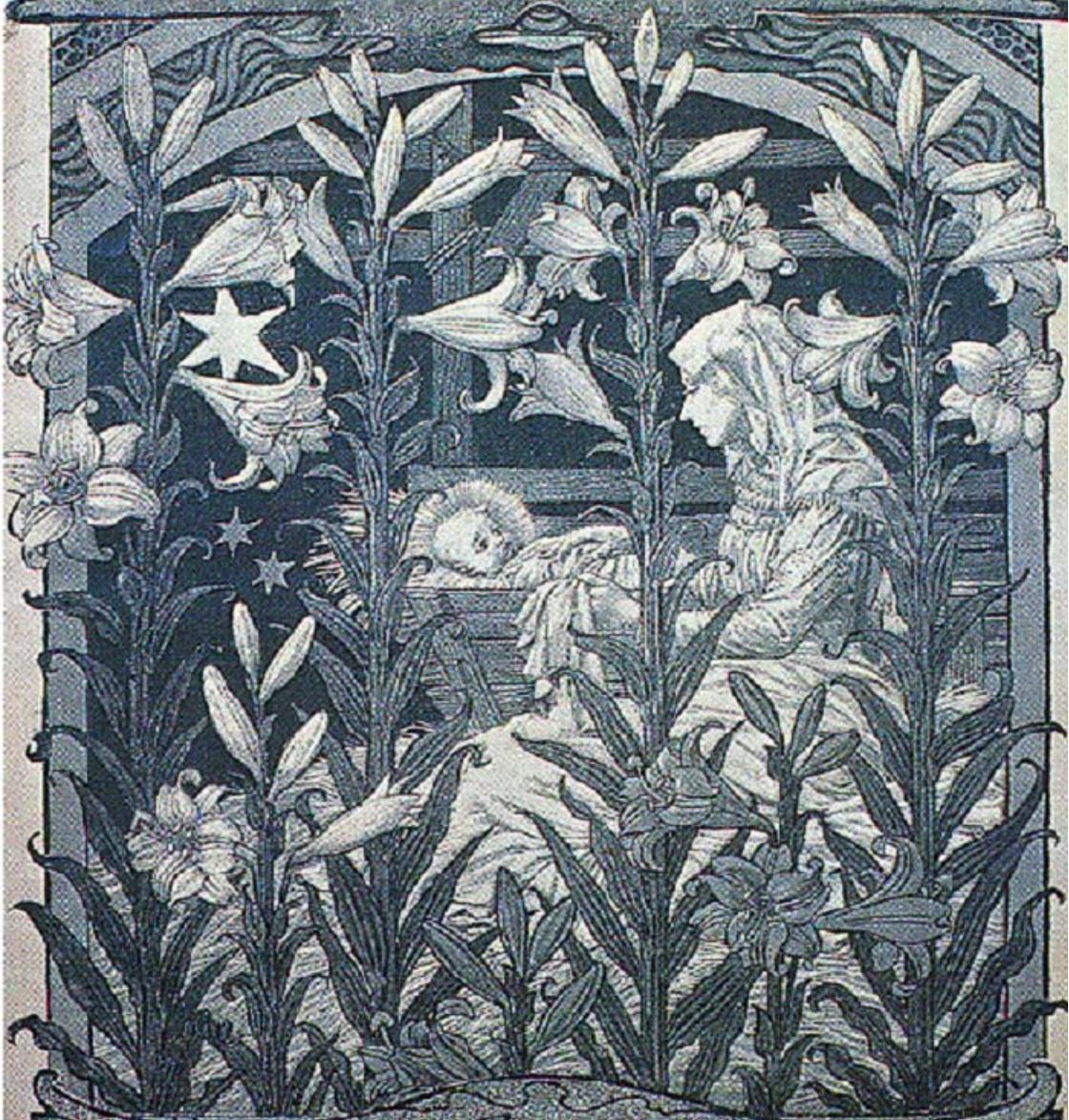
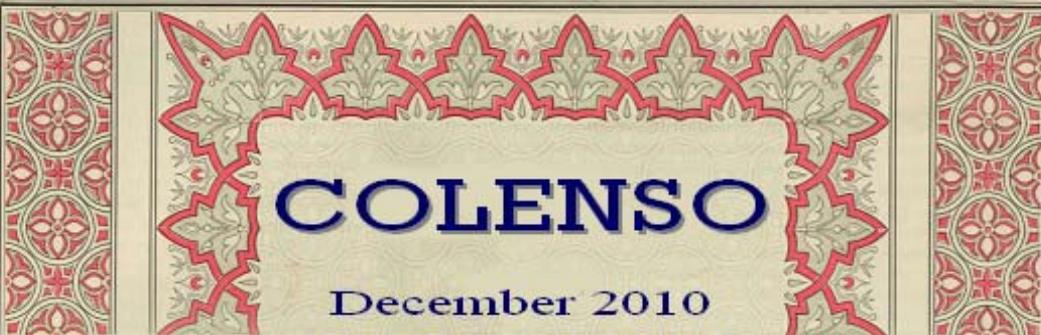


COLENSO



CHRISTMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS
2010



COLENZO

December 2010

Letters to the Editor



ABOUT 200 “letters to the editor” of newspapers by the Rev. William Colenso are known: he was an avid correspondent.

What do letters to the editor say about their authors? Are they simply ephemera? Sour nothings reeled off without much thought? Or should we take them as notable records of a person’s beliefs, and draw apt conclusions from reading them? Probably the latter.

Jürgen Habermas drew attention to the significance of social places, where members of the public discuss and negotiate the importance of things, in his book *The structural transformation of the public sphere – an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*.¹ The book is regarded as the basis for modern public sphere theories, which propose that democratic decisions are reached through reasoned debate in public gathering places.

Perhaps the Roman forum with its oratory and the Paris café with its existential arguments have given way, in our mediated age, to a different kind of “public sphere”, the letter to the editor, the email chatroom, the radio talk-back show, the website, the blog, emails to radio programmes. Media sociologists think so. There is now at least a sizeable literature on the sociology of “letters to the editor”.

For instance Perrin and Vaisey examined the “mediated public sphere (of) the letters-to-the-editor column found in virtually all newspapers.” They concluded that “public debate in the letters to the editor column represents a pragmatic approach to solving a normative problem: the paucity of spaces in which citizens can enact the kind of public sphere demanded by their understanding of democracy. It is, of course, by no means an ideal public sphere offering inclusion, deliberation, and extensive consideration of important issues. It is, however, a tool available for citizens to use in seeking to practise the democratic ideals they imagine to fulfill effective citizenship.”²

Atkinson wrote, “Traditional conceptualisations of the public sphere often view it as a physical place fixed in specific time and space, a site of literal geography such as a salon or a town square. But a more useful way to think of the public sphere might be to envision it taking shape in the two-dimensional world, such as in the column inches of a newspaper’s letters to the editor, where time and space do not have to meet but can flow disconnected with communication being freer and more spontaneous than in a fixed three-dimensional location.”³

Reader and colleagues studied those whose letters to the editor were published: successful letter writers tended to be white, middle-aged, well-educated upper-middle-class men who were avid readers, lived in the country and had strong political views (strong liberals and strong conservatives were more likely to write than were centrists).⁴

Colenso matches the type. He wrote to Mrs de Lisle (26 December 1898), “Here alone and no town papers for 2 whole days, I know nothing of the gay and bustling world below (in town, I mean) & around me”. The correspondence columns of local newspapers were an important forum for that 19th century white, middle-aged, well-educated, upper-middle-class man who was an avid reader, lived in the country and had strongly liberal political views: had he lived today Colenso would also no doubt have been a regular caller to talkback radio, operated a website and run his own blogs.

These provincial newspaper columns were the “public spheres”, the places for geographically separated individuals to contribute opinions to the debates of an immature democracy. Coupland Harding wrote, “Newspapers then... were live organs in every sense.”⁵ Well, not quite *every* sense, but they were the vehicles for the passionately held views of bigots egged on by unscrupulous editors eager for exciting copy. Many of Colenso’s public letters were answers to (or were met by) equally forthright editorials or published letters from contemporaries. Many in his political days were composed in a sage, “thus-spake-Zarathustra,” civic-leader, authoritative tone that would be read as condescending today. We could attribute it to his evangelical preacher’s habits, but in the midnineteenth century Hawke’s Bay correspondence columns such a tone was commonplace. The cut and thrust of colonial politics were argumentative, fervent, destructive and nasty – and the rants of opinionated, self-styled experts are startling in their vehemence.

Coupland Harding would write,

“On a remote coastal sheep-station, visited every two weeks by the mail-man, the ‘Herald’ was read and re-read from title to imprint, and in the literary and political battles of the day,

*‘Always with a fearless heart,
Taking, giving, blow for blow,’*

William Colenso was in the van. Quaint, eccentric, odd, sometimes to the last degree, were his ‘Tracts for the Times’, but always with the sub-stratum of solid argument and practical suggestion; tremendous were his battles with opponents such as George Worgan the aged, and Charles Pharazyn the youthful—both of whom preceded him (the latter very recently) to the Unseen Land. Readers of his voluminous newspaper correspondence could not fail to form some idea of his extensive stores of information, his methodical style, his British pugnacity, and indomitable energy. They would note certain curious mental ‘kinks’ and personal prejudices ostentatiously displayed, but only personal acquaintance could reveal the beauty and spirituality of the hidden life—the unfathomable kindness of his nature.”⁶

As a rule Colenso wrote for local Hawke’s Bay publications and sent most of his few letters to newspapers outside Hawke’s Bay during his national public life (1861–1866).

“Print is a nice ego booster” and if you want your voice to continue to be heard long into the future, a letter to the editor works. Colenso, self-consciously aware that in many of his ideas he was in advance of his time, wrote in one letter, “Of course, in all this, I know I am before the age; yet I have a joy. ‘I joy the age to come will think with me.”⁷

The anonymous scribbler

Today many editors refuse to publish anonymous letters, “arguing that they are upholding the principles of democracy, maintaining civil discourse, and preserving the traditions of journalism ethics.”⁸ They suggest, “If you don’t have the guts to sign your name, you don’t deserve to have your say.”⁹ Reader asserts, however, that a newspaper that refuses to publish anonymous letters cannot honestly describe its letters section as a true “public forum” that is really “open to all comers” and supports the “traditions of democracy” – because the elderly, women, racial minorities, and others who are socially and economically vulnerable prefer not to have their names published.

Colenso repeatedly insisted that he did not “notice anonymous scribblers”, viewing their anonymity as cowardly – “unmanly and anonymous sneaking scribbling”:

“I would make one remark, namely, that I should have come out earlier had the writers of those anonymous and malevolent letters, which have appeared in our Napier papers, possessed the common fairness, the manliness, of putting their names to their letters (if, indeed, more than one have really been engaged in writing them); for I have a great and a growing dislike to all cloaked anonymous writing, which too often is closely allied to the skulking cowardly shooting of a man from behind a bush with a crape mask over the face! and, as a rule, I never answer, never notice any such effusions when directed towards myself. Such seem to me to be un-English,—that is, against the good old rule of our forefathers, of ‘all fair and above board.’”¹⁰

and again:

“... although it is an old and standing rule with me never to condescend to notice anonymous cowardly letters. I am an Englishman, and like a fair open fight; not secretly lurking behind a flax bush, or hedge to get a shot or a stab at a victim, and then a run! ‘Fair play is bonnie play,’ as my Scotch friends say.”¹¹

Colenso’s political opponent George Worgan identified Colenso with an anonymous 1860 correspondent calling himself “Rua Taniwha” and the only other suggestion that he ever did write anonymously himself comes from Coupland Harding (who was writing about verses), “The only rhyme I know of his composition is a playful political squib, making no pretentions to poetry, published anonymously in the ‘Herald’ early in 1860.” Colenso later defended anonymous writing if meant humorously:

“Possibly, however, at Election times (such being a kind of Saturnalia, Carnival, or Free-licence time,) anonymous letters may be permitted,— ‘for the fun of the thing,’ as the boys say; but, sir, there is a vast difference between Comedy and Tragedy; between writing for ‘fun’ and laughter, and writing traducing ‘the powers that be’ and howling for human blood!”¹⁰

One letter (“Open column”, *Hawke’s Bay Herald* 7 January 1860, p.3) appears to be written in Colenso’s style and would be, by virtue of its timing and content, allowed by his defence. It appears to fit Coupland Harding’s description (though the verses in it are not Colenso’s, but are quoted from Byron’s *Beppo*). Colenso or not, it is quite fun:

DEAR HERALD,—

Don't ruffle up like a turkey-cock at my familiarity. Reflect; a cat may look at a king, and the able authors of the "Rambler" and "Spectator" were (in their day) often addressed as "Dear Spec." and "Dear Rambeler." If so, then (as I 'spose you are not much greater) I may surely be allowed to address you as "Dear Herald."

But I want you to see with my eyes, and think as I do. And I hope you will. Now do, like a good kind Herald. Just now, too, being Christmas season and New Year's day and Twelfth night; monkeys and dogs and funny clown gone awa'; and the roads so dry and dusty; and old Munn saying, "he doesn't wish folks to drink spirituous liquors in the hot weather;!! (isn't that folly?) 'cause he's gone into the sodawater and lemonade line.

Oh, Mirth and Innocence! Oh, Milk and Water!
Ye happy mixtures of more happy days;
In these sad centuries of sin and slaughter,
Abominable Man no more allays
His thirst with such, pure beverage. No matter
I love you both, and both shall have my praise.
Oh, for old Saturn's reign of sugar-candy! —
Meanwhile I drink to your return in brandy.¹²

Now don't funk; I'm not going to write on politics, nor attack characters. So all your dear friends, from the Superintendent down to Corporal Groom, are for the time safe; quite so, I assure you: ta, ta.

By the way, don't you think your elder brother *Punch* could make a pretty dacent job of your famous Waipukurau case — *M. Fitzgerald v. Hambell*, — as reported by you? If that 'ere kind of law-work ayn't the werry *nee ploos ultrer* of all perfectionated law and justice, and of all pecksniffian vartue, — "black's the white" — mum! You know.¹³

— Jist let's see: — of big wigs (i.e. J.P.'s) a good half-a-dozen; some of whom rode several miles in the burning sun — to try the 12-penny case. And then the summoning and fetching Hambell from Waipawa; and then the scratching of polls, and diving into law books, and solemn faces, and grave whisperings, and anxious expectance, during three long hot wearisome sleepy mortal hours, cooped up in Lloyd's tap, and "No liker sarved whiles the Binch be sitting" hung at the door, by order of the Magnums Bonum! Ah! if you had but been there, dear Herald, to take a graphic illustration! — And then the immensity of the theft, whether viewed as to rascality or actuality — in the mind or in the amount; — or whether it be any theft at all, I couldn't help thinking, as I came away, — another Waipukurau "Much ado bout Nothing." Yet all, dear Herald, for the honor of the Queen, (God bless her!) and the good of society, and to shew the perfection of our British civilization and law, and to enlighten the Maories, and to give the "*runanger*" an extra idee. And no one knows when or where it will end, or what it may not cost; seeing that *five* full grown J.P.'s could not wholly grasp the case. — Only that the calf (I beg pardon, the young John Bull,) will have to *fork out*. But he still sings the old stave taught him by his daddy, — "*fiat justitia ruat caelum*"; — as his old dad has often sung, alas! to his cost.

“But to my tale of Laura; — for I find
Digression is a sin, that by degrees
Becomes exceeding tedious to my mind,
And, therefore, may the reader too displease.

Now then, I'll try; dear Herald, don't be angry. You see, “I was a beginning all right enuff”; but, as my, old chum, Tom Touch-'em-up, used to say, — “When a fellow, has a good hat on his head he should also have a good pair of boots on his feet, otherwise the two poles don't harmonise”: so, when as how I was a-thinking of the follies of the Town, by Jove! I was whipped-up like winking to contemplate the follies of the Country. But then, you know, these are days of Railways and Photographs and Telegraphs and Hurrygraphs and Great Easterns, and “all that sort of thing;” all quick-marching now-a-days and no mistake. Indeed, our cousins in Amerikay (always ahead) have been dancing and tumbling over the falls of Niagara; and they be building a big balloon to launch at the moon or somewhere else; while we here have jist capsized the Wonga Wonga, and hold on hard and fast to slow coaches and to “Government stroke,” and say, there's nothing like it! But I'm off again!

To turn — and to return— the devil take it!
This story slips for ever through my fingers—

Of course, dear Herald, I mean your printer's devil. Now then, I'll begin, in good earnest. On two or three occasions while standing in Marshall's door (and also at your attractive window), I have noticed some of our ladies a-steaming or a-sailing through the streets. (You may yet amend the term, and call it a-ballooning if you will; only the swell of a balloon is “forrards” or aloft, while here 'tis all aft; besides, a balloon has a safety-valve to let off the superfluous gas.) Well, while I have been looking on, old school-boy play-questions have occurred to my mind, such as, — “*If a herring and a half cost three halfpence, what will a bushel of coals come to?*” For I'll tell you, that I have seen Maories riding through the Town, and their horses don't kick up a bit more dust than those ladies with their balloon or basket trains. Woe betide the unfortunate pedestrian who has to keep the same course with wind ahead and he astern! But then, dear Herald, his being choked with dust from those sweep dresses is a mere nothing; don't think for a moment I am writing on his account. No, no. “*What will a bushel of coals come to?*” Dust, of course. Now then, what will the hems and trains and furbelows and flounces of such a new dress come to by the time the wearer has swept half of Shakespeare Road and Tennyson Street to Newton's Store? Rags, of course. And then, dear Herald, those sweeping gowns (pardon- my unpolite word, — *dresses*, I mean,) contain 24 yards and half and a good quarter over of stuff, fairly measured by Yates' thumb out, to make one! And seeing that one must be quite worn to rags in once going over the ground, — for, sure and sartain 'tis not merely a plain clean sweeping behind, but 'tis somehow whisked from side to side as well — a rolling kind of gait, reminding one of an old waddling Muscovy duck, and very like a walloping Dutch dogger yawing in a gale of wind.

Now, dear Herald, I don't like to see the ladies laughed at, any how not behind their backs; and as I think you are our allowed moral Censor, and that it is your duty to “lash the living *follies* as they rise,” — I think you ought to lend a hand to put a stop to such *outré* proceedings. It is bad enough for our young men to come hither to work on

the roads, — but for our English women to become scavengers and to sweep 'em, and that too with their dresses, is very much too bad. But some say, 'tis owing to the ladies having badly formed ankles or feet, that they choose such an ugly trolloping riding-habit attire in order to conceal them. Others say, 'tis owing to dirty stockings, &c, water and good washerwomen being alike scarce at Napier. But I am of opinion, dear Herald, that 'tis owing to the coarse and clumsy shoes they are *obliged* to put up with, poor souls! and I'm sure they should be greatly pitied. But, whatever be the reason, the dress is unbecoming, — is expensive (unless they patch the lower tucks and flounces every time of wearing), is vexatious (to themselves), is trying (to the gallantry and politeness of the gentlemen), and is — dear Herald, may I say it? — is VERY DIRTY.

Besides, (as the writer¹⁴ of the Tracts for the Times says, somewhere in one of his Tracts,) “things are best and most strongly seen by their contraries.” Now our children — even great girls, — are wearing the Highland costume, and in windy days exposing their knees; while their mothers and grown-up sisters are carefully shrouding (in hot and dusty weather), their very feet, like Powder Pigeons and Bantams.

In your last paper, I see Munn has again altered the prices of riding in his *Velocipede*. I cannot but suppose he will yet have to alter further, unless the ladies quickly consent to wear reasonable dresses; for certainly not more than two ladies and their dresses can ride in it at once; and not even two unless they are on *very* friendly terms. As nothing puts a lady out of humour sooner than the least imaginary injury to her dress.

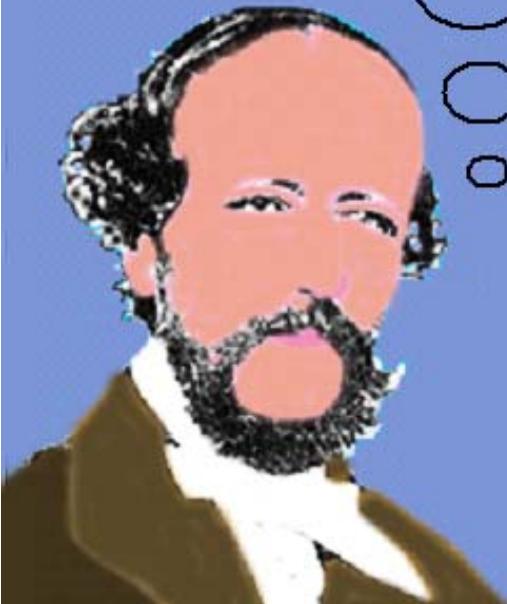
I heard one of our Town Members say, that the person who should introduce *Crinoline* into the Province of Hawke's Bay, ought (alike with him who wilfully introduced the *Scotch thistle*) to be banished. At the time I thought he was rather severe, but now I am quite inclined to agree with him in this matter. For we are all obliged to inhabit small rooms and houses, and we have vastly too much to do in a new place — town and country — to think of making extra house-room for indescribables and nuisances. And so I hope, dear Herald, you will also say, and come out valiantly, and help to put down all such extravagant infringements and out-of-the-way innovations. And so set the ladies right (for you have, I can tell, you, wonderful influence among them); and so make them better tempered at home, and more at ease in the streets; and save the weary eyes and hands of the dressmakers and menders, and the pockets too of their husbands — that is, when they have them.

In writing thus, the writer, more especially
Of women, would be understood to say,
He speaks as a spectator, not officially,
And always, reader, in a modest way;
Perhaps, too, in no very great degree shall he
Appear to have offended in his “say,” —
Since, as all know, without the sex, our sonnets
Would seem unfinished like their untrinned bonnets.

Dear Herald,
Yours truly,
MISLETOE. [*sic*]

January 2, 1860.

*I DO NOT NOTICE
UNMANLY SNEAKING
CLOAKED ANONYMOUS
COWARDLY SCRIBBLERS.*



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4. Bill Reader, Guido H. Stempel III and Douglas K. Daniel. Age, wealth, education predict letters to the editor. Newspaper Research Journal 25, no. 4 (fall 2004): 55-66.
5. Harding RC. William Colenso, some personal reminiscences. The Press, 27 February 1899.
6. *Ibid.*
7. 14 February 1863.
8. The editor of the Hawke's Bay Herald of 31 July 1858 noted below one anonymous letter criticising Colenso, "Reluctantly we give insertion to the above; for we consider that no man should be thus assailed by an anonymous writer."
9. Reader W. A case for printing "name withheld" letters. The Masthead. Summer, 2002.
10. A word about Te Kooti. Hawke's Bay Herald 28 February 1883.
11. Church matters. Bush Advocate 16 August 1890.
12. All the verses are from Byron's narrative poem Beppo, which takes place in Venice ("the seat of all dissoluteness") where Laura, whose husband Beppo had been lost at sea, takes a lover. At the carnival her beauty is admired by many, including a Turk, who turns out to be her missing husband. Beppo had joined a band of pirates and has returned, wealthy, to re-join his wife. Laura returns to Beppo, and he and his wife's lover become friends. The poem argues that the English aversion to adultery is hypocrisy compared with the more honest custom in Italy, and further that this more lax attitude towards morals may be beneficial to all participants. The poem is structurally digressive, has autobiographical elements and takes satiric swipes at literary women and other poets. A perfect model of this letter.
13. M. Fitzgerald took John Hambell to court to recover one shilling, obtained "under false pretences".
14. One William Colenso.



Colenso is a free email Newsletter published irregularly by the Colenso Society. The editor invites contributions on any matter relating to the life and work of the Rev.

William Colenso FLS FRS. Such contributions should be emailed to ian.stgeorge@rnzcgcp.org.nz. The cover of this issue is based on the Harper's Weekly of December 1896, a design by Eugene Grasset.

Book review

Classic Tramping in New Zealand (revised, expanded, and updated edition). By Shaun Barnett and Rob Brown (2010). (with Bird's Eye maps). Craig Potton Publishing. \$41.00, 164 pages, soft cover.

The first edition of "Classic Tramping" dates from 1999. It is part of a series by the same publisher that includes the Classic Walks (essentially the Great Walks), Classic Peaks, and Classic Fly Fishing Rivers. "Classic Tramping" (1999) covers illustrated stories of twelve multiday tramps throughout New Zealand, with route guide and other useful information like its partner "Classic Walks (1997, 2004)". "Classic Walks" sticks to the really popular tracks (The Milford, Routeburn, Heaphy, Lake Waikaremoana and the like), whereas "Classic Tramping" deliberately avoids these areas at the same time as covering (mostly) accessible places. Both have understandably sold very well. Each author completed all tramps—as well as many more in all of the areas written about. Indeed, all of these authors have subsequently written other books, magazines articles, and published calendars that you may have seen. "Classic Tramping" (1999 and 2010) are presented in an informative and reader friendly style. The trips are as memorable for the writers and photographers as well as the readers.

This revised, expanded, and updated edition of "Classic Tramping" features the same tramps as the original, this time with updated information and some new or different photographs. More importantly, though, are the stories of two new tramps—one on the West Coast of the South Island, and one through the so named "Colenso country" of the North west Ruahine Range.

Like the other chapters, the story of a modern day tramp through Colenso country is interwoven with some of the journeys of William Colenso. It makes a charming story. The authors ascend Colenso Spur, considering that they tread precisely where Colenso once did due to the lie of the land. They share with the reader some of the views that Colenso enjoyed, and describe some of the native plants he collected. They enjoy modern DOC facilities as they tramp past Lake Colenso, Puketaramea, one of Colenso's camps known as Ngaroto, then back down to the Makarora River. True to form, Barnett and Brown present stunning photographs and inspirational writing. Their philosophy is about respect for the environment and history while presenting lovely publicity about "Colenso country".

Each chapter is about a dozen pages long, with a useful information box and three dimensional map by Geographx (Bird's Eye Maps). There are useful sections on introductory stuff, References/ Further reading lists and tramping terminology. The book is a great reference text as much as a coffee table and route guide information book.

Tony Gates.

Miracles at Madron Well



“ O MADRON WELL many extraordinary properties have been ascribed. To this miraculous fountain, the uneasy, the impatient, the fearful, the jealous, and the superstitious resort, to learn their future destiny from the unconscious waters. By dropping pins or pebbles, into this fountain, by shaking the ground around the spring, or by contriving to raise bubbles from the bottom, on certain lucky days, and when the moon is in a particular stage of increase or decrease, the secrets of the well are presumed to be extorted. But the anxious are not always satisfied with the omens they procure. Defeated in one attempt, they come again; and frequently confirm by their renewed applications, the painful uneasiness, from which they thus foolishly endeavour to procure a deliverance. This well had a chapel erected over it, which was destroyed in the days of Cromwell, by the pious fanaticism of Major Ceely, who then resided at St. Ives.”

So wrote the 19-year old William Colenso in his guidebook to Mount’s Bay. Madron well still exists, a muddy hole, the trees above it festooned with messages written on cloth and tied to the twigs. The chapel nearby is ruined, but a makeshift alter was covered in strange alter furniture—perhaps the work of witches, for there had been a wickery convention in Penzance this weekend.

In the tree over the well was a corn dolly (at right), a form of straw work associated with harvest customs.

The Druids believed that the corn spirit lived amongst the crop, and the harvest made it effectively homeless. Therefore, they fashioned hollow shapes from the last sheaf of wheat or other cereal crop. The corn spirit would then spend the winter in their homes until the “corn dolly” was ploughed into the first furrow of the new season.

“Dolly” is a corruption of “idol”.



Colenso's mug

by Trevor Crabtree 1975

High in the Ruahines
Off a steep and narrow trail
Two thousand feet above a stream
Lies waiting, Colenso's Grail.

Waiting for eager, thirsting lips
To drink from it once more—
To taste again the cold, clear spring
Like wine, from the mountains core.

Silver mug, with silver chain
Fastened to a log
Tapu to all Maori tribes
Caressed by morning fog.

Very few have heard of this
Fewer yet have seen
But thanks to my friends Vic and Ian
It's one place I have been.

Leave your dreary fireside
Come walking where I know
Up the Makarora
Where Colenso used to go.

Climb the Ruahines
Work up a raging thirst
And if you find Colenso's mug
Remember—he drinks first.

Sent in by Tony Gates: Trevor Crabtree died in 2007; we have been unable to locate the copyright owners—Ed.

“... it being nearly dark, we halted in the forest, not knowing where we were; but believing we had not much further to go to gain the wished-for summit. I immediately sent two of my companions to seek for water, which we had greatly needed for the last three hours, and fortunately they found some in a declivity in the side of the spur not very far off. This spring, I afterwards learned, is called Te Wai-o-kongenge—fit name!—” [= the water of weariness]

“The water too, of our little spring, taken a little higher up, was delightfully cool and good tasted,—indeed delicious.”

Remembering Colensos

By Ann Collins.

Ian's poster in the November newsletter reminded me of Willie and Wally Colenso, who travelled the world – often celebrating anniversaries related to John William Colenso, Bishop of Natal and William Colenso. Willie was William Colenso, grandson of Richard Veale Thomas Colenso, great nephew of William. Wally was his second wife Doris Leona, nee Wallis.

I have letter from a family member in Sydney recalling her aunt's memory of Willie and Wally visiting Sydney before going to a memorial ceremony in New Zealand. They usually contacted any Colenso family member they could during their travels – consequence of a relatively rare surname is that we are probably all related.

The first newspaper article (photograph below, text overleaf) was probably 1954, centenary year of the Diocese of Natal.



MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM COLENSO, who arrived in Maritzburg last week during a visit to South Africa. Mr. Colenso, who comes from Fentance, Cornwall, is related to the first Bishop of Natal, Bishop J. W. Colenso. (See story.)

The centenary of Bishop Colenso's death in 1983 was attended by Philip Colenso (second newspaper article overleaf), a resident of Durban, a descendent of the Australian branch. His father had been a soldier in the Bushveldt Carbineers (Breaker Morant's Unit) during the Boer War who settled in Natal after marrying the sister of another Australian soldier.

MADE SPECIAL VISIT TO MARITZBURG

MR. WILLIAM COLENZO, whose grandfather was cousin to the famous prelate, Bishop John William Colenso, first Bishop of Natal, made a special visit to Maritzburg last week to see the bells of St. Peter's Church. But within an hour of his arrival the bells were damaged by a storm.

Mr. Colenso, who comes from Penzance, Cornwall (the home of the Colenso family since the Sixteenth Century), is visiting South Africa for health reasons. He is accompanied by his wife and together they made a special trip to Maritzburg at the behest of Bishop Colenso's granddaughter, Mrs. Irma Crovo, of Elangani, Amersham, England.

Nearly a century has elapsed since Mrs. Crovo's grandfather returned to Natal to become its first Bishop. His headquarters were in Maritzburg and St. Peter's was then the Cathedral.

Three of St. Peter's bells were hung on a tree in the churchyard at this time and there they remained until last week's storms uprooted the trees.

The bells of St. Peter's be-

came world renowned after Ripley featured them in his "Believe It Or Not" series in an English newspaper.

Mr. Colenso was delighted that he was able to ring a couple of the bells after they had been salvaged from the branches of the fallen tree.

The name of Colenso is historic in New Zealand, too, for the Bishop's cousin, the Rev. William Colenso, F.R.S., was famous there as a missionary-printer—he was the first person to take a printing press into New Zealand and was also a noted botanist.

Speaking about the Bishop, Mr. Colenso said that there had

been numerous B.B.C. talks on his life and these, he felt, had done much to publicise Maritzburg.

Cambridge Lecturer

Before entering the church, the Bishop was a mathematics master at Harrow and later became lecturer at Cambridge—his arithmetic was used in public schools all over England.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Colenso have enjoyed their stay in Maritzburg. They came as complete strangers to see the city and church which are of such historic interest to their family but in no time they had many interesting engagements.

Colenso Centenary Exhibitions

BISHOP LIKENED TO VICTORIAN GREATS

TONIGHT Reporter

LAUNCHING the first of the series of Bishop Colenso's Centenary Exhibitions, was Dr Ruth Edgcombe, a lecturer in Economic History at Natal University, Pietermaritzburg, at the Local History Museum last week.

In her address, Dr Edgcombe paid tribute to a man who was "committed to justice and truth", and likened him to the great Victorian figures of Sir Charles Lyell and Charles Darwin in advancing "the frontiers of knowledge". Bishop Colenso became the first Bishop of Natal, in 1853, and held this position until his death in 1883.

As educator, he wrote numerous textbooks on arithmetic, mathematics, history and science, and as a missionary bishop, he had the task of translating scripture into Zulu. His biblical criticism, together with his theo-

logical thinking, led to his trial for heresy and his excommunication from the Anglican Church in 1863. The last few years of his life were spent fighting for the preservation of the Zulu nation and their land.

Among the 70 people attending the opening, was Mr Phillip Colenso, a descendant of an uncle of the bishop.

The exhibition, which was mounted by Ms Gill Berling, the assistant at the museum, will run until the end of the month. In addition to this exhibition, a number of lectures to be held at various venues has been organised.

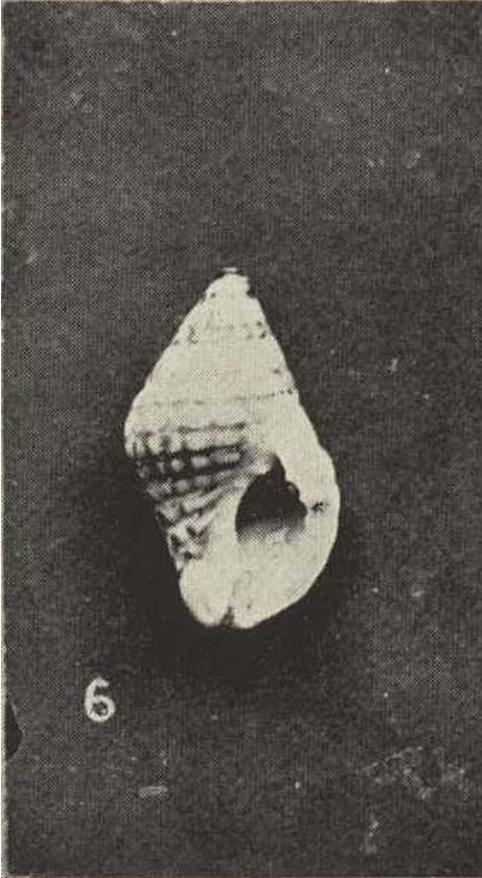
For further information about the Celebration arrangements, telephone the Cathedral secretary at Durban 41567.



MR PHILLIP COLENZO (centre) examines the publicity poster of the exhibition. With him, from left: Mr Brian Spencer, member of the Colenso Centenary committee; Ms Jenny Duggan, Killie Campbell chief librarian; and Mrs Shiela Spencer, author of "Natal Pioneers".

19 May 1931	Travelled on the Empress of Australia to Quebec Canada
30 Sep 1931	Returned to Plymouth from New York on the George Washington
2 Jun 1933	Departed from London for Tangiers on board the Madura
16 Jun 1933	Arrived in Plymouth on the Narkunda from Gibraltar
15 May 1936	Departed from Southampton to Madeira aboard The Union Castle
8 Jun 1936	Arrived in Southampton from Natal via the Cape on the Carnarvon Castle
1 Apr 1939	Travelled from Dover to Cristobal Panama on the Costa Rica
16 May 1939	Travelled on the San Jose from Cristobal to Olympia Washington USA
16 Sep 1939	Returning to Southampton from New York on the Manhattan
18 Jul 1948	Arrived in New York on the Parthia from Liverpool
27 Sep 1948	Travelled on the Queen Elizabeth from Mombasa to Southampton
20 Jul 1950	Travelled from London to Freemantle on board the Strathnaver
20 Aug 1951	Arrived in Southampton from New Zealand via the Cape on the Dominion Monarch
23 Dec 1954	Left Southampton for South Africa aboard the Stirling Castle
21 Sep 1958	William (Willie) Colenso died in Penzance at Glen Trewithen
15 Jun 1960	Doris travelled to Montreal aboard the Saxonia
13 Sep 1990	Doris Leona (Wally) died in Penzance, aged 101. Glen Trewithen sold.





Photograph by Suter, Fig. 6 of Plate XXX.

Bucculinum colensoi

This mollusc was named *Tritonidea colensoi* by Henry Suter in 1907. (“Descriptions of New Species of New Zealand Mollusca.” Trans. N.Z. Inst. 40: 371-2) from a specimen found at East Cape Lighthouse. (Original paper [here](#)).

Suter remarked, “This shell was first shown to me by Mr. Howard (*sic*: surely Henry?) Hill, of Napier, who told me that the examples in his possession were collected by the late Rev. W. Colenso, the exact locality being unknown. It may well be that the species ranges from the East Cape down to Hawke’s Bay.”

Henry Suter (1841-1918) was a Swiss who came to central Hawke’s Bay in 1887 and later moved to Mt Cook and then to Christchurch. Colenso wrote to Cheeseman (21 April 1894), “You will have seen some able papers in late vols. of ‘Transactions’ on N.Z. Malcollogy, by a foreigner named Suter, living at Xt.church. I have heard (more than once) that he is very badly off financially,—though Prof. Hutton has, at times, employed him, but the Museum authorities there are just the opposite of yours—poor! Could

you give him a job? I think he is a good industrious scientific naturalist, and should not want here among us.—”

Suter by then had seven papers published in the *Transactions* on NZ molluscs. He had translated Stephani’s manuscript on New Zealand *Hepatica* for Colenso in 1893.

Suter sent plants from the South Island to Colenso (including the type specimen of *Nematoceras orbiculatum* from Mt Cook), and shortly after 1900 began to work on local molluscs. He compiled descriptions of all the known specimens of molluscs in the country, and in 1913 he published his *Manual of New Zealand Mollusca*. This work contained descriptions of 1,079 species, and it also served to bring the nomenclature used in New Zealand into conformity with international standards. Suter’s *Manual* is viewed as the classic reference source in New Zealand conchology.

William Colenso Bicentenary

9-13 November 2011, Napier
Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery

Join us in Hawke's Bay next November
to celebrate the life of William Colenso.

HB MAG, in association with
the Colenso Society, is planning an
exciting programme of activities
including a two-day academic
conference, tours, workshops and
commemorative events.

If you or your business would like to
partner, or sponsor this important
event, or to register your interest
contact

Eloise Taylor, Hawke's Bay Museum &
Art Gallery 06 835 7781
or etaylor@hbmag.co.nz

E-mails to the editor

KAY MORRIS MATTHEWS: “Thank you for yet another wonderful newsletter! Particularly so, because I have been trying to identify for some years, the cartoonist of a sketch of a Napier woman teacher and the Frederick Richard Rayner signature on Colenso’s sketch is the same as on the one I have and fits the time period!”

TONY GATES: “My father John, as a young man in about 1947, was tramping with the Tararua Tramping Club around Cape Palliser. It was difficult beach walking, hot, dry, dusty, windy, so several of the team paused in the shade of the occasional tree. Not my father tho’, nor one other person on the trip whom my father recalls as a dedicated tramper following the footsteps of an early European explorer and missionary who apparently had walked over much of New Zealand, and had even explored in the Ruahine mountains. The other tramper apparently needed to walk every step of this person’s many journeys. He told my father that this missionary and explorer was a famous person about whom he was writing a book. Some years later, my father got to know some of the Bagnall family and saw the book *William Colenso*”.

ANN COLLINS: “Looking for more information to support a newsletter article I have found the website of the Natal History Society. As you have been reading about Bishop Colenso I thought you would find the link of interest. Too many articles to be selective – I have just been browsing for the last two hours. <http://www.natalia.org.za/index.html>. PS: Another interesting newsletter – thanks again.”

PETER WELLS: “Congratulations on another excellent newsletter. I was fascinated, in particular, by the Rayner caricature which I think is very lively and captures something of OMF’s character. Very interesting indeed. (I particularly like the hat he is doffing. I did read that as an old man he used to walk round town in a Maori rain cloak - but I have only seen one reference to this and wondered if he did so. Of course as a lone man he would have been subject to eccentricities of behaviour, with no partner to monitor his actions - gently say no. I suppose a Maori rain cloak also emphasised his unique links with Maori and the past, so would have made him a rare individual, a real sage.)

The Colenso Society’s application to Lottery Grants for the Colenso Project was unsuccessful, and we are looking elsewhere.

Colenso scholars will be pleased to hear that Papers Past is planning to digitise the Daily Telegraph (Napier) next year.

A trampers guide to Colenso country— Ruahine Forest Park, Mokai Patea Range, Maropea River, Iron Bark and Otukota Huts, Kawhatau Base

by Tony Gates

Refer NZTopo50 BK36.

The modern day Ruahine Forest Park is part of a once vast and remote area. It is still remote in places, with tough country, often wild weather, and difficult vegetation to fight through—but this remoteness is somewhat softened by the availability of roads, modern technology and helicopters, and by the excellent Department of Conservation facilities there. William Colenso and his guides made their own trails, now long superseded by modern day tracks, huts, and bridges. You can follow them.

As a bushman for the past 35 or so years, I have often tramped around Colenso country. It's the mix of tussock and forest as much as the mix of greywacke rocks and limestone that have intrigued me, forming a fascinating landscape of flat topped ridges, steep sided valleys, and beautiful country. And of course there is great history to this area. I have tramped the Makarora Valley, fished the Maropea River, and skied and hunted the Mokai Patea Range. I have frequently followed the footsteps of William Colenso.

Driving into the Ruahines from near Taihape takes you past the popular “Gravity Canyon” with its classy café, bunjii jumping, and adventure activities. Views of this mighty canyon of the Rangitikei River featured in “Lord of the Rings”. Beside Mokai road and just before Mokai Station, there is a substantial stone cairn (with plaque) dedicated to William Colenso. At the road end, which is just past the Station woolshed, there is a DoC car park and information panel (naturally featuring a photograph of the great man himself). A marked DoC route climbs south through the farmland to the Mokai Patea Range, climbing very steeply for a bit. It would take a fit trampler a good two hours to reach the expansive tussock flats on top of the range. This is an exposed alpine location, often without water, so you need to be well prepared. Tramping is easy either north or south from here, along the range to the sign posts marking entry to Ruahine Forest Park, then either Otukota Hut (south) or Iron Bark Hut (north). The point named “Mokai Patea” is a special place to me because it is (approximately) where the William Colenso first crossed the range some 165 years ago.

Otukota Hut

Otukota Hut is a tidy ex NZ Forest Service six bunker located in a pleasant grassy clearing on a terrace above the Maropea River. There is a good river crossing point here—very important in such a location. Although we do not know for sure, it is most likely that William Colenso followed the course of the Maropea River here, as the lie of the land forces you to do so. There are two good DoC tracks climbing from Otukota Hut to the Mokai Patea Range. One climbs the obvious ridge to the west, after first crossing a side stream then the base of a large slip. The other climbs directly south



Maropea River at Otukota Hut

behind the hut up Bruce Ridge, leading to delightful clumps of *Nothofagus* in the tussock. There is a third track radiating out from Otukota Hut, over the river and climbing north and east towards Puketaramea (located on Colenso's route). This track also offers somewhat convoluted routes to Lake Colenso

and Iron Bark Hut. A deer culler who knew the area well once suggested that William Colenso would have most likely followed a ridge due west from Puketaramea, rather than north west, where the current track goes. This would have brought him to the Maropea River an hour or two upstream from Otukota Hut, and forced him to tramp up or down the river bed.

If you are travelling "Colenso style", then following the river (either up or down valley) is the way to go. This is the norm for many Ruahine trips, but is strictly reserved for when the river allows you to do so. Check Regional Council web sites for real time river levels, and ask DoC.



Otukota Hut and the Maropea River (hidden). The DoC track to Puketaramea follows the skyline Ridge. Colenso passed by here

The best route between Otukota and Iron Bark huts follows the Maropea River. In good summer conditions, it should take a sensible trumper a couple of hours, but remember, it can be a big bouldery river, and the river bed changes all the time. You might get your shorts wet. There is a DoC swingbridge over the river about half way between the huts that may seem to be in an odd location—remember, it was constructed in the days of NZ Forest Service deer cullers who lived for months in the ranges, and knew the place well. Somewhere between Iron Bark and Otukota Huts, the route that William Colenso used several times departs the Maropea River, climbs the Mokai Patea Range, then descends more or less where the modern day DoC route goes.

Iron Bark Hut

Iron Bark Hut is also a tidy riverside ex NZ Forest Service six bunker. DoC have added a porch, lining, and log burner, so Iron Bark Hut is understandably a popular hut. The track climbs from here south west to the northern end of the Mokai Patea Range. Over Maropea River right outside the hut (another good crossing point), the DoC track known as “The army track” due to the people who cut it for the deer cullers, climbs east, then descends to Lake Colenso and Lake Colenso Hut.

Kawhatau Base and Colenso trig

East from Mangaweka, several roads terminate with the Rangitane Road, which follows high terraces of the Kawhatau River just after it exits the Ruahines. The final few kilometres passes through locked gates and private land (with a log book at the main gate), so permission is needed to drive here. The road ends at Kawhatau Base, an ex NZ Forest Service house now available for hire. It’s a great camping area. Perhaps the most popular attraction is the DoC track behind the base, which climbs easily through *Nothofagus* forest to Colenso trig. This obvious outlier from the expansive

Mokai Patea Range plateaux offers great views, and was apparently never visited by William Colenso. There is a reliable tarn here, next to a good camping spot. Open tussock ridges lead easily east (in clear weather) to the Mokai Patea Range, Bruce Ridge, then down to Otukota Hut.



Wide open tussock plateaux of the Mokai Patea Range, near Colenso Trig



Colenso country

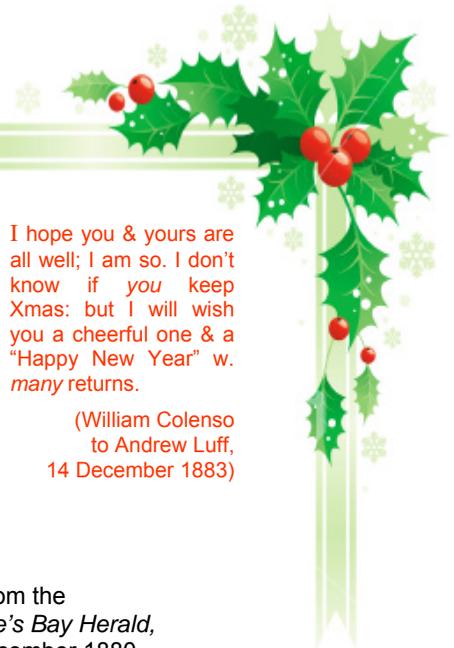
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I hope you & yours are all well; I am so. I don't know if you keep Xmas: but I will wish you a cheerful one & a "Happy New Year" w. many returns.

(William Colenso to Andrew Luff, 14 December 1883)

◀ From the *Hawke's Bay Herald*, 24 December 1880.