

eColenso

Volume 9 number 4 April 2018

Contents

- 2 Te Pūtake o Te Riri: Te Tai Tokerau
- 5 Clem Earp. The original locality of *Celmisia graminifolia* Hook.f.
- 9 Napier conference
- 10 Captain Newman & Mr Colenso
- 11 A blessing in disguise?
- 12 The cost of Trewithen
- 14 Lake Tarawera
- 15 Colenso didn't submit all of his papers to the *Transactions*
- 18 For services rendered
- 19 Further wanderings with William Colenso: Call for papers
- 20 *Mr Colenso's Wairarapa*

Supplement. The first European fighting at Taranaki.

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

Past issues are at
www.colensostudy.id.au/Newletter%20Masthead.htm.



Te Pūtake o Te Riri: Te Tai Tokerau

The first national commemoration of the New Zealand Land Wars took place in March in the Bay of Islands. Zak Henry, Leah Bell (a descendent of William Colenso and one of the founders of the campaign) and Waimarama Anderson spoke...

Mai i Te Rerenga Wairua ki Rakiura,
Mai i te maunga tapu o Takanaki ki Hikurangi
Kei ngaku iti, kei ngaku rahi,
E te iwi o Ngaapuhi nui tonu
E ngaa Mana whenua o Ngaati Rahiri me Ngaati Kawa
Nei raa maaua ko e mihi ana

The journey of the petition to commemorate the New Zealand Land Wars began with Rangatahi, was lead by youth, and has become the responsibility of young people – our generation. A campaign for all our people; to become conscious of the history that our forebears were forced to suppress.

In Waikato, we are surrounded by lush land, deep rivers and lakes, that bury the blood, bones and stories of those wars and their ongoing consequences. Little rural schools that no one has heard of are dotted across this land, such as ours – Ōtorohanga College where the petition was born.

On a school excursion in 2014, just half an hour away from our Kura, we visited the Ōrākau battle-site and Rangijāowhia where, in 1864 the militia burnt out elders and children, breaking the agreed rules of engagement. Most of the 190 of us students present had never visited before, let alone heard of these battles, invasions and contrived land

confiscations. Our kaumātua and kuia travelled with us. We witnessed their anguish as accounts of their ancestors' peril were explained. We heard stories of valour, struggle and veracity from Pākehā soldier perspectives, and of the warrior whānau, including women and children who so valiantly defended mana whenua.

When we witnessed the grief of our elders, we realised that it was shameful that we did not know our connections with such formative history. We were learning about parallel events far away, but we did not know anything at all about what had happened in our back yard. We heard Matua Rahui Papa and Nick Tuwhangai say that for years the old people had tried to have this historical reality addressed, to no avail. We felt their grief. We knew in that instant that we had to do something. A petition was born.

Two weeks later at the sesquicentennial commemoration of Ōrākau, Kīngi Tuheitia signed a letter which became the first signature to a petition to parliament seeking redress to this historical amnesia. The Kīngitanga proved to be relentless in its support of this kaupapa. Whaea Nanaia Mahuta readily agreed to sponsor and table the petition in parliament. Two years of hard work followed where we petitioned on the streets, at festivals and to anyone who would listen, to gain 13,000 signatures. We quickly realised that our people would only sign when they heard the story face to face, hence why 12,000 of those signatures represent 12,000 face to face conversations. We were overwhelmed with support from both Māori and Pākehā, but also met strong resistance.

We learnt that finishing what you start takes commitment, courage and resilience.

Leah Bell visited the Norfolk pine planted by her ancestor Elizabeth Colenso ►

Zak Henry, Waimarama Anderson and Leah Bell speak at Te Pūtake o Te Riri: Te Tai Tokerau ▼



We learnt that bringing a whole community along with the kaupapa alienates few.

We also learnt that once the kaupapa gains traction, people want to join. Once you have media attention, even those who were initially negative will support it.

On December the 8th 2015, we arrived at parliament supported by a huge contingent of people from across the motu. The petition was received and endorsed by members of all parties. We sought a statutory public holiday to commemorate the New Zealand Land Wars: to have this included in the New Zealand Curriculum: and to have this resourced.

In Parliament's Banquet Hall, that afternoon, Andrew Little, the then leader of the Labour party, stated that Labour would honour this should they become the government.

We are known to be a country of immense pride. We three come from Te Rohe Pōtae where stories of horror, deceit, abandonment, bloodshed and confiscation abound. We also have stories of friendship between Pākehā and Māori: people forced to fight each other due to the greed of people seeking power. Stories of heroism, women, children and men, fighting until their very last breath on all battlefields. Stories that are embedded in this kaupapa.

This is not a black and white history. Guilt and shame are irrelevant emotions which have hindered the illumination of our history. For we fear such shame. Sorry John Key, but Aotearoa was not founded peacefully. It did not begin as a colonial country with a peaceful Treaty signing between two peoples and miraculously leap forward in time to the World Wars; which is how history has been taught in our schools for generations. How can we as Rangatahi possibly know

why we have Treaty settlement processes, when we do not understand that the New Zealand Wars breached treaty agreements beginning here, where we stand today. Truthful stories are what we Rangatahi want to know. This is the history we deserve as citizens of Aotearoa. And young people, with the platform of social media and the pathways that our older generations have given us, will stop at nothing to know our truth. Hand in hand, aiming to be together, as one.

Since the petition was initiated there have been commemorations across the motu, open discussions between whānau, communities, schools and politicians. We have seen Rangiriri repatriated, Ōrākau battle site returned, battle sites protected, and this very commemoration. Te Reo classes are exploding, Land War texts are sold out. A conversation has been raised.

Across the world colonial history is being challenged. The time has come.

We are humbled and honoured to support Te Pūtake o te Riri in Te Tai Tokerau.

In the ode of remembrance we say “Lest we forget”, today and forever more we say “we must remember – me maumahara tātou”.



The original locality of *Celmisia graminifolia* Hook.f.

By Clem Earp

This species of *Celmisia* is colloquially known as ‘Whangarei Heads daisy’ (Fig. 1), and appears in many botanical works as *C. adamsii* var. *rugulosa*, although more recently Hooker’s specific name has been accepted pending further taxonomic research.¹

In his first large collection of specimens sent to Sir William Hooker at Kew, in a dispatch dated 20 July 1841, Colenso included what ‘I sup-



Fig.1. *Celmisia graminifolia* Hook.f. growing on Mt. Manaia, 5 December 2017. My 55 mm lens cap at right for scale.

pose to be a n. sp. of Compositæ. I obtained it from the summit of the high hills on the N. side of Wangarei Bay. It had passed flowering & I could not procure a more perfect specimen. It grows plentifully there. Native name, Tikumu.²

Tikumu is the generic Māori name for plants in the genus *Celmisia*. Colenso later referred to this specimen in a letter dated 31 July 1846: ‘one [*Celmisia*] I discovered at Wangarei, in 1837, – and sent you in first parcel; – which, by the bye, had not been noticed (as one of my detecting) in your remarks on the different species of Celmisia in the “Boty. of the Antarctic Voyage”.³

The work Colenso is referring to, *The botany of the Antarctic voyage of H.M. discovery ships Erebus and Terror in the Years 1839-1843: under the command of Captain Sir James Clark Ross* to give it its full title, was written by Sir William’s son, Joseph Dalton Hooker. It’s possible Colenso got carried away while writing and conflated his Hookers, as I’m not aware that Sir William himself made any such remarks—certainly not in that work, or in any publication noticing it.⁴

Looking at what Joseph Hooker wrote, there is only one of his species (in that work) that fits with what Colenso could find in Northland: *Celmisia graminifolia*.⁵ The locality given for this is ‘Bay of Islands’ and, unusually, no collector names are cited, so Colenso had

1 P.J. de Lange (2009).

2 I.M. St George (2009), p. 144.

3 I.M. St George (2009), p. 199.

4 Ian St George has suggested to me that Sir William may have made the remarks in a letter to Colenso. As such letters to Colenso have not survived, it is not possible to confirm this.

5 J.D. Hooker (1844), formal description on p. 35. Also brief mention on the following page.

every right to feel aggrieved. Much later, Joseph Hooker reduced the species to a variety of *C. gracilentia*, yet gave the collector as ‘Sinclair, etc’.⁶

Peter de Lange has remarked ‘examination of the type material in Kew and AK, and correspondence between William Colenso and Joseph Hooker (St George 2009) make it quite clear that: 1. Colenso collected the type from the Whangarei Hills, and 2. He gave it to Andrew Sinclair to pass on to Hooker.’⁷

So much for that. The question remaining is, can we now determine more exactly where Colenso got his specimens from? The species is common in various places around the hills east of Whangārei. On the high peaks of Manaia and Te Whara (Bream Head) it occurs right up near the ridgeline—long steep climbs for which Colenso was unlikely to have had the time to spare, nor did he ever mention going up there. But it also occurs at lower elevations,⁸ for example in regenerating bush on Kauri Mountain (no mountain that, a modest hill!). It has been suggested that Māori land clearing for cultivation, and also early European farming methods, led to an increase in suitable ecological habitats, but after that, more intensive modern farming has led to its decline: ‘it grew in poor pasture at Parua Bay until the 1950s’.⁹

Colenso mentioned having ‘discovered’ the plant in 1837, a period for which we do not have his journals.¹⁰ But as for the specimens actually sent to Sir William, there is a very suggestive journal entry a few years later.

On 10 March 1841, Colenso wrote: *Breakfasted, and started, in a Canoe, for Pakaraka, about 10 miles down the river, and not far from the N. Head of the [Whangarei] Bay.*

The next day, Colenso wrote: *11th. Early this morning I held Service; preached from Rom. II. 7–10, Service over I ascended the high hill behind the village, & gained in so doing a plant (out of flower) ap-*

parently a species of aster. Then he descended and had breakfast, showing that the ascent was not particularly time-consuming.

The wording of this last entry is very close to what he wrote about the specimens sent to Sir William, and I suggest that these specimens were in fact collected at Pakaraka in 1841, regardless of whether Colenso initially saw the species in 1837 as he claimed.

This throws back the question about locality to: where was Pakaraka? In Hamlin’s list of Colenso localities, it is stated that it was located ‘4 miles from Pihoi in the Wāngarei district. In 1841, Pakaraka was reached from Pataua in half a day. From Pakaraka the Bay was crossed to Pohue and recrossed to Tamatarau. This suggests that Pakaraka was at the head of Whangarei Harbour, on the present site of Whangarei.’¹¹

While there might have been a place named Pakaraka ‘4 miles from Pihoi’ (the slightly elevated part of the present Whangārei city, overlooking the Town Basin), that is not the place Colenso was visiting in March 1841. You certainly would not have been able to walk from Pataua (on the Pacific coast) to the present site of Whangārei in half a day, and the journal entry specifically states it was 10 miles *down* the ‘river’ from Pthoi and close to the north head of the bay (i.e. Bream Head). It is one of the peculiarities of the English language that ‘the heads’ of a bay are at the opposite end of the bay from ‘the head’.

Old land deeds in fact show a place called Pakaraka on a peninsula jutting out from the eastern end of Parua Bay (Fig. 2).¹² This is sepa-

6 J.D. Hooker (1852), p. 123.

7 P.J. de Lange (2009).

8 N. Goldwater & S. Beadel (2010), p. 25.

9 M. Bellingham & C. Devonshire (1986).

10 I. St George (2018).

11 I.M. St George (2009), p. 115.

12 H.H. Turton (1877a & b), Kaiwa Block, Deed 112.

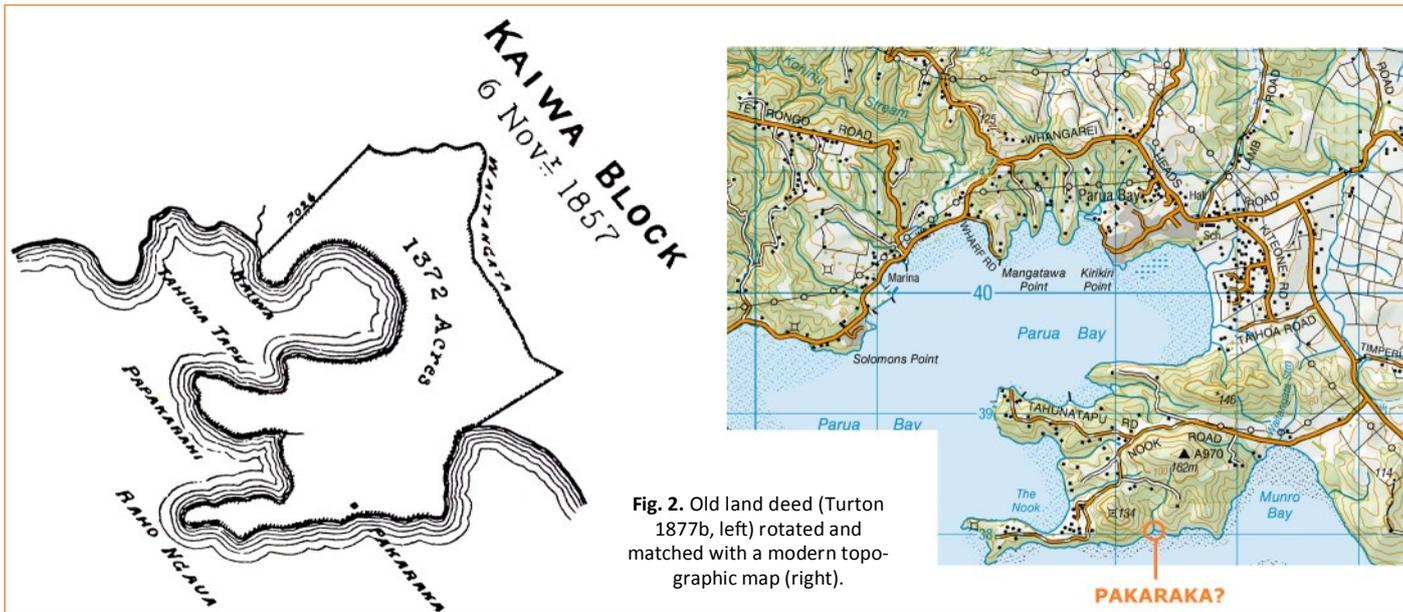


Fig. 2. Old land deed (Turton 1877b, left) rotated and matched with a modern topographic map (right).

rated from Pataua by a relatively narrow corridor without rugged hills blocking the way, which would easily be traversed in half a day; and is just across Urquhart's Bay from Bream Head. The name does not appear on modern topographic maps, but is still recognised by older residents as referring to an old pā site which is marked on top of a hill (and therefore the etymology is Pā Karaka). This site was registered as N24/2 in the New Zealand Archaeological Association system.¹³

As Colenso stated there was a high hill behind the 'village', he cannot have been referring to the old pā site as being Pakaraka. I

suggest that by his time, the inhabitants were living on the coast, returning to the fortified pā only in times of trouble (if at all). I have visited the pā site, now covered in thick gorse and *Kunzea* scrub with dense *Carex* ground cover, and accessible by grazing animals. It is on a ridge with a very steep drop on three sides, and one would not want to live there unless necessary. There are extensive middens of pipi and cockle shells which would have had to be transported up from the beach.

¹³ G. Nevin (1984), fig. 2.

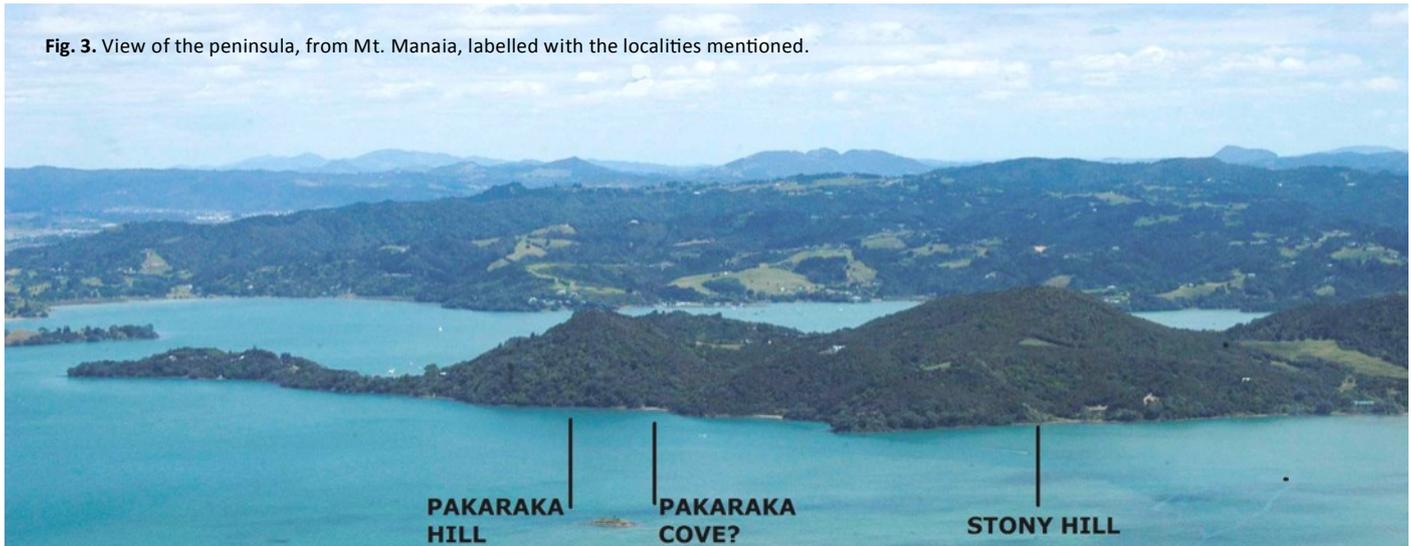
Instead, I suggest that when Colenso visited, the village was where the old land deed shows it, on the coast. The only suitable location (to my eyes, anyway) would be the cove where a clear gravel-bottomed stream enters the bay; other nearby coves are either dry or have narrow, boggy bottoms, although all appear to have middens.¹⁴ There is a reasonably dry, flat natural terrace above the stream where a village might sit, but as this is now a lifestyle block with stock grazing on it I was not able to enter for a closer examination. The location of the cove also fits nicely with that shown on the rather rough survey map.

The 'high hill' would therefore be behind this, the peak known locally as Hinewai or Stony Hill and marked as trig A970 on modern maps (Fig. 2). This is now covered with tall mature *Kunzea* scrub, the

ground underneath being relatively open where not covered with large andesite boulders, and since stock have been excluded, totara and tanekaha have begun to regenerate. Gorse is rare on the slopes, but becomes dense at the top of the hill. Also at the top are some *Phormium tenax* plants of no great age, probably from wind-blown seed like those in similarly regenerating forest at Kauri Mountain. It took me a bit less than 40 minutes for the round trip (ascent and descent), certainly something Colenso could have done before breakfast. The view he would have seen from the top is not visible today because of the height of the scrub.

14 G. Nevin (1984), fig. 4.

Fig. 3. View of the peninsula, from Mt. Manaia, labelled with the localities mentioned.



No *Celmisia* was seen on either this hill or the one with the pā, nor has it been recorded here in vegetation surveys.¹⁵

According to local informants, the whole area was repeatedly burnt during the 1950s as normal farming practice for clearing scrub, and it is only in recent decades that regeneration has been allowed as progressive subdivision made the use of uncontrolled burnoffs impractical. It may be that a few plants survive elsewhere in the Parua district, but as noted above, they most likely became extinct in the area in or before the 1950s.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Willie and Vince Oxborrow for local information and Max Oxborrow for access to his property, Kiri Sharpe (Heritage NZ) for supplying me with archaeological reports, and Ian St George for supplying a transcription of Colenso's journals.

References

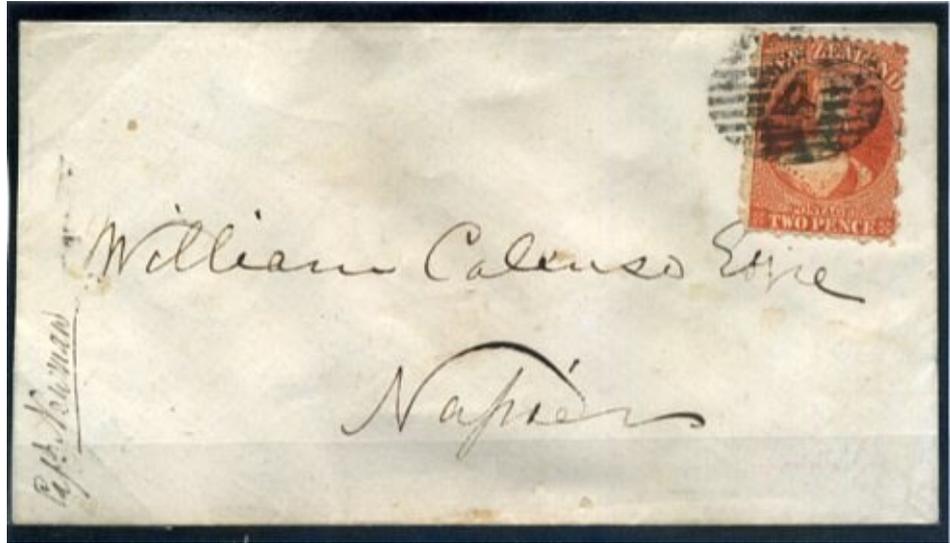
- M. Bellingham & C. Devonshire, 1986. The rise and fall of *Celmisia adamsii* var. *rugulosa*. *Journal of the Auckland Botanical Society* 41: 16.
- P.J. de Lange, 2009. [*Celmisia graminifolia* web page for NZ Plant Conservation Network]. http://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora_details.aspx?ID=413, accessed 22 November 2017.
- N. Goldwater & S. Beadel, 2010. *Natural areas of Manaia Ecological District: reconnaissance survey report for the Protected Natural Areas Programme*. DOC.
- J.D. Hooker, 1844–1845. *The botany of the Antarctic voyage of H.M. discovery ships Erebus and Terror in the Years 1839–1843: under the command of Captain Sir James Clark Ross. I. Flora Antarctica. Part I. Botany of Lord Auckland's Group and Campbell's Island*. Reeve etc., London.
- J.D. Hooker, 1852–1853. *The botany of the Antarctic voyage of H.M. discovery ships Erebus and Terror in the Years 1839–1843: under the command of Captain Sir James Clark Ross. II. Flora Novae-Zelandiae. Part I. Flowering plants*. Lovell Reeve, London.
- G. Nevin, 1984. *Whangarei Harbour Study Technical Report No. 9: Archaeology*. Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.
- N.P. Pickmere, 1986. *Whangarei: the founding years*. Published by the author, Whangarei.
- I.M. St. George (editor), 2009. *Colenso's collections including the unpublished work of the late Bruce Hamlin on William Colenso's New Zealand plants held at Te Papa*. New Zealand Native Orchid Group, Wellington.
- I. St George, 2018. What was Colenso doing in 1837? *eColenso* 9(1): 2–4.
- H.H. Turton, 1877a. *Maori deeds of land purchases in the North Island of New Zealand. Vol. 1. Province of Auckland*. Govt Printer, Wellington.
- H.H. Turton, 1877b. *Plans of land purchases in the North Island of New Zealand. Vol. 1. Province of Auckland*. Govt Printer, Wellington.

15 N. Goldwater & S. Beadel (2010), Protected Natural Area Q07/067, pp. 70–72.



FURTHER WANDERINGS:
MTG HAWKE'S BAY
22 to 24 FEBRUARY 2019

Captain Newman to Mr. Colenso



Captain Alfred Newman, commander of an East India Company ship, his wife Isabella Soames and three sons migrated to New Zealand in 1853 in the *Selma* and farmed the 13,000-acre Arlington estate near Waipukurau, becoming prominent members of the local community.

“In 1858, when the new province of Hawke’s Bay had separated from Wellington, a proclamation decided that the council of the province should consist of ten members and that the province should be divided into six districts:—Napier (three members), Napier Country (two), Clive (one), Mohaka (one), Te Aute (one), and Waipukurau (two). The election resulted in the following members being returned: Napier, Messrs TH Fitzgerald, W Colenso and T Hitchings; Napier Country, Messrs HS Tiffen and JCL Carter; Clive, Mr J Rhodes; Mohaka, Mr Robert Riddell; Te Aute, Mr ES Curling; Wai-

pukurau, Messrs JD Ormond and J Tucker. The establishment of the new province was celebrated by two days' racing, a dinner, and a ball in the schoolhouse.

“The first meeting of the council took place in the Golden Fleece Hotel on Saturday, April 23rd, 1859. Mr JD Ormond was elected chairman of the meeting, and subsequently Speaker of the Council and Mr TH Fitzgerald Superintendent.

“As a matter of fact, the first choice for Superintendent seems to have lain between Captain Newman and Captain Carter, but, as the Councilors were equally divided, both candidates retired.”

W. Dinwiddie (1916). *Old Hawke's Bay*.

A blessing in disguise?

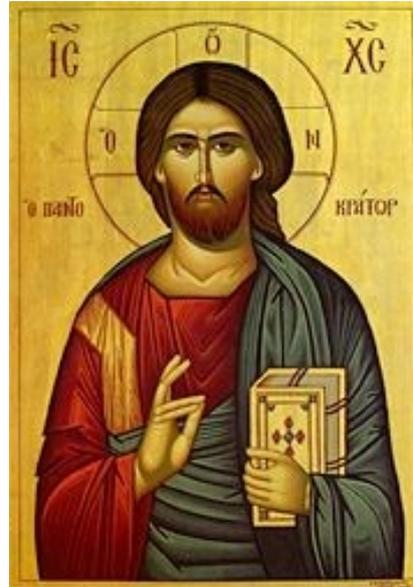
We have wondered if the curious posture of Colenso's right hand in this photograph is the result of the infection he described to JD Hooker in a letter dated 14 November 1867,



In Aug. /66 I was suddenly attacked with malignant Whitlow (or something worse) in bulbous part of forefinger right hand. For 6 days & nights I was nearly mad and eventually became delirious; I begged & prayed our surgeons day after day to lay it open – they would not, saying they could not see where to cut (it was red swollen & stiff throughout), but on the 6th day, when I was beside myself and the disorder up to my elbow, they did so – it gave immediate relief but I have lost the use of my finger! I was months poulticing, &c, &c, and I got very low & haggard; and now my finger is healed rigid (ankylosis). I think I must have informed you, that I had lost the writing & drawing use of my right thumb 4 years ago, and now my index finger has followed suit; so I had to learn to write with my mid. & ring fingers, and I have managed this also, thank GOD!

But we now know that photograph was taken in 1865, so it preceded the ankylosis of his forefinger. Perhaps there is another explanation; I wonder if Colenso, 13 years after Selwyn had deprived him of his Deacon status, now a Member of the House of Representatives, was making a point: “I am a churchman.”

“What is the significance of Christ's hand gesture (thumb and two fingers up, two fingers down) in Christian art?” asks a correspondent



to an art history website, and the answer is “This gesture, in which his first two fingers and his thumb are extended and his third and fourth finger are closed, is among the most frequently occurring of Christ's hand gestures in Christian art. It emerged as a sign of benediction (or blessing) in early Christian and Byzantine art, and its use continued through the Medieval period, and into the Renaissance. The sign is most frequently seen in iconographic images of Christ, which appeared in churches in the Early

Byzantine and Medieval periods in the form of mosaics, stained glass windows, relief sculptures, and paintings. One of the most common of such images is the Christ Pantocrator (or Christ Almighty), which depicts Christ, usually isolated against a golden background, with his head encircled by a halo, his left arm hugging the gospels to his chest and his right hand raised in the sign of benediction. It is important to note that this gesture is always made with the right hand, as this is the hand with which one blesses, according to Christian doctrine.” (<http://art-history.voexpert.com/art-history-general/what-is-the-significance-of-christ-s-hand-gesture-5016.html>).

The cost of Trewithen

Colenso's son Wiremu (Willie) married his cousin Sarah in 1880 and they lived at 8 North Parade Penzance for a time but then moved to the substantial house called Trewithen, provided by his father. A document in Colenso's hand is in the collections at MTG Hawke's Bay; it appears to be a draft of a letter to Willie and it gives an account of the cost. Tears and water splashes make transcription difficult; in addition the sections are numbered out of the original sequence. The transcription that follows attempts to show the sequence intended.



I. (To Willie & S. Octr./89)

Cost of Trewithen

=====	
1. The Land w. Lawyer's & other expenses	£700. 0. 0
2. The House, £975.—	
architect—	50.
ptg. & glazing—	46.
Layg. out gard.	35
earth.....	<u>3.10.</u>
	£1109.10. 0
3. Walls (only proposed in addition)	100. 0. 0

	£1909:10: 0
	3% = £
	=====

This expensive outlay, @ 7%, net, stands me in £126. a year, rent!! for Trewithen: indeed, it would be more if I were to set down Int. on outlay from the beginning: 8 and 9 percent is the common rate here.

In memo (no date) of cost of house, &c, early in the year, you say:—

Monies remg. at Bank £965.10. 0

In yours (Sarah's) of June./89 you say—

“I have been to the Bank and given notice for our ½ year's salary we shall be obliged to draw for this half £100, as usual, instead of £75. We have so many small bills to pay which we shall not have next half and we are waiting to be guided by you, dear Uncle; we were very disappd. last Mail after giving you our list of particulars and what money remd. in the Bank; we wanted to be advised what we should do.”

I don't know what you can mean by “as usual”—I fancy (to make sense of it) it shod. come after £75. and then yr. remark, “We were very disappd. &c”—what need for that? when you had money in plenty in Bk there?—had you none then you might well have said so.

I do not know how much money there will be left in the Bank at the end of the year, (as you don't send me regular & clear accounts)—but I suppose about £865 after deducting the £100 you speak of in yr. June letter—and if you have the 2 walls built—to cost £100 or so, that will further reduce it to (say) £765.

I cannot well allow you more than £150. net a year (this is £20. more than Latty's)—and this sum you must continue to draw from your Bank for some time to come, until the monies there are reduced to £300.—& then from that time forward the said £150. a yr. shall be remitted to you from N.Z. in ½ yrly payments. I shod. like for that sum of £300. to be kept at int. in your Bank—in case of any great emergency; and the extra sum of int. (@ 3% = £9.) from it shall also be allowed to you in addition to the £150—as a gift.

As, I think, I mentd. in one of my late letters, Lat. has also purchd. a house & grounds (about 20 ac. I believe) it was a Vicarage House & was sold by the Church Commisn.—well I remitted to him £2000. (less Bank expenses) to pay for it, £1900. & ½ yr. allowance £100. L. never before had any lump sum from me. And now, & for the future, it has been arranged betn. us, that instead of having £200. a yr. from me for them (3) he is only to have £130:—& by this m. I send him £65. So much for that.—

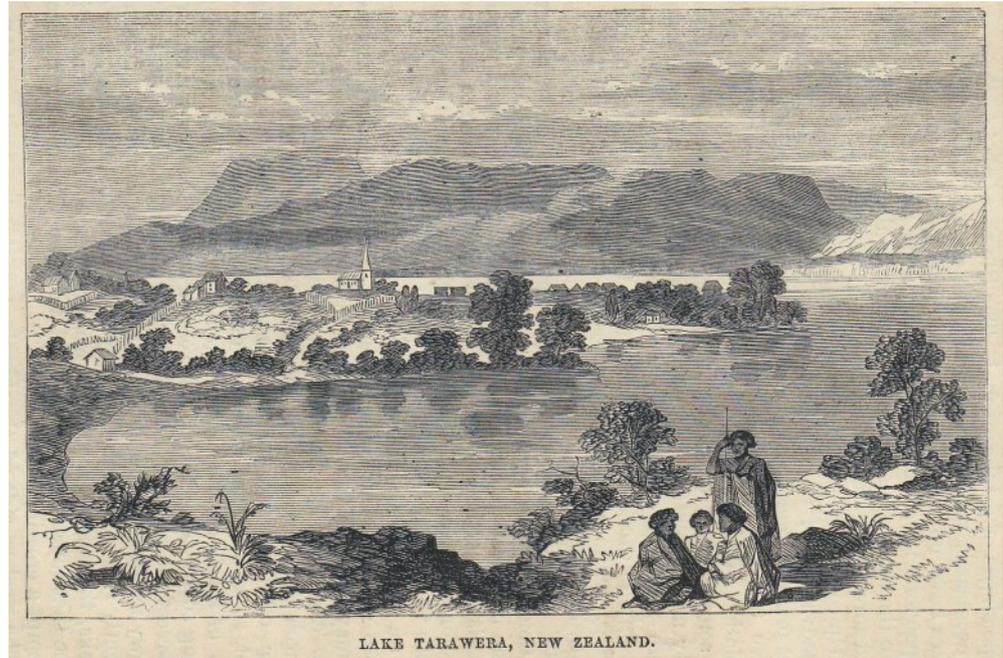
And here I may tell you what the Bk. exps. was—pd. here by me *** 17.—You may recollect what you & yr. uncle made me pay ***** £2000 - £60 and note the diffee.

Lake Tarawera

William Colenso visited Lake Tarawera only once, on 7 January 1842. He wrote in his journal,

7th Friday—Early started onwards; an hour & ½ brot. us to *Tarawera* Lake where we breakfasted; here were sevl. hot springs on the edge of the lake, some of wh. were hotter than the finger cod. be borne in, just within the lake 'twas warm, farther on it was lukewarm, & farther on cold; baths of every deg. of heat—on the hill behind, the Natives infd. me, the water was hot enough to cook food in, & that they often did so there;—sulphur, too, abounded there, & it was often thrown up out of the earth—the steam & smoke of wh. continually ascended.—We got into a Canoe, Bkfast. & prayers ended, & accd. by the Chief, paddled across the Lake almost to the farther end of the same; this sheet of water is very deep, and is about 3½ miles in length, & from 1 to 2 in breadth; surrounded on all sides by hills destitute of verdure. Landing at upper end, & giving the chief a few Books,—we proceeded onwards.

The woodcut here was sold recently on Ebay: the vendor had acquired an old book with no date and no cover or identification, so he could not tell me the provenance, but it is later than Colenso's visit.



LAKE TARAWERA, NEW ZEALAND.

Colenso did not submit all of his papers to the *Transactions*

The *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* published 101 papers by William Colenso, all of them subtitled “Read before the Hawke’s Bay Philosophical Institute on (date)”. Nonetheless he did not submit a number of interesting papers he read at the Institute meetings—including one, given at the HBPI meeting “On the Men of Science who preceded us in these Seas and Lands, with particular reference to their labours, adventures, and tragical ends” (illustrated with portraits of Sydney Parkinson, La Perouse, David Douglas, the two brothers Richard and Allan Cunningham, Dr. Darwin, Sir J. D. Hooker, and Wm. Swainson; and, also, with some striking views and scenes from La Perouse’s Voyage, and Sir J. Ross’s Antarctic Expedition); by W. Colenso, F.L.S.

It was reported in unusual detail by the *Daily Telegraph* of 11 September 1883.

The Ordinary Meeting of this Society was held last night, and we were pleased to see a good attendance of Members, also several Visitors, notwithstanding the unfavorable weather. The President the Bishop of Waiapu occupied the chair. Two new members

were announced by the Hon. Secretary, viz., Dr. Matthews of Napier, and Dr. Yon Mirbach of Waipawa.

There being no written paper to be read, the business of the meeting commenced with Mr Colenso giving his Address, (which was postponed from the last meeting,) “On the men of science who preceded us in these South Seas and lands, with particular reference to their labours, striking adventures and tragical ends.” And, although it occupied a full hour or more in its delivery, it was listened to most attentively throughout.

The Lecturer (for so we must call him) certainly gave a large amount of most interesting information, culled from official and authentic sources; no small portion being both striking and new—at all events to us; this was still further heightened from his own personal knowledge of several distinguished scientific men of whom he had to speak, and of whom he related personal anecdotes.

Beginning with Capt. Cook, who

had led the way with his attached band, Mr. Colenso pointed out the smallness of Cook’s ships, and their great want of fresh provisions on his discovering N.Z., and his getting absolutely *nothing* on landing! hence he named that place Poverty Bay! (so widely different to what it is now.) In his first voyage, Cook lost his artists and scientific men; in his second, his own life was hardly saved through their killing their ship’s dog to make a little soup for him; while in his third voyage he lost his own life barbarously. Cook was followed by the great French expedition of two fine (King’s) ships and 250 men, commanded by the unfortunate La Perouse, and with him some of the chief scientific men of France. Mr Colenso rapidly sketched their voyage and detailed the sudden and severe losses of several of the scientific men of that expedition, before its final loss on the island and rocks of Mallicollo: on one occasion, 6 officers and 16 men; on another (the great massacre at the

Navigator's Island) nearly an equal number, including the Captain of one of the ships De Langle, and the highly-gifted man of science Lamanon! He also read a portion of the instructions from the Government of France to La Perouse respecting N.Z., from which it would appear, that at that early date the French contemplated the doing something in this Country; so that, had La Perouse not perished with his ships without visiting N.Z., this Country (or the S. Island) might have become a French Colony. Curiously enough, Mr Colenso, in 1834, was a fellow passenger from England to Sydney with Chevalier Dillon, (an Irishman), the then recent discoverer of the remains of La Perouse's expedition; of whom he (Mr Colenso) also gave some entertaining anecdotes. Then followed the second great French Expedition, in search of La Perouse; 2 fine ships commanded by General D'Entrecasteaux; these ships circumnavigated Australia, and were twice at Tasmania, and twice through Torres Straits; they also sailed around New Caledonia (the present French Colony), and even sighted the outermost islet of the New Hebrides, little

deeming that their unfortunate countrymen of whom they were then in quest were dwelling on the neighbouring isles of Mallicollo! Of this expedition the two commanders and other officers and chief men and many seamen died during the voyage. The talented Botanist and Naturalist *La Billardiere* was in this expedition, whose name is retained among us, given to several of our Ferns and other plants.

Leaving the Voyages of Discovery of the last Century, Mr Colenso came to the scientific men of his own time. And first, Mr David Douglas, a zealous Scotch Botanist, and Collector of plants for 10 years in N.W. America and Columbia, where he met with many perilous and highly interesting adventures, and sent scores of trees and shrubs and annuals to England, which are still the delight of our Shrubberies and Gardens, some of which bear his honoured name, (as *Abies Douglasii*, *Pinus Douglasii*, &c.)—afterwards he went to the Sandwich Islands, Botanicizing, and there he met with a horrid death, through falling into a pit-fall in the mountains dug for trapping wild cat-

tle, and there gored and trampled to death by a bull in the pit! Then Mr Colenso spoke of the two Cunninghams, (brothers,) Richard and Allan, who had both Botanized in New Zealand, in the years 1826-1838; Richard was early butchered by savages in the interior of N. S. Wales, while carrying on his scientific pursuits; and Allan (after many long years of heavy service in the cause of science in the tropics,) hastened his death through being benighted, with nothing to eat and no shelter, in the early spring, in the dense wet woods between Te Waimate and Kaitaia, at the N. of the Northern Island. On that occasion however he discovered and brought away the handsome fern which now bears his name—*Gleichenia Cunninghamii*.

The Lecturer then told us of the very narrow escape from drowning experienced by Dr. Hooker, the Botanist attached to the antarctic expedition under Sir James Ross, (now Sir J. D. Hooker, the Director of the Botanic Gardens at Kew,) in their landing, or attempting to land on Franklin Island in 76 degrees S.; where, with the seas heavy on the shore, the ther-

mometer at 22 degrees, and fresh ice continually forming from the dashing of every wave on the icy and slippery rocks,—Dr. Hooker slipped his foot, and fell into the frozen sea, and was saved, and kept alive with difficulty till they reached their ship. To this was added the sad fate of Dr. Sinclair (for many years the Colonial Secretary of this Colony,) who was drowned while Botanizing, &c, in crossing the Rangitata river in Canterbury.

To the already long Death-roll, the following great and illustrious names had yet to be added: viz., of the two French Commanders, De Surville, (who was in N.Z. at the same time with Cook, in 1769,) who was drowned in the surf in landing at Madras, on his arrival after his voyage thither from N.Z.: and Captain Marion, who with so many of his officers and men were killed in the Bay of Islands in 1772. Then there was the lamented Sir John Franklin (with all his officers and men!) who had done so much for Science in Tasmania, while Governor of that Colony:—the unfortunate Admiral Fitzroy, who

(with Darwin,) had laboured so hard for Science and for Navigators in their many years spent in Surveying the inhospitable and bleak regions of Cape Horn and the Straits of Magellan; who was afterwards Governor of this Colony; and who, long after, committed suicide at Home: and, lastly, there was the still more unfortunate end of the celebrated French Admiral, Du Petit Thouars, who, after a long and arduous life spent in the cause of science in these Southern Seas, was unhappily and miserably burnt to death in the train, with his family, &c., on his first going to Paris to see the King shortly after his return to France.

Well might Mr. Colenso say, that while the Christian and other Religions had their Martyrs, Science, also, had a glorious list of similar heroes; whose memories should not be forgotten. Indeed, their names live among us, in those of plants and animals, and Capes, and Islands, and Bays that bear them.

The Address was followed by a show of several scarce and little-

known portraits of some of those scientific persons who had been mentioned; as of La Perouse, the two Cunninghams (Allan and Richard), and Mr David Douglas; also, drawings of scenes from La Perouse's voyage, and of views from the great Antarctic Expedition under Sir James Ross,—one of which was the famous active volcano, Mount Erebus, in 76 degrees S. latitude, 12,400 feet high,—described by privileged and daring observers as a wonderful and thrilling sight!

These were followed by a large display of exhibits, natural and artificial, Botanical and Zoological, not a few of them being novel and highly interesting; collected by Mr Hamilton, Mr Winklemann, Mr Balfour (Glenross), the Hon. Secretary, and others. Mr John Harding's newly-received earthenware from home, made of N.Z. clays from Mount Vernon, (already described in our columns,) were also exhibited.

Votes of thanks to the Lecturer, and to the Chairman concluded the proceedings.

For services rendered to the cause and advancement of Science

The *Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, Volume 19, 1886, page 618, reports with admirable brevity, the fifth meeting for the year of the Hawke's Bay Philosophical Institute on 9 August, the President in the chair. The President was Dr William Isaac Spencer and the Honorary Secretary Augustus Hamilton. It says, "The President, at the commencement of the meeting, took occasion to congratulate Mr. Colenso on his election as a Fellow of the Royal Society".

The minutes, in longhand in the collections of the Hawke's Bay Museums Trust, are rather more effusive,

The Chairman in the course of his opening remarks took occasion to congratulate Mr Colenso upon his election, and especially upon his unanimous election – as a Fellow of the Royal Society of England – and considered that an honour was conferred not only on the town and district but upon the Colony – and Mr Hill moved that,

The members of the Hawke's Bay Philosophical Institute have received with much satisfaction the news that a Fellowship has been conferred by the Royal Society of England upon the Revd. W. Colenso, one of its members and they authorise that the fact be entered upon the minutes of the proceedings of the Society and further that a letter be sent to Mr Colenso in the name of the Society & signed by the President & Secretary congratulating him upon the honour he has received from the Royal Society in recognition of the services he has rendered to the cause and advancement of Science. This of course was carried by acclamation.

Those men who sat in parliament between 1854 and the 1870s included some of the best educated, most accomplished, widely travelled, colourful and interesting personalities who have ever involved themselves in this country's public life.

—Edmund Bohan, *Edward Stafford: New Zealand's First Statesman*, p. 9)

Further wanderings with William Colenso

Napier 22–24 February 2019

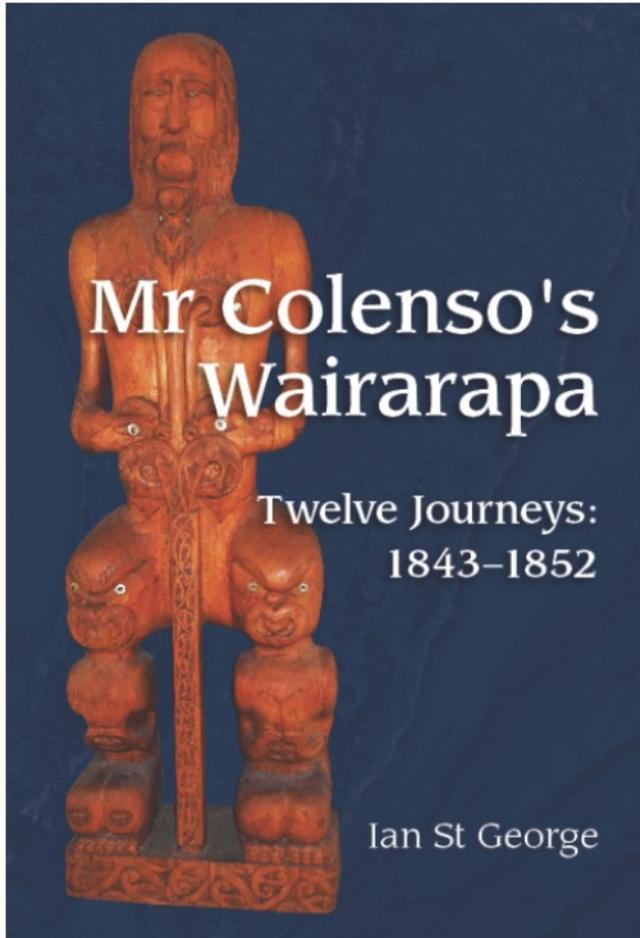
Call for papers

William Colenso was a nineteenth century printer, preacher, explorer, linguist, avid reader, churchman, writer, politician and more, at a time when multispecialists were fervidly examining this new and fascinating country.

We invite papers on any subject related to the life, times or interests of William Colenso – in other words, on any topic related to nineteenth century knowledge – for a conference to be held at MTG Hawke's Bay from 22 to 24 February 2019.

An abstract of fewer than 200 words should be sent to Ian St George at istge@yahoo.co.nz before 30 July 2018.





Mr Colenso's Wairarapa

twelve journeys: 1843-1852

Available now from selected bookshops
or from Fraser Books by emailing or
phoning the publisher:

ifgrant@xtra.co.nz +64 6-377 1359

