

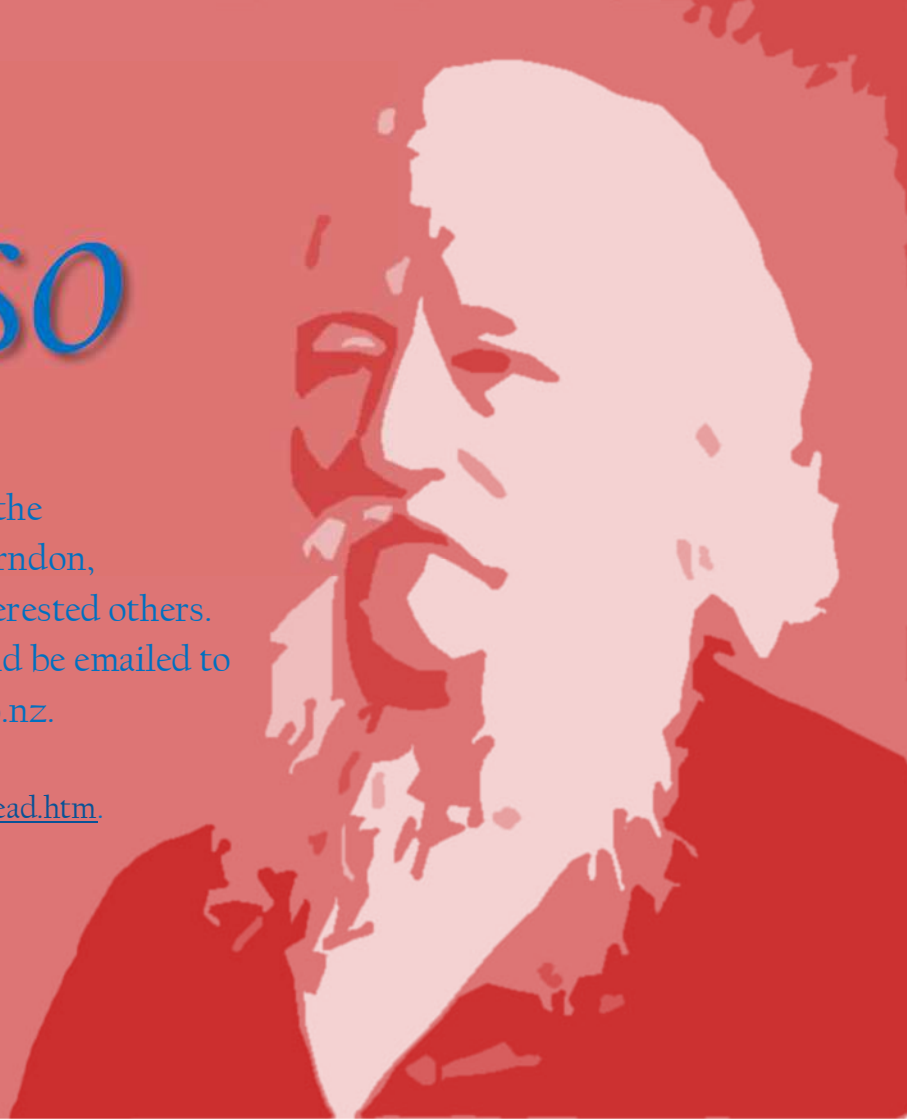
eColenso

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

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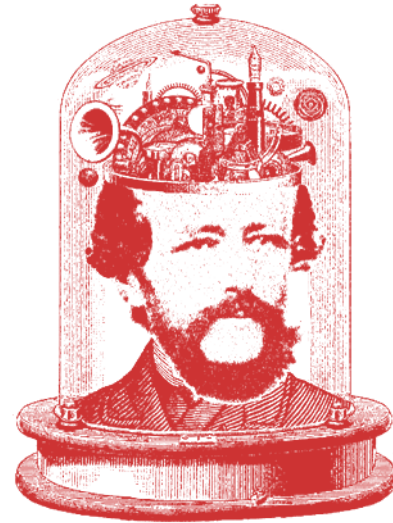
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**The NZ polymath:
Colenso & his contemporaries.**

Wellington 16–18 November.

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An unpoetical and disreputable pursuit

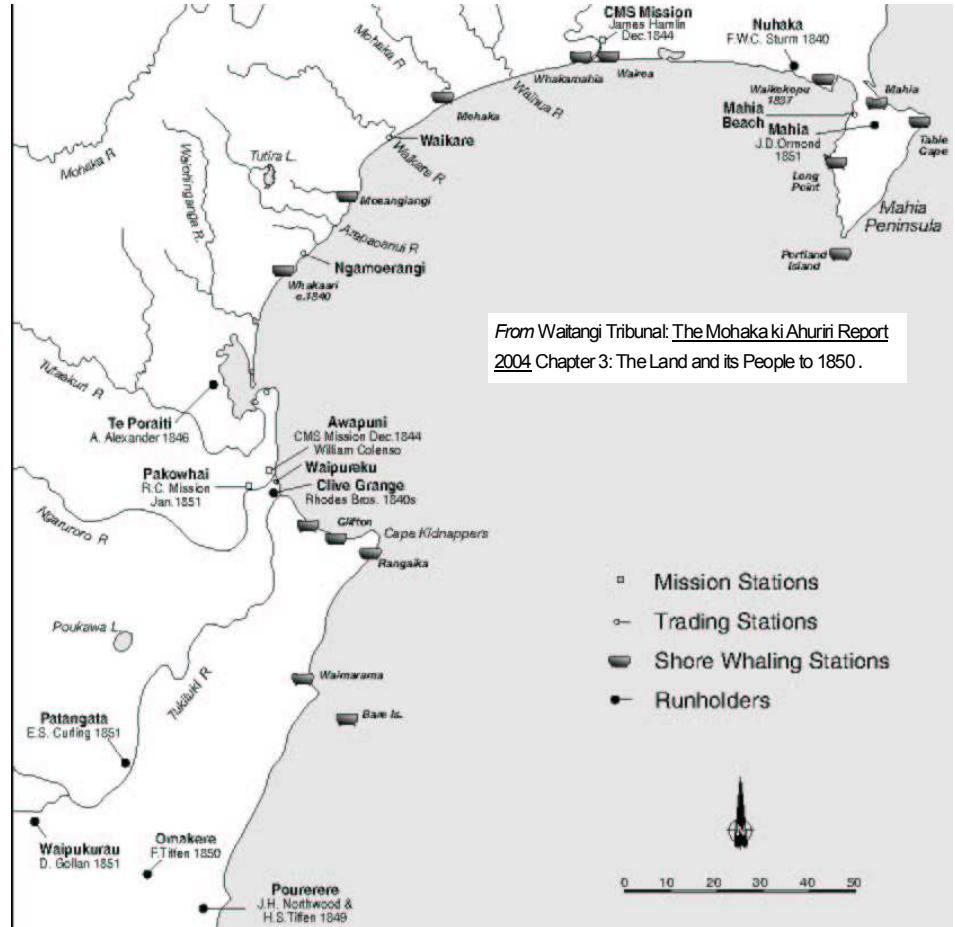
... this business of whaling has somehow come to be regarded among landsmen as a rather unpoetical and disreputable pursuit.

—Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*.

The shore boundary of William Colenso's Hawke's Bay and Wairarapa parish was peppered with whaling stations during the boom in whaling:

...by 1840 there were up to 1,000 whalers in New Zealand and whaling led the country's economy.... (An) area of growth was the east coast of the North Island. Whaling began at Gisborne in 1837, and by 1847 there were 17 boats in Hawke's Bay.¹

Hawke's Bay whaling stations were at Long Point 1840s, Mahia 1837–40s, Moeangiāngi 1840s?, Moemotu 1840s, Mohaka 1840s, Portland Island 1840s, Pourerere 1849?–?, Putotarānui 1845?–46?, Rangaiika 1845–51?, Te Hoe 1840s?, Waikokopu 1837–50s?, Wairoa 1844?–50s?, Whakaari 1840s–45, Whangawehi 1840s.²



In modern accounts history has its edges rounded off, as,

Maori also played a major role in shore whaling, many going on to become boat steers and headsmen, or set up their own stations. In Hawke's Bay the stations depended heavily on Maori labour, making the relationship between Maori and Pakeha whalers one of mutual respect and equality. Prominent Ngati Kurukuru chief Tiakitai had, for example, served as the patron of Morris's Rangaika whaling station until his death in 1845, bringing it under his protection. Maori, in exchange, gained access to goods, money and work.³

...and,

Whalers often married Māori women, who acted as mediators between the whalers and Māori when necessary.⁴

Colenso's accounts are harrowingly sharper.

On **15 January 1845** the great chief Tiakitai's daughter Kore was drowned in the river while Tiakitai was at the whaling station selling 2 women of this village to the whites for prostitution.... Conversing, while at (Waimarama), with the father of the girl who was yet to be taken to the Whaling Station, he said, It is not of my doing—it is against my wish, and also the wish of my daughter and her mother, but what can we do against Tiakitai? His word is law, no one dares to speak....

Arriving at the Station, I kept my word towards (Tiakitai);—and (after he had made several ineffectual efforts to induce me to give away, or to see him,) at last succeeded in gaining my point—i.e. his taking back the money and bringing away the 2 young women.

3 March 1845 (at Waimarama). This morning I read prayers and held School, after which I conversed with the Natives. Rebuked Tuahu, the Chief, severely and openly, for his wretched conduct in sell-

ing his only daughter (a fine young Baptized woman) to a white man at the Whaling Station near by for prostitution; my doing so called forth much bad language from him; I succeeded, however, in driving him away from my tent. In the course of the day I examined catechized and taught the Catechumens, 9 in no.:—read with the Baptized Natives, who are ignorant and careless (which is always the case with Natives who live in the neighbourhood of Whites):—

... the only daughter of Tuahu the Chief of Waimarama, has since given birth to a half caste child.

On **7 March 45** Colenso wrote to Tiakitai (Translated from te reo in his *King James Version* style), suggesting Kore's death was a punishment for his selling the women,

“From Parimahu, March 7/ 45.

“O sir, O Tiakitai, this indeed is my word to thee; this also being the second of my words to thee, be thou listening hitherward. I am dead, verily dead to the utmost. Thou also hast caused it. For the first time indeed, I am said to be the receiver of the price of women's blood! but why mention it? when Tiakitai has done it. I did not know, when I was residing at the station, the Cause, why thy daughter died; but on my coming hither to this Sea-coast, I too truly & plainly saw a cause why she ceased to be. Yes, thou didst kill her. Incline thine attention hitherward, hear, thou wert the cause of the death of Kore. Forasmuch as on that very day, in that very self-same hour indeed, in which she ceased to be among us, here thou wert, here, at the whaling-station, stealing women, selling man's blood, & causing fornication to grow, that thou mightest have money! But what of that? Why speak? Thou hast contended against, yea, thou hast despised God, and now thou seest the fruit of thy work. Yes; seest to the very extreme the truth of that word, “The wages of sin is death.” O sir,

“Jehovah is known by the judgment which he executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.”—He, himself says this. And this, also, is equally true, “I, Jehovah, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children.” Didst thou indeed forget those words of the Catechism? together with these, “The eyes of Jehovah are in all places beholding the evil and the good; and from him there is nothing hid”? But enough!... If thou wert desirous of causing fornication and adultery to grow, why didst thou not give one of the six* (*He has six wives) whom thou hast, that thou mightest have money? But that compared with this! verily, nothing.—For, besides sin of fornication, here is also the theft, the selling of the daughters of that man as money for thee! this, indeed, is the bad thing; yes, the veriest bad thing.... Now indeed the great sinning man is come; even thou; fearless, shameless, what-less—Alas! for thee, O Tiakitai!”

“Go thou, O sir! go thou, to the entrance of the chapel which is nigh thy dwelling; look forth towards the graves; say forth, O Kore, alas! through me thou hast been killed! O my daughter, also! I was too well-disposed towards the wages of sin! I stole, I sold other girls: I spoke falsely of the ministers of God; and thou indeed, alas! O Kore! thou indeed art the price!”....

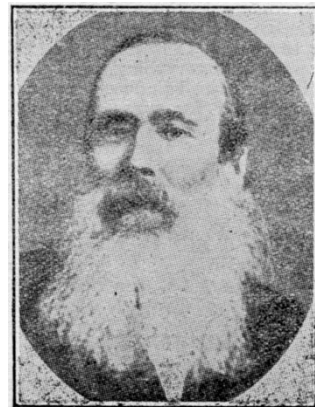
“Now hear me: Return the price of blood to the whites;—bring thence both Emi and Martha; then, pray to God to forgive thy evil deeds.—And, dwell mindfully, ceasing thus to sin, lest a worse judgment fall upon thee. Then, when I hear thou hast so done, my heart perhaps may recover from this abiding darkness and grief which remains within and travels with me.”

“Once more, go thou not to my house to my place, lest my wife should be afraid because of thee. Let my place be as a forbidden one to thee for these times. This is all my word to thee in this season. It is done.”

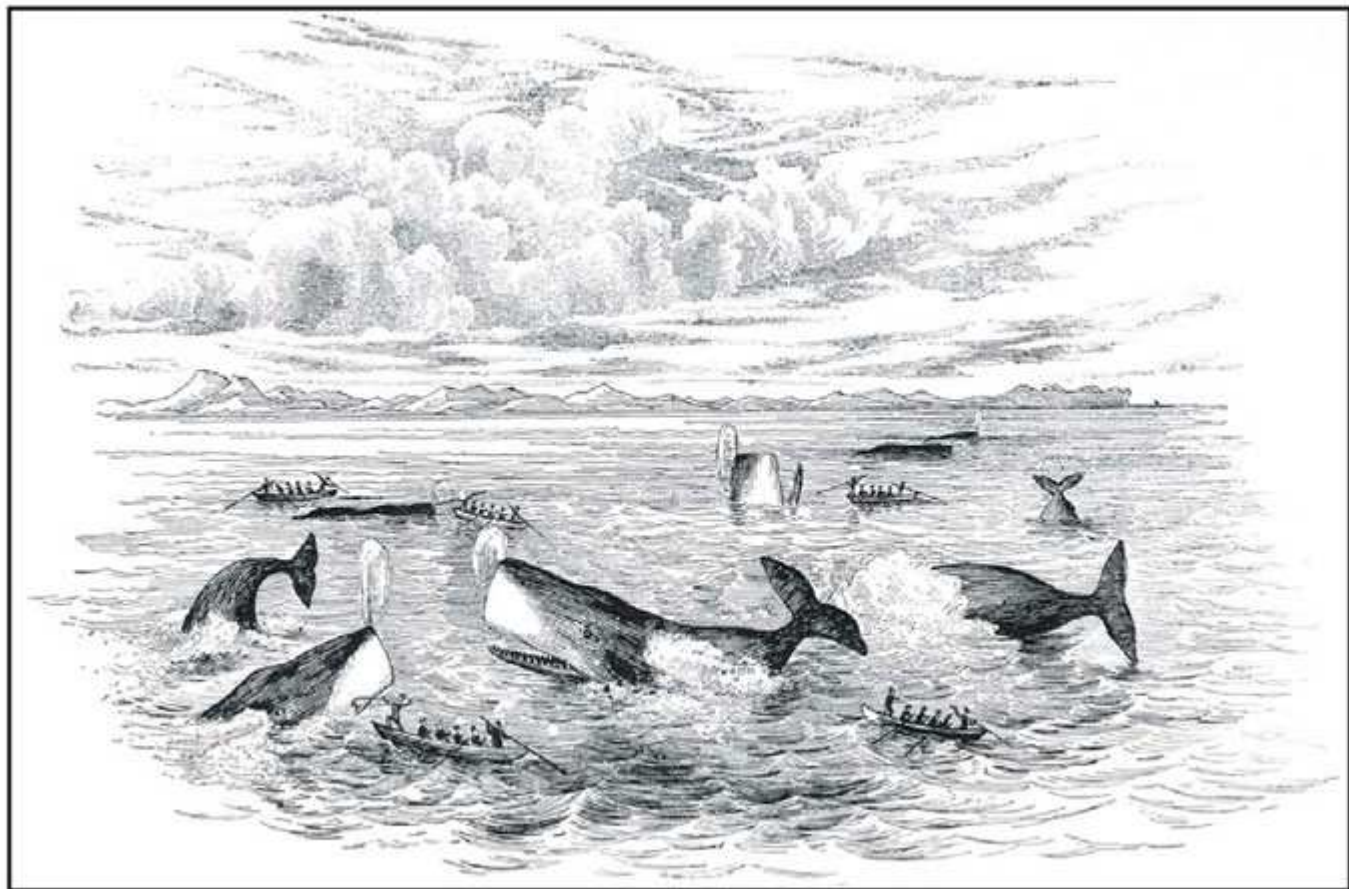
“From the Minister of these places of Heretaunga,
From Colenso”.

4 July 45 (at the Mission station): A day worthy of a passing notice, on account of the proud Chief, Tiakitai, having submitted himself, coming to my terms, and, consequently, going to the whaling Station, and taking away the two women of his party who were there.—For this, too, O Lord, I thank thee.

9 December 45 (at the Mission station): William Morris, the owner of the whaling station at Cape Kidnapper, (from whom I have received several favours, in landing and bringing my goods in his boats,—in lending stores when in want, &c.,) called today, to request me to use my influence and speak to Kurupou in his behalf, as he thought he was about to treat him hardly, and perhaps to rob his place.—The cause this:—Morris, who has resided several years among the Natives, has been in the habit (in common with other Masters of whaling stations) of giving the Chief to whom the place belonged a trifling sum pr. ann., for right of fishing off that spot. This, hitherto, had been £5., but now Kurupou demanded £10., saying, less he would not have. Morris declared, that rather than give it he would leave,



William Morris



From an old plate.

Whaling off the North Cape, New Zealand.

and go somewhere else to reside, adding, that of all Natives he had ever seen or dealt with, these residing hereabouts were the worst. Now, when the immense outlay which these men have to make before they are ready “to whale”—their constant exposure in the cold and stormy winter season (for it is only then that the whales approach the coast) to daily peril if not death—and the very great uncertainty attendant upon their labour, are, on the one hand, duly considered, and, on the other, the great benefit, in the way of Trade, which the Natives derive from them, it will, I think, be evident, that £5. pr. ann. is money enough for (as they call it) “a standing-place for the Trypot”. I told Morris that I would speak to Kurupou, but that I, also, knew well what kind of man he was, and would very much rather have nothing to do with him. Wrote this evening a note to Kurupou, to come to see me.

11th. This morning at 10 o'clock... Kurupou paid me a visit... from their countenances and manner, I augured anything but a pleasant conversation. Kurupou began, by asking If Morris had been here, and what I wanted, &c. I told him what I had to say, after very many interruptions on his part, and when I had finished, he commenced in good earnest;—giving me a great deal of bad language for daring to speak in the matter, and declaring that he never would take less than what he had demanded—£10. I endeavoured to convince him, that the fairer plan would be, to arrange so, as to have so much for every Fish secured, or for every so many tuns of oil, as some seasons the whalers caught nothing;—but all I could say was to little purpose.



“Happy Jack,”
a Mahia whaler

10 February 1846 (at Matarauwī, a small village a few miles S. of Cape Kidnapper). I talked with Tuahu, the old Chief of Waimarama, (who sold his only daughter, a Baptized female, to the wretched whites living in the Whale Fishery at the Cape,) and found him as hardened and careless as ever.

19 August 46: Morning prayers & School, about 35 present. After School, Tiakitai came up and proffered his hand, which I refused, as... he had recently re-sold one of the young women, whom I had got away from the whaling station at Cape Kidnapper, to the whites of that place; he, therefore, returned in high dudgeon.

13 June 1847: A native arrived this evening from Mr. Morris’ Whaling Station, at Cape Kidnapper, upwards of 30 miles distant, bringing a letter from Mr. Morris to me, imploring my interference to protect him from some of his own large European party, who had banded together & threatened his life, &c.

16th.... we started for Aropauanui; on the heights we met Rahurahu (a young heathen Chief of the Wairoa) and a party of Natives with him, coming in quest of some white men who had yesterday broken into a house of his in his absence and had taken therefrom a lot of whaling gear. I gave him suitable advice. This is one of the ways in which the whites get embroiled with the Natives, and then (if the Native stands up for his common right) they call loudly & repeatedly on the British Government for aid! I afterwards found that these persons were those who had left Mr. Morris, and from whom he thought he was in imminent danger.

23rd.... I landed at Mr. Alexander’s, where I had a long 3-hour’s conversation with the ringleader of the whaling party who had behaved very ill to Mr. Morris, and who subsequently abstracted the whaling-gear from the house of Rahurahu. This same man was the fellow who gave Capt. Mulholland so much trouble in March last. He had been waiting here to see me some days, in consequence of my

letter written on the night of the 13th. inst. to Mr. Morris, and note to Mr. Alexander. At first he was inclined to bounce, until I assured him, that if he broke the peace I would be the first to lay hands upon him, and would soon get him conveyed to Wellington gaol. At last he promised fair, but looks like a confirmed rogue. He is a Native of Tasmania, and is what the seamen call a “sea-lawyer”. It is well for me, that I know how to deal with such fellows, in such a place and time as this.

3 September 1847: Received an application, to day, from Tuahu, the Heathen Chief of Waimarama, for medicine.—This is that Chief who got so enraged at my rebuking him, when at his place, for having bartered his daughter to some of the low whites at the Whaling Station.

[In September 1847 Tiakitai and his party were drowned at sea, further evidence, in Colenso's eyes, of divine retribution].

Annual report for the year ending December 1847: I found it no small matter to make the parties of whalers & others residing on this side of Hawke's Bay to keep the peace among themselves: and also to prevent their getting the different tribes of natives among whom they live to join them respectively to fight and pillage each other. No doubt had I not strongly interfered they would have shed each other's blood and caused a little disturbance in this neighbourhood.

6 March 1848: I assembled a Class of Candidates for Baptism.... (one) is Emi, a young woman whom the late Chief Tiakitai sold to the whites at the Whaling Station at Cape Kidnapper, upon that memorable day in which his daughter was drowned; and which sale of his subsequently led to so much disturbance between us. In Tiakitai's last ill-fated expedition to Poverty Bay, in September last, he took the white man to whom he had sold Emi to steer his boat, and that night they were all drowned together. Now Emi has become a Candidate for Baptism.

WHALING STATIONS.

The whalers seem to have come to the Bay in the late 'thirties, and when they arrived they found the bulk of the natives settled round the northern shores, between the Wairoa River and Mahia, whither they had migrated after some rather disastrous raids at the Heretaunga by Taupo and Waikato tribes. Whaling stations were established at Mahia, Waikokopu, Cape Kidnappers, Wairoa, and other places. In 1847 there were seventeen five-oared boats in the Bay, employing over 120 men. In that year £3000 worth of oil and £700 worth of whalebone was taken by these Bay stations. These fellows lived a care-free, devil-may-care life, drinking and gambling, without any check whatever, and it is said that more died from the effects of drink than from the accidents of their calling, hazardous as it was.

These whalers were naturally a wild lot, just as they were at half a dozen other places round the coast. “The New Zealand Spectator,” writing in 1850 about a murderer who had escaped said, “He is trying to escape to Hawke's Bay, on the East Coast, which seems the Alsatia of the colony, where all disorderly and desperate characters resort to be out of reach of the law.” We read that in 1847 a coastal trading vessel “was plundered near Waikokopu of goods and money by white men connected with the whaling stations.” Other disreputable doings are also on record and the missionary Colenso seems to have had a busy time trying to keep his native flock from being utterly contaminated by this white flotsam.

—Henry Brett 1928. *White Wings* (volume II).
The Brett Printing Company Limited, Auckland.

21 June 1848: Married a young couple who had been patiently awaiting my arrival. Martha, the bride, is the young woman, with whose father, the Chief Tuahu, I had such a skirmish at Waimarama, in 1845, and whom I subsequently rescued from the Whalers at Cape Kidnapper.

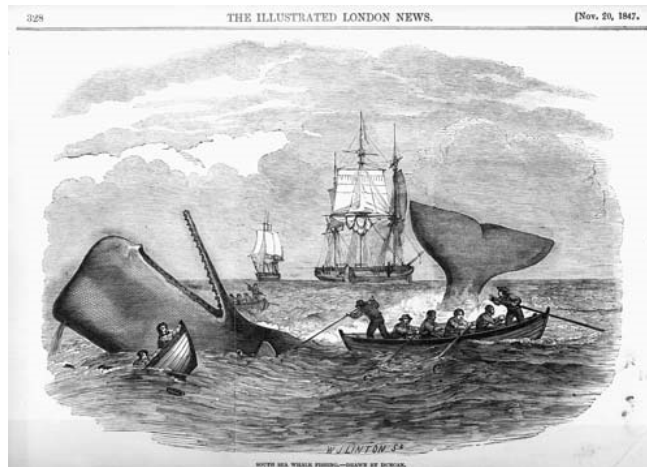
1 October 1849: Returning from the Chapel to my tent, an elderly native came, and asked me for medicine for his daughter, (Reremorehu, a girl about 12 years of age,) who, he said, was “very ill with a peculiar malady.” I gave him what I could, and advised him, at the same time, to tell her to pray to Jesus.... Returning to my tent by starlight, quite weary, having spent nearly the whole day from sunrise in the Chapel, and sitting down in my tent to a cup of tea, one of my domestic natives, informed me the reason why the little girl, Reremorehu (the daughter of Te Korou, who had this morning applied to me for medicine for her,) had become a Papist, namely, her having been sold by her unnatural father, to a wretch of a white man now living here, and that she had been ill almost ever since, her malady being *vagina lacera*! I felt both sickened & indignant at hearing Edwin’s recital, and on Te Awi (one of the principal Chiefs of the Tribe professing Xy.) coming to my tent to see me, I enquired of him if it was true. He quickly & carefully replied in the affirmative. Several natives having assembled about my tent, I expressed my detestation of such abominable practices, and denounced in my strongest manner such cursed traffic. And, finding, alas! that they were all inclined to think favourably of it, (and

the more fully to shew those callous-hearted fellows how very heinous I considered such conduct to be,) I ordered my baggage-bearers to strike my tent and pack up, that we might leave at once, instead of waiting for the morning, as previously arranged. Telling the

Church... I should not see them again until they had taken away the poor girl from the brutal pakeha, and either separated those evil-doers from among them, or themselves from the evil-doers.

2nd. On rising this morning I was informed, that the brutal whaler, who had bought the little girl, Reremorehu, had come (accompanied by a Native) to see me. Leaving my tent I had prayers & School as usual, and on returning thither, this man accosted me, demanding in a most bold manner, (by way of preface,) whether I had really dared to tell the Natives at Tangoio that he was a slave! I told

him, that I had, and would now tell him to his face, that he was a slave to the worst of masters the devil. Upon this he uttered a deal of really shameful language, mixed with threats, upon which I, pretty well knowing how to deal with such fellows, told him, that if he did not speak in a more civil manner, I would most certainly get him soused in the neighbouring river. Hearing this he became a little more decent in his behaviour, but still his language was reprehensible. In conclusion (after “glorying in his shame” to some length,) he said, that he had the Chiefs of Tangoio to side with him, &, he dared me to go there again, and, that if any harm should be done by the Natives to



a thread of his, or to a hair of his head, he would seek and obtain his revenge, cost what it would, &c. I told him, that he might be well assured I should go there again, but that I certainly hoped to hear, first, of his having left the village; and, that while I hoped they would do him no bodily injury (if he would depart quietly), still, if they had tarred and feathered him, I should have rejoiced thereat. I had heard of this fellow before, as being one of the genus known among seamen as a “sea-lawyer”! The Natives of Bethany, who thronged about us, would have done any thing to him which I should order. And some of them were not a little displeased with me for permitting him to return unmolested, they having heard & understood some of his insulting language.

4th. This evening a messenger arrived from Tangoio, bringing letters from the Chiefs & N. Teacher, to inform me of their having separated the girl from the white man, but that they expected she would die being very ill, (no doubt from the abominable usage she received from him, she being a small though healthy girl, and he a huge beast,) and, that the white brute was to leave next week, &c.

16 October: I heard, today, that the P. Priest, on reaching Tangoio, had, ... at the brutal whaler’s suggestion, (who, however, disowns his being a Papist,) married him to the poor ill-used girl, Reremorehu; and now the Papist party and their new ally are exulting over this stratagem, by which they have effectually “served me out.” I having

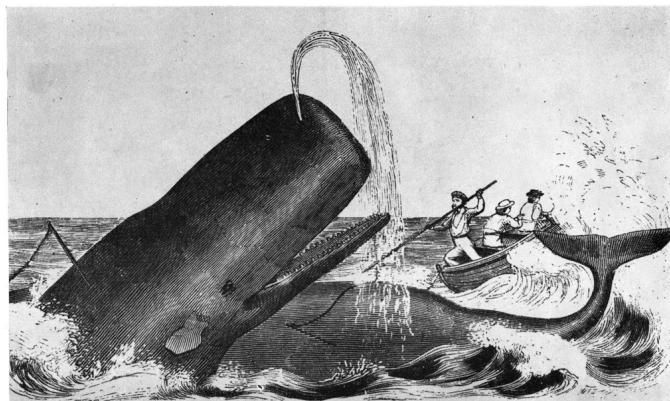
said, that I would not go thither again until they had taken away the Child, and separated themselves from this dealer in human flesh.

31st. This morning Matthew returned from Tangoio; the poor girl, Reremorehu is dead! She died a few days after her unhallowed marriage by the P. Priest; and the white, fearing the rage of the people, has fled to Table Cape.

Annual report for the year ending December 1849: I have... had, to conflict with no small annoyance from immoral Europeans, whalers & others; who may truly enough be said to be the evil curse of New Zealand, and who are determined still to carry on, if possible, their old practises of buying young girls from their Heathen & Popish parents for the worst purposes.

20 January 1850: After breakfast

I married the 4 couples—... Eliza Pohutu, another of the brides, is the young woman whom I had last year rescued from the vile European whalers at Te Wairoa, and whom I had Baptized here on the 12th. of last month.



HARPOONED WHALES BREACHING
[From *Life and Adventure in the South Pacific*]

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3. <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/culture/pre-1840-contact/sealers-and-whalers>.
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Te rewharewha

The venerable old man Melchizedec Te Motu of Ngāwakatatara listed for William Colenso the troubles that had beset *te tangata* from the earliest times and Colenso duly recorded the lament in his journal...

20 July 1852: Arriving at Ngāwakatatara we were loudly welcomed, and soon treated with a long lamentation and oration by the venerable old man Melchizedec Te Motu. Poor dear old man! on my sitting down in the verandah of the little hut they had prepared for me, he came, and clasping my knees, bowed his head, and wept long & loudly like a little child. Our “tangi” over, he rose, & going silently to his hut, put on some better apparel. When he returned, and made a long and animated speech.—He began at the first man (N.Z.), thence he recounted downwards; often making a pause, to ask, “Why did not the Gospel come then?” At last he came down to his own youthful days, and related what he had seen and suffered:—the different epochs of the axe, of the musket, of the new food and clothing, of the slaughtering Hongi, of the coming of the *Re-wharewha*, (the fatal contagious disease which severely scourged the natives about 40 years ago, & which well nigh exterminated the few whom war & murder had left,) and of the whalers and their rum,—and, lastly, of the Gospel.

We cannot be certain what the rewharewha was, but it was probably influenza of which the first epidemic was about 1790. It is therefore often attributed to the sailors on Cook’s second voyage—though it is hard to understand how they could have kept the virus alive for the 6

months the *Resolution* took from Capetown to New Zealand (22 November 1772 to 7 May 1773). Cook did return to NZ twice on this voyage, but after visiting only other Pacific islands. Forster had however complained of flu-like symptoms on the voyage south.

About the end of the eighteenth century the Kauarapaoa Pa on the Whanganui River was held by about eight hundred natives when the devastating rewharewha epidemic broke out among them. An old native thus described it to Mr. Best: “Friend, I will now tell you of the first sign of the white man which came to us. It was the rewharewha, the disease that slaughtered the Maori people, until thousands were represented by hundreds, and hundreds by tens. When attacked by that disease, for one night and one day might man look upon the world of life: then death came. Men did not die singly, but in tens, and twenties, and thirties. Day by day and day by day they died. No effort was made by the survivors to mourn for the dead, or to carry out our ancient burial customs, for a great fear was upon them. And the hearts of the living breathed not as they looked upon the multitude of the dead. So the children of Paerangi went down to Hades. Then the survivors fled to the ranges, and a war party which came to attack the fort found only the dead therein, many of whom they ate.”¹

The Italian word *raffreddore* for a cold or flu is similar to *rewharewha*—as is the Spanish *resfriado*—and even the English *respiratory infection*....

Reference

1. Goldie WH 1904. Maori Medical Lore: Notes on the Causes of Disease and Treatment of the Sick among the Maori People of New Zealand, as believed and practised in Former Times, together with some Account of Various Ancient Rites connected with the Same. *Transactions of the NZ Institute* 37: 86. [Read before the Auckland Institute, 7th September, 1903.]

McLean tried to dump Colenso in 1864

William Colenso's political career went like this,

1859 Elected Provincial Councillor; appointed Provincial Auditor and re-elected Councillor.

1860 Appointed acting Provincial Treasurer.

1861 January accepted nomination for Parliament, eventually elected to House of Representatives; **July** joined opposition benches in Auckland.

1863 Re-elected to Provincial Council, but resigned: wrote *To the electors of the town of Napier*; re-elected in March; dropped by McLean as Provincial Treasurer.

1864 Political skirmishes.

1865 Resigned seat on Provincial Council, re-elected 2 weeks later; **March** defeated by McLean in election for Napier seat in House of Representatives.

There is an interesting file in the National Archives that tells us something about the 1864 skirmishes.¹

Donald McLean wrote to the Colonial Secretary on 25 January 1864, in his official capacity as Superintendent of Hawke's Bay,

Sir,

A question having arisen under the Disqualification Act 1858 as to the validity of Mr. Colenso's seat in the Provincial Council owing to his being in receipt of pay from the Post Office department I have the honour to forward a Resolution of the Provincial Council addressed to me on the subject.

I also enclose copies of correspondence relating to Mr. Colenso's employment in the Post Office.

I should be glad if I can be favored with an opinion from the Honble the Attorney General² as to whether the circumstances of this case are sufficient to justify me in issuing a New Writ in accordance with the 12th. clause of the Constitution Act.

The subject being one which refers also to Mr Colenso's seat in the House of Representatives I feel less hesitation in soliciting an opinion respecting it.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most ob. servt

Donald McLean

Superintendent.

the Provincial Council resolution was dated 21 January 1864,

Mr. Rhodes³ moved the following Resolution, That Doubts having arisen as to the right of Mr Colenso to sit on this Council it is the opinion of this Council that His Honor the Superintendent shall without delay obtain all the evidence that can be procured as to the disqualification of the said Member.

Should this evidence be conclusive it is the opinion of this Council that a "New Writ" should be issued in accordance with Clause 12 of the Constitution Act and the provisions of the General Assembly of New Zealand. Mr. Kennedy⁴ seconded the motion.

Motion agreed to.

A true copy

Clerk of Council.

If the scrawled notes almost obscuring McLean's letter are anything to go by, the letter caused the stir it might have been expected to,

There is a letter from Mr. Colenso on this subject (attached hereto) on which, before I saw this, I have made some remarks—

The opinion of the Hon. Attorney General is not sufficient to decide the question, and if, hereafter, the Supreme Court should hold the seat as valid,—great confusion would in the meantime arise.

Under the 9th. section of "The Provincial Elections Act 1858" it is prescribed that the right of a person claiming to be a Member of a Provincial Council (except in certain cases provided for by the 11th Sectn. of the Constitution Act) shall be determined by a "Quo Warranto" "and by no other mode"—Suing for a penalty in the Supreme Court under the Disqualifications Act would therefore seem not to be sufficient alone to justify the Govt. in issuing a new writ, though it might practically prevent such a person taking his seat.

(Signed) W Gisborne⁵ 1 Oct/64.

Scrawled across the foot of the page is,

Mr Gisborne's views are in my opinion quite correct. It may be added that as against the House of Representatives it would be a most unconstitutional proceeding for the Executive Central Government to interfere—the decision rests altogether with the House & in the case of the Provincial Council it rests with the Supreme Court.

Fred Whitaker⁶ 2 Feb 1864.

Colenso's letter was dated 23 January 1864, from Napier,

Sir,

I have the honor to address you respecting a matter affecting myself, brought, on Thursday last the 21st inst., before the Provincial Council of Hawke's Bay, and which yesterday ended in a Resolution empowering the Superintendent to make enquiry, and, if satisfied, to proclaim my seat therein vacant.

I do not know, Sir, whether I should more properly write to the Attorney General on this matter; but, if so, I trust you will pardon my writing to you, and forward my letter to the Hon. the Attorney General. I see, however, by the late Gazettes, that you are also at present acting for the Post-Master General, which is with me an additional reason why I should write to you.

The Case is simple, and well-known, and is as follows:—When this Province was first formed, the inland Mails were a Provincial charge, and carried by Maories; consequently I, as Provincial Government Interpreter, had to do all the Interpreting work, &c. After about twelve months, the said Inland Mails became a General Government Charge, and then, on the Maories again becoming Contractors, the Chief Post-Master here (Mr Catchpool) requested me to assist him. I did so, and (although I soon after resigned my Office of Provincial Interpreter,) have done so, with little intermission, down to the present. I believe, that I assisted the Chief Post-Master for two years, without asking, or indeed expecting any remuneration. I, however, had stated to him, on several occasions, my inclination to cease assisting him,—mainly from the fact of the number of Inland Mails carried being greatly increasing, and all performed by Maories, and the work of writing, interpreting, arranging, &c., &c., becoming increasingly heavy.—

At about the time of the late Post-Master General's (the Hon. C. Ward's) visit in 1862, it was arranged, that I should receive £50. gratuity for former services down to June in that year; and, that a sum not exceeding £30. should be at the disposal of the Chief Post-Master for what assistance I might render during the following year, if I would continue to assist. At the same time, the Chief Post-Master at Napier was instructed, not hereafter to contract to pay so much for special assistance without leave. Early in 1863, on Mr Catchpool resigning the office of Chief Post-Master, and myself (shortly after) also resigning that of Provincial Treasurer, I again wished to cease assisting the Chief Post-Master here, but I was (on strong official importunity) induced to continue to do so, to aid the new Chief Post-Master who had only recently taken office. But, in September 1863, I informed him by letter that I could not assist him any longer (copy enclosed). At Auckland, however, the then acting Post-Master General, Mr Reader Wood, begged me to do so again on my return to Napier; (Mr. Elliott Elliott having also previously written to Napier to that effect,)—on returning hither from Auckland, I consented to assist the Chief Post-Master as formerly; only stipulating, that I should be paid according to the amount of work done, for which I should send in my account of charges quarterly.

This, Sir, (or, rather, what I did for the Government up to September, 1863,) has now been brought against me an our Provincial Council by Mr Ormond⁷ (Member for Porangahau), and by Mr McLean (Superintendent) as disqualifying me (under the "Disqualification Act" of 1858,) both for the Provincial Council and the House of Representatives. And which, of course, I have disputed, and do deny; believing, (as I have always believed,) that I hold no "office" nor "place" within the meaning of that Act.—

I enclose, sir, six printed copies (such as I happen to have left,) of some of my work for the Public Service; that you may the better form some idea of the character and amount of it; among which you will find, the "List of Tenders received for Mails for 1863," nearly 170 in number! All of which had to be translated arranged and answered; although of the very many other Maori letters to translate and answer, as well as of the many personal arrangements with them, occurring at all hours, you, Sir, can really have but a faint idea.

—I would also further refer you (if needed) to copies of correspondence of last year, (filed in the General Post Office Auckland,) between the late Chief Post Master here and the Maori Chief Renata of this place, and also the principal Chief of Poverty Bay, Raharuhui,—to shew something of the importance of the aid which I have had the honor to render to H.M. Service and this part of the Colony—for all of which, as I take it, the Country Residents in this Province should much rather be ready to thank me than to find fault.—

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your mo. ob. servt.

Wm. Colenso.

Colenso's letter is accompanied by other letters and receipts. There are draft responses to McLean and Colenso in Gisborne's hand. To McLean,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of Your Honor's letter of the 25th. ultimo submitting certain documents relative to a question which had arisen respecting the qualification of Mr Colenso as a Member of the Provincial Council of Hawkes Bay and requesting the opinion of the Hon. Attorney General whether, under the circumstances, you would be justified in

issuing a new writ for another election.

Under the 9th. Section of “The Provincial Elections Act 1858” it is prescribed that the right of a person (who) claims to be a Member of a Provincial Council (except in certain cases provided for by the 11th. Section of the Constitution Act) shall be determined by a “Quo Warranto” “and by no other mode.”

As the proper course of proceeding in such a case as the one in question is thus clearly laid down by law, and as the opinion of the Attorney General is not of course sufficient to decide the point, I have not thought it necessary to obtain the opinion of that Officer.

With reference to the seat in the House of Representatives to which you refer as held by Mr Colenso, it would be much more unconstitutional that the Executive Govt should interfere. The decision is that (the) case rests altogether with the House of Repves, as, in the case of the Provincial Council, it rests with the Supreme Court.

and to Colenso,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd ultimo respecting a question which had arisen relative to your qualification as a Member of the Provincial Council of Hawkes Bay.

As the 9th Section of “The Provincial Election Act 1858” specifically provides a mode for the determination by the Supreme Court of such questions, it would not be proper for the Executive Government to interfere in any way in the matter to which you refer.

In the event, of course, Colenso retained both positions till the following year, when he was thoroughly beaten by McLean for the Parliamentary seat.

But what was this all about? just another incident in the Colenso-McLean saga? or dirty politics by the Provincial Executive, led by old squattocracy cronies McLean and Ormond, supported by Rhodes and Kennedy?



McLean



Ormond

References

1. NZ National Archives 1864/195.
2. The Attorney General in 1864 was Frederick Whitaker (see 6 below).
3. Joseph Rhodes 1826–1905, a man of property, acquiring the Clive Grange and Milton Grange estates, he played his part in Provincial Government in Hawke's Bay from 1859 to 1876.
4. Captain Alexander Kennedy, –1888, a captain in the New Zealand Militia, he fought and bled at the battle of Oamaru; he was intimately connected with the political, commercial, and social progress of Napier.
5. William Gisborne 1825–1898 was appointed Under-Secretary in the Colonial Secretary's Office in 1856, thus becoming the senior public servant in the Colony.
6. Frederick Whitaker was a lawyer who had himself been Attorney General. In 1863 he formed a government to replace Premier Domett following a vote of no confidence. Whitaker's term as Premier lasted just over a year until November 1864.
7. John Davies Ormond 1832–1917 Superintendent of Hawke's Bay, Minister of Public Works, member of the Legislative Council, landowner.

Nature's Colenso obituary

Colenso died on 11 February 1899. The periodical *Nature* was ready: it printed this obituary in its 2 March 1899 issue,

THE REV. W. COLENZO, F.R.S.

WE briefly announced in our issue of February 16 the death of the Rev. William Colenso, F.R.S., of Napier, New Zealand. The close of so interesting a life, which for more than half a century has been intimately associated with the progress of science and education in the antipodes, is one that demands more than a passing reference in the columns of *NATURE*.

Mr. Colenso was the son of the late S. M. Colenso, a saddler of Penzance, and was born in that town in 1811. He was put to learn the arts of printing and bookbinding in London, where he was eventually employed for a time on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In 1833 the Church Missionary Society determined to establish a printing press in the then almost *terra incognita* of New Zealand. Mr. Colenso was selected to take charge of the enterprise, with results that must have more than justified the most sanguine expectations. An account of his early experiences in the joint capacity of printer and missionary was published by him in 1888, under the title of "Fifty Years ago in New Zealand," and a more interesting history of pioneer work of the kind undertaken by Mr. Colenso, performed as it was under exceptionally unfavourable conditions, it would probably be impossible to find. "In December 1837," says the technical journal *Typo* (April 26, 1890), "under difficulties such as perhaps no printer ever had to surmount since the first invention of the art, Mr. Colenso completed his great work (a translation into Maori of)—the entire New Testament, in octavo, small pica type." From about the year 1840 Mr. Colenso devoted himself

1 "Purgatorio," xxvii. 131.

principally to mission work. In 1844 he took orders, after preparation under Bishop Selwyn. In the same year he settled at Hawkes Bay, where he resided for the rest of his life.

An ardent lover and student of nature, Mr. Colenso has left behind him a distinguished record as a botanist and as an authority upon the natural history of the archipelago. For his services to botanical science he was in 1886 elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, having been previously made a Fellow of the Linnean Society. The wild woods and mountains of his island home, traversed unremittingly by him in his missionary avocations, exercised throughout his life an ever-increasing fascination on his mind. With the Maoris his acquaintance was necessarily of a most intimate character; and he became an authority second to none on the subject of their language, arts, and legendary lore.

On June 25, 1896, a notice appeared in *NATURE* of the generous scheme for the foundation of a museum that Mr. Colenso had put before a meeting of the Hawkes Bay Philosophical Institute. The enlightened spirit in which the scheme had been conceived is shown by the extract which we printed from Mr. Colenso's address to the meeting. In offering 1000*l.* as a nucleus of the fund required for the establishment of the museum, he imposed the condition, among others, that the museum should be opened on Sunday afternoons as well as on every weekday. It is stated in the Cornish press that the reception accorded to his munificent offer was very disappointing to him, and that the scheme was withdrawn by him in the following year, with the announcement that his books and money would go to his native town. He had already presented 1000*l.* to the borough of Penzance, the income from the investment of which sum is utilised for annual gifts to the deserving poor. At the end of 1898 this fund, known as the "Colenso Dole," was increased by a second donation of 1000*l.*

Mr. Colenso's zeal in the pursuit of science, and his enthusiasm for missionary work did not exhaust his energies. He discharged important public duties from time to time. In the days when the relations between the natives and the colonists were strained he acted as a negotiator in the interests of the Maoris, and was the last survivor of the English signatories of the treaty of Waitangi. He was a member for Napier in the first General Assembly, and retained the seat for many years.

Mr. Colenso was a first cousin of the late Bishop of Natal. There are marked points of resemblance between the spheres in which the two men worked, and it is not surprising that the former felt himself to be in close sympathy with his South African namesake on the subjects which the Bishop had at heart.

This fact, and the untiring energy which sustained Mr. Colenso in his latest years, are evidenced by the following extracts from a letter which he wrote to a correspondent in London barely two years ago. He said: "I am leaving here to-morrow morning by rail for the Bush district (that is the forest country) in the interior, having Church duty at Woodville, 100 miles S., on Sunday next, the Vicar being unwell. Last Sunday I took Church duty here at St. Augustine's, and on the Sunday before at Clive, a village nine miles E. towards Cape Kidnappers. I am far too old (eighty-six) to undertake the duties of a *parish*, but I *love* my *work*, and am always ready to help as far as I am able." He then adds that he had always been "a great admirer and supporter" of Bishop Colenso's "theological works." "I have them here," he writes, "and have often studied them. I particularly like his volumes of Natal sermons, &c., and went with him wholly in the matter of the oppressed and ill-used Zulus."

It is greatly to be hoped that the preparation of a biography of this remarkable man may fall into thoroughly competent hands.

Colenso's correspondent in London, referred to in the penultimate paragraph, remains a mystery: I can find no record of this letter: it is not among those written to Hooker. Colenso left Napier for Woodville on 10 March 1897, to relieve Rev. Eccles who was ill (Colenso to Harding 26 March 1897), so his letter to his London correspondent was probably dated 9 March.

He was injured in a buggy smash a few days later.

The extract from the letter does add to what we know of the theological empathy between Colenso and his cousin John, Bishop of Natal—Ed.

Cornishman 5 August 1886

PENZANCE PUBLIC LIBRARY—At the committee meeting on Monday the following works were received:— 7th volume of Stephen's *Dictionary of National Biography* (Browne to Barthogge;) Gordon's *Physical Treatise on Electricity and Magnetism* 2 vols.; *The Miz Maze*, a story by Nine Authors; Cobden's political writings, in one volume (given by the Cobden club;) correspondence and proceedings concerning the tin and copper trade of the county of Cornwall 1792 (given by the president;) *Report and Transactions* of the Penzance Natural history and antiquarian society for 1885-86 (given by the Society;) a number of the *Botanical Magazine* containing a coloured figure of the *Colensoa physaloides*—a new *genus* of plants, named after the Rev. W. Colenso, of New Zealand, an accomplished botanist and liberal friend to our library.

The Sydney Exhibition Medal

There is a “curio” in the Alexander Turnbull Library collection, a bronze medal from the Sydney Exhibition, its provenance given as “Presented by Mrs Simcox of Otaki, in 1973. The medal had at one time belonged to William Colenso (1811–1899).”

On 28 April 1879 William Colenso wrote to James Hector,

Napier
April 28 1879

Dear Sir

Seeing the Advertisement in the papers re articles for the forthcoming Sydney Exhibition,—it has occurred to me to offer the following, subject to your approval, as you know them: viz.—

- 1. The antique Bell.*
- 2. Its photo. & litho., framed & glazed.*
- 3. The P. Book (entire) Ch. of E., also in Maori,—ditto ditto.*
- 5. First Book in English printed in N.Z.*
- 6. First Govt. Gazette.—*

I don't recollect any thing else worth offering.—

Should you approve of the above (or any of them) please let me know—which you can do briefly by telm.

I am, Dr Sir,
Yours truly
W. Colenso.

He followed this up on 27 May 1879, to Hector,

List of a few small Articles put up for the Sydney Exhibition, and sent this day to the kind care of Dr. Hector, F.L.S., &c

-
- 1. the ancient Asiatic Bell.*
 - 2. a framed & glazed plate of the same.*
 - 3. New Testament, 8vo. in Maori, printed in N.Z., 1837: first copy of the N.T. printed in the Southern Hemisphere. (Edition of 5000 copies)*
 - 4. Prayer Book of Ch. of England, in Maori, printed in N.Z. 1839.*
 - 5. Lot of early Public Papers:—viz.:—*

<i>1. The first Government Gazette, A.D.,</i>	<i>1840.</i>
<i>2. The first English placard,</i>	<i>1836.</i>
<i>3. The first English Circular</i>	<i>1835.</i>
<i>4. The first English Prospectus</i>	<i>1839.</i>
<i>5. The first English Proclamation</i>	<i>1840.</i>
<i>6. The second Ditto Ditto</i>	<i>1840.</i>
<i>7. The third Ditto Ditto</i>	<i>1840.</i>
<i>8. The fourth Ditto Ditto</i>	<i>1840.</i>
<i>9. The Treaty of Waitangi in Maori</i>	<i>1840.</i>
<i>10. The Statement from Confederate Chiefs</i>	<i>1835</i>
 - 6. The first Book printed in N.Z. (Ep. to Eph. & Phil.) 1835. (Feby.)*
 - 7. The first English Book printed in N.Z. 1836.*
 - 8. The first English Sermon printed in N.Z. (Dr. Selwyn) 1842.*
 - 9. (2) Specimens of early Maori Almanacs, 1840, & 1843.*
 - 10. (1) a letter from Rt. Hon. Viscount Goderich to Chiefs of N.Z., 1832, (Eng. & Maori.)—and*

(2) first address from James Busby, Esq., the British Resident, to Native Chiefs of N.Z.,—in Maori and English: both printed together at Sydney, 1833.

11. *An account of the Phormium tenax*, by J. Murray, F.L.A., F.L.S., &c, &c. Printed on paper made from its fibre, A.D. 1838.

12. *Specimens of Paper made from Phormium tenax, before 1838.*

W. Colenso,

Exhibitor.

Napier, Hawke's Bay,

May 27th., 1879.

N.B. All the Books &c printed in N. Zealand were wholly Composed by the exhibitor; some, also, wholly, or in part, written & translated by him, who also Bound the bound ones.

W.C.

The Sydney International Exhibition was the first true international exhibition that an Australian colony had hosted. Previous exhibitions had been local or intercolonial. The International Exhibition was held in a purpose-built building at Inner Domain, featuring 15 acres of display area and a main dome 210 feet high. Four towers of this "Garden Palace" provided spectacular views of the city and harbour, and the galleries were illuminated with stained glass skylights. The Exhibition attracted over 1.1 million visitors, at a time when the population of New South Wales was 739,385.

All of Colenso's offerings were accepted for the exhibition (items 526 and 820 in the Catalogue at right).

Bronze medals were struck in London and 5,550 were awarded to exhibitors (silver to staff and gold to visiting heads of state).

526—COLENSO, W., F.L.S., Napier—

- (3) New Testament, printed in Maori in New Zealand, 1837. 1st Copy of New Testament printed in Southern Hemisphere (Edition 5000 copies)
- (4) Prayer Book, printed in Maori in New Zealand, 1839
- (5) Early Public Papers, viz.:
 - (1) 1st Government Gazette, 1840
 - (2) 1st English Placard, 1836
 - (3) 1st ditto Circular, 1835
 - (4) 1st ditto Prospectus, 1839
 - (5) 1st ditto Proclamation, 1840
 - (6) 2nd ditto do. "
 - (7) 3rd ditto do. "
 - (8) 4th ditto do. "
 - (9) Treaty of Waitangi in Maori
- (10) Statement from Confederate Chiefs, 1835
- (6) 1st Book printed in New Zealand (epistle to Ephesians and Philippians), February, 1835
- (7) 1st English Book printed in New Zealand, 1836
- (8) 1st English Sermon printed in New Zealand (Bishop Selwyn), 1842

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Sydney International Exhibition.

5

- (9) Two Maori Almanacs, 1840 and 1843
 - (10) Letter from Right Hon. Viscount Goderich to the Chiefs of New Zealand
Address from James Busby, Esq., British Resident, to the Native Chiefs (both printed in Sydney, 1833)
 - (11) Account of Phormium Tenax, by J. Murray, F.S.A., F.L.S., printed on paper made from its Fibre, A.D. 1838
- All of these Books printed in New Zealand were composited by the Exhibitor, and some were written, bound and translated by him

820—COLENSO, W., F.L.S., Napier—

1. Ancient Asiatic Bell
2. " " " (Framed and Glazed Plate of)
12. Paper made from Phormium Tenax, before 1838



Colenso's 1879 Sydney Exhibition medal is not inscribed.

The bronze medal is large, 223G, 76 mm diameter, 6mm thick, featuring a view of the Sydney Garden Palace Exhibition Building with a figure of New South Wales standing in front holding the colonial shield and surrounded by exhibition goods. The reverse has a wreath of Australian flora below in tiny letters, J.S. & A.B. WYON (the

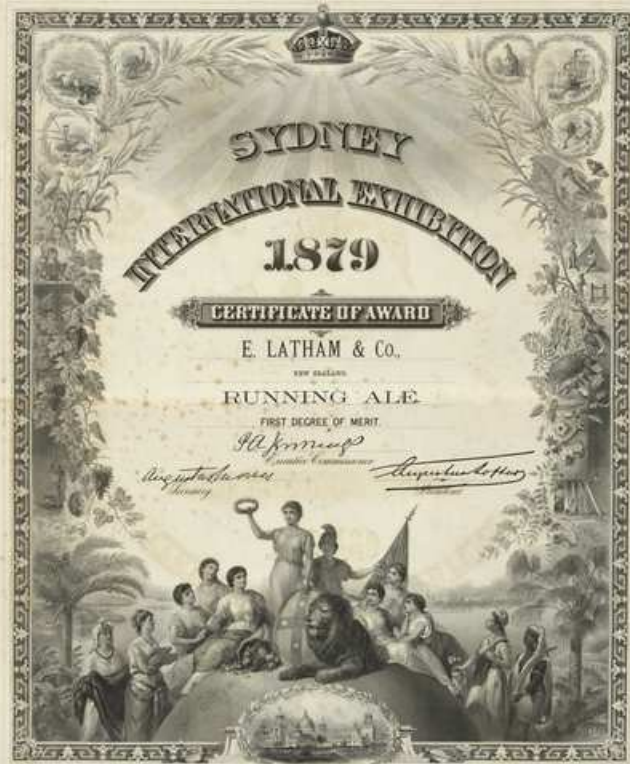
makers). The medals were accompanied by a square hinged case with a blue leatherette exterior and an orange satin and blue velvet interior.

This must be the medal awarded to Colenso for his exhibits. It is not engraved with his name, so presumably he didn't win an award.

References

1. <http://collections.museumvictoria.com.au/items/52948>
2. <http://www.expositionmedals.com/1879/>

Certificates were also awarded at the 1879 Sydney Exhibition. This, awarded for ale to E Latham & Co., was printed by the American Bank Note Company (Alexander Turnbull Library Eph-E-ALCOHOL-1879-01) and has an illustrated border including such motifs as the Sydney Exhibition Buildings, an emu, kangaroo, kookaburra, cockatoo, wine-making, industry, and a tableau at the bottom showing maidens of all nations gathered round Britannia who stands with her shield (*and a tambourine? or is it a laurel wreath?*) beside a British lion on top of a globe of the world. ►



*BOTHERED BY THE UNUSUAL
INTEREST, COLENSO DECIDES...*



*SHUCKS. I THINK I'LL GO
TO THE NOVEMBER 2016
POLYMATH CONFERENCE
& SEE FOR MYSELF!!*