythological, "taboo" or sacred, genealogical, proverbial, poetical, tropological, sacerdotal, incantatory, natural history, idiomatic, abbreviated, tribal and other names and terms of and allusions to persons, things, acts, and places in ancient times, also showing their affinities with cognate Polynesian dialects and foreign languages, with copious pure Maori examples, has a sad history to tell. To begin with, it is only a first instalment, going no further than *Anguta* in the Maori English part, and *to come* in the English Maori part; nor does it seem settled even now that Mr. Colenso will be able to finish the publication of it. That such a lexicon ought to have been published by the New Zealand Government long ago, admits of no gainsaying. It is a work practically useful to the whole Colony, and who is to publish such a work if the Government declines to do so? As far back as 1861 the Rev. W. Colenso made his first proposal to the House of Representatives. His motion, he tells us, was favourably received, and the resolution was passed, "That the House considers it highly desirable that a sum of money be devoted for the purpose of commencing a Standard Library Dictionary of the Maori Language." But there followed the ominous sentence, "as soon as the finances of the Colony will permit." A new application was made in 1862, when the finances seemed to be in a flourishing state, but without results. Then came the war in 1863, and nothing was done. The Governor, Sir George Grey, took an active interest in the matter; but in spite of that, nothing was done in 1864. At last, in 1865, an estimate was asked for, and Mr. Colenso stated that the time required would be seven years, and the expense would be 300*l.* per annum. In 1865 the House once more decided that it is highly desirable that the Maori dictionary should be commenced forthwith. Mr. Colenso then devoted himself entirely to this work, shutting himself up, as he says, fourteen and even sixteen hours a day. He gave up his official duties and his useful natural history studies, which had made his name familiar to students at home. He received, however, but scant recognition from the Government, and in 1867 it seems that an official inquiry was called for by the House, and another gentleman was appointed to inspect and report. The report was favourable, and so were some other reports in 1868. But the House seems to have grown impatient. Mr. Colenso was informed that the work must be finished by 1870, and that no more money should be paid after that date. After that, the relations between the Government and the compiler of the dictionary seem to have become strained. Unfortunately illness supervened, possibly aggravated by disappointment, for Mr. Colenso speaks of "having been goaded on to desperation almost through the remarks made in the House and the bad faith of the Government." In 1870 Mr. Colenso entered the Provincial Council again, and was appointed Inspector of Schools, so that he could devote his spare time only to the prosecution of his literary labours. A last appeal was made by Mr. Colenso in 1875, offering to hand over his materials to Government, or to go on again with his work if the

Government would grant the necessary funds. To this, we are informed, no answer was returned, but transactions went on, more or less unsatisfactory, till at last the first instalment of the dictionary was sent to press, and published in 1898!

This certainly seems a sad history, and, considering Mr. Colenso's age, we can hardly hope that he will be allowed to finish this great undertaking. In the meantime two Maori dictionaries have been published by Williams and by Tregear, but on a smaller scale; so that Mr. Colenso's work may still be very useful as filling many a gap left by his predecessors. It is difficult for an outsider to form an opinion as to the rights of the case. Scholars are sometimes dilatory, and Governments are sometimes stingy, and that on the highest principles. Personal feuds, too, are difficult to avoid when different parties divide the Government, and patronage is put into the hands of whatever party is in power.

The loss to science, particularly to linguistic studies, is very great, for by his long residence among the Maoris Mr. Colenso seemed highly qualified for the work which

he had undertaken, and which, under more favourable auspices, he might have finished by this time. On comparing some of the entries, even in this small fragment we come across several which are most interesting. It is well known that the Maoris call their gods *Atuas*. But the question is, why? It seems at first sight as if *Atua* was derived from *atu*, a particle expressive of many things. Mr. Colenso enumerates thirty-three meanings of it, one of which is an emphatic *very*, used also to form superlatives and to express extraordinary greatness, or anything that goes beyond everything else. *Atua* may have been derived from it, though it seems to convey not so much the idea of exceeding greatness as of being terrible. Hence it is used as a name of any supernatural and malevolent being, a demon, and also of their gods, many of whom were more or less malevolent. The most dreaded and powerful *Atuas* were *Tu*, *Rongo*, *Tane*, *Tangaroa*, *Tawhiri matea*, and *Whiro*, four of whom appear again as the gods of Hawaii, viz. *Tu*, *Lono* (Rongo), *Kane* (Tane), and *Kanaloa* (Tangaroa). All of these, though invoked, were hated and often threatened by their worshippers. Idols also are called *atua*, and a number of imaginary invisible evil powers, genii, spooks and gnomes, go by the same name. *Atua* is applied also to sickness, pain and death, as personified, in fact, to anything abnormal and monstrous, disgusting and disagreeable. Natives who never touch pork, eels, or even mutton, call them also *atua*; in fact, anything uncanny or unlucky is *atua*. It was unfortunate that the same word should have been taken by the missionaries as the name of the Deity, the one true God, the God of the Christians. This to the natives sounded at first like a solecism, but in the course of time it has lost its original meaning, and serves its purpose now as the name of the God of Love. Mr. Colenso would prefer *Matua*, *Matua-pai* for that purpose, though *Matua* itself is but a derivative of *Atua*.

One remark we should like to make in conclusion. Mr. Colenso generally adds Maori sentences in proof of the meaning assigned to each Maori word. But, alas! he gives no translations; and as the study of Maori has not yet been recognised in our schools and universities, much of the usefulness of these *prices justificatives* is lost on those who consult his dictionary, however convinced they may feel that Mr. Colenso has rightly interpreted them.



TE RUAHINE

Photographs by Thomas Robertson, taken 28 July 12, sent in by Tony Gates



Above: the view north from near Te Atu Mahuru, with the Ruahine Range on the right and the slopes of Remutopo on the left. Remutopo Stream catchment is in the centre, flowing NW to Lake Colenso and Colenso Hut, and Rangiwahakamataku peak is the craggy knob in the centre.

14 December 1848

Rising early we left Ngaroto in the cold & dense fogs of the morning, and soon gained the summit, where, however, we durst not halt, the keen cutting South wind and driving fog being so very cold. Curiously enough, my dog started a couple of English rats (killing one), from their warm dormitory on the very topmost ridge of the range,—a sad proof of the extent to which the whole country is now overrun with them, hence the total destruction of the numerous Gallinaceous birds with which the grassy plains and fern-brakes of this Country once abounded, and the present death-like silence of the forests. We travelled steadily on during the whole day till near dark when we halted in the bed of the R. Makoro, & not far from its mouth.



Above: the spectacular Remutopo Peak, on Te Papakiakuuta Ridge from near Te Atu Mahuru (Ruapehu in the left distance). William Colenso admired this large and gaunt piece of the Ruahines on many occasions, then climbed somewhere up its slopes with his dog on his final Ruahine journey in 1852. His Ngaroto camp is in the bush just to the left (south) of the left side of the photograph. He became extremely thirsty on Te Papakia Kuutaa, with his only water source from a muddy tarn that his dog had first splashed in. He squeezed the foul mix through his handkerchief for his water.

Te Papakia Kuutaa “Barrier of the Defender God of the Interior”

By and by I proceeded, but before I got onto the open and clear table land of the top, the sun went down and it soon became near dark. Still, the travelling was pretty good there on those flat tops, only now and then stumbling, through haste and hunger, over low tussocks and mounds and boulder stones. It grew still darker, and the place was fast becoming enveloped in night clouds, when suddenly, a dark form appeared just before me, and my dog barked and stood. It was my trusty native, who, having become alarmed at my nonappearance and long absence, had left the encampment in quest of me.

William Colenso 1852

PAIN AND PUNISHMENT, SICKNESS AND SIN

There is a deeply ingrained belief in many cultures that sickness and death are caused by intemperate, immoral or evil behaviour (today we blame pleasures like food, alcohol, tobacco, coffee, cellphones, sunshine, chocolate, salt, sexuality and so on, despite, in many cases, evidence to the contrary). Tell a person they have a fatal disease, and they will say, “Why me? I’ve led a decent life. I haven’t done anything wrong! Why me?”

Māoritanga has similar traditions.

William and Elizabeth Colenso appeared to exploit the temporal associations between those two common occurrences, sin and death, implying a causal link and so necessarily indulging in victim-blaming: in 1847 Colenso’s journal has this...

22 June.... During our reading a fine child was accidentally burnt; I dressed his burns which were merely superficial as well as I could....

3 July.... This evening, at dusk, Naaman (the poor little child who was slightly burnt at Warerangi on the 22nd. ult.,) was brought for me to see and prescribe for. I was not a little surprised to see the Child brought, as its burn was so very superficial, though large, that I scarcely thought anything of it—and more so to hear his foster-parents say, “he is very bad—the stench is dreadful, &c.” On examining the little fellow, oh! how sadly he was altered! from a very fine child, fat & healthy, to a thin and weakly-looking object. We undid the cloths of its leg and thigh, & found it to be in a mortifying state, no doubt caused by gross neglect, coupled with the wet state of the weather, which obliged the Natives to remain day and night within their huts by the side of their fires. We dressed its wounds, and gave it food, and desired the persons who brought it to bring it again early in the morning.

4. LORD’S-day. This morning early the child was again brought, and Mrs. Colenso remained at home to attend to it.

6. In dressing and attending to Naaman this morning, it was very evident to us that the hand of death was upon him. After dressing his wounds I had just gone over to the study, and was occupied with Leonard, my N(ative) Teacher, and Daniel, from Warerangi, who had just arrived express having some what important to communicate, when Mrs. Colenso called out, the Child is dead! We hastened back to the house, and found the poor little thing breathing its last. His foster-parents (Baptized) exclaimed, to the Natives who had come up, that Naaman had been killed with the medicine which we had given it! (Mrs. Colenso had just given it a spoonful of wine,) and, repeating the same words two or three times hurried off with the Child. Thus are we repaid! We may yet, however, have some trouble to undergo upon this child’s account. The story which Daniel had to relate was a very sad one—the adultery of Paul Kaiwata (the N. Teacher at Warerangi) with Charlotte Tawī, an interesting young Communicant of the same place, & nearly related to him. Paul is, also, a married

man, and his crime is increased by his saying, "that the religion which he professed would not keep him from either taking 2 wives, or absconding with Charlotte to the woods." The Crime took place some time back, and was only now brought to light through Paul's beating Charlotte severely for playing and gallanting with the White Trader residing at Ahuriri. Upon reflection I thought it rather strange, that just as Daniel commenced his saddening relation, Mrs. Colenso interrupted us with her startling exclamation; Paul being closely related to this child, (who was also burnt while I was engaged with the Baptized Natives of Warerangi in reading the New Testament,) and uncle to Naomi who died on Sunday last. Alas! how common are such and similar crimes—scarcely a day—never, I believe, a week, without something of the kind.

What Elizabeth Colenso was suggesting here, and Colenso himself apparently affirming (despite earlier attributing it to "gross neglect"), is that the lapse into immorality of Paul had led to God's retribution in the death of his niece and, after a superficial burn, a child from his own village. Again,

Te Paea ... informed me of the death of his newly-born child; upon which I reminded him of his shameful adultery, a few months back, with a near and newly-married relative of his....

It is a theme often repeated in Colenso's journals, perhaps most forcefully after the death by drowning of the great Chief Tiakitai and his crew.

...we heard of the loss of Tiakitai, his Son, and his party, 21 in number! who were on their way to Poverty Bay, in a large boat, to carry out his Heathen plans; and which voyage (on account of its object,) I had often protested & preached against.... It is somewhat remarkable, that all the Male Papist Heathens of Tiakitai's village were on board; and, among the rest, that miserable white man, to whom Tiakitai sold a woman (shortly after our arrival here,) and whose cause he embraced to the end, in preference to the truth....

Early this morning the young Chief, Takamoana, his party and boat (who had sailed hence in company with Tiakitai's boat) returned from Te Wairoa, confirming the sad news. Takamoana spent an hour with me in my Study; he is very much cast down (in fact, his own life was saved almost by miracle), but acknowledged that Tiakitai deserved his fate—which is, also, generally allowed by the Natives. May GOD bless this awful visitation to the Chiefs, who are all hardened Heathens!

And again (*Journal* 10 March 1849).

*Among those who brought their children for Baptism was Isaiah Tamaera from Te Rotoatara. This is the wizard with whom I conversed here 15 months ago,(see, *Journal*, Nov. 26/47,) and refused then to Baptize his child; since which (about 2 months ago) he had lost 2 of his 3 children in one day!—Both of whom suddenly died through eating the poisonous seeds of the fruit of the Tutu (*Coriaria sarmentosa*). I again questioned him as to his views, &c., and he now expressed his great willingness to abandon such practices for ever; acknowledging, that it was through his great wickedness he had lost his children, &c. He appeared now to be much humbled, and what he said was very suitable and affecting.*

The wages
of Sin is
death





Report by Donelle McKinley

Colenso Bibliography

The first priority for The Colenso Project is a comprehensive bibliography of all William Colenso holdings. While work is ongoing, almost 1900 records have been created to date, and these will soon be available online at <http://www.williamcolenso.co.nz>.

There are several options for format and display, which are presented below. We welcome your feedback on the options you feel would be most useful for readers and researchers, and invite you to complete a brief survey here:

<http://bit.ly/colenso-bibliography>

Bibliographic citations (see Fig.1)

Organized into categories (biographies, journals, news items, private letters, public letters, ephemera, writings about Colenso etc) and/or presented in its entirety alphabetically.

Available as plain text (.rtf), HTML and/or PDF

Citation style options: APA, Chicago, Harvard, MLA

Reports (see Fig. 2)

PDF and/or HTML reports of the bibliographic records. We can select which fields to display, and the order in which they appear.

Separate reports that reflect categories and/or a combined PDF of all records.

Private letters - Letters to Colenso

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Figure 1 Categorized bibliography (PDF)

Collection of letters in Maori to William Colenso, ca. 1840

Author Not specified
Abstract Collection of letters in Maori. Transcribed and translated at St Johns College Auckland under charge of Tahu Kukutai in the 1990s.
Date c. 1840
URL <http://acms.slnsw.gov.au/item/itemDetailPaged.aspx?itemID=889670>
Accessed Wed Feb 22 11:18:52 2012
Library Catalog State Library of New South Wales, Mitchell Library
Call Number MLMSS 137
Rights <http://www.slnsw.gov.au/siteinfo/copyright.html>
Extra On microfilm. CY 3470 Copies were transcribed and translated at St Johns College Auckland under charge of Tahu Kukutai in the 1990s. Contact Jenny Te Kaa - Tikanga Maori Dean.

Hill, Henry Thomas, 1849-1933 : Letters from various correspondents

Author William Colenso
Author Henry Thomas Hill
Author Richard (Sir) Owen
Author John Philip (Rev) Gell
Author Richard Watt
Author Geoffrey Swarbrick
Author William Young Dennett
Abstract Comprises two collections of letters largely on topics of history and natural history (1) to William Colenso from Richard Owen and J P Gell (1843) and Richard Watt to Colenso (1837); and to Hill from B [?] Caxton re a plant (1927), Geoffrey Swarbrick re moas (1930-1931) and W Y Dennett re burial of Kereopa who was hung in Napier and buried at Taradale ca 1879.
Date 1837-1931
Short Title Hill, Henry Thomas, 1849-1933
URL <http://beta.natlib.govt.nz/records/22644661>
Accessed Sat Feb 11 16:53:39 2012
Library Catalog Alexander Turnbull Library
Call Number MS-Papers-0004
Rights Not restricted
Extra Donor/vendor - Presented in 1959 by the daughters of Henry Hill. Source of Title - Supplied. Quantity: 0.01 linear metres. 1 folder(s) (7 pieces). Physical Description: Mss . Finding Aids: Piece-level inventory available.

Letter from Hori Niania to Sir Donald McLean

Figure 2 PDF report of categorized bibliography (selected fields, default order)

CONFESSIONS OF A TRANSCRIBER OF PRIVATE LETTERS

The Rev. William Colenso was a diligent correspondent all his life, of which the last fifty years are well represented among his surviving private and public letters [1]. He wrote to his friend JD Hooker in 1897 [2],

I have been and am very busy, mostly in the writing way - letters, public & private; as I keep a tally of my scrawls - much like Crusoe his days on the desolate island - I find, I have written from Augt.1, to Decr.31st, - 427 letters, some very long.

and to Lady Hyacinth Hooker in 1898 [3],

I am still very busy, daily at it, mostly writing letters...

He reckoned that in 1895 he wrote 837 letters, in 1896, 859 [4] and in 1898, 1081 [5] letters. Even on the eve of his death, as his friend Coupland Harding told JD Hooker, "he had been busy with many affairs - dictating answers to some of the letters that were accumulating, &c., and had methodically arranged his plans for the morrow [6]."

We published his private letters to Allan Cunningham, WJ Hooker and JD Hooker in *Colenso's collections*, 2009, and many of his public letters in *Give your thoughts life* (2011). I have, with a little help from my friends, just finished transcribing all that appear to remain of his private letters.

"And I have the slightly clammy feeling of biography, the sense of living on the edges of other people's lives without their permission."

—Edmund de Waal, *The hare with amber eyes*, Vintage, 2011, p346.

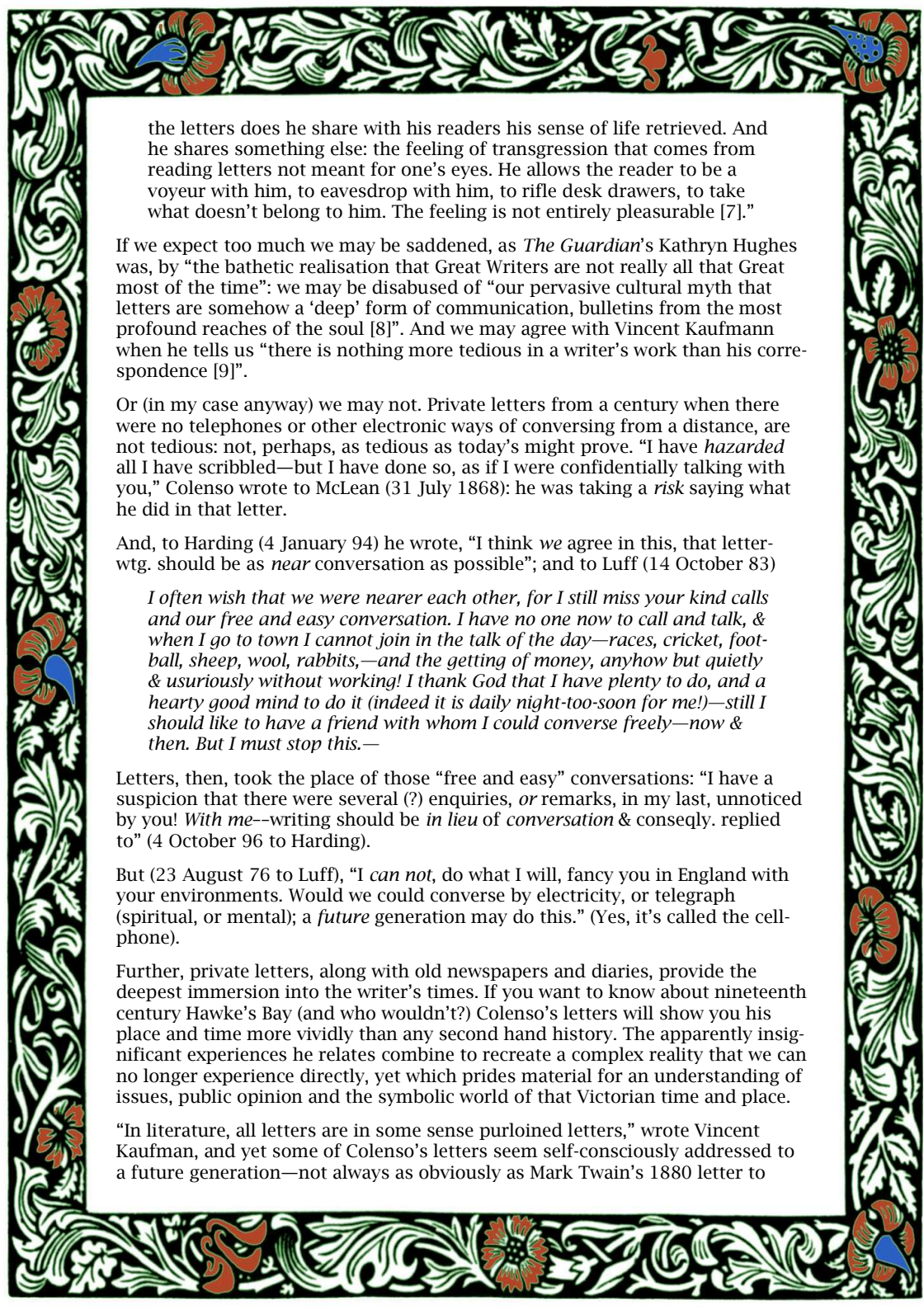
That sense is intensified if one *transcribes* the private letters of another. Rewriting takes one beyond the edge of eavesdropping, of peeping tommy, and into a powerfully intrusive experience of what it was like actually to *be* your man.

Private letters

What can we learn from collections of private letters? will we discover new facts to flesh out our knowledge of the life we are studying? Are private letters somehow a window on the psyche with an analytic glass to guide us to a clearer view of the character and personality of the writer?

Or do we just enjoy eavesdropping on the private communications between two others? That certainly, but perhaps more than that: Janet Malcolm wrote,

"Letters are the great fixative of experience. Time erodes feeling. Time creates indifference. Letters prove to us that we once cared. They are the fossils of feeling. This is why biographers prize them so: they are biography's only conduit to unmediated experience. Everything else the biographer touches is stale, hashed over, told and retold, dubious, unauthentic, suspect. Only when he reads a subject's letters does the biographer feel he has come fully into his presence, and only when he quotes from



the letters does he share with his readers his sense of life retrieved. And he shares something else: the feeling of transgression that comes from reading letters not meant for one's eyes. He allows the reader to be a voyeur with him, to eavesdrop with him, to rifle desk drawers, to take what doesn't belong to him. The feeling is not entirely pleasurable [7]."

If we expect too much we may be saddened, as *The Guardian's* Kathryn Hughes was, by "the bathetic realisation that Great Writers are not really all that Great most of the time": we may be disabused of "our pervasive cultural myth that letters are somehow a 'deep' form of communication, bulletins from the most profound reaches of the soul [8]". And we may agree with Vincent Kaufmann when he tells us "there is nothing more tedious in a writer's work than his correspondence [9]".

Or (in my case anyway) we may not. Private letters from a century when there were no telephones or other electronic ways of conversing from a distance, are not tedious: not, perhaps, as tedious as today's might prove. "I have *hazarded* all I have scribbled—but I have done so, as if I were confidentially talking with you," Colenso wrote to McLean (31 July 1868): he was taking a *risk* saying what he did in that letter.

And, to Harding (4 January 94) he wrote, "I think we agree in this, that letter-wtg. should be as *near* conversation as possible"; and to Luff (14 October 83)

I often wish that we were nearer each other, for I still miss your kind calls and our free and easy conversation. I have no one now to call and talk, & when I go to town I cannot join in the talk of the day—races, cricket, football, sheep, wool, rabbits,—and the getting of money, anyhow but quietly & usuriously without working! I thank God that I have plenty to do, and a hearty good mind to do it (indeed it is daily night-too-soon for me!)—still I should like to have a friend with whom I could converse freely—now & then. But I must stop this.—

Letters, then, took the place of those "free and easy" conversations: "I have a suspicion that there were several (?) enquiries, *or* remarks, in my last, unnoticed by you! *With me*—writing should be *in lieu* of *conversation* & conseqly. replied to" (4 October 96 to Harding).

But (23 August 76 to Luff), "I *can not*, do what I will, fancy you in England with your environments. Would we could converse by electricity, or telegraph (spiritual, or mental); a *future* generation may do this." (Yes, it's called the cell-phone).

Further, private letters, along with old newspapers and diaries, provide the deepest immersion into the writer's times. If you want to know about nineteenth century Hawke's Bay (and who wouldn't?) Colenso's letters will show you his place and time more vividly than any second hand history. The apparently insignificant experiences he relates combine to recreate a complex reality that we can no longer experience directly, yet which prides material for an understanding of issues, public opinion and the symbolic world of that Victorian time and place.

"In literature, all letters are in some sense purloined letters," wrote Vincent Kaufman, and yet some of Colenso's letters seem self-consciously addressed to a future generation—not always as obviously as Mark Twain's 1880 letter to

Joseph Twichell (giving news of his baby), when he broke off in midsentence and addressed a reader of 1960:

"...somebody may be reading this letter 80 years hence. And so, my friend (you pitying snob, I mean, who are holding this yellow paper in your hand in 1960,) save yourself the trouble of looking further; I know how pathetically trivial our small concerns will seem to you, and I will not let your eye profane them. No, I keep my news; you keep your compassion. Suffice it you to know, scoffer and ribald, that the little child is old and blind, now, and once more toothless; and the rest of us are shadows, these many, many years. Yes, and your time cometh!"

For the most part Colenso's letters are unselfconscious, ordinary, replies to enquirers or the senders of specimens, purposeful and businesslike. But there are also several groups of protracted correspondence over several years: those to McLean morphing from friendly, generous, to guarded, to suspicious, to formal. Those to David Balfour, John Drummond and Andrew Luff relaxing into easy gossip and a considerable degree of personal revelation--as he wrote to Luff on 13 August 1881, "I trust you will see that I have again written to you in my old free open & friendly style--just as you were here in this room with me, and we were conversing together *as of old*."

None, however, of those letters that have survived, are more gossipy and revealing than those to Coupland Harding over 24 years from 1875 to 1898. They were both printers: they shared a love of print, of books and newspapers, and Colenso's letters are full of items of such mutual interest. He continually updates his young friend, exiled from Napier to Wellington, with the local news and Napier doings. But the letters are full of much more than that. Harding acted not only as a kind of sounding board, but also as a proxy son for the lonely old man on Napier hill--the son he never had: one who shared his profession and his interests.

The letters to Harding are an outlet for Colenso to express his grief, loss, worry, suspicion, grievance, jealousy, remorse--and his joy, childish delight, self-satisfaction, pride, sentimental reflection, gratitude and love.

This correspondence is a *taonga*. It should be recognised as one of the most important collections of letters to have survived from New Zealand's past.

References

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COME AND SEE THE TATTOOED SAILOR

*We came to town to see
that all-tattooed lady.
She was a sight to see,
tattooed from head to knee.*

*On her jaw
was the Royal Flying Corps.
And on her back
was the Union Jack.
How could you ask for more?*

*All up and down her spine
were Queens Hall Guards in line,
And all around her hips
sailed a fleet of battleships.*

*And over her left kidney
was a bird's-eye view of Sydney.
But what we liked best
was that on her chest
was her home in Waikiki.*

—the Kingston Trio, c. 1960.

Tattooed women aside, being tattooed was evidence of the acculturation of European *men* to Polynesian ways from the earliest ship visits. And tattooed men, ever exhibitionists, became, at the extreme, circus attractions in themselves. In The Alexander Turnbull Library is a Bagnall typescript of a Colenso letter to the *Hawke's Bay Weekly Courier* of 1 October 1886, written in response to an article on a heavily tattooed man named George Bruce that had appeared in the *Herald* of 24 September. The *Herald* article had ended, "Can any of our old colonists throw any light on this old romance? Mr Colenso, perhaps, might be able to do so—mayhap he has *korero'd* with the descendants of Bruce, and broken kumara with his great grandchildren." One WR Edwards had replied. The transcription that follows is from Bagnall's copy; he appears to have abbreviated the original.

Ye Ancient Mariner

Sir,—Having seen in an article in the *Hawke's Bay Herald* of the 24th headed "An Ancient Mariner," and as you wish to be informed a little more about it, I beg to state that I happened to be in Poverty Bay in 1833, and in course of conversation with a Mr Harris, who was acting as Trading Agent for Messrs Monteveere and Co., of Sydney, he told me that he had a man in his employment named Burns (not Bruce) who several times wanted to get himself tattooed and did get tattooed, the result being that Mr Harris sent the man about his business. Some few years afterwards Mr Harris being in England, and passing by a showman's box, he recognised Burns, tattooed all over, acting on the stage. When Mr Harris accosted Burns in the native language Burns felt quite surprised, Mr Harris having said, "Burns, I know you." I am, etc.

William R. Edwards, Te Aute...

Colenso responded...

An Ancient Mariner

Sir,—On reading the short letter of “W.R. Edwards” in your paper of this morning written on your article headed “An Ancient Mariner,” which appeared in the Herald of the 24th—and noticing the errors in the said short letter, (no doubt through ignorance,) and knowing something of the said subject, (having also formerly written upon it,) I have thought it best to write you a few lines by way of correction. Indeed, I had nearly taken up the matter when I first saw your article; but the story, in its entirety, is a long one, and having my time fully occupied prevented me.—

1. Of George Bruce. This young man, a Londoner, arrived in Sydney in 1790; there he entered the Colonial naval service, and was employed for several years in vessels of Survey. Afterwards he was turned over to the “Lady Nelson,” Captain Simmons, a vessel fitted up by the Government to take back Te Pahi... a principal friendly chief of the Ngapuhi tribe, with his five sons and retainers to New Zealand—Bay of Islands; they having been to N.S.W. (Port Jackson) on an express visit to the Governor. On their voyage hither Te Pahi was taken ill, and Bruce was appointed to attend him; this he did so well, that on their arrival at the Bay of Islands, Te Pahi begged Captain Simmons to allow Bruce to remain with him, to which Captain Simmons consented. Bruce was soon adopted into the tribe and fully tattooed, and before long had Te Pahi’s youngest daughter for wife. Not very long after this, (say, about a year,) the ship “General Wellesley,” Capt. Dalrymple, called at N. Zealand, and was helped to a cargo of spars, etc., by Bruce; that, however, resulted in Bruce and his wife being shamefully carried off and much ill-used.... And this took place about the year 1800, or a little later. This account is authentic and shows, that Bruce is not the “Burns,” of your correspondent, W.R.E.
2. Of a tattooed white man named Burns, I remember seeing a man of that name, and partly tattooed by the southern tribes, at Kororareka (now Russell), between the years 1834 and 1838; but then he was not the only white man (pakeha-maori) so marked in those early days.
3. The Englishman, par excellence, who was fully tattooed and exhibited in England, a half a century or more ago, was named John Rutherford. He first served on board of our man-of-war, and spent several years in that and the Merchant Service in the Indian and South Seas. At last, in 1816, he was on board the “Agnes”, an American brig of 6 guns and 14 men; and, on her returning from the Islands, and endeavouring to make the Bay of Islands for supplies the ship was driven off the land by a N.E. gale, and being much in want of water, (and not knowing the coast,) she anchored in Tokomaru Bay; where, after 2 days employed in bartering and watering, she was taken by the Maoris, and nearly all hands murdered;—Rutherford, however, was saved, and in course of time became one of the tribe by marriage, etc., adopting their customs....



At last Rutherford managed to make his escape in an American brig, commanded by Captain Jackson, trading on the E. coast in 1826; and after residing some time in Tahiti, he returned to England in 1828. In 1829 a small book of his adventures was published, and he was exhibited....

Much of his plain unvarnished yet interesting tale I subsequently proved to be correct; even to the visiting some of the spots mentioned by him in his little book. My late deceased friend, Mr Thomas Lowry of Okawa, told me, that he had seen John Rutherford in England.— I am, etc.

William Colenso.



Sarah and Wiremu Colenso with her family in Penzance: he—Billy T James mo', sideburns, pipe in hand, other hand in pocket, kerchief in breast pocket, with his boater, fashionable shirt and spotted cravat, nicely crumpled tweed three-piece suit, the lowest button of his weskit undone, his collar turned up and his side pocket bulging with tobacco paraphernalia—a gentleman of provincial style and ample means. But who is looking where? And who is smiling? Are they “together” in any discernable way?



Wiremu and Sarah's grave in Penzance cemetery—

*Golden lads and girls
all must, as chimney
sweepers, come to
dust....*



WILLIAM COLENZO, BOTANIST-PRINTER

GEORGE WOODS

—by George Woods, scraper board, 1950

George Woods is best known for his graphic, stylised images and is most readily contextualised alongside contemporaries Russell Clark and E. Mervyn Taylor. He recognised nature as the bottom line for artists, commenting: *"I think artists should begin where Nature leaves off"*. His colour linocuts exhibited a strong linear image, and his skills as a draughtsman allowed him to develop a sculptural element. He had an ability to capture form and light through simple lines and use of unbroken colour. This scraper-board print of Colenso as a white-bearded old man enthusing over a native plant shows a keen appreciation of light, reminiscent of a Rembrandt etching. —abstracted, in part, from Wikipedia.

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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 St George (istge@yahoo.co.nz).

The cover is based on that of the July 1894 issue of *Inland Printer*.

