



eColenso

eColenso is the free email publication of the Colenso Society, 32 Hawkestone St, Thorndon, Wellington 6011:
it might be forwarded to interested others. Contributions should be emailed to the editor, Ian St George, istge@yahoo.co.nz.

Part 1: Land shark?

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Land shark?

William Colenso — land speculator

Made destitute by his expulsion from the Anglican ministry in 1862, William Colenso wrote desperately to the Archdeacon begging to be reinstated.

He was not, and so began his alternative career as politician, part-time botanist, school inspector and small-time land speculator.

Colenso's own writings tell us much of his land buying activities. His means were very limited, but he appears to have bought small sections of land around the province during the 1850's. This came to an end in 1868 when he abruptly changed direction.

Colenso wrote to his friend Donald McLean in April that year to say that he had sold all his Hawke's Bay properties, and that he intended to double in land speculation on the Napier Hill. He bought Lots 39-44 and told McLean he intended to set out a street and a terrace along the hilltop nearby.

Lots 39 to 44 comprised a significant block of land, stretching from Faraday street to Milton

Road and from Carlyle Street to halfway up the hill. Colenso had May, Colenso and Hooker avenues laid out, contracted builders Gebley and Thomas to build a house for himself near the top of the hill, and subdivided the rest of the land for resale. Faraday and Tennyson streets were extended to meet the new roads.

Two years later, Colenso successfully bid for several acres in Havelock North. He never sold this property, Section 47 on the Aotea and Middle roads, but instead rented it out as a dog pound.

It was still in Colenso's hands as late as 1891, when he wrote to the Road Board proposing to remove the fences and sell them, as the pound had not been used for some time.

Colenso was also involved with Taradale. It

In this feature, the last in a special holiday series, Napier historian Matthew Wright looks at some of the identities who have helped to shape Hawke's Bay.



junction of Te

has been argued that Colenso was an original owner of land there, which was first advertised by the government in 50 and 70-acre blocks in 1856 and has been generally thought to have been acquired by Henry Alley for farming and urban speculation.

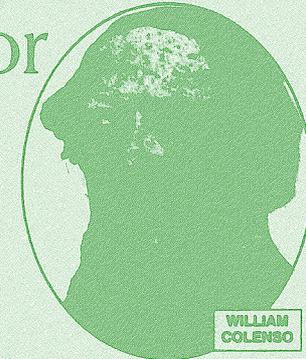
If Colenso did have interests in Taradale in 1856, they presumably had ended by 1858 when

he consolidated his holdings to Napier Hill.

However, Colenso certainly had later interests in Taradale land. When Alley left Hawke's Bay in 1870, Colenso acquired 270 acres of Alley's land for \$1080. Two years later he sold the land outright to R D Maney for \$2970. This was a tidy enough return; but Maney, waiting until the Taradale road was open a few years later, divided the property into residential

blocks and after wooing customers with a champagne lunch, netted up to \$52 for each quarter-acre section.

How far Colenso's land dealings contributed to his income is not clear. It cannot have been more than a supplement because he embarked on a mediocre political career in the 1860s, and later worked as a school inspector. When he



finally retired it was to his modest Milton Terrace house, where passing children going to Central School remembered him as a kindly old man who gave them apples.

Stuart Webster estimated that Colenso's estate was worth over \$6 million in today's money,¹ and Matthew Wright discussed some of his land purchases (see above).²

People have asked me how it is that Colenso preached against land sales by Māori yet ended up a property millionaire: surely this was a great paradox, if not a great hypocrisy?

The explanation lies in the complex history of Māori land sales. Te Ara discusses it and I have quoted freely from that resource.³

Early transactions

Before 1840 commercial arrangements made land available for cut-

ting timber or building wharves and jetties (for instance those of Gordon Browne and his New South Wales colleagues).⁴ Some white settlers married to Māori women arranged with local chiefs to set land aside for their families. There were also many speculator transactions (such as Busby's at Whangarei).⁵

Missionary organisations and individuals entered into various kinds of land transactions with Māori. For example, the Te Rarawa chief Nōpera Pana-kareao arranged with the Church Missionary Society for 1,000 acres to be set aside at Kaitāia for the mission. There were similar arrangements wherever missions were located. In 1873 the *Daily Southern Cross* republished a list of private missionary acquisitions (p.12 herein).⁶

—*The Daily Telegraph*, 20 January 1995.

Investigating pre-Treaty purchases

After the Treaty of Waitangi, the government investigated pre-Treaty purchases. If they met certain requirements, buyers could get a grant from the government giving them legal title to at least some of the land they claimed to have acquired from Māori.

Crown pre-emption

For most of 1840–1865, under the doctrine of Crown pre-emption, only the Crown could buy Māori land. Private individuals could not. This was standard practice in all British colonies, and in New Zealand was set out in Article Two of the Treaty of Waitangi and in section two of the Land Claims Ordinance 1841. It was also intended, at least in part, to protect Māori from private European purchasers.

In this period about two-thirds of the entire land area of New Zealand was bought from Māori, using deeds of sale. The land was then transferred to the provincial governments, for sale and grant to private settlers. Ngāi Tahu of the South Island gave up their very large landed estate to the Crown by a sequence of deeds between 1844 and 1864. Important areas of the northern South Island, Porirua, parts of Hawke's Bay, the Rangitikei region, Auckland and Northland were purchased by deed.

Colonial governors, especially George Grey and Thomas Gore Browne, set Crown policy on these purchases. Donald McLean was head of the Native Land Purchase Office. He persuaded many chiefs to sell land to the government by arguing that Māori would gain economic advantage from British settlement.

Confiscations

The government confiscated substantial areas of Māori land after the New Zealand wars of the early 1860s. In 1863 Premier Alfred Dom-

ett sent a memorandum to Governor George Grey, proposing that Māori in a “state of rebellion” have their lands confiscated as a punishment. At first confiscation was intended to be relatively restricted, but it gradually became more and more elaborate. Land was confiscated both from tribes who had rebelled against the government and from government allies. Military settlers would be placed on confiscated land.

Confiscation in New Zealand has affinities with British practice in other places, particularly 17th-century Ireland and the southern African colonies. Sir William Martin, the former NZ chief justice, published a paper in 1863 in which he argued that the history of Ireland showed “how little is to be effected towards the quieting of a country by the confiscation of private land”. All that resulted was a “brooding sense of wrong”.

Much confiscated land was returned to Māori, although not always to its original owners. The history of each confiscation became very confused and often generated amending legislation, petitions and litigation. In 1869 Donald McLean, by that time Native Minister in the Fox–Vogel government, concluded that the confiscations were nothing but an expensive mistake.

Native Land Court, 1865

The Native Lands Act of 1862 provided for the governor to set up a court consisting of a panel of Māori jurors or assessors presided over by the local resident magistrates. This first act only operated in a few places, mainly Northland, because of the turmoil elsewhere caused by the New Zealand wars. It was replaced by the much more comprehensive 1865 act.

The Acts abolished Crown pre-emption. Māori were now free to sell land to private buyers on the open market, provided that the land had first been investigated by the Native Land Court.

Before 1840: Colenso purchased no land

Colenso was in Paihia 1834–1840, unmarried and working as a printer. He bought no land.

On 24 January 1840 he wrote to the CMS secretaries,

I have kept myself from purchasing Land (having not a single foot of ground) in order that no obstacle should thus arise through me against the Gospel.... Oh! how thankful should I be to the LORD, (though I sometimes feel my poverty,) that HE has kept me from becoming possessed of Land, and, by that means seeking my own welfare before that of my Redeemer, the Society, or the poor New Zealander!⁷

Later, in 1862, he petitioned George Grey, stating,

That your Petitioner, though often performing long and difficult Journies, mainly resided in the Bay of Islands till 1844.

That during the whole of that period your Petitioner never once broke the rule of the C.M. Society—viz. not to acquire nor possess Land from the Natives.⁸

The other missionaries were more sanguine (see page 6).

1840–1862: Crown pre-emption

The mission years 1840–1853: Colenso purchased no land

Land Commissioners were appointed to investigate early transactions, and Colenso was asked by Commissioner Godfrey to interpret for him. Colenso wrote (from Paihia, 9 January 1841),

In ansr. to your request—to my becoming Interpreter to the Land Commission at Russell—I regret (when I consider the absolute need of some efficient and disinterested person to fill

that important office) that it is utterly impossible for me to assist you, for, as I said before, my present duties are more than I can (without the most strenuous & unremitting endeavours) possibly perform.

You speak, my dr Sir, of “an ample remuneration, &c”—allow me to say, (whilst I trust I can both discern & appreciate the motive that prompted the generous offer,) that neither pecuniary remuneration nor worldly honor could possibly have influenced me, in my leaving the Land of my Fathers, my connexions, & prospects, & coming to this country, to fill the situation which I at present do, and I trust, that such never will. In the little that I have been, or may be, enabled to do for H.M. Govt., Remuneration, permit me to remark, (unless circumstances with regard to myself sadly alter) I never wish to hear mentioned.⁹

He was not a greedy man. Colenso went to Hawke’s Bay in 1844 and during the next eight missionary years bought no land. In his 1862 petition to Sir George Grey he explained,

That among other stringent conditions imposed by the Bishop of New Zealand upon your Petitioner, on his coming to Ahuriri, (having previously limited him to the use of ten acres of Land,) was this, viz., that he should not hold nor acquire any Land without his consent....

That up to this time, (and, indeed, till 1854,) your Petitioner did not possess a foot of Land in the Colony.⁸

(In 1851 he had confided to McLean, “I think I shall be quite ready to buy a few acres of land from the Govt.—immediately after you have settled with the Chiefs”,¹⁰ but probably his first purchase was 80 acres at Taipo on the north bank of the Meanee river, purchased from James Grindell in 1854—see later in this issue).

THE ALLEGED MISSIONARY LAND SHARKING.

The subject of the early missionaries of the Church of England in New Zealand having engaged so extensively in land purchases from the natives, has engaged a good deal of attention lately. The following extracts from "The Story of New Zealand: Past and Present—Savage and Civilized," by Arthur S. Thompson, M.D., surgeon-major 58th Regiment, and published in London in 1859, will be read with interest. At page 154, and following pages, vol. 2, Dr. Thomson says:—"At an early date, it will be remembered, several of the English Church Missionaries purchased land from the New Zealanders, and the statement of the quantity claimed and the awards given, will be found in the subjoined table, where also will be seen the honoured names of Messrs. Maunsell, Ashwell, Chapman, Morgan, Colenso, and the early missionaries who resisted this world's temptations:—

Rev. Alfred N. Brown, missionary, entered the mission in 1829, and Mr. J. R. Wilson, catechist, entered the mission in 1833; they jointly claimed 3,840 acres of land, and were awarded by the land commissioners, 2,987 acres.

Rev. — Maunsell, missionary, entered the mission in 1835, claimed no land.

Rev. R. Taylor, missionary, entered the mission in 1835, claimed 50,000 acres; awarded 1,704 acres.

Rev. Henry Williams, missionary, entered the mission in 1823, claimed 22,000 acres; awarded 9,000.

Rev. Wm. Williams, missionary entered the mission in 1825, claimed 890 acres; awarded 890 acres.

Mr. Benjamin Ashwell, catechist, entered the mission in 1835, claimed 20 acres; awarded 20 acres.

Mr. Charles Baker, catechist, entered the mission in 1828, claimed 6,242 acres; awarded 2,560 acres.

Mr. John Bedford, wheelwright, entered the mission in 1836, claimed 250 acres; awarded 60 acres.

Mr. Thomas Chapman, catechist, entered the mission in 1830, claimed no land.

Mr. George Clarke, catechist, entered the mission in 1824, claimed 19,000 acres; awarded 5,500 acres.

Mr. William Colenso, printer, entered the mission in 1834, claimed no land.

Mr. Richard Davis, catechist, entered the mission in 1824, claimed 6,000 acres; awarded 3,500 acres.

Mr. James Davis, store-keeper, entered the mission in 1824, claimed 1,015 acres; awarded 335 acres.

Sorena Davis, teacher, entered the mission in 1824, claimed no land.

Mr. John Edmunds, stonemason, entered the mission in 1834, claimed no land.

Mr. W. T. Fairburn, catechist, entered the mission in 1819, claimed 20,000 acres; awarded 2,560 acres.

Mr. S. H. Ford, surgeon, entered the mission in 1837, claimed 8400 acres; awarded 1,767 acres.

Mr. James Hamlin, catechist, entered the mission in 1826, claimed 6,774 acres; awarded 3,937 acres.

Mr. James Kemp, catechist, entered the mission in 1819, claimed 18,552 acres; awarded 5,276 acres.

Mr. John King, catechist, entered the mission in 1814, claimed 10,300 acres; awarded 5,150 acres.

Mr. P. H. King, catechist, entered the mission in 1834, claimed 2,305 acres; awarded 2,305 acres.

Mr. W. King, assistant, home in New Zealand, claimed no land.

Mr. Octavius Hadfield, catechist, entered the mission in 1838, claimed no land.

Mr. S. M. Knight, catechist, entered the mission in 1835, claimed no land.

Mr. Joseph Matthews, catechist, entered the mission in 1832, claimed 2,200 acres; awarded 2,200 acres.

Mr. Richard Matthews, catechist, entered the mission in 1837, claimed 3,000 acres; awarded 4,792 acres.

Mr. John Morgan, catechist, entered the mission in 1833, claimed no land.

Mr. Henry W. Pilley, catechist, entered the mission in 1834, claimed no land.

Mr. James Preeco, catechist, entered the mission in 1830, claimed 1,450 acres; awarded 1,450 acres.

Mr. W. G. Puchey, catechist, entered the mission in 1821, claimed 4,800 acres; awarded 2,300 acres.

Mr. James Shepherd, catechist, entered the mission in 1820, claimed 11,860 acres; awarded 5,330 acres.

Mr. James Shepherd, catechist, entered the mission in 1820, claimed 11,860 acres; awarded 5,330 acres.

Mr. James Stack, catechist, entered the mission in 1834, claimed no land.

Mr. W. R. Wade, superintendent of the press, claimed no land.

Marian Williams, teacher, went out with her father, claimed no land.

Church Missionary Society, claimed 11,665 acres; awarded none.

Families of Church Missionaries, claimed 6,200 acres; awarded 3,100 acres.

Total area of land claimed, 216,763 acres; awarded 66,713 acres.

Two Wesleyan missionaries bought land from the natives, but the great majority of the clergy belonging to that Church kept themselves aloof from land-sharking. The Roman Catholic missionaries arrived too late to take advantage of the trade; not that they would have done so, for the missionaries of that Church in other countries have generally obeyed the spirit of the holy injunction to the first Christian missionaries in the world: "Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money, neither have two coats apiece." The Church of England missionaries claimed 216,000 acres of land, and the Commissioners awarded 66,000. The foregoing statement shows the exact quantities claimed and awarded. The Bishop of Australia had in 1847 some misgivings about these lands; and in 1846, Governor Grey, thinking some of the awards illegal and unjust towards the natives, asked the missionaries to relinquish certain portions without reference to the Courts of law, and Bishop Selwyn used his influence to accomplish this object. The missionaries were told that their conduct was injuring the Society they belonged to, and affecting their own character: *Punch* suggested that Father Taylor should have his picture hung up in the Church Missionary Society's hall with the words "fifty thousand acres" under it; the judicial board of the Privy Council declared against them; but all these modes of attack were in vain. Archdeacon Henry Williams and others refused to relinquish a rood unless the Governor withdrew some verbal accusations hurled against them. * *

* * * The Council of the Church Missionary Society * * * informed Archdeacon Henry Williams and some others, that they must either give up their exclusive grants of land or leave the service of the Mission. The Archdeacon chose the latter course: one missionary was superannuated; the resignation of another accepted; and the others offered to relinquish their lands. When Archdeacon Williams had suffered suspension for five years he was restored. The treatment the venerable missionary received—the man who had borne the burthen and heat of

the day, "the father of missionaries"—for a society he had served with zeal for more than a quarter of a century, was severely stigmatised by several in New Zealand; but other parts of the world and other times will doubtless affirm that the Archdeacon's suspension and restoration were alike creditable to the Church Missionary Society.

THE ALLEGED MISSIONARY LAND SHARKING.

Daily Southern Cross,
11 October 1873, Page 3

ex Thompson AS 1859. The story of New Zealand. London. Vol. 2: 154.

Colenso actually advised Māori not to sell their land, despite many of them wishing to. At Te Kopi on 14 September 1846,

...during the evening I was engaged with the old Chief Simon Peter Te Hinaki and other Chiefs, who blocked up my tent door, upon the never-ending Land question. These Chiefs are now disturbed by a few of their own number—two or three wild young fellows—who wish to sell their land. “Live to day and die tomorrow,” is truly their motto and aim. As I pretty well know the native character, I may, I fear, truly predict, that the number will be ultimately obliged to give way to the few. I endeavoured faithfully to show them what I believed to best for them—in this, always to me, disagreeable business.

A few days later (18 September 1846), in southern Wairarapa,

Called on Capt. Smith, who took me aside into his Garden and told me what he had heard concerning me;—among other things, that I had said his house (which I had never entered) was a lousy one”!! &c. He said a good deal about the Land, and about my “interference” between them and the Natives, &c. I replied that I never interfered, but that I had been again & again applied to by the Natives, to tell them what was right and to advise them, and that such were our relative situations, I standing as a father to my flock, and they not having a single friend besides to appeal to,—I could not but advise and tell them, what I, as a Xn., considered best; and that as the Settlers views & the Native’s welfare were so very opposite, our interests must necessarily sometimes clash. I told him moreover, plainly, what I had ever advised the Natives—not, however, in my ministerial capacity, but as a private person:—

1. Not to sell their lands in Wairarapa.
2. Not to lease them beyond 21 years.

3. *Not to lease the whole of their food foraging land, but to retain some, and use it, and get into the way of grazing Cattle, growing wheat, & breeding sheep, &c.*
4. *Not to lease it in very large blocks—such as 10 miles “run” of good pasture land to one person.*
5. *To make deliberate choices of the persons to whom they would let it.*
6. *Faithfully to fulfil their Leases.*
7. *To be kind to the whites who came to dwell among them.*



William Mein Smith 1799–1869,
surveyor, artist, Captain in the Thornton
Militia, squatter, runholder
Portrait ca 1860 by William Beetham, (see
<http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1s16/smith-william-mein>).

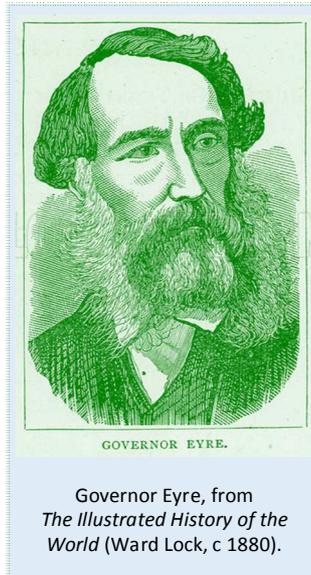
This plain dealing he seemed not at all to relish, and more than intimated the Governor’s probable anger, saying, “You would not dare to allow as much before him, &c.”—I replied, “Were his Excellency now present I should most certainly and most fearlessly avow it, &c.”—He, Capt. S., told me, that he had told the Bishop, when here in Decr.4./45, all the many things he (had) against me. He was now, however, very civil, & pressed me to remain to dinner, &c.—He

professed great regard for the Natives, but ever and anon, "rascally fellows,—villainous conduct, abominable cheats," &c., &c., would escape.

Feelings ran high: Colenso wrote to the Chief Clerk of the Colonial Secretary's office, JE Grimstone (15 March 1848),

I again visited Wairarapa; when I heard from the Native Chiefs and Teachers, that the white Residents about them had often greatly abused me, assuring them, that if I went to Wellington I should be cast into gaol! I asked, what for?—but they could not inform me. I went on to Wellington, where I heard, that certain heavy general complaints had been made against me, by the "Squatters" at Wairarapa, and which some of my friends wished me to notice; but, as I could not particularize any thing, and had ever been accustomed to such ill treatment during the many years of my itinerating in New Zealand, I declined doing so. In dining, however, at Mr. St. Hill's, the Archdeacon of Waiapu, and Major Richmond being also present—His Honor asked me, whether I had lately received a Letter from him; I replied in the negative. On which he added, "I have been applied to by a person from Wairarapa, who appeared to have some charge against you to this effect—namely that you had been inciting the Natives there to rise and to drive all the Settlers into the Sea"!! I told his Honor, that he might rely upon my solemn word that the allegation was false. He replied, that he did not believe it, yet he had written to me; and that now he wished me to aid in keeping the peace between the Natives and the Squatters; which I promised to do.

On 6 November 1848 Lieutenant-Governor Eyre wrote to Colonial Secretary Domett,



Governor Eyre, from *The Illustrated History of the World* (Ward Lock, c 1880).

Mr. Domett,

Mr. Cole goes to the Wairarapa on Wednesday next to meet Mr. Colenso and as the latter has much influence with the Natives & is resident in the district might be acquired thro' Mr. Kemp. I think you had better write officially to him stating that the Govt. are about entering to purchase the Wairarapa & contiguous districts for a Church of England settlement, explaining the objects & intentions of the Govt. and soliciting his friendly cooperation in pointing out to the Natives the high standing & character of the population likely to be introduced by the Canterbury Settlement, & the invaluable advantages which the Natives will derive from the establishment of schools & the location of a missionary Church of England Ministry among them, independently of all the other concomitant advantages they must necessarily derive from the presence of a highly civilised & moral community among them—

Domett wrote to Colenso and Rev Robert Cole handed the letter to him at Te Kopi. It was dawning on Colenso that he would have to watch his words,

Heard... the Government were seeking to purchase the whole of this District.... The old and principal Chief, Simon Peter Te Hinaki, sent to enquire whether I would talk with him and his children upon the Land question, which I (having said too much already?) declined. (9 November 1848).

Colenso returned home on 18 December 1848 and almost at once met with Hawke's Bay chiefs to discuss the Government plans to purchase their lands,

Now I am asked to counsel you, to sell all your Lands to the Government, but I tell you candidly I cannot do so. I shall not now deviate from what I have always told you, Never to part with the whole of your Land. And, when you part with any, be sure to have a good natural boundary between. Henceforth, I shall not have a word to say on the Land question.

Colenso replied to Domett (23 December),

*Church Mission Station,
Waitangi, Hawke's Bay,
December 23, 1848.*

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 7th. ulto., in which you are pleased to give me a sketch of the plans of the proposed "Canterbury Settlement," and in which you further wish me to aid (as far as I may be able) H.M. Government in obtaining the whole of this District from the Aboriginal Proprietors, &c.

I should have answered your Letter long ere this, but having been absent, travelling among the Natives of the District during the last 2 months, and having only returned to this my Station on the 18th. instant, I have not been able to do so.

In reply to your Letter, Sir, I have to state, that I have attentively read it, and (I trust) duly considered the principal subject thereof in all its various bearings upon the Natives; and I regret, deeply regret, to have to say, that I cannot conscientiously aid or assist or in any ways use any influence which I may possess over the Native Chiefs to prevail upon them to alienate the whole of their Lands to the Crown, or to accept

of "Reserves" for themselves (when the Land has become so alienated) in scattered or detached parcels or blocks [2] among the whites. Both of which plans being, in my humble opinion, equally fraught with no less than the utter and speedy extinction of the whole of the Native race.—

I have, however, Sir, in compliance with your request, made known to the Native Chiefs of this neighbourhood, the wish of his Excellency to purchase the District, and the "benefits" arising from the location of the "Canterbury Settlement," &c., &c., as contained in your Letters.—

As I cannot conscientiously advise the Natives to part with the whole of their Lands, nor recommend them (in the event of their doing so) to accept of Scattered or detached reserves—and as I equally wish to live in peace with all, and by no means to bring myself into collision with, or to obstruct the carrying out of the plans of H.M Government—my aim will henceforward be to preserve a strict neutrality in this and other similar matters; and peacefully endeavour to follow out my Calling.

Having lately been very ill, and being still but very weak, with an afflicted household, and numerous cases of the usual Summer March Fever of this locality about me—I cannot now remark on many things which I much wish to bring before His Excellency's [3] notice concerning the matter in question. But, with His Excellency's permission, I would beg briefly to call his attention to two important points, both of which I humbly conceive to be to the future general interest of the Colony: the one, the speedy carrying into effect that portion of the Queen's Instructions (chap. xiv.) respecting the Aborigines of New Zealand, and the formally setting apart of those Aboriginal Districts therein mentioned, as the only

human means of preserving the Aboriginal Race:—the other, that in the event of any Tract or Tracts of Land being purchased by H.M. Government in this District, great care shall be made to obtain it only from the rightful and bona fide proprietors; otherwise you may depend upon similar scenes being acted (only on a larger scale) to those of which the neighbourhood of Port Nicholson so lately became the theatre.

Believe me, Sir, (though I may be unfortunate in my views) to be actuated by a conscientious regard for the welfare temporal and eternal of this poor people; and allow me to subscribe myself,

*Your most obedient servant
William Colenso*

Ch. Missionary.

The same day (23 December) Colenso replied directly to Eyre,

.... I said very little indeed—in fact, I may say, I cautiously abstained from speaking my own thoughts—to the Native Chiefs at Wairarapa, in passing through the valley, on the Land Question (although I did, in very strong terms, denounce the conduct of those who, in defiance of your Excellency's late proclamation, were still seeking to let Lands to the Whites, they being urged thereto by the Whites themselves. At the same time, however, I endeavoured quietly to gather their own opinions upon the matter, which I found (as I told Messrs. Dillon Bell & Kemp) to be quite opposed to the parting with the whole of their possessions.—

Your Excellency having been pleased to inform me of a Deputation having visited you from Wairarapa, offering on the part of the rest to sell a portion of that place, &c.,—You will not, I venture to think, deem it obtrusive on my part if I ac-

quaint you with what I heard, when at Wairarapa, as the Cause, &c., of that movement.—

—Te Manihera te Kehu, a young Chief of inferior rank and of similar character, had privately consented to let a piece of land at Tauwārenikau to a Settler named Gillies, residing at Otarāia: this, he (alone) had no right to do. On the transaction being known, the anger of the Natives was greatly excited, and some of his own relations not only proposed but sought him to put him to death!—For they were quite tired with talking to him, and he had long been one of the principal peace-breakers of the valley. Upon his hearing this he fled precipitately across the Ruamahanga towards the Tararua range; upon which some of the more moderate of the Tribe proposed that as Manihera could not be reformed, the better way would be to go and offer that Tract of Country (including Tauwārenikau) to the Government. This some few of the junior ones did, forging the assent of some of the principal Chiefs of Wairarapa, who are largely concerned, among whom I may mention—Ngatuere, Ngairo, and Wiremu Kingi te Hiakai, who never so much as heard of the intention of the junior party much less assent to it. Great indeed was the stir among them, when, at the return of “the Deputation,” it became known. So that from what I saw and heard, I could not but conclude, that it would prove a difficult matter to get even the land offered to your Excellency by “the Deputation” from the rightful owners....

Yesterday I went there, and spent some time with the Chiefs there assembled, in informing them concerning the projected “Canterbury Settlement” and its “benefits”; and of the wish of the Government to purchase the whole of the Country between Ahuriri and Port Nicholson, &c., &c., as detailed in

your Letter to me (one thing, only, as far as I recollect, I did not mention, the proposed life annuity of £25. to four of the leading Chiefs). Having faithfully informed them of what I knew from your Excellency's Letters; I, also, told them, that henceforward I should not interfere nor have anything to say in the matter of their doing as they pleased with their Lands; and, that I could not conscientiously deviate from the advice I had formerly given them,—1stly. Never to sell the whole of their Land; and 2ndly., If they should conclude to sell it, to be sure to have their "Reserve" in one block, with a good natural boundary between.

In conclusion—as I have told the Natives, that I do not intend to say any thing more to them upon the subject; and as I cannot conscientiously advise them either to alienate the whole of their Lands, or to accept of "Reserves" (when so alienated) in scattered or detached parcels among the Whites—both of which plans are, in my estimation, equally fraught with their speedy destruction; and, as I wish to live in peace with all men, and to be as far as possible from bringing myself into Collision with H.M. Government,—Little now remains for me but to be perfectly neutral in the matter: this, therefore, I hope strictly to be. Your Excellency will, therefore, not be surprised, if, (in the event of the Commissioners or any other Government Officers visiting this place upon this errand,) I should, deeming it my duty, be led to refuse to have any thing whatever to do in the matter.

I could say, Sir, a great deal more on this subject (closely connected as it is with one so very dear to my heart—the welfare of the Natives) but I have not strength just now. I may, perhaps, incur your Excellency's displeasure for not seeing and acting with the Government, for which I shall be sorry;—but I dare not go against the established convictions

of my mind, grounded too, as they are, upon my knowledge of the Native Character, and the painfully striking contrast between the rude yet prospering and healthy Native of the Country, and the daily decreasing and demoralizing ones of the Towns.

Eyre and Colenso had enjoyed each other's company when Colenso visited Wellington, but now Eyre was not pleased and conveyed his displeasure to Domett on 17 January 1849,

It seems unnecessary to reply to this letter further than to point out to Mr Colenso that he has fallen into some serious mistakes with regard to the objects and views of the Govt. They never contemplated purchasing the whole of the country between the Port Nicholson purchase & Hawke's Bay—but the whole exclusive of such lands & reserves as might be required by the Natives themselves.

It was never intended to buy "the whole" (in the sense this expression is used by Mr Colenso) & then give back certain detached Reserves scattered about the district—but to except all lands required for the Natives in the first instance from the sale.

Neither have the Govt. wished to have the Reserves required for the Natives in many small isolated blocks scattered about among the properties of Europeans—but on the contrary they have always endeavoured to get the Natives to select their Reserves in as few localities as possible.

With regard to the other portions of Mr Colenso's letter I can only say that I regret extremely that he should have considered it necessary to advise H. Majesty's Govt. to make purchases only from the rightful & bona fide proprietors. I am not aware that they have ever made purchases in any other

way (as far as such could be ascertained) and I am quite sure that our exertions or enquiries are ever disposed to ascertain who are the rightful owners & the relative merits of each.

Mr Colenso would therefore have rendered greater service both to H. Majesty's Govt. & to the Natives themselves by giving any information he may be in possession of as to the nature, extent or validity of the respective Native claims.

Whilst considering it right to point out to Mr Colenso the errors he has fallen into with regard to the views of H. M. Govt. I beg to thank him for having explained to the Natives the substance of your communication on the subject of the Canterbury Settlement. Since that communication however circumstances lead me to believe that there is now but little prospect of the Wairarapa or Hawke's Bay districts being selected as the site of that Settlement and of this I deem it right Mr Colenso shd. be at once informed.

In his 1848 report to the CMS Colenso concluded,

I have, also, very recently received fresh Communications from the Government, earnestly requesting me to use my influence with the Native Chiefs of the District to sell the whole of their Lands in one block from Ahuriri to Port Nicholson, to the Government, when the Government would return them their villages, &c. I have answered these Communications, by simply but (I hope) respectfully declining to have any thing to do in any way whatever with the matter.—

Māori leaders continued, however, to seek Colenso's advice; at Te Kaikokirikiri (Masterton) on 24 March 1849, he was

Engaged, during the day, in conversing with the N. Chiefs and Teachers, and in settling disputes, and in giving advice, &c., &c. They had prepared a long Letter to the Queen

against the proposal of the Governor to purchase their Lands, which they wished me to take to Wellington, but I refused; assigning, as my reason, lest it should be said, I had promoted it; at which several of the first-class Natives were greatly displeased.

Eyre remained generous, despite their differences. The unwavering honesty of this rugged, wild but highly articulate and cultivated man from the frontier of civilisation would have been prized in the drawing rooms of Wellington, a pleasant change in the truth-trading of the city's politics. Colenso wrote (April 1849),

Returning to the Town and meeting Mr. Cole, we called upon the Lieut. Governor, who repeatedly pressed me to make his house my home, even to shewing me the rooms which had been put in order for me, and pressing me to bring all my (ragged) Natives with me! But, for various reasons, I considered myself bound to refuse all his proffered kindness, although in so doing I may possibly have done myself injury.

They would not meet again.

Colenso continued to advise Māori against selling, to the ire of the local whites, as he recorded in his journal in 1852,

While the boat was getting ready I conversed with Mr. Alexander who was also going across, who told me, that all the Settlers to a man were greatly incensed against me, believing that I was continually setting the Natives against them, and opposing their prosperity in every possible way; and they either had written or would write, to the Governor against me.

The years 1853–1862: Colenso bought land but not from Maori

In 1852 Colenso was sacked as a deacon, in 1853 his house was torched and he was fined by McLean for assaulting Wi Tipuna. His *mana* was diminished. Māori keen to sell land argued with him. He felt badly treated by those he had tried to protect.

He first bought Hawke’s Bay land in 1854—not from Māori directly, for, as his speech on the Native Lands Bill in 1862 was reported,

He had heard one hon. member plainly say that it was his intention to vote for the Bill because he intended to go in for a slice for himself (laughter.) But he (Mr. C.) could assure this hon. house that he had no such intention; he never had obtained any land for himself from the natives (though scarcely another person had had the opportunities he had had to do so,) and he never should.¹²

There is a letter from Henry Tiffen (Chief District Surveyor and Sub-Commissioner in Hawke’s Bay) to the Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands in Wellington dated 29 May 1857, in which Tiffen says,

... the Revd. William Colenso who on the 7th. Of November 1854 applied for sixty acres of land, being the supposed area of a small flat on the Tukituki river....¹³

This confirms Colenso’s first purchase of land in 1854—legally, on application to the Commissioner’s office. He apparently continued to invest in property. Land acquisition and sale was probably the major factor in his accumulated wealth.

In 1862 Colenso appeared before Civil Commissioner Russell (himself a squatter) as defendant in a hearing under the Native Lands Act 1862, relating to his continued occupation of the Waitangi mission land. He was found guilty in what was plainly a predetermined

political decision. The *Nelson Examiner & NZ Chronicle* reported (12 July 1862),

The whole features of the case are extraordinary. In the first instance, it was supposed that when the Civil Commissioner was appointed, his duties would be confined to strictly native districts, but, in the case referred to, superseding the ordinary Court of Magistrates, that officer has constituted himself a tribunal to adjudicate on a case between the Government and an European; secondly, the decision given was opposed to the evidence, for, in the opinion of every unprejudiced person in court, the case for the prosecution completely broke down and, thirdly that the Commissioner’s son (if not the Commissioner himself), is in the occupation of native land, and, therefore, transgresses against the law, from further breach of which Mr. Colenso is prohibited. The public feeling in Hawke’s Bay appears to be perfectly unanimous on this....

Native Lands Acts 1862 & 1865

Colenso was busy from 1854 to 1865. In 1867 he gave evidence on teo words in a civil case in the Napier Supreme Court.

In a recent analysis of “The Native Land Court and the Ten Owner Rule in Hawke’s Bay, 1866-1873”, Richard Boast and Lisa Lefever Black wrote,

Under the pre-1862 pre-emptive purchase system only the Crown was legally able to extinguish customary title.... The Native Lands Acts reversed this policy, and in this sense formed a unique experiment in the British empire. Instead of a common law native title, Maori could become freeholders and, like any freeholder, could alienate their lands to anyone. The legislation did not, therefore, allow private purchasers to

extinguish customary titles. Rather, the law provided a mechanism for conversion to freehold and thus to freedom of alienation....

There is no Maori customary land remaining in Hawke's Bay today, however, at least as far as is known.... alienation of the Hawke's Bay blocks was in fact very rapid, and was often in the most questionable of circumstances. Of the land blocks investigated in 1866, which came to a total of 177,526 acres, 123,255 acres (by our calculations) had been sold by the time the Hawke's Bay Commission sat in 1873, an alienation rate of 70% within a 7-year period.... overwhelmingly the land was purchased by land speculators and land brokers, and one sees the same names over and over again in the documentation, including Frederick Sutton, Hutton Troutbeck, RD Maney, JH Coleman, JG Kinross, Thomas Richardson, Henry Russell and others. The ten owner rule created a massive free land market in Hawke's Bay in which Maori and Pakeha dealt with each other directly, unmediated by the state.¹⁴

Some of Colenso's land purchases after 1862 may then have been direct from Māori—but clearly, at a time when such purchases were sanctioned by the Court.

When, in August 1902, after Colenso's death, the Hon. CC Bowen raised in the Legislative Council the matter of Colenso's papers, he lamented about

... the loss of Mr Colenso's early diaries. We had occasion, at different times, to ask Mr Colenso for certain information which necessitated a reference to these records.... They have often been quoted in the Native Land Court to settle disputed questions of title. Yet these were all sold... for waste paper.¹⁵

Colenso did appear before the Māori Land Court as a witness: the *Hawke's Bay Herald* of 20 August 1887 reported ►

Colenso's evidence on Porangahau ownership¹⁶

[Te Teira Tiakitai claimed ownership of Porangahau before the Maori Land Court in Waipawa. Wi Matua's cross examination was postponed for the purpose of taking Revd. Mr. Colenso's evidence, "who cannot conveniently attend on another day."]

William Colenso sworn. I live at Napier. I arrived in this district on the 1st. December 1843. We landed under stress of weather at Castlepoint & travelled up the Coast through Porangahau & Waimarama. On that occasion I saw about 100 people living at Porangahau. The principal chiefs I

Our Waipawa correspondent writes as follows under yesterday's date:—On Wednesday I paid a visit to the Native Land Court to see how the everlasting Porangahau case was progressing. Mr M'Lean, acting on behalf of Teira, Teukitai and Airini Tonore (though by a rule of the Court in the present case solicitors were not allowed to conduct) made application to address the Court on behalf of his clients at the conclusion of the evidence, on the ground that he wished to refer to legal points bearing on the case, and also to certain previous judgments given in the Native Land Court having indirect bearing on the case. Henare Matua, the claimant, objected to this, giving amongst other reasons that the Court was for the adjudication of native lands, and judgments should be guided by the evidence and by native customs alone, and that legal points were foreign to the case. The Court, in allowing Mr M'Lean the privilege of an address on behalf of his client, added that Henare or any of the counter claimants need not be alarmed about any argument a lawyer might adduce, as it was the intention of the Court to give judgment strictly on the merits of the case and the evidence given, and that one Native Land Court was not bound by the decision of another. Yesterday the business of the Court was particularly interesting to the pakeha, as Mr Colenso was in the box. His evidence consisted of his experiences and reminiscences of this district early in 1843, these being augmented by extracts from his journal, which were highly interesting. His evidence seemed to be very strong in support of the title of the present occupiers of the land. There are two or three witnesses still to be examined for the claimants, and there is every probability of the case lasting another week.

saw there were Aperahama Te Whakaanga, Hori Ropiha Te Takou, & Hoani Matua, Henare's father. Paora Ropiha is Ropiha Te Takou's son. There were some of the Natives living on one side of the river & some on the other. The place they were living at was generally known as Porangahau. There were settlements also at Ouepoto, Pohatupapa, Parimahu & Pakowhai. It is impossible for me to say how long the natives had been living at Porangahau. But there was a chapel built & several houses & the potatoes they gave us were of their own raising. I only heard generally that the whole native population from Kidnappers to Wairarapa went to Nukutaurua. I heard that the whole of the natives had returned. It was Archd. Williams who told me that they had all gone to Nukutaurua.

I saw several natives at Waimarama. In fact there were natives all of the Coast. We stopped 2 or 3 days at Porangahau wh. was the largest place. Tuahu was the chief of Waimarama at that time. I may mention that I was specially appointed by the Bishop of N.Z. to take a census of the Maoris & I therefore took down the names tribes & hapus. I did not see Tiakitai at Porangahau but at Te Awapuni. Very likely I saw Turereiao (Teira) at Te Awapuni amongst the children. I cannot say that I saw so much of Turereiao. This will be explained by my documents—why I did not see so much of him or Tiakitai. I could only have become acquainted with Turereiao at Te Awapuni. But he went to Turanga. I do not know Turereia well. Tiakitai & I saw each other almost every day when I lived at Waitangi as he lived just across the river at Te Awapuni. I never heard Tiakitai say that he had a claim to Porangahau—rather to the contrary. From what I saw & heard I have reason for believing that the owners of Porangahau were those living & cultivating food there. I have in my book a great number of names of those living at Porangahau. I went to Porangahau & saw them there many times. I never saw Tiakitai there. The only place I saw him at after leaving Te Awapuni was Waimarama. He had good reasons for leaving Te Awapuni. I will explain. I arrived at Waitangi in Dec. '44.

Very shortly afterwards Tiakitai's daughter Te Kore was drowned in the river. I tried to resuscitate her but could not do so. But that was not the worst. In the third year, the spring of 1845 I received a letter from the merchants in Wn asking whether it would be safe to send a trading vessel there. The King Wm. IV came up in Dec 1845. Greenstone formed part of her cargo. Tiakitai had been addicted to a seafaring life. This little cutter came to the entrance of Ahuriri & Tiakitai & Morena went out & took possession of the vessel & stole the cargo. The cutter left for Wn. When I heard of it I demanded restitution & after great difficulty succeeded in getting the stolen property returned. Tiakitai was vexed with me & went to live at Waimarama where he remained. Wm. Morris a whaler went to live between Kidnappers & Waimarama & Tiakitai used to provide girls for the whalers. I wrote remonstrating with him.

(Court: It might be as well to avoid recounting this sort of thing.)

I have no recollection of seeing Turereiao at Porangahau. If I saw him at all he was mixed up with the children.

I did not hear any chiefs say that Tiakitai had the mana over the land from Kidnappers to Castlepoint—rather the contrary. (Read extract from Journal. On Dec 9/45 Wm. Morris asked me to intercede with Te Kurupo (Te Moananui) for him as he anticipated danger from him &c &c—to the effect that the whaling station at Waimarama belonged to Kurupo. Morris paid Kurupo £5 a year for the right of fishing & Kurupo insisted in it being increased to £10.

(Court: I do not know where Tiakitai was then—now I remember: he was at Te Awapuni.)

I heard of some natives having sold land to Rhodes, but it was always laughed at. The people went on board to sell. The natives not only did not respect Tiakitai's sale to Rhodes but laughed at it.

(To Court) I never heard that Capt. Rhodes tried to take possession of

the land. Captain Rhodes & his brother received large compensation for this purchase. I have not heard that Rhodes made any other purchases at Te Wairoa or Turanga.

I have heard of a sale by Te Hapuku to Mr McLean. I heard of Tareha & Moananui selling land to McLean. I believe that the first moneys paid by Maclean were distributed in a very lavish kind of way, the natives not knowing its value. For instance, old Wereta on the strength of some old proverbs got £100 though he had no claim to the land sold.

Te Hapuku was on friendly terms with me – not more than the rest.

After I had been here a few years I was asked by the Govt. to undertake the purchase of parts of this district. I refused. They applied to me again but they would not agree to my conditions. On this account I refrained from having anything to do with native Land sales. I mention this to show why I do not know much about the land sales.

(Produced a document printed by him for Te Hapuku relating to his descent & right to the land—shewing that he (Te Hapuku) was descended in the elder branch from Te Aomutua while Tiakitai is descended from the younger. Te Aomutua obtained the land originally by gift. The land is Ouepoto, Pourerere, Omakere, Manawarakau, Waimarama, Mataraua, Koptanaki.

To Court: Christianity was introduced a little before my arrival by Christian natives who came from Porangahau, but it was not generally introduced till my arrival. Tiakitai was drowned on the night of the 1st. Sept. 1847. Tiakitai betrothed his son Turereiao to a woman of Turanga, Aroh. Williams objected to this, but Tiakitai insisted on it. A great number of mats &c were prepared & put on board a whale-boat which started for Turanga but the boat capsized and he was drowned.

When the natives went to Nukutaurua there was only one man left, Koromahue, who lived at Kohinurakau. Perhaps Hineipakeha joined in it.

I cannot say whether Tiakitai went to Waimarama. The exodus extended from the Kidnappers to Castle Point and took in the whole of the district inland of those two points.

It is quite clear to me that Tuanui, the father of Hoani Matua, was one that went off to Capt. Cook's vessel when opposite Porangahau.

I never saw Apiata Kuikainga, Nopera's father, but at Eparaima.

Rev. Mr. Colenso by Hori Te Aroatua: I did not say Te Hapuku sold the land from Ouepoto to Parimahu. Hapuku along with all the people sold the land between Kairakau & Parimahu. It is the Kaipurakau block or "Hapuku's block". Karanema was connected with that sale. Don't recollect Paora Ropiha being connected with Hapuku and that sale. I don't know under what ancestor that sale was made. You know very well that I took no interest in any of the sales. I heard you sold to the Government the block adjoining this, but the sale was contested & not allowed. I could not say who the individual sellers were ultimately. I heard that Hapuku sold several blocks of land beside the Wai-pukurau block.

According to the Maori custom Pareihe was the greatest man in these parts, but he died about 1844. His mana descended to the following over their respective hapus, viz: Tareha, Kurupo, Tiakitai, Puhara and Hapuku. The mana of Porangahau was with the Ropiha and Matua families, who were living on the land & cultivating it. They occupied the several villages in the district and I never heard that any others did.

I have heard of your father Te Aroatua generally, but don't know where he was buried. Can't say if he was related to Te Ropiha or Hoani Matua.

Rev. Mr. Colenso by Te Peira: I was a witness in the Mangaohane case at Hastings. I said there what I have said here to-day about Tiakitai. I did not say he was the great chief of this district. He was one of the chiefs of Waimarama. I don't know whether he was of Ahuriri. I never heard of him as one of the chiefs of Akitio. I am aware of the mana of chiefs having extended to people other than those amongst whom they happened to be living at the particular time.

I knew Captain Rhodes. Don't know if he was a clever man in buying land. He supposed he was buying land as a great many other captains from Sydney thought, when they and the natives scarcely understood each other. Tiakitai could & did profess to sell land at the time, though he had no authority, as at that time there was a rush from Sydney for land; and people used to give natives presents in payment for land that they supposed they had bought—to the great amusement of the Natives. This was before the Treaty of Waitangi. I have had many a laugh with Capt. Rhodes at Wellington over his supposed purchase.

They, captains generally, knew the chiefs. They did not attach much importance to it however, as witness the case of the “Boyd” and Hapuku's conveyance to Wellington in a vessel for stealing pigs.

When on one occasion we wanted a piece of ground for a mission station at Waitangi, Te Hapuku himself marked off the 10 acres—the gift coming from him, Tareha, and Te Waaka Kawetini; and, although Tiakitai was at that time living in the Awapuni pa close by, he had nothing to do with the transaction nor was he consulted in any way in the matter.

Another instance—Te Moananui sold the Kidnapper block. Subsequently finding the extent of that block he became dissatisfied & Mr McLean Crown granted two reserves to him—the fishing station and Te Awanga. On his death the reserves came into the possession of Karauria, who through Mr. Locke, sold it to the present owners.

I know Mr Sturm. I question his statement that he saw Tiakitai at

Waimarama in 1839. I saw Mr Sturm in Dec. '41 at Turanga, and he then seemed not to know anything of the Maoris. I was first at Hicks' Bay in 1838. It was in '43 I first saw the Hawke's Bay district. I know nothing of Mr Sturm's residence at Nukutaurua. I forget if he told me of his prior life in New Zealand. I did not expect to meet him again. Nukutaurua & Turanga where the two landing places in those days, and I don't know where he landed.

Capt. Rhodes' vessel did not arrive at Turanga while I was there.

I don't know anything about Mr Sturm's statement that he was at Waimarama in 1839. I should believe Mr Sturm if he said he saw Henare Matua at Nukutaurua many times. It was only in Mr. Mclean's days that Henare came down to these parts, that is, to Porangahau.

In the early days the chiefs used to act unfairly with the traders in the oil trade, and on many occasions tried to prevent the oil being shipped. To overcome this, the captains used to entice them on board and carry them to the Ngapuhi district—the chief North Island depôt—and keep them there till the oil was all shipped. For some underhand work of this kind I believe Tiakitai himself was taken from Nukutaurua to Ngapuhi between '35 & '38. I don't say that he was taken, but, judging from the fact that many chiefs were so taken and Tiakitai being one of the most troublesome, it is very probable he was taken in the way I state. This would be somewhere in 1835, 6, or 7.

Waimarama proper was not a whaling station. Rangaika, about 2 miles off, was. Don't remember the “Harlequin”, a small trader from Sydney. Did not know Captain Coyle. I knew Capt. Rhodes' vessel called the “Eleanor”.

Tiakitai interfered with the mission work in many instances. The theft of the vessel & its restitution through me was a cause of offence against me. His daughter's death was attributed to me; so was the death of his horse. Epidemics were also charged to me. The dispute as to his conduct with the whalers was another cause of complaint.

Conclusion

The suggestion made to the Waitangi Tribunal that “Colenso had supported the McLean purchases in Hawke’s Bay,”¹¹ is in my opinion simply wrong.

The following statement from the same source appears to be based on a misreading ...

“Colenso's support in promoting the land sales, and plans for Native townships was evident in the report when he stated:

That for some time before Mr. McLeans first arrival here, (in Dec. 1850), the Native Chiefs had (partly at my suggestion) quite arranged among themselves the boundaries of the blocks of Land which they intend to offer him for the Government; and, had also selected a spot (about 2 miles from Waitangi) upon which to commence a township for themselves. That an offer had been repeatedly made to me by, the Chiefs proprietors of a piece of ground for a Mission Station.”¹¹

Furthermore, the conclusion in the same document, that,

The Ahuriri, Waipukurau and Mohaka tukuwhenua purchases were all supported by Colenso and he urged Māori to obey Colonial law and the words of the Governor and Mclean...¹¹

... errs in generalising from the particular: Colenso was referring only to the illegality of private direct land sale by Tareha to the Roman Catholic mission in the years of Crown pre-emption.

William Colenso opposed the sale and leasing of land by Māori to whites before 1840, and he opposed sale to the Government after that. When he saw it was inevitable he insisted Māori make conditions advantageous to themselves.

He discouraged Māori from selling their land for the same reason he discouraged their working on the road (that sewer-like conduit of

European immorality from town to country), in a misguided but altruistic attempt to protect them from alcohol, tobacco, gambling, prostitution and the decline and degeneration of what he described as “industrious, regular, temperate, and cleanly” people.¹⁶

He was certainly paternalistic (the “father” to his native “children”), in a way that would be offensive now, but he was paternalistic with beneficent motives. The squatters called him a “philomaorist,” a “Māori-lover”; the roadmen wrote to the Government and accused him of treason [see *eColenso* October 2015 Part 2].

He was taken to task by the Wellington politicians and public servants and so he withdrew from the arguments—refused to take sides or even to give advice—but he wrote, later,

*The writer of this Essay has no hesitation in expressing his settled conviction; that... taking all things into consideration, and viewing the matter from a philanthropic as well as a New Zealand point of view,—it would have been far better for the New Zealanders as a people if they had never seen an European.*¹⁷

— De duro est ultima ferro.—

—Fugere pudor, verumque, fidesque;

In quorum, subiere locum fraudesque dolique,

Insidiæque, et vis, et amor sceleratus habendi.

OID.¹⁸

He was rewarded with the mistrust of whites and Māori alike, a mistrust that taints his reputation and veils his achievements to this day.

He was not a land shark. He was ethically opposed to acquiring land when he was a missionary and he acquired none then. He bought his first block of land via the Government in 1854 and continued to invest profitably in land thereafter, the value of his estate being largely made up of urban property.

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13. Archives Ref. 57/142.
14. Richard Boast, Lisa Lefever Black 2010. The Native Land Court and the Ten Owner Rule in Hawke's Bay, 1866–1873: an analysis. In AH Angelo, O Aimot and Y-L Sage (eds) *Droit Foncier et Gouvernance Judiciaire dans le Pacifique Sud* (Wellington, *Revue Juridique Polynesienne*. 169–211.
15. *Hawke's Bay Herald* 1862. The Colenso papers. 27 August, page 2.
16. This is transcribed from Colenso's evidence as written on pp412–421 of the Māori Land Court Minute Book for the Waipaoa Porangahau Takitimu District, 18 August 1887. The actual minutes in Vols 13 (pp424–429) & 14 (pp1–3) of the Napier Minute Books are rather more sketchy.
17. Colenso W 1868. On the Maori races of New Zealand. *Trans. NZ I.* 1: 5-75.
18. Colenso used Dryden's translation...
Hard steel succeeded then;
And stubborn as the metal were the men.
Truth, modesty, and shame the world forsook;
Fraud, avarice, and force, their places took.
(Ovid: Metamorphoses)

Colenso's first land purchase

In his 1862 petition to Governor Grey Colenso had written, "That up to this time, (and, indeed, till 1854,) your Petitioner did not possess a foot of Land in the Colony". That suggests a purchase in 1854.

A letter from Colenso in the National Archives (57/211) refers to his first land purchase. It is dated 29 May 1857, and contains the words,

About two years ago I purchased from James Grindall his section at Taipo (on the said N. bank of the Meanee river), application, No.3, 80 acres, for which I gave £240. (or, with the improvements, &c., £400.)—this helped to raise very much the value of Land in that neighbourhood.

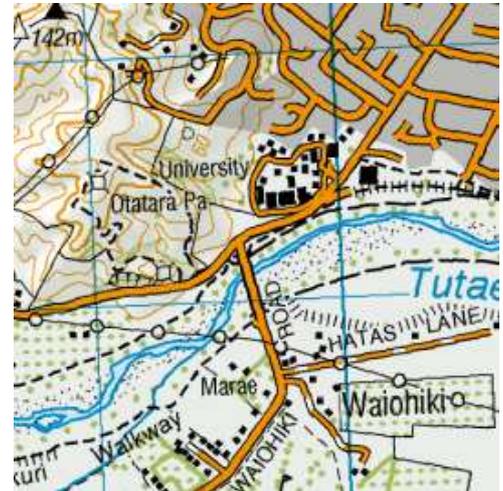
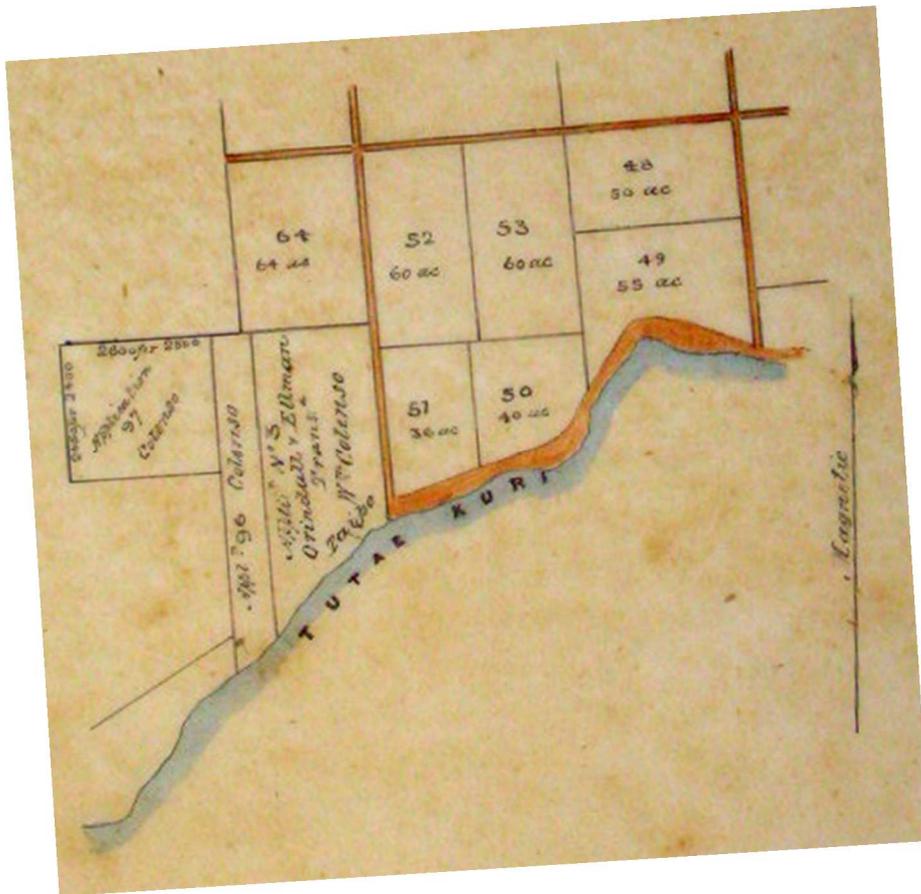
Grindell had arrived in Napier in 1851 to manage Alexander Alexander's trading station; he had bought the land from the Government at 10 shillings an acre (Archives 57/92) so made a tidy profit.

Henry Tiffen (Ref 13 above, Archives 57/142) wrote,

... the Revd. William Colenso who on the 7th. of November 1854 applied for sixty acres of land, being the supposed area of a small flat on the Tukituki [sic] river....

A plan of the area (overleaf) shows this land north of the Meanee (Tutaekuri) river, near present Taradale.

Colenso's letter continues with the advice that he subsequently bought blocks 96 and 97 from the Government, bringing the total to 189 acres. The purpose of his letter (to the Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands), was to state that he wished to buy Nos. 50, 51, 52, 53 and perhaps No.64, making a total of 260 acres—but that he lacked the means to pay cash for them, so was applying to put down a one-half deposit and pay off the balance over 6 to 12 months.



<http://www.topomap.co.nz/NZTopoMap/nz51309/Taipo-Stream/Hawkes-Bay>

◀ **Colenso's first land purchase, November 1854**

Plan of land on the north bank of the Tutaekuri river, Hawke's Bay, showing No.3, "Taipo", transferred from Grindell & Ellman to Colenso in 1854. Colenso later bought Nos 96 & 97, and later still applied to buy Nos 51-53 and 64.

It was near Taradale, probably near the Waiohiki road bridge, with the Taipo stream still running nearby.

Mr. Colenso, Mr. Flatt and Mr. Wade

In London in 1834 William Colenso wrote in his diary,

Friday 28 March. “Good Friday!” ... drank Tea this afternn. with Messrs. Wade & Flatt who are going with me to New Zealand, and spent the day, in a Christian way (I trust).

Monday 16 June. Expecting to sail to day—but once more delayed, very busy today:—went into the Bank of England with Mr. W. Wade.

Wednesday, June 18th. 1834. This morning at 9 left my lodgings for the C.M.H.—met there Mr. and Mrs. Wade and Jno. Flatt—left for St. H. Docks in Hackney Coach—got on board the Rose steamer and arrived at Gravesend at 1—dined at Gravesend and about 3 went on board the Prince Regent, had tea—met for prayers in Mr. W.’s Cabin—and slept on board for the first time, had a most refreshing night’s rest. Lord unite us together in Love—give us faith towards thee and zeal for thy cause for Xts. sake.

Thursday 19 June. ... agreed to meet in Mr. Flatt’s Cabin every day for a half hour’s religious intercourse. Bless God for all his mercies.

Mr. Colenso

23 year old Colenso 1811–1899 was sent as a printer but Henry Williams would require him to preach as well (*eColenso* August 2015).

Some of his writing against land possession by missionaries is reproduced in this issue. He fell out with Williams by criticising his avaricious acquisition of land in letters to the CMS,

24 March 1838: I have long been of opinion that one reason why our Mission does not flourish more is, from want of an every-day knowledge of the people: an hour or two on the Lord’s-day is not sufficient to see them; we ought to be daily moving amongst them. This is now the opinion of many of my Brethren, but, who is to go? is the question. Most of the Missionaries have large Families, and this with the secular affairs of their Stations, keep them at home—

15 January 1841: It is not my intention, my dear Sirs, to say much about passing events, numerous, new, and strange, as they are. But, I think, I may in all truth say, that, the words of God,—my own heart,—the temptations of the world and the Devil—the spiritual wants of the Natives—and six years’ residence in the New Zealand Missionary field, all, all combine in assuring me, that it is almost a matter of Impossibility for a man to be a Missionary among the Heathen and a possessor of Lands and Cattle, &c, &c, the same having to be looked after or attended to, in any way, by himself. Wealth, even in civilized countries, has generally Care, if not Pride also, in his train; and Care too often brings Anxiety, Self, Parsimony, Avarice, &c, &c, ad infīn.;—if it be so, how much more is it to be expected that such is the case in uncivilized lands, where moral restriction exists not? I most willingly acknowledge and firmly believe, that a man, abounding in possessions, and flocks, and herds, may, by the Grace of God, become a useful settler in a Heathen Land, and may be of great utility in the little circle around about him. But even this is by no means an easy thing in a Land like this; where the

Natives (supposing them to be, in part at least, his workmen,) unused to constant labour, would very soon perceive that they were working for their employer's profit; which alone, among this suspicious people, would be quite sufficient to neutralize all the efforts he might make for their spiritual welfare. Were, however, such a Settler not to employ Natives as Laborers, the constant trespassing of Cattle on their plantations, would alone prove a fruitful and never-failing source of discontent, bickering, and quarrelling: for the Natives, from never manuring their ground, only plant one or two, or at most three of four years in one place; hence their cultivated lands are seldom fenced in; and hence, also, the continual inroad of the Cattle of "the Stranger" on their little all. And then, (to place the case in a more favorable point of view,) if we suppose such a settler possessed of a "Cattle run," (as is, perhaps, the case with some,) large enough to allow his Herds full liberty of roaming hither and thither in search of food, without at all coming near any Native Cultivations; yet, even in this case, there would be often heard, some such expressions as— "You have got all our best land—You have got the Lands of our Fathers—You have got our Lands for nothing—Our Fathers foolishly sold their Lands to you— You, who profess to have come hither for our interest, have taken advantage of our ignorance—You coaxed them to part with their Lands, when they said, No, No, &c, &c,"—which, as I before observed, would, to say the least of it, have a tendency to destroy all such a person's exertions for their spiritual good; however disinterestedly he might endeavor to act in the matter. Oh! that the Lord, who has hitherto graciously kept me from this snare, would mercifully vouchsafe to waken me every [6] morning, with, "Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world, &c".—

Mr. Flatt

29 year old John Flatt 1805–1900 came on the *Prince Regent* too. He

was sent out by the church missionary society in 1834, to assist Mr Richard Davies, the Superintendent, "that he might have more liberty to attend to his catechetical duties and the spiritual concerns of the Natives." But Mr Davis did not want more liberty for those duties – he preferred the farm; and Mr Flatt, who does not appear to have been selected with any view to his theological qualifications, was sent into the interior as a catechist (*Spectator* 4 January 1845).

CK Stead, Flatt's great great grandson, wrote,

a story (my grandmother) told me more than once was how my great great grandfather, John Flatt, a lay catechist, had fallen out with the church missionary society by suggesting that its missionaries in New Zealand were acquiring too much Maori land. Twenty years ago in the British Museum I looked up evidence that Flatt gave, while in London in 1837, to a Select Committee of the House of Lords looking into "the State of the Islands of New Zealand". I found that he had defended the acquisition of land by missionaries, saying (a familiar argument later on) that they had no other way, in that remote place, of providing a future for their children. (CK Stead. Ihimaera: old wounds and ancient evils. In *Answering to the Language: Essays on Modern Writers*.)

In fact Flatt, questioned on 3 and 6 April 1838, was reported thus,

Upon the whole, are you not of opinion that the Labours of the Missionaries have been successful as far as might be expected?

They have been successful; but I think a greater Effect might

be given to them if their Minds were relieved from those secular Things which press so heavily upon them on behalf of their Children.

If they could devote their whole Lives to the Service of Christianity, instead of trying to better the Condition of their own Children?

Yes. At present they are cultivating their Land. To use the Words of the Reverend Henry Williams, they are just holding on for their Children, seeing no other Prospect for their Children than the Cultivation of those Lands. They cannot send them home to England;— that would be too expensive;— New South Wales would not be desirable for them; and this is their only Chance. (Minutes of evidence of the Select Committee of the House of Lords, 1838).

In 1838 John Ward, Secretary to the New Zealand Company, would quote Flatt in the 4th edition of his *Information relative to New Zealand, compiled for the Use of Colonists*:

The following statement is made on the authority of Mr. Flatt, recently a catechist of the Church Missionary Society, whose evidence before the Lords' committee of last year, has already been noticed.

Church Missionaries who have purchased Land on private account in New Zealand.

1. The Rev. Henry Williams, Chairman of the committee, not less than four thousand acres, at Titrianga, near Waimate, fifteen miles from the Bay of Islands. Mr. Williams has commenced farming there; has sheep, cattle, and horses; farm-buildings built by natives, and an American superintendent. He employs about thirty natives. He visits the establishment two or three times a week. He sells the produce to the Mission.

2. Mr. James Kemp, Catechist, has purchased at least five thousand acres at Kirikidi and Wangaroa.

3. Mr. James Davis, Catechist, has purchased at least four thousand acres at Waimate, adjoining the land of the Society. Mr. Davis has a farming establishment; buildings, sheep, cattle, and horses. He employs about twenty natives. He superintends the farm himself. His father is the superintendent of the Society's farm at Waimate.

4. Mr. James Shepherd, Catechist, is supposed to be (excepting Mr. Fairburn) the largest English land-owner in New Zealand. His property extends from Kirikidi nearly to the Hokianga forest, a distance of more than fifteen miles. He has no farming establishment, but is about to commence one under the superintendence of his eldest son.

5. Mr. Charles Baker, Catechist, has a large landed property at Wangaroa, but no establishment.

6. Mr. George Clerk, Catechist, has purchased a large tract of land at Waimate, adjoining the Society's land on the west side. He has a farming establishment, with buildings, including a large barn; and cattle, sheep, and horses. He employs above twenty natives. He lives at the Mission station, and attends to the private property himself.

7. Mr. William Fairburn, Catechist, owns small tracts of land at the Bay of Islands, adjoining the Mission station of Paihia. He has recently purchased a very extensive tract, supposed to extend for thirty miles in its greatest length, at Tamaka in the Frith of the Thames. This purchase took place in January, 1836. The contract was drawn up in native and English, by the Rev. Mr. Williams, Chairman of the Committee, and was signed by him and myself, as witnesses. Mr. Fairburn has obtained leave from the Committee to commence a farming establishment on this purchase, with the assistance of his eldest son.

8. Several other members of the mission have purchased smaller tracts.

Mr. Wade

31 year old William Richard Wade 1802– 1891 and his wife Sarah came on the *Prince Regent* too. He may have been the first Baptist in New Zealand. He was to be Superintendent of the Mission Press but,

When, however, we arrived in New Zealand, we found that the intentions of the Missionary Brethren here were diametrically opposed to those of the Comee. at home. The Printing concern was placed entirely in Mr. Colenso's hands, and we were told we must be otherwise employed. After waiting unemployed, except in picking up a little of the language, till August 1835, we then went to Tauranga and formed a Mission Station there; but in the following April received a peremptory order from the Comee. at Home to return to the Bay of islands. In short, my dear Sir, the Press became the subject of appeal and counter appeal. Orders from home of the most decided character were totally disregarded, or at best trifled with, by the Missionary Committee here. (WR Wade to Rev. Saunders 24 August 1839)

He would write to Dandeson Coates of the CMS, from Hobart where the Wades eventually settled,

It has ever been my wish in all my correspondence with C.M.S. to report faithfully concerning New Zealand and the mission. In doing so I have made myself enemies, and have the mortification of reflecting that my testimony will hardly be regarded in England as worthy of the least attention. The C.M. Socy., however, have been and are deceived. In looking over a Patriot Newspaper containing the Report of your last May meeting, I noticed a speech by the Revd. J.W. Cunningham, in which much is said on the land question. The case of the Revd. Hy. Williams is brought forward. Mr. W. Is said to have 4000 acres, which divided among eleven children is made to appear but little. Mr. H.W. has evidently conveyed

home the impression intended in his reply to Mr Flatt's statement. Mr. F. Put down 4000 acres to Mr. W. The Socy. inquire about it. Mr. W. replies that he has no objection to Mr F's. statement, as to the quantity of land, seeming to intimate that it is correct; and so he is understood. But why has he "no objection" to the number 4000? Not because of its correctness, but as being greatly below what he really possessed at that time: and at the time Mr. Cunningham was advocating his cause he could not be possessed of less than 24,000 acres. He had land at Titirangi, Pakaraka, Pukekawa, the Bay of Islands; and I think also at Mangakahia if not at Port Nicholson. In this way, and in similar ways, has the Socy. often been misled, and I fear they still will be, as I find reports are going home of the prosperous state of the Mission, and that many Natives are being baptised with very little inquiry, by that very individual, who thus seems to answer the ends of his Mission, while his great aim for some time past has been to amass property for his family. (Letter to Coates 26 October 1840).

None of these three devout young men bought any land during their missionary years in New Zealand and each expressed his disapproval of missionary land acquisition in similar terms, their disapproval directed most particularly at Henry Williams.

The three had spent six months together in close proximity on the *Prince Regent* from Gravesend to Sydney, in Sydney while they awaited passage to New Zealand and on the *Blackbird* across the Tasman Sea. Wade and Colenso remained close in Paihia and continued to correspond after Wade had fled to Hobart—despite the potential created by Williams for them to compete in the mission printing office.

The similarity of their expressions seems hardly coincidental.



The New Zealand
polymath:
Colenso & his
contemporaries

Wellington 16–18 November