

eColenso

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What was Colenso's Cyclopean wall?

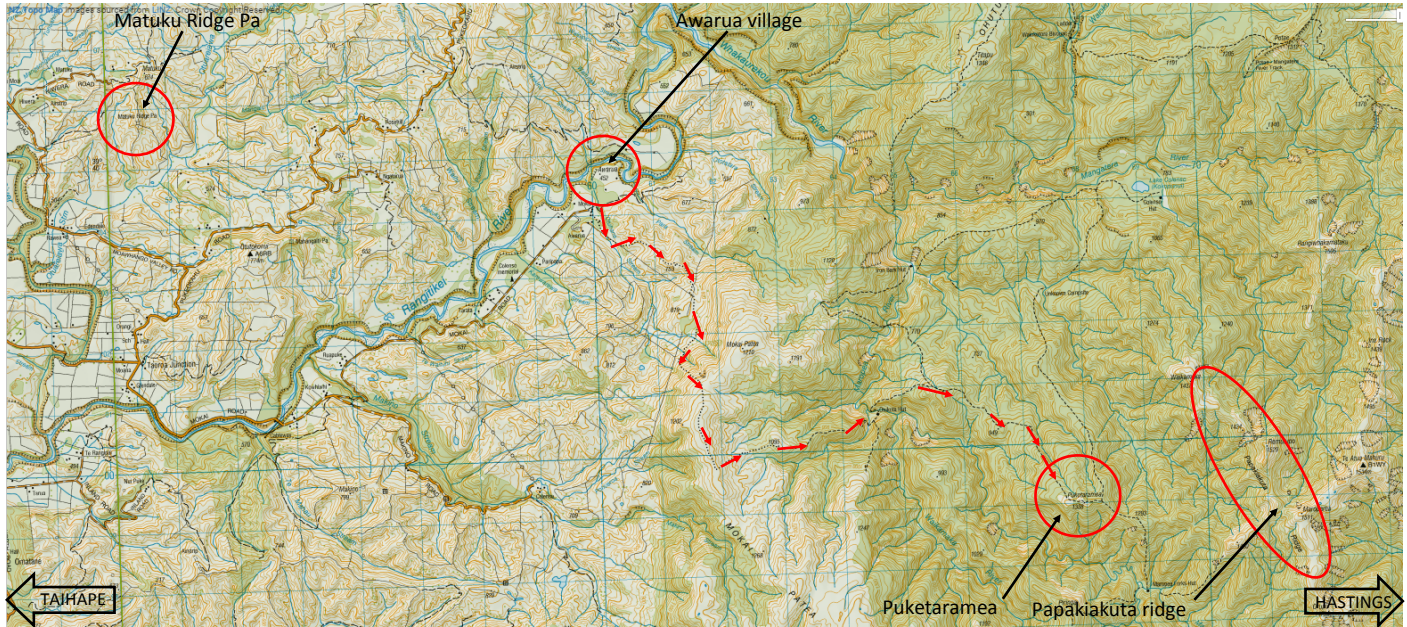
by Clem Earp

In February 1852, Colenso's personal troubles were coming to a head, and he decided to make what he must have known would be his last visit to the Inland Patea.¹ While there, he decided to investigate something which it seems he noticed on earlier visits: there was something strange, visible far up a mountain side.

"I have already mentioned a peculiar looking peak, or spur, on the top of the Ruahine range, running in a Northerly direction (when viewed from Matuku), and called, Te Papakiakuutaa.² On every journey of mine to and from Patea, I had always been desirous of visiting that strange-looking outlying spur ...

"Early the next morning we were on the move, and when we got to the W. summit, I, for the first time told my party what I was going to do,— to visit alone Te Papakiakuutaa. For a long time they strongly objected to my plan,—for them to proceed from where we then were some 2–3 miles on to the 'camping-place' on the E. side of the peak, where I would rejoin them at evening,—they preferring to remain and wait for me where we then were, which I would not allow. At last I got them to leave me,—I privately telling my trusty native among them, that if I did not appear by sun-down, he was to come as far as the 'two slips' to meet me. Taking my dog with me I went on: it was a gloriously fine day, the sun was melting; ere long the course without trees or high shrubs was more difficult than I had expected owing to the snow rifts in the earth and the boulders; and when, after several hours' toil, I got to the spur and mounted on it, to my great astonishment I found that all the upper part of that huge rampart was wholly composed of loose rocks and stones without any earth or clay between! It was a singular spot; no living thing was there, save a few common small lizards (*Mocoo*) basking on the black rocks in the sun."³

NZ topo map of the region east of Taihape, showing Colenso's probable route from Te Awarua village to the campsite at Puketaramea in February 1852. The next day he explored Papakiakuta Ridge.



In Colenso's own words: "I never saw anything natural like it before; it seemed more like a piece of Cyclopean art". He mused on about some other formations which hardly seemed natural, and on an ancient greenstone adze they had found that same day. When it came time to leave, Colenso felt faint and hardly able to walk and was unable to move far before darkness fell; fortunately his companions had begun to worry, and came to retrieve him.

What was this strange "rampart"?

Nearly 150 years later, in 1996, claims emerged that an ancient civilisation, the "Waitaha", had occupied New Zealand long before the Māori. Among other evidence cited for this theory was the presence of

a mysterious "wall" in the Kaimanawa Forest Park.⁴ It should be noted right away, this was not Colenso's "rampart", which was many kilometres further south in the Ruahines.

Amid much media speculation (by magazines, newspapers and TV) a geologist was sent to examine the Kaimanawa wall, and pronounced it a natural formation of Rangitaiki ignimbrite.⁵

"The apparently regular block shapes are produced by natural fractures in the rock. These fractures (joints) were initially produced when the hot ignimbrite cooled and contracted after it had flowed into place during the eruption. Near vertical and horizontal joints are common in welded ignimbrites of this type... Even where the joints are not 'block

-like', detailed inspection of the joint surfaces showed they were natural, with small matching irregularities in opposing surfaces which would not be produced by artificial block laying."

Was this the type of thing that Colenso saw? It does not seem that any further reports have emerged of such a formation in the Ruahines, nor does his report seem to have been picked up by the proponents of the Waitaha theory. Furthermore, it does not seem that the Rangitaiki Ignimbrite reaches that far south. The Ruahine ranges are composed of Mesozoic greywacke which includes black argillite and dark grey sandstone,⁶ which fit more with the colour of the rocks Colenso saw than does lighter-coloured ignimbrite.

Rather, the loose stones suggest frost-shattering of a linear outcrop such as is commonly seen in strike ridges, where a band of hard rock forms the backbone of the ridge running along the ridgeline. There would probably never have been any earth or clay between the stones – Colenso was unfamiliar with alpine scree where this is a common situation. If weathering did produce any soil, in such an exposed position it would soon have been washed or blown away.

Perhaps the identity of the "rampart" could form a project for a keen trapper. Papakiakuta Ridge is an extensive feature, at least 3 km long on current maps, so any searcher would have to start from the site of Matuku to gain a visual fix on the exact feature which so intrigued Colenso.

1. Bagnall, A.C. & Petersen, G.C., *William Colenso: his life and journeys*, p. 475 of the 1947 edition. However, Colenso, in his *In Memoriam* published over 30 years later, states it was 'probably 1850'. The vagueness, contrasted with the details he then recalled, inclines one to believe the date given by Bagnall & Petersen.

2. Papakiakuta Ridge on modern topographic maps. NZ Topo50 sheet BK36 Taoroa Junction 715 985, Google Earth or GPS lat/long -39.723569, 176.169121.

3. W. Colenso, 1884. *In Memoriam: an account of visits to, and crossings over, the Ruahine mountain range*.

4. See the account in Ritchie, N.A., "A New Age myth: the Kaimanawa 'wall'". *Archaeology in New Zealand* 39(3), 1996, 175–183. The map reference given is obsolete, it is equivalent to modern NZ Topo50 Rangitaiki BH37 763 841, Google Earth or GPS lat/long -38.948546, 176.188745.

5. Wood, C.P., quoted by Ritchie p. 181.

Napier cartoons revisited

The *eColenso* of June 2011 asked "Have you seen this book?" referring to the following passage in a letter from Colenso to Andrew Luff dated 9 March 1876,

Mr Tylee is got round again, & just at office. He shewed me a Book of *photographs* bound at Dinwiddie's,—of fearfully lowering pen & ink scratches of many of us, (much like *those* of Tiffen—but it is *doubtful* if T. is the author.)—there is myself (often), Justice Johnston, McLean, Lee, Lambert, & several others. Tylee expressed surprise at my not having before seen it,—and other *photos. also*.

The *eColenso* of March 2012 carried "Carnell, cartoons and Colenso", reproducing a series of photographs from the Alexander Turnbull Library collections, by Samuel Carnell, of cartoons, some probably by Augustus Koch, showing Hawke's Bay worthies.

It has now dawned on me that they refer to the same thing. (As the years gallop by, dawns come round more often but dawnsings don't).

The extract from the letter refers to photographs of drawings by an artist unknown to Colenso—of Justice Alexander James Johnston, Donald McLean, George Edmund Lee (whom Colenso referred to as "Lee"), Colonel Charles Arundel Lambert (whom Colenso referred to as "Lambert") and several others—as well as other photographs; Dinwiddie, Morrison & Co. had bound them into a book.

These photographs must surely be the same as those by Carnell now in the ATL collections.

John Thomas Tylee had been unwell; perhaps Carnell had given him the book to entertain him while he was sick. In any case, we can now, more confidently I believe, identify some of the characters.

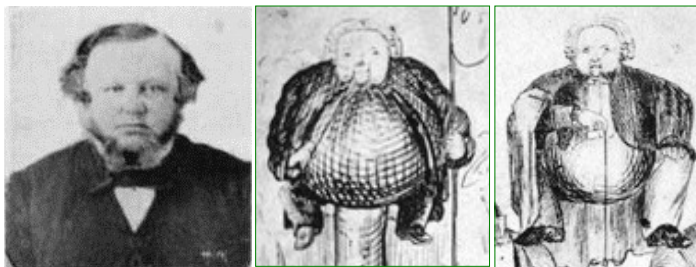
Colenso and McLean are obvious enough (see March 2012 *eColenso*: and see p.8, this issue).

Alexander James Johnston 1820–1888

The Press 13 June 88: “The late Mr Justice Johnston was one of a stamp of men whom the colony can ill spare. As a criminal lawyer, he possessed an amount of acumen and clear-sightedness which would probably have won him high distinction in England had he remained there. As a Judge he was always noted for the honorable and determined manner in which he upheld the high traditions of his office, the uprightness and logicalness of his decisions, and his rigid maintenance of a lofty tone in any judicial proceedings over which he had to preside. He possessed a fund of dry humor, with which he often managed to enliven the tediousness of a legal argument, and, in spite of the firm hand with which he administered the duties of his position, his relations with the bar were always of the most cordial description. Socially he was very popular. He was a great lover of music, and the genial humor which manifested itself on the Bench made him in private life a most entertaining companion.”

Johnston occupied a dignified position during the Maori panic of 1869, opposing the outcry for summary trials by court-martial. He tried most of the prisoners during the Te Kooti and Tito Kowaru wars. He also tried the Maungatapu murderers and he tried Kereopa Te Rau (see Peter Wells: *Journey to a hanging*). He was chief justice of New Zealand for the two years 1867 and 1886.

Johnston published “A Lecture on the Influence of Art upon Human Happiness,” Napier, 1861; he was not just a hanging judge.



Justice Alexander James Johnston, photograph at left from *Cyclopedia of NZ*; detail from cartoons at centre (holding the flag of justice) & right (holding the scales of justice).

George Edmund Lee was a criminal lawyer who began practice in Napier in 1864. He defended Kereopa Te Rau.

GE Lee



Lee in the cartoons: the detail at right is of a race between two lawyers each burdened with a client (see next page); was Charles A Lambert Lee's client?

Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Arundel Lambert New Zealand Militia (previously Captain 62nd Foot), owned Lambertsford (Tangarewa) station near Ashley Clinton, Central Hawke's Bay—where, the *Daily Telegraph* of 12 Oct 1882 reported, “for many years he pursued the peaceful avocation of a sheepfarmer. Colonel Lambert supported the movement for the separation of Hawke's Bay from Wellington, and sat in the Council of this district for Te Aute until the Abolition Act centered the government at Wellington. During the native war Colonel Lambert was appointed a major of militia, and afterwards was promoted to a Lieut.-Colonelcy. Throughout the native troubles Colonel Lambert held a command in this district, and led the abortive expedition to Mohaka. At the time of his death the deceased gentleman was a member of the Waste Lands Board and of the Harbor Board, at both of which his sound common sense and liberal views were repeatedly favorably commented on by the local press.”



CA Lambert, portrait at left; cartoons centre & right, exaggerating his ptosis.

volumes of notes on his cases (ATL MS-1086–1088) but they cover only 1865–1868. Archives NZ has minute books for the Supreme Court at Napier 1861–1875 (Ref. AAOW W3244 29 1) but I can find no case that fits this there either.



Bewigged lawyers are shown as housewives, fighting: at right is Lee—but is the other Judge Johnston again?

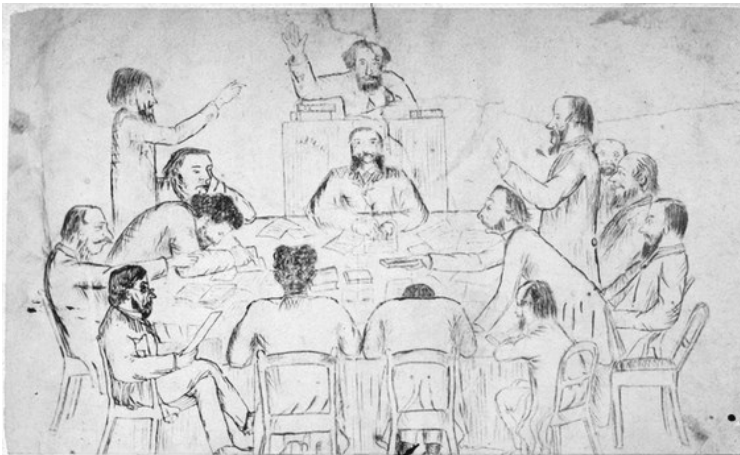
Hawke's Bay newspapers 1871–1876 are missing, so it is not possible to identify the court case there. In 1876 Tylee was surprised that Colenso had not seen the book before, a comment suggesting it may have been compiled much earlier. Indeed Justice Johnston left for Christchurch in 1875. Johnston left three



Colenso told Luff that he himself appeared “often” in the book—but I can identify him in only two of the extant cartoons. Perhaps the book originally contained more.

◀ Colenso, “philomaorist”, stands aloof, unwilling to be drawn into Superintendent Donald McLean’s wargames; the Māori figure hurls another dead soldier to the floor (little JD Ormond reads a book at lower right; the dark-bearded man may be James Wood; the other perhaps Joseph Rhodes, Deputy Superintendent).

These may be the Hawke’s Bay Executive Council members considering the Hauhau uprising.



◀ The Hawke’s Bay Provincial Council: Colenso lectures, McLean looks bored, Lambert passes a book, reporter James Wood takes notes, Speaker Curling gestures for silence, others (Rhodes standing?) argue, or just look resigned (little JD Ormond reads a book at lower right).

The Council members in 1864 were the Speaker (Curling), Messrs Rhodes, Lambert, Smith, Edwards, Dolbel, Colenso, Kennedy, Tiffen, Richardson, Tuke, Wilkinson, Buchanan, McLean, Ormond. James Wood attended as press reporter. Donald McLean was Provincial Superintendent from 26 February 1863 to 23 September 1869. Lambert was elected in July 1864. Colenso resigned in August 1865. This then may represent a meeting held between July 1864 and August 1865.

Perhaps Colenso’s opponent was Joseph Rhodes at the meeting of 28 July 1864, reported in the *Herald* of 13 August. ▶▶

Report of Bush License Committee.

Mr. ORMOND, in moving the adoption of this report, said that, as was known, the committee did not recommend the issue of bush licenses—they believing that the public bush lands would suffer much if licenses were issued and the falling and splitting of timber allowed *ad libitum*. In this way the waste of timber would be very great; while, through carelessness, there was the constant risk of fire, which once begun, would spread over immense tracts and be exceedingly destructive. There could not, he thought, be any hardship in requiring any one who wished to split on his own account to go to the land office and buy a section of bush. Another thing had influenced the committee in their decision—the expense of overlooking a system of bush licenses, so as to prevent persons from splitting without a license. There was a class, he might add, who were privileged to split for their own use in particular bushes—the residents upon small farm settlements.

Mr. CURLING seconded the motion for the adoption of the report.

Mr. EDWARDS would oppose the motion, believing that it would be far better to issue licenses than to have timber stolen with impunity.

Mr. COLENSO having given the subject careful consideration was prepared to vote for the adoption of the report. With reference to what had been said by his colleague (Mr. Edwards) he believed that the government would no longer permit the practise of unauthorised sawing and splitting. Not many sittings ago, the member for Waipukurau (Major Lambert) had complained bitterly of persons who were illegally removing timber from the Hampden reserve bush. That member knew the while that a brother magistrate was one of the principal offenders, yet, a day or two after, must turn round and charge him (Mr. C.) with committing a crime inasmuch as he did not speak respectfully of magistrates. But, thank God, the floor of that Council was a privileged place—a place where magistrates could be spoken of in the same way as other men.

Mr. CURLING.—Order.

Mr. COLENSO was in order. He had not the slightest intention of being put down by that member, and would advise him in future not to make the attempt. The Act quoted by the member for Waipukurau (as we understood, the Act which made it an offence to speak disrespectfully of magistrates) applied to fit men—to gentlemen such as were to be found upon the bench in England; and not to men who scarcely knew an Act when they saw it, and who, at any rate, scarcely knew the meaning of one when they read it. He had recently heard of a magistrate in Otago who, when a case of arson was brought before him, did not know what arson was. He would like the member for Waipukurau to look a little nearer home. With reference to the motion, it was clear that any man who wanted to go sawing or splitting, could go and buy 40 acres. Seeing therefore that no hardship was likely to be sustained by the refusal of licenses, he would support the motion.

Mr. RHODES was very sorry, day after day, to see the time of the Council wasted by the member opposite, whose egotism, displayed upon every opportunity, became, day by day, more preposterous than before. From the tenor of his everlasting speeches one would think that that member was the sole person in the Council qualified to judge of anything. That member took every opportunity of detracting from the character of the magistracy of the province—inferentially stigmatizing them as all that was base and corrupt. He had, in contrasting them with the magistracy of England, used the word gentleman in such a way as to imply that persons in the commission of the peace in this province were not gentlemen. [Mr. Colenso,—Hear, hear.] And yet, would it be believed that he (Mr. Rhodes) could bring forward a gentleman residing in the province who could state that this very member had almost gone down on his knees to be appointed a Justice of the peace. Disgusted at being refused, he got up and reviled the magistracy of the province upon every opportunity, in

or out of season—displaying, in so doing, a most rancorous spirit—(Mr. Curling—The most venomous abuse,) and the most preposterous egotism.

Mr. COLENSO moved that the words used by the member for Clive—that he had almost gone on his knees, &c.—be taken down. Taken down accordingly.

Mr. RHODES, if the member for Napier wished it, would be happy to name the gentleman who had told him this. Other matters also which had come to his knowledge he would certainly bring forward.

Mr. KENNEDY said that the story told about a magistrate in Otago was merely a Joe Millerism that had been going the round of the papers. Last time he read it, the magistrate was said to be an Australian one.

Mr. RHODES apologised for speaking on the subject at all. In the warmth of the moment he had forgotten what was actually before the Council.

The motion for the adoption of the report was then put and agreed to.



JD Ormond



Joseph Rhodes



W. POTTS, LITH.

A. D. WILLIS, LITHOGRAPHER, WANGANUI, N.Z.

S. CARNELL, PHOTO.

Napier, N.Z.

▲ Chromolithograph entitled "Napier, NZ" by William Potts. A D Willis, Wanganui 1889. From *New Zealand Illustrated* by Edward Wakefield. Bagnall wrote, "The quality and clarity of the reproductions is heightened by the neo-primitive conventionalised representation of figures, trees and the facades of buildings".

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The NZ polymath: Colenso and his contemporaries

Conference, Wellington,
17–19 November 2016

Call for papers

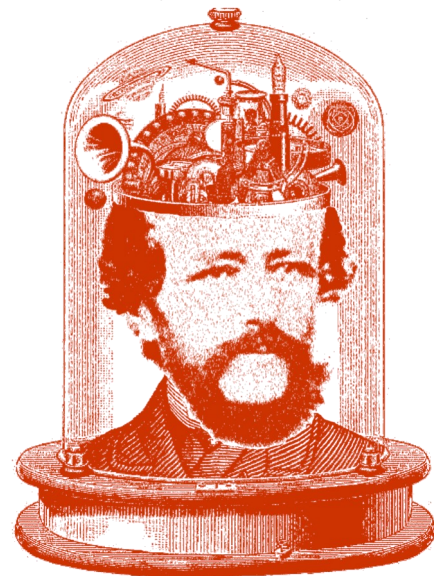
The nineteenth century was full of scholars who turned their intellectual interest to a dazzling array of subjects: botany, languages, geology, conchology, ethnology, religion. William Colenso was one of them, as were Sir George Grey, Lady Jane Franklin, James Hector, Julius von Haast and Augustus Hamilton. What were the worlds of knowledge these men and women explored? *The New Zealand Polymath* aims to deepen our understanding of nineteenth century knowledge, especially mātaraunga Māori, and knowledge networks. How was knowledge acquired and recorded? How did disciplinary fields intersect and inform each other? What interested nineteenth century polymaths? What were the networks? Colenso's regular papers to the Philosophical Society covered a huge array of topics from Māori vocabulary and social life to botanical description. How accurate were they? What do we know now about mātaraunga Māori in the early years of colonization? Who were the women scholars?

Papers are invited which address any area of nineteenth century knowledge making and collecting for a conference to be held at Victoria University from 17-19 November. We would particularly welcome proposals of panels, such as 'collectors' or 'flower artists'.

Possible topics might include:

- Māori knowledge
- Botanical drawing
- Astronomy
- Social and cultural practices
- Object making
- Fishing
- Cultivation practices
- Collecting
- Networks
- Women in science
- Women collectors
- Relationships between European scholars and their Māori collaborators
- Any other relevant field

Abstracts of not more than 200 words should be sent to Deborah.Levy@vuw.ac.nz by 30 April 2016.

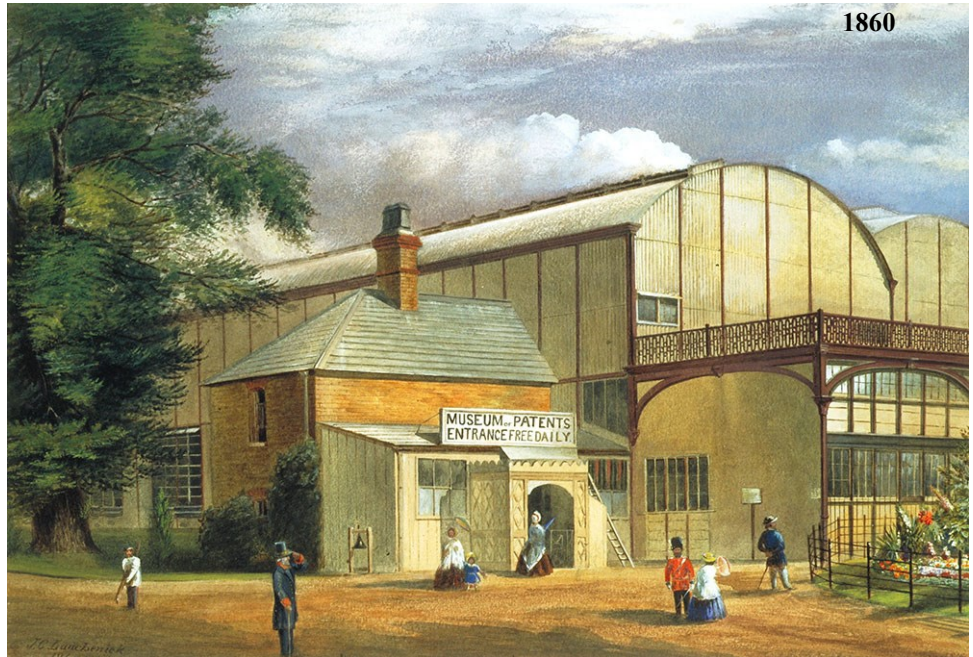


*Sketches in South Kensington picture gallery
 9 Colours, including red
 by Benjamin West
 Christ lamenting over
 Jerusalem
 by Eastlake
 Sir John Moore's last
 daughter's hopes by
 J. R. Herbert R.A.
 Heron Collection
 by Thos. Stothard
 "Dance of the Dishes"
 "Bianchetta & Phillis"
 and "Twelfth night."
 The "Heron's departure"
 by John Landseer
 "The fight interrupted"
 by Mulready
 very good
 The "Heron's departure"
 by John Landseer
 Mulready
 The "fight interrupted"
 by Mulready
 very good*

Elizabeth Colenso's taste in art

The illustration at left is from Elizabeth Colenso's diary for 1862. In 1860 she had taken her teenagers to London to be educated in England, and this (ink copy over rough pencil) records her visit to the "South Kensington picture gallery in museum".

Queen Victoria opened the South Kensington Museum (which would become the Victoria and Albert) in 1857. It was an educational institution with displays open to the public. On the next few pages are reproductions of the paintings Elizabeth specially mentioned.





“The fight interrupted”,
William Mulready, 1816,
Victoria & Albert
Museum.

Elizabeth Colenso thought
it “very good”.



“Christ lamenting over Jerusalem,”
Sir Charles Locke Eastgate, 1846, Tate Gallery



“Sir Thomas
More and his
daughter,”

John Rogers
Herbert, 1844,
Tate Gallery.



“The drover's departure—a scene in the Grampians”,
Sir Edwin Henry Landseer, 1835, Victoria & Albert Museum



“Christ Healing
the Sick in the
Temple,”

Benjamin West,
1811, purchased
for 3,000 guineas,
at that time the
“largest sum
ever paid for a
modern work”.



“Sancho Panza and the Duchess,” 1809 ▲



“Twelfth night,” ca 1800 ▲



“Brunetta and Phyllis,” ca 1800 ▲

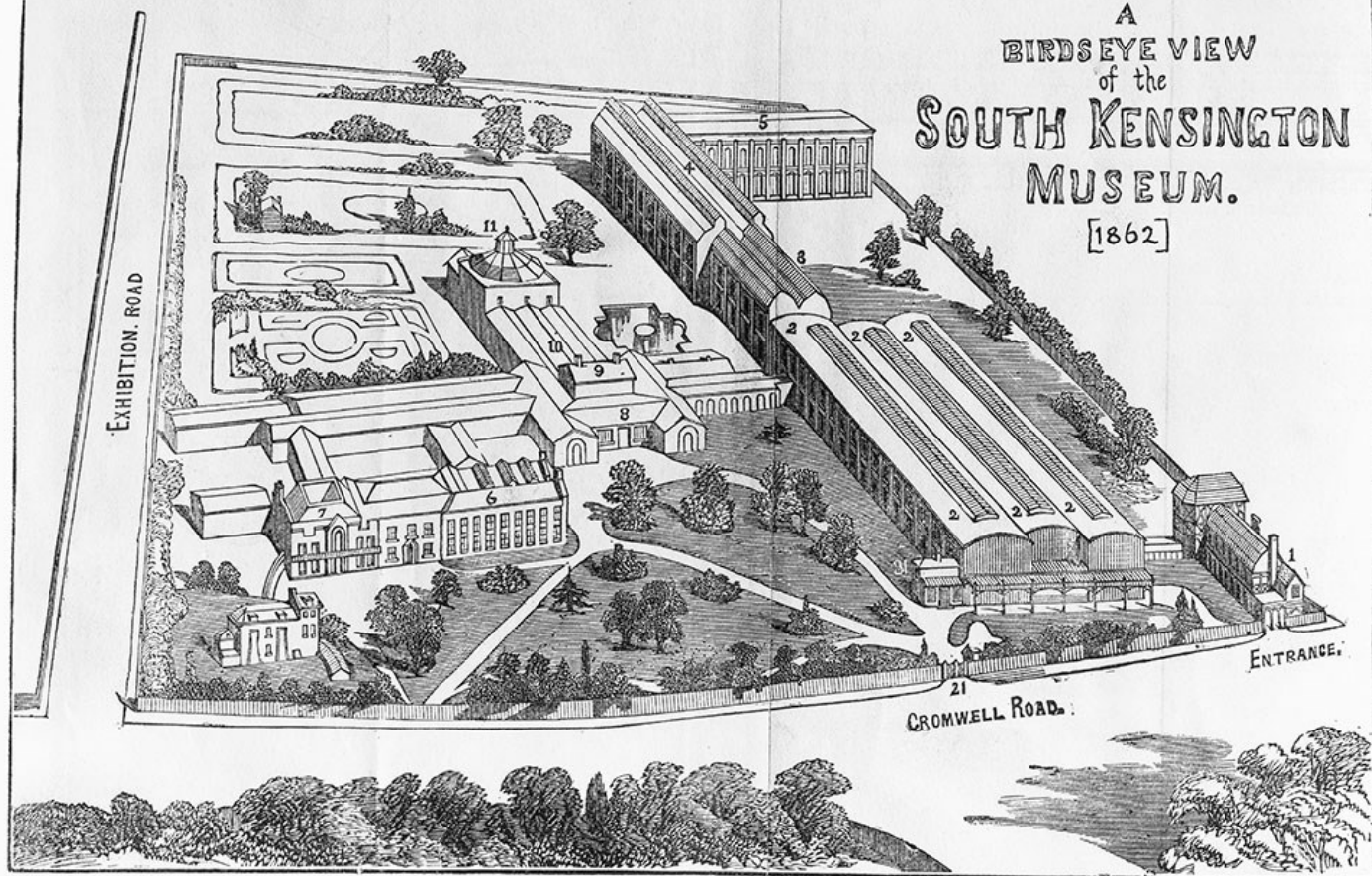
—Thomas Stothard, Victoria & Albert Museum—

Elizabeth narrowly missed seeing what Nathaniel Hawthorne would describe as “tantalising”, “full of imaginative beauty” and “like a tract of beautiful dream-land, seen dimly through sleep”—the work of Joseph Mallord William Turner who had died in 1851 and left his collection to the nation. Selected paintings from the Turner Bequest were housed for a time at the South Kensington Museum, but were transferred to the National Gallery, Trafalgar Square in 1861. I wonder what she would have thought....



Inside the South Kensington Museum, shortly after it opened in 1857.

A
BIRDSEYE VIEW
of the
**SOUTH KENSINGTON
MUSEUM.**
[1862]



Tapatahi

On 22 January 1838, at 1 p.m., we [1] reached Tapatahi, a pa romantically perched on the top of a steep craggy hill! Notwithstanding its situation it was taken by the Ngapuhi Tribes, who, flinging fire into it set it in a blaze and drove the wretched inhabitants over the crag, or murdered, and took them prisoners. David, of Kaikohe, near the Waimate Station, was the most courageous and foremost on that occasion; he it was who set fire to the pa, after they had been driven back for several days by the besieged. One of our Natives was present on the day of battle. The poor creatures had no fire-arms, while the assailants were well-armed. The relation of the story could but remind me of the Shechemites in the hold of their God Berith; Mr Stack addressed the people while I took a sketch of the place. Dined on coffee and potatoes with a very good zest. Conversd with the Chief, ascended the crag, turning inland hence, and over high and abruptly broken hills to Tokomaru....[2]

1. "We" is explained in Williams FW (*Through Ninety Years, 1826-1916: Life and Work Among the Maoris in New Zealand: Notes of the Lives of William and William Leonard Williams, First and Third Bishops of Waiapu*. Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, Auckland): "On January 20th, 1838, Rev. Wm. Williams and Messrs. Colenso, Matthews and Stack left Rangitukia, travelling separately in pairs, each two with a party of natives to carry food. Thus they were able to visit more of the native kaingas, and occasionally inter-changing companions."

2. ATL MS-0589: "Memorandum of several visits among the natives on the E. Coast of New Zealand; performed during the years, 1836, 1838, 1839, 1840, and 1841; extracted from private journal." This is a manuscript gifted to the ATL by George Colenso Carter (1878–1965), a grand-nephew of William Colenso. It contains Colenso's accounts of journeys between 1836 and 1841 which he compiled and sent to his parents. A fragment of the bush journal has survived (ATL Micro-MS-0170) with pencil entries 1 January to 15 February 1838 in a notebook about this journey, a Poverty Bay map, sketches of scenes, a hammerhead shark, a leaf and lists of Maori words.

In the formal account of his second visit to the area Colenso wrote, (early December 1841),

... I continued my journey. After travelling for four miles over beaches, I arrived at Waipiro, a small village, whence I directed my course inland, over high and craggy hills. A short distance beyond Tapatahi, a village romantically perched on a high and perpendicular crag, I discovered a timber tree of the Natural Order *Corylaceae*, from 30 to 60 feet in height, with small oval entire leaves, which may possibly be found to belong to the Linnæan genus *Fagus*. [3]

In 1842 Colenso sent the Church Missionary Society four drawings, with explanations, and a note on the moa. One of these (of *Paihia rae*) was published as a woodcut by Whimper (see *eColenso* September 2015) but the others appear to be lost. One of them was of Tapatahi, perhaps taken from the sketch he made in 1838, referred to in [2] above and reproduced on p.21.

Colenso's explanations of those four sketches have survived—including an interesting paragraph on Tapatahi,

3. Colenso W 1844. Memoranda of an Excursion, made in the Northern Island of New Zealand in the summer of 1841-2; intended as a contribution towards the ascertaining of the Natural Productions of the New Zealand Groupe: with particular reference to their Botany. *Launceston Examiner*, Launceston, 95p; reprinted 1846 *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics, Etc*; 1846; 2: 210-234, 241-308. This is Colenso's revision of his "Journal of a naturalist in some little known parts of New Zealand". *London Journal of Botany* 1844; 3: 1-62 (completed in September 1842; see *Colenso's collections*, p.151). Colenso later wrote to Sir William Hooker that a "more elaborate account of that Ramble (was) subsequently published in the *Tasmanian Journal* vol. ii, p.210" (letter 22 January 1851). The Tasmanian paper begins with a note from the editor to the effect that publication was delayed by a year, and that in the meantime the material had appeared in the *London Journal of Botany* (it had also appeared in booklet form, printed by the Launceston Examiner—see Introduction above). He reprinted WJ Hooker's introductory essay at the beginning.

A very romantic village, or rather strong hold, of the Ngatiporou Tribe. A great slaughter was made here, a few years ago. The poor creatures, on the first appearance of their enemies, fled to their high tower for refuge, but alas! They had no fire-arms, whereas their assailants were well provided; notwithstanding being as it were naturally defended, (for there was but one entrance, and that near the tree at the highest point of the crag,) they held out for a little time, but were at length taken by assault. Many were butchered, and many in the recklessness of despair, leaped the crag! choosing to do so rather than fall alive into the hands of their merciless foes! very many also were taken prisoners. Oh! What horrid days these were, when each *literally* thirsted for the other's blood! At such times mercy was scarcely ever shown—perhaps the greatest mercy was to despatch their victim quickly. Human bones, (the sad mementos of cannibal feasts,) and ovens, in which the bodies were cooked, are every where scattered over the face of the country. From some of the bones which I have seen in my lonely wanderings, it should appear that the by gone race of New Zealanders were men of large stature: my first visit to this place was in January 1838. Descending in the immediate foreground to some depth, we arrived at a river, crossing which we ascended and gained the top of the opposite side, (of a similar height to the place from which this sketch was taken,) thence proceeding we arrived at a pond near the immediate foot of the precipice; thence our road lay up the face of the hill, winding among the tree and bushes, emerging at last near the summit of the round topped hill, just without the cut trench of the citadel. The view from the top is quite imposing, the slope on the further side, being only one to the bed of the river in the valley—or rather gorge—

beneath, is very steep. The path runs along the top of the ridge, where the unwary traveller would not require a second slip to enable him quickly to find the bottom. [4]

He would have mentioned this in a footnote (“Note 7”) to his 1865 Exhibition essay [5], except the censorship of three of his footnotes by Eccles and Hector prevented the publication of any of them with the essay [6]. Fortunately a rough manuscript version of Note 7 survives in the Mitchell Library collection in Sydney,

Note 7, Par. 15. The Ngati Maru (Thames) Tribe used their flaming darts successfully in their attack on the stronghold of Tapatahi near Waiapu, S. of the E. Cape. This first landing site on the abrupt precipitous end of a high hilly range, made impregnable by nat., & containing several hundred natives was, after a long siege taken, through being fired by flaming combustibles slung, and thrown, into it. On this day there was a very great slaughter. Many threw themselves over the precipice, only a very few escaping w. their lives. [7]

Furthermore, he included a fuller version of Note 7 in a later paper,

“Note 7, par. 15, § 2.—Travelling beyond the East Cape in January, 1838, I arrived at Waipiro (Open Bay), and striking inland over high hills reached a place called Tapatahi, where were the remains of a famous stronghold or pa of the olden time. This fort is strongly situated on the abrupt precipitous end of a high hilly yet narrow range, and made impregnable by art; the only possible way of access leading from the top of the ridge, but this the Maoris had completely secured by cut-

5. Colenso W 1868. On the Maori Races of New Zealand. *Transactions of the N.Z. Institute* 1: 5–75. Three of the Notes were censored and none were printed with the original.

6. St George IM 2011. “Beastly”—Colenso censored. *eColenso*, April.

7. Mitchell Library, Sydney (ML reference A237: essay pp. 103–265, notes pp. 266–278).

ting a deep fosse across it. The Ngatimaru tribe, arriving in their canoes from the North, well armed with muskets for the purpose of slaughter, the people of this neighbourhood took refuge in their stronghold on the crag, where they were regularly besieged. Several hundreds of Maoris were cooped up in it, and for some time the place was closely invested; and though provisions fell short among them there was no outlet of escape. The besiegers getting both tired and hungry (!)—for the entrance end of the fort was made so high above the deep-cut fosse that musketry could effect nothing, unless any one of the besieged wilfully exposed himself—at last the besiegers hit upon a mode of attack and assault which proved successful; they prepared sticks with dry combustibles fastened to one of their ends, while to the other was tied a strip of flax-leaf, and the wind being favourable, they set fire to them, and then whirled and flung those flaming darts across the ditch into the pa, where, alighting on the dry thatch roofs of the houses and sheds, the whole was soon on fire; then, in the confusion, the assault was made, under cover of their muskets, and the slaughter was very great, even for a successful Maori attack! Many of the unfortunate besieged threw themselves down the precipice in sheer desperation, and only a very small number escaped with their lives. There is a small moat or pool of deep water close to the base of the precipice on one [114] side, and possibly a lucky few might have fallen into it, and so broke the force of their fall. The whole spot is a most romantic one naturally, and at the time of my visit

it was desolate and bare—a sad and striking memento of the horrid past!” [8]

Elsdon Best quoted from this in his *The Pa Maori* [9].

A fragment of the bush journal has survived (ATL Micro-MS-0170) with pencil entries 1 January to 15 February 1838 in a notebook about this journey, a Poverty Bay map, sketches of scenes, a hammerhead shark, a leaf and lists of Maori words. The scene that appears to match Colenso’s description of Tapatahi is shown below.



This sketch from Colenso’s bush journal for 1838 possibly shows Tapatahi.

8. Colenso W 1879. On the Moa. Transactions of the New Zealand Institute 12: 63-108.

9. Best E 1927. The Pa Maori. Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, Wellington.



THE NEW ZEALAND
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