

**‘[T]he sound of the bell amidst the wilds’:  
Evangelical Perceptions of Northern Aotearoa/New Zealand  
Māori and the Aboriginal Peoples of Port Phillip, Australia,  
c.1820s-1840s**

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A thesis  
submitted to the Victoria University of Wellington  
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
in History

Victoria University of Wellington  
2009

Let me sing a song for you  
that alters your belief  
– Ryan Adams

## Abstract

This study investigates evangelical missionary perceptions of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, Australia, during the 1820s-1840s, a period when evangelical humanitarianism was at its height and European racial thinking was in a particularly formative stage. The thesis uses three case studies: the Church Missionary Society missionaries George Clarke and the Reverend William Yate in northern Aotearoa/New Zealand, and the Wesleyan Missionary Society missionary the Reverend Francis Tuckfield in the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, Australia. Clarke, Yate, and Tuckfield's perceptions of the indigenous peoples they sought to 'save' are explored through an examination of journals, letters to missionary society secretaries in London, personal correspondence, and in the case of Yate, evidence presented to the 'House of Commons' Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements)' and his published *Account of New Zealand* (1835). Particular attention is paid to how these men's perceptions changed over three key stages: prior to arriving in their respective mission fields, the initial period following their arrival, and after a significant period of residence.

Evangelical missionary endeavour in both Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia is compared in this thesis because in the early nineteenth century these two places were part of a common Tasman world. The similarities in evangelical experiences in the Tasman world during this period reveal an evangelical community within which ideas and information flowed freely. Comparative exploration of evangelical perceptions of northern Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip reveals that adaptation and evolution occurred through missionaries' experiences. Evolution of evangelical ideas is revealed in missionary encounters with a number of non-European populations, which further shaped missionary ideas about those they sought to 'save'. Adaptation of evangelical ideas is reflected in the different evangelical experiences in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia. These differences, most significantly the opposing experiences of success in Aotearoa/New Zealand and failure in Port Phillip, Australia, indicate that evangelical views of non-Europeans were not static, but rather they were altered as a result of experience.

## Preface

The topic of this thesis is a combination of my interests in early contact between Europeans and Māori and between Europeans and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, and more generally, the contrasting places of these indigenous populations on the European hierarchy of races. While I am secular in my own beliefs, I am interested in missionary perceptions of Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia because evangelical encounters with these peoples, related through a wealth of written sources, provide insight into a fascinating historical topic. Many of the events discussed in this thesis are painful issues for both Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip and wider Australia. I have endeavoured to discuss these events sympathetically, however certain incidents mentioned may remain distressing for some readers; writing about them was often distressing in itself.

During the thirteen months spent researching and writing this thesis I was fortunate enough to have a considerable amount of assistance and support from many people. This thesis had benefited greatly from these people's help; the remaining failings are however, solely my own. I am extremely grateful to: my whānau for support and inspiration – aroha nui. The staff and my fellow postgraduate students in the History Department at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) who made my workspace an enjoyable one. Charlotte Macdonald and Adrian Muckle, my supervisors for this project, whose wealth of knowledge and expert guidance made this thesis substantially better than it might have been. Kate Hunter, for introducing me to Francis Tuckfield. My office-mate Susie Johnston, who, with good humour, put up with me for over a year. The VUW Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences for two research grants which enabled me to twice visit Melbourne – firstly to conduct research in the State Library of Victoria (SLV) and a second time to present a

paper at the 'Re-Orienting Whiteness' conference in December 2008. The helpful staff of the VUW library, the Alexander Turnbull Library (ATL), the SLV, and the Hocken Library (HL). My friend Rachel Standfield, who both encouraged me and assisted me in my research interests, and who, with her fiancé Jason Groom, hosted me during my first visit to Melbourne. Most importantly, my wife Michelle, without whom none of my academic pursuits would be possible – just three words my love: you mean everything.

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## List of Abbreviations

ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library
CMS	Church Missionary Society
HL	Hocken Library
<i>HRV 2A</i>	<i>Historical Records of Victoria, Volume 2A</i>
LMS	London Missionary Society
NSW	New South Wales
SLV	State Library of Victoria
VUW	Victoria University of Wellington
WMS	Wesleyan Missionary Society



## Introduction

‘There is something peculiarly pleasing in the sound of the bell amidst the wilds of New Zealand’ wrote the Reverend William Yate (1802-1877) in his 1835 *Account of New Zealand*.<sup>1</sup> This study is an exploration of evangelical missionary perceptions of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, Australia, from the 1820s to the 1840s – perceptions of the cross-cultural encounters which arose from the ringing of the church bell in ‘the wilds’. Yate’s *Account* – written after six years labouring as a missionary to Māori – and other written observations produced by Yate and the missionaries George Clarke (1798-1875) and Francis Tuckfield (1808-1865) are the subject of this study. The purpose of this thesis is to examine the nature of evangelical missionary perceptions of two different groups of indigenous people during a period when European ‘racial thinking’ was in a particularly formative stage.<sup>2</sup> More generally, it also attempts to contribute to the broader historiography of race and religion in the British Empire.

Missionary journals and correspondence provide a rich commentary on evangelical, and even common European, perceptions of the non-European societies which they encountered. As David Arnold and Robert Bickers have

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<sup>1</sup> William Yate, *An Account of New Zealand and of The Church Missionary Society’s Mission in the Northern Island*, first published London, 1835, facsimile reprint with an introduction by Judith Binney, Wellington, 1970, p.199.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: a History since 1800*, Sydney, 2005, p.xxiv; Nancy Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain 1800-1960*, London, 1982; Colin Kidd, *The Forging of Races: Race and Scripture in the Protestant Atlantic World, 1600-2000*, Cambridge, 2006; Kenan Malik, *The Meaning of Race: Race, History and Culture in Western Society*, London, 1996; George W. Stocking Jr., ‘From Chronology to Ethnology: James Cowles Prichard and British Anthropology, 1800-1850’, James Cowles Prichard, *Researches into the Physical History of Man*, first published 1813, reprint of the first edition with an introduction by George W. Stocking Jr., Chicago, 1973, pp.ix-cx; Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture*, Philadelphia, 2000; Nicholas Hudson, ‘From “Nation” to “Race”: The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 29, no. 3, 1996, especially pp.247 & 258.

observed, for Europeans, 'missionaries were one of the most important sources of information and images of non-Europeans'.<sup>3</sup> Historian Judith Binney has written that '[m]issionary journals are, on the whole, disappointing sources for commentary on the existing societies' which they encountered.<sup>4</sup> While this may be the case, missionary correspondence does provide a wealth of information concerning evangelical perceptions of these societies.

In 1793 the *Evangelical Magazine* was established to cater to Protestants of any denomination who were devoted to the spreading of the gospel.<sup>5</sup> It is in this sense that the word 'evangelical' is used in this thesis; to denote the interdenominational Protestant humanitarian movement which began in Britain in the 1730s. In order to illuminate evangelical missionary perceptions of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip, three case studies are used. At the centre of this study are the perceptions of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) missionaries George Clarke and the Reverend William Yate, who arrived in Aotearoa/New Zealand in 1824 and 1828 respectively, and the Wesleyan Missionary Society (WMS) missionary the Reverend Francis Tuckfield, who arrived in Port Phillip in 1838. These men's perceptions are examined over three key stages in their missionary careers: prior to their arrival at their respective mission fields, during the initial period of encounter with those they were endeavouring to 'save', and finally, after a significant period of contact with the respective indigenous peoples among whom they lived. Particular attention is paid to what these men's perceptions were, where they were recorded, and what their perceptions were influenced by.

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<sup>3</sup> David Arnold and Robert A. Bickers, 'Introduction', in Robert A. Bickers and Rosemary Seton (eds.), *Missionary Encounters: Sources and Issues*, London, 1996, p.8.

<sup>4</sup> Judith Binney, *The Legacy of Guilt: a Life of Thomas Kendall*, first published Auckland, 1968, 2nd ed. Wellington, 2005, p.40.

<sup>5</sup> D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a history from the 1730s to the 1980s*, London, 1989, p.1.

Before the three case studies are investigated, this thesis is positioned with a discussion of the rise of evangelicalism in Britain which led to interest in missionary endeavour to newly 'discovered' areas of the globe at the close of the eighteenth century. Anglicanism and Wesleyanism are examined, with particular reference to their missionary arms the CMS and WMS. A discussion of the Reverend Samuel Marsden is also imperative as he played a key role in missionary endeavour within both Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia during the first half of the nineteenth century. A brief assessment of key texts which shaped evangelical views of non-European peoples, and thus influenced missionaries' subsequent perceptions of those they sought to 'save', is also outlined before progressing to an examination of the circumstances in northern Aotearoa/New Zealand and the Port Phillip district to which Clarke, Yate, and Tuckfield arrived.

The CMS missionaries to Aotearoa/New Zealand came in two waves prior to 1840. The first wave consisted of those missionaries – including William Hall, Thomas Kendall, and John King – who arrived in the Bay of Islands prior to 1823, when the arrival of Henry Williams signalled the beginning of the second wave. The Aotearoa/New Zealand aspect of this thesis focuses on second wave missionaries because while they, like their predecessors, arrived prior to the beginning of large-scale permanent European settlement, overall the second wave missionaries were better educated than their predecessors. The second wave missionaries' perceptions of northern Māori were also shaped by access to their predecessors observations. Second wave missionaries thus had further developed ideas about those they intended to 'save' prior to their arrival. Because of the constraints of time and space, the Aotearoa/New Zealand aspect of the thesis focuses specifically on two case studies – George Clarke and the Reverend William Yate, both of whom were second wave mis-

sionaries. These two men have been chosen because both spent a significant period of time in Australia. Both men also encountered other non-European 'heathens' – including African slaves, Aboriginal peoples of the Sydney and Parramatta areas, and Pacific Islanders – their observations of whom influenced their perceptions of northern Māori.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Yate's observations of northern Māori, including his 1835 published *Account of New Zealand*, have been largely overlooked in the historiography of the CMS mission to Māori, while Clarke's role as Chief Protector of Aborigines has dominated historiographical discussion of him to the neglect of his earlier role as a missionary to northern Māori.

The Port Phillip district of New South Wales (now the state of Victoria) has been selected as the site for the Australian aspect of this thesis because the establishment of a mission to the indigenous peoples of this area took place at a similar time to the settling of the area by Europeans. Many Aboriginal people's initial permanent contact with Europeans in this part of Australia was, therefore, with missionaries.<sup>7</sup> Missionary endeavour in Port Phillip is thus more comparable to missionary endeavour in northern Aotearoa/New Zealand, where much initial prolonged contact with Europeans was, for many Māori of the Bay of Islands and the surrounding areas, also with missionaries. The Port Phillip example is contrasted by the case of the European settlement of Sydney, where thirty-three years of European settlement had passed before the first Christian mission to the Aboriginal peoples of the area was estab-

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<sup>6</sup> The contemporary term 'heathen' was, during the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, used as an umbrella term for all who were not Christian; Wheeler, p.16.

<sup>7</sup> A settlement of 308 convicts was founded at Port Phillip under the command of David Collins in October 1803. The aim of this settlement had been to protect the Bass Strait from the French. The settlement was, however, abandoned soon after its founding due to the hostility of the landscape. It was from this expedition that William Buckley, who will be discussed later in the thesis, escaped and lived with the local Aboriginal peoples for thirty-two years; Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore: the Epic of Australia's Founding*, New York, 1988, pp.122-124; Marjorie J. Tipping, 'Buckley, William (1780-1856)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, online edition, updated continuously, accessed: 18 March 2008, available at: <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A010158b.htm?hilite=William%3BBuckley>

lished. The Wesleyan Methodist missionary Francis Tuckfield has been selected as the case study for the Port Phillip aspect of this thesis because his WMS Bunting Dale mission, established in 1839, was the first mission in the district to be founded by a British missionary society.<sup>8</sup>

In this study the term 'the Aboriginal peoples of Australia' is used to describe the indigenous population of Australia. In 1788 there were approximately 300,000 indigenous people living on the continent, divided into over 500 different tribes, each with their own separate country, language, history, and ways of life.<sup>9</sup> Thus while making generalisations is unavoidable when writing about initial and subsequent European observations about the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, the term 'peoples' acknowledges the different tribes and their different interpretations of the Dreaming. Historian Richard Broome has estimated the pre-contact population of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales to have been approximately 10,000, again divided into many distinct tribes.<sup>10</sup> The term 'the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip' is, therefore, used in a similar manner. Where possible, when writing about specific peoples the people's tribal name and country has been used in preference to the general term 'Aborigines'. These include: the Awabakal people of the Hunter Valley; the Djaugurdwurrung people of the Western District; the Gulidjan people of the Lake Colac area; the Wathaurong people of the area between the Werribee River, Painkalac Creek, and inland to Fiery Creek – all of the Southeast region; and the Wiradjuri people of the central-west slopes and plains from Bathurst to Hay, and Nyngan to Albury, in the Riverine region.<sup>11</sup> The conscious rejec-

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<sup>8</sup> Although often elsewhere written 'Buntingdale', Tuckfield always wrote 'Bunting Dale'.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Australians: Black Responses to White Dominance 1788-1994*, first published Sydney, 1982, 2nd ed. Sydney, 1994, p.11.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.61; Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, p.54.

<sup>11</sup> David Horton (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander History, Society and Culture*, 2 vols., Canberra, 1994.

tion of the term 'Aborigines' (except where it appears in direct quotes) reasserts the individual tribal identities of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia.

While spread over a much smaller area of land, the same individual iwi (or even hapū) identities could be argued for among Māori, who are estimated to have numbered approximately 110,000 at the time of James Cook's visit in 1769.<sup>12</sup> While the initial period of CMS missionary endeavour was directed at the Ngāpuhi people of the Bay of Islands, Māori from many parts of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand visited the Bay of Islands – some by choice, others as captured slaves. Furthermore, many CMS missionaries, including both George Clarke and William Yate, travelled to other parts of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand – Yate described the area of Aotearoa/New Zealand with which he was familiar as 'the eastern and western coast[s], north of the Thames [the Hauraki Gulf].'<sup>13</sup> Consequently, this study focuses on northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori. Where possible, Māori have been identified by their iwi. The term 'Europeans' is used to describe Pākehā/'whites' in this thesis.<sup>14</sup>

This study of evangelical perceptions is drawn from written missionary texts. In investigating Clarke, Yate, and Tuckfield's perceptions of the indigenous populations of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand and the Port Phillip district, the following have been examined: letters to missionary society supervisors in London; journals, which were forwarded to their London supervisors but nonetheless often contain a less filtered account of events; private letters to parents; and in the case of William Yate, his published *Account of New Zealand*

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<sup>12</sup> Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand*, Auckland, 2003, pp.90-91; on his first Pacific voyage, Cook estimated Māori to number 100,000.

<sup>13</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements); together with the minutes of evidence, appendix and index*, London, 1836, p.196.

<sup>14</sup> George Clarke, William Yate and the other early missionaries to Aotearoa/New Zealand almost always identified themselves and other Pākehā with the term 'Europeans'.

and evidence presented to the 1836 'House of Commons' Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements)'.<sup>15</sup>

In September 1830 – soon after his return from Sydney where he had printed 550 copies of an untitled collection of biblical extracts, the Ten Commandments, several hymns, and two catechisms in te reo Māori – Yate wrote a letter to the CMS secretaries to accompany his journal.<sup>16</sup> He explained to the secretaries:

[i]t may possibly appear to you at times, that the same person differs in his opinions one day, from those which he formerly expressed. I would only say upon this that *we are obliged to differ*. Such is the political state of the country and so uncertain are all the movements of the natives, that we by no means know what a day may bring forth. An unexpected battle ... takes place, and gives us a totally different view, from what we before took upon any given subject. And what may appear to us, as a body, to be sound policy tonight; so very peculiar is our situation, that we may as a body altogether reject it in the morning. This [?Thus it] is I think impossible for a person who has never dwelt in this land, to form a correct idea of the difficulties which we have to encounter in coming to a decision upon any important step.<sup>17</sup>

Here Yate underlines the unpredictable and changing nature of the missionaries' situation. His warning highlights the character of missionary texts – they are first-hand observations recorded on a day-to-day basis which have not been edited to form a coherent account of events written with the benefit of hindsight. Recorded missionary observations are, nonetheless, filtered,

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<sup>15</sup> Copies of George Clarke's journals and correspondence are held at: MS-Papers-7394 and qMS-0463 – qMS-0465 ATL, Wellington; copies of William Yate's journals and correspondence are held at: MS-2544 and fMS-264 ATL, Wellington; copies of Francis Tuckfield's journals and correspondence for the period 10 November 1837 to 20 May 1842 are held at: MS 7667, Box 655 SLV, Melbourne; Yate, *Account; Report of the Select Committee*, 1836.

<sup>16</sup> Judith Binney, 'Yate, William 1802-1877', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, online edition, updated 22 June 2007, accessed: 28 May 2007, available at: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/dnzb/>; George Clarke's eldest son, George Clarke (Junior), accompanied Yate on this voyage. Clarke (Junior) later recalled, reflecting the opinions of both his father and Yate, '[a]t that time hundreds of blackfellows could be seen in the streets of Sydney, and one could see at a glance that they were a lower race than the Maoris by many degrees'; George Clarke [Junior], *Notes on an Early Life in New Zealand*, Hobart, 1903, available at: <http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/>, p.18.

<sup>17</sup> Yate to CMS secretaries (secs.), 3 September 1830, fMS-264 ATL, italics in original.

shaped accounts of their experiences – the missionaries have, after all, selected what to report.

In 1993 the British Empire historian Tony Ballantyne, then an honours student, wrote that '[h]istorians have tended to misrepresent the [CMS] missionaries [in Aotearoa/New Zealand], frequently reducing them to crude caricatures.'<sup>18</sup> Three years later Aotearoa/New Zealand historian James Belich argued that '[m]issiology and hagiography are still too closely related'.<sup>19</sup> Various historical works have been written on the CMS mission and its missionaries in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The body of historical work on the CMS includes biographies published on the first wave missionary Thomas Kendall and the second wave missionaries Henry Williams and George Clarke.<sup>20</sup> There has also been a biographical pamphlet published on the first wave missionary John King.<sup>21</sup> Numerous edited collections of missionary letters and journals have been published, including those of Henry Williams, Marianne Williams, and Samuel Marsden.<sup>22</sup> An error-riddled compilation of the correspondence of the first wave missionaries William Hall, Thomas Kendall, and John King has also been published.<sup>23</sup> Two significant journal articles have also been written on the CMS mission to Māori – Robin Fisher's 'Henry Williams' Lead-

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<sup>18</sup> A. J. (Tony) Ballantyne, 'Reforming the Heathen Body: CMS Missionaries, Sexuality, and Māori, 1814-1850', BA (Hons) thesis, University of Otago, 1993, p.i.

<sup>19</sup> James Belich, *Making Peoples: a History of the New Zealanders, from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, Auckland, 1996, p.137.

<sup>20</sup> Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*; Lawrence M. Rogers, *Te Wiremu: a Biography of Henry Williams*, Christchurch, 1973; Roger Evans, *Truth and Obedience: the Life and Letters of George Clarke 1798-1875, Missionary, Protector of Aborigines, and Defender of the Treaty of Waitangi*, Kerikeri, 2004.

<sup>21</sup> Tony Higgins, *Souls & Souls: a Life of John King of Swerford, 1787-1854*, Oxford, 2001.

<sup>22</sup> Henry Williams, *The Early Journals of Henry Williams, 1826-40*, Lawrence M. Rogers (ed.), Christchurch, 1961; Marianne Williams, *Letters from the Bay of Islands: the Story of Marianne Williams*, Caroline Fitzgerald (ed.), Auckland, 2004; Samuel Marsden, *The Letters and Journals of Samuel Marsden 1765-1838*, John Rawson Elder (ed.), Dunedin, 1932, available at: <http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/>; Samuel Marsden, *Marsden and the New Zealand Mission: Sixteen Letters*, P. Harvard-Williams (ed.), Dunedin, 1961; Samuel Marsden, *Some Private Correspondence of the Rev. Samuel Marsden and Family 1794-1824*, George Mackaness (ed.), Sydney, 1942.

<sup>23</sup> John Rawson Elder (ed.), *Marsden's Lieutenants*, Dunedin, 1934; Binney wrote of Marsden's *Lieutenants*: '[t]hat book, on the whole, was a very bad piece of editing', Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.20.



ership of the CMS Mission to New Zealand' and J. M. R. Owens' 'Christianity and the Maoris to 1840'.<sup>24</sup>

Missionary endeavour to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia has received some attention within Australian historiography. At close to 1000 pages, John Harris' *One Blood* is a comprehensive examination of Australian mission history. *One Blood* is however, hindered by the author's belief 'that it was the duty of the Christian church to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to Aboriginal people' – phrases such as '[o]nly God knows the real effect of the Wellington mission' show Harris' partiality.<sup>25</sup> J. Brook and J. L. Kohen have explored the history of *The Parramatta Native Institution*.<sup>26</sup> Anna Johnston has examined the London Missionary Society (LMS) in Australia and Polynesia in the first half of the nineteenth century in her chapter 'Antipodean Heathens'.<sup>27</sup> Jessie Mitchell's 2005 PhD thesis 'Flesh, Dreams and Spirit' is a general examination of life on Aboriginal mission stations in the second quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>28</sup> Amanda Barry's 2008 PhD thesis 'Broken Promises' has explored education on Aboriginal mission stations in South-eastern Australia in the century after 1837.<sup>29</sup> On a more specific level, two biographical articles have been written on the missionary Lancelot Edward Threlkeld: Anna Johnston's 'A Blister on the Imperial Antipodes: Lancelot Edward Threlkeld in Polynesia and Australia' and Ben Champion's 'Lancelot Edward Threlkeld. His Life and

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<sup>24</sup> Robin Fisher, 'Henry Williams' Leadership of the CMS Mission to New Zealand', *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 9 no. 2, October 1975; J. M. R. Owens, 'Christianity and the Maoris to 1840', *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 2, no. 1, April 1968.

<sup>25</sup> John Harris, *One Blood: 200 Years of Aboriginal Encounter with Christianity: a Story of Hope*, first published Sydney 1990, 2nd ed. Sydney, 1994, pp.9 & 77.

<sup>26</sup> J. Brook and J. L. Kohen, *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black town: a History*, Sydney, 1991.

<sup>27</sup> Anna Johnston, 'Antipodean Heathens: the London Missionary Society in Polynesia and Australia, 1800-1850', Lynette Russell (ed.), *Colonial Frontiers: Indigenous-European Encounters in Settler Societies*, New York, 2001, pp.68-81.

<sup>28</sup> Jessie Mitchell, 'Flesh, Dreams and Spirit: Life on Aboriginal Mission Stations 1825-1850. A History of Cross-cultural Connections', PhD thesis, Australian National University, 2005.

<sup>29</sup> Amanda Barry, 'Broken Promises: Aboriginal Education in South-eastern Australia, 1837-1937', PhD thesis, University of Melbourne, 2008.

Work'.<sup>30</sup> Threlkeld's correspondence has also been published in *Australian Reminiscences and Papers of L. E. Threlkeld*, edited by Niel Gunson.<sup>31</sup>

This study concerns evangelical missionary endeavour in both Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia because in the early nineteenth century these two places were part of a common Tasman world. As the authors of *A History of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific* point out, since William Pember Reeves 1902 *State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand*, 'most scholars have worked within (and therefore created) national narratives.'<sup>32</sup> This nationalistic approach, which has until recently dominated Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australian history, is not a fair representation of these countries' early colonial history because, as historian James Belich asserts, the 'Tasman world' during the first half of the nineteenth century, was 'a strange social and cultural entity that did not see Australia and New Zealand as markedly separate places.'<sup>33</sup> To study Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia as two distinctly separate places in the early colonial period is to apply a contemporary perception of the two societies which at that time did not exist.

Very little work has thus far been done exploring the crossover between missionary endeavours in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia; indeed, there is a gap in the historiography of comparative indigenous-European relations between the two countries in general. The most notable Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australian comparison of relations between indigenous peoples and

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<sup>30</sup> Anna Johnston, 'A Blister on the Imperial Antipodes: Lancelot Edward Threlkeld in Polynesia and Australia', David Lambert and Alan Lester (eds.), *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 2006, pp.58-87; Ben W. Champion, 'Lancelot Edward Threlkeld. His Life and Work. 1788-1858', *Royal Historical Society Journal and Proceedings*, vol. xxv, part 5, 1939, pp.341-411.

<sup>31</sup> Lancelot Edward Threlkeld, *Reminiscences and Papers of L. E. Threlkeld: Missionary to the Aborigines 1824-1859*, Niel Gunson (ed.), 2 vols., Canberra, 1974.

<sup>32</sup> Donald Denoon and Philippa Mein Smith with Marivic Wyndham, *A History of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific*, Oxford, 2000, p.1.

<sup>33</sup> Belich, *Making Peoples*, p.131.

Europeans is K. R. Howe's *Race Relations in New Zealand and Australia: a Comparative survey 1770s-1970s* (1977). Howe's work focuses on accounting 'for the major differences between Aboriginal and Maori relations with Europeans over the last 200 years.'<sup>34</sup> Keith Sinclair also attempted to tackle comparative race relations in his 1975 journal article, 'Why are Race Relations in New Zealand better than in South Africa, South Australia or South Dakota?'<sup>35</sup> Two works which do encompass missionary endeavour to Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia are Brian Stanley's *The Bible and the Flag* and A. T. Yarwood's biography of Samuel Marsden. Both of these works do so, however, in an extremely brief and abstract manner.<sup>36</sup> John Blacket's dated and hagiographical *Missionary Triumphs Among the Settlers in Australia and the Savages of the South Seas* (1914) compares Wesleyan Methodist missionary endeavour in the South Seas. Blacket, a Wesleyan missionary himself, used *The Methodist Magazine* as his chief source of information. Reflecting the views of his contemporaries, Blacket subscribed to the 'ignoble savage' theory, concluding:

[s]uppose that the missionaries had not gone – that the gospel had not reached those islands – what then? Infanticide, burying alive, strangulation of widows, slavery and ill-treatment of women, clubbing men and woman, cooking their bodies and eating their flesh, would have continued, and in all probability would have been in full operation to-day. Think of the appalling horrors from which generations of children in the South Sea Islands have been saved by the introduction of the gospel. Think of the butcheries and atrocities from which multitudes of men and women during the last half-century have been delivered by the same agency.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> K. R. Howe, *Race Relations in Australia and New Zealand: a Comparative Survey 1770s-1970s*, first published Wellington, 1977, 2nd ed. Auckland, 1981, p.vi.

<sup>35</sup> Keith Sinclair, 'Why are Race Relations in New Zealand better than in South Africa, South Australia or South Dakota?', *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 5, no. 2, October 1975, pp.121-127.

<sup>36</sup> Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Leicester, 1990; A. T. Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden: the Great Survivor*, Wellington, 1977.

<sup>37</sup> John Blacket, *Missionary Triumphs Among the Settlers in Australia and the Savages of the South Seas*, London, 1914, p.283.

Historical work on comparative missionary endeavour in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia is, therefore, limited. This thesis consequently adds to the current historiography surrounding missions in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia and the nature of missionaries' perceptions of the indigenous populations of these places.

## Chapter One: Shaping the Evangelical Mission

And he said unto them,  
Go ye into all the world,  
and preach the gospel to every creature  
– Mark 16:15<sup>1</sup>

What people are there here?  
Hostile and uncivilized savages,  
or kindly and god-fearing people?  
– Homer<sup>2</sup>

The rise of evangelicalism in Britain at the close of the eighteenth century led to the formation of the CMS and the WMS, the missionary arms of Anglicanism and Wesleyanism. While there were both theological and practical differences between these two wings of Protestantism, and these certainly mattered within inter-denominational arguments in England, these differences became less important and were often overridden by an understanding of evangelical community in the Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australian colonial context during the first half of the nineteenth century.

The Reverend Samuel Marsden (1765-1838) played a key role in missionary endeavour in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia in the early-nineteenth century. It was Marsden, perhaps more than any other individual, who shaped the course of evangelical effort toward Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia during this period. Historiographically, Marsden has been portrayed as an anti-dissenter, a charge which has been overstated; conversely, Marsden provides further evidence for the argument that an understanding of evangelical community often triumphed over inter-denominational differences in the colonial context.

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<sup>1</sup> *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

<sup>2</sup> Homer, *The Odyssey*, E. V. Rieu (trans.) 1946, revised ed. D. C. H. Rieu, London, 1991, p.79.

Prior to arriving in their mission fields, evangelical missionaries had already formed ideas concerning those they sought to 'save'. The preconceptions about indigenous populations held by evangelicals who set out for Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia during the first half of the nineteenth century, were largely shaped by the opinions of the Reverend Samuel Marsden. Marsden had arrived in Australia in March 1794 as assistant chaplain to the colony of New South Wales. Marsden reported his opinions on the potential of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia and Māori – who were by the end of the eighteenth century visiting Sydney – to 'civilise' and become Christian to the missionary boards in London. The CMS, WMS, and LMS in turn initially shaped their evangelical efforts in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand according to Marsden's opinions. In addition to Marsden's opinions, the observations of early European explorers of the Pacific and the writings of evangelical missionaries who preceded Clarke, Yate, and Tuckfield, further influenced these men's preconceptions about, and subsequent interactions with, those they sought to 'save'.

Evangelicalism was a popular movement within Protestantism which existed in Britain from the 1730s. Prior to the last decade of the eighteenth century however, British Protestant concern for the spiritual condition of the non-European population of the globe had remained limited and sporadic.<sup>3</sup> The evangelical movement was initially concerned with British people who lay outside the reach of Christianity in England; until the evangelical revival at the close of the eighteenth century, there was little theological or institutional support for missionary work among the non-European peoples of the globe. In 1792 William Carey published *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*. Having been inspired by Cook's

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<sup>3</sup> Stanley, p.55.

accounts of his voyages to the Pacific – recalling that ‘reading Cook’s voyages was the first thing that engaged my mind to think of missions’ – Carey announced that it was the duty of British Protestants to spread Christianity to all humankind.<sup>4</sup> Described as ‘[o]ne of the founding documents ... of the modern missionary movement’, Carey’s *Enquiry* provided a crucial impetus to a new wave of missionary work.<sup>5</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century, the British public had easy access to English language reports about the indigenous peoples of the South Seas – and they were exceptionally popular. Anticipating the public hunger for information concerning the Pacific, Lieutenant James Cook had predicted that the expedition ‘of the Endeavour, because the Voyage is uncommon, will very probable be mentioned in every News paper’.<sup>6</sup> Published accounts of European voyages into the Pacific, which included observations of the indigenous peoples of the area, were extremely popular during the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. The first large-scale collection of writings on European voyages into the Pacific, *Histoires des Navigations aux Terres Australes*, was edited by Charles de Brosses and first published in 1756. A decade later an English language version followed – *Terra Australia Cognita*, edited by John Callander.<sup>7</sup> Prior to 1893, the most widely available English language narrative of European Pacific voyages was John Hawkesworth’s edited *An Account of the voyages undertaken by the order of His present Majesty for making discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere*. Hawkesworth’s *Account* con-

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<sup>4</sup> E. Carey, *Memoir of William Carey D. D.*, p.18, quoted in *ibid.*, p.58.

<sup>5</sup> Andrew Porter, ‘North American Experience and British Missionary Encounters in Africa and the Pacific, c.1800-1850’, Martin Daunt and Rick Halpern (eds.), *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, c.1600-1850*, London, 1999, p.348.

<sup>6</sup> James Cook, *The Journals of James Cook*, J. C. Beaglehole (ed.) 4 vols., 1955-1967, Wednesday, 20 March 1771, available at: <http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/cook/contents.html>; for details of Cook’s promotions from Lieutenant to Commander and finally to Captain, see Anne Salmond, *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog: Captain Cook in the South Seas*, London, 2004, pp.24, 166 & 300.

<sup>7</sup> P. J. Marshall and Glyndwr Williams, *The Great Map of Mankind: British Perceptions of the World in the Age of Enlightenment*, London, 1982, p.260.

tained portions of the journals of Pacific voyages undertaken by Cook, John Byron, Samuel Wallis, and Philip Carteret.<sup>8</sup> W. H. Pearson's study of 'Hawkesworth's Alterations' is littered with examples where Hawkesworth: 'draws a different conclusion' to, 'softens', 'omits', and 'expanded' both Cook's and Banks' writings, the effect of which was to dramatise and popularise his work. More importantly, Hawkesworth omitted Cook's musing that the Aboriginal peoples of Australia were 'in realty [sic] ... far more happier than we Europeans', instead applying this observation to the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego.<sup>9</sup> Pearson has argued that Hawkesworth rejected this 'hard primitivism'<sup>10</sup> understanding of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, 'to avoid the incivility of disagreement with Banks for the use of whose journals he was so grateful'.<sup>11</sup>

In the years 1773 through 1778 the popular *London Magazine* contained both excerpts from and reviews of Hawkesworth's *Account*.<sup>12</sup> The official account of Captain Cook's third Pacific voyage was published in June 1784 and sold well for £4 14s 4d a set.<sup>13</sup> The *Monthly Review* reported: 'we remember not a circumstance like what has happened on this occasion on the third day after the publication a copy was not to be met with in the hands of the bookseller; and, to our certain knowledge, six, seven, eight, and even ten guineas, have since been offered for a sett [sic].'<sup>14</sup> Pirated, cheaper versions were also available and presumably sold well, however demand for the official account

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<sup>8</sup> W. H. Pearson, 'Hawkesworth's Alterations'. *Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 7, 1972, p.46.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.48; also see Glyndwr Williams, "'Far more happier than we Europeans": reactions to the Australian Aborigines on Cook's voyage', *Historical Studies*, vol. 19, no. 77, October 1981, pp.499-512.

<sup>10</sup> '[A]n attitude that idealized groups of hunters or pastoralists living in cool or dry climates and rugged or infertile terrain on the assumption that a life of austerity, activity and abstinence would produce the virtues, Spartan or stoic, of physical fitness, courage, endurance, independence and loyalty to one's tribe or territory'; Pearson, p.46.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p.48.

<sup>12</sup> Marshall and Williams, p.53.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.56.

<sup>14</sup> *Monthly Review*, LXX (1784), p.474, quoted in *ibid.*



remained high; second and third editions were published in 1785.<sup>15</sup> George Clarke, William Yate and Francis Tuckfield, therefore, had access to reports of European encounters with those they sought to 'save' prior to their departure from England.

Historian Judith Binney has noted that there is no evidence to suggest that the first wave missionary to Māori Thomas Kendall had seen Hawkesworth's version of Cook's voyages.<sup>16</sup> Many missionaries who came to the Pacific, however, were familiar with Cook's observations. George Clarke noted that it was 'Cook's interesting account ... [which had] roused the Christian world to a sense of their duty'.<sup>17</sup> William Yate observed that '[t]he descriptions given, by our English voyager [Cook], of the manners and customs of the inhabitants of New Zealand, are remarkably correct'.<sup>18</sup> The Reverend Henry Williams showed his knowledge of Cook's journals in observing that Port Nicholson (Wellington Harbour) was 'quite a different place to what is laid down by Cook'.<sup>19</sup> The Quaker missionary James Backhouse noted that '[a]mong the persons whose prejudices have operated upon the public mind most detrimentally in respect to the Australian Blacks are the benevolent Capt'n Cook and the pious Saml. Marsden'.<sup>20</sup> Many evangelical missionaries' expectations of Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia were, therefore, influenced by Cook's earlier observations of these populations.

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<sup>15</sup> Marshall and Williams, p.56.

<sup>16</sup> Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.32.

<sup>17</sup> George Clarke, 'Address to Mutual Improvement Society', c.1858, quoted in G. W. Shroff, 'George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824-1850', PhD thesis, University of Auckland, 1967, p.1.

<sup>18</sup> Yate, *Account*, p.3.

<sup>19</sup> Williams, *Early Journals*, Elder (ed.), Thursday, 7 November 1839, p.449.

<sup>20</sup> James Backhouse, 'Journal', 30 April 1836, quoted in Threlkeld, *Reminiscences*, Gunson (ed.), I:p.128.

The Protestant missionary movement originated as an exclusively evangelical phenomenon.<sup>21</sup> Historian D. W. Bebbington defines evangelicalism as having a 'quadrilateral of priorities' as its basis: conversionism, activism, biblicism and crucicentrism.<sup>22</sup> Evangelical belief held that the 'heathen' needed to hear the gospel – conversionism – and that it was the duty of Christians to bring the knowledge of Christ to those who were without it – activism. The *Bible* was seen by evangelicals as a product of divine inspiration which provided moral guidance and a guide to the natural world. Seen as a window to God, biblicism was fundamental to evangelicals.<sup>23</sup> Evangelicalism's primary focus on Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross distinguished it from other forms of Protestantism in the early nineteenth century. While evangelical missionaries preached doctrines other than the atoning death of Christ, crucicentrism was the central message which they brought to the 'heathen'.<sup>24</sup>

Although evangelicals argued that all of humankind was equal in theory, they believed that only through Christianity could the 'heathen' become equal in the eyes of God and thus equal in reality.<sup>25</sup> Convinced that Satan was the supreme and unchallenged ruler of the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia, evangelicals believed that God would rescue the 'heathen' from the chains of Satan, ultimately fulfilling his promise to recover those lost in 'heathen' darkness.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Stanley, p.55.

<sup>22</sup> Bebbington, p.2.

<sup>23</sup> Tony Ballantyne, 'Print, Politics and Protestantism in an Imperial Context: New Zealand c.1769-1870', Hiram Morgan (ed.), *Information, Media & Power through the Ages*, Dublin, 2001, p.156.

<sup>24</sup> Stanley, p.62.

<sup>25</sup> Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.27.

<sup>26</sup> Niel Gunson, *Messengers of Grace; Evangelical Missionaries in the South Seas 1797-1860*, Melbourne, 1978, p.195; Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.80.

The foundation of evangelicalism lay within the Enlightenment.<sup>27</sup> Enlightenment ideals such as compassion, emancipation, and improvement through effort – in a word, humanitarianism – had a deep influence on evangelical theory.<sup>28</sup> Evangelicalism was therefore, expressed in overseas missions and the desire to ‘save’ the ‘heathen’. The CMS was founded in London on 12 April 1799. The goal of the society was to convert the non-European peoples of the world to Christianity in a fashion acceptable to the Church of England.<sup>29</sup> The WMS was founded in 1813, its ‘chief architect’ being the zealous Wesleyan Methodist Jabez Bunting.<sup>30</sup> The London Missionary Society (LMS) had been established in 1795 ‘to spread the knowledge of Christ among the heathen’, particularly in the South Seas and specifically through the use of missionaries.<sup>31</sup> While the aims of Cook’s voyages were generally scientific, ‘to members of the new London Missionary Society’, argues historian Jane Samson, ‘he was more of a prophet than a scientist. His narratives spoke of a paradise lost and a call to redemption.’<sup>32</sup> Cook’s descriptions of the indigenous peoples of the South Seas had a similar effect on the CMS and WMS. The newly formed British missionary societies were an expression of the widespread evangelical belief that Britain had a providential role to play in the world and that British evangelical Christians had a particular responsibility to carry the gospel to the ‘heathen’ peoples who had not yet heard the ‘good news’. As a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review* noted in 1802: ‘Europe is the light of the world, and the ark of knowledge: upon the welfare of Europe, hangs the destiny of the most remote and savage people.’<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Bebbington, p.74.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p.71.

<sup>29</sup> Elder (ed.), *Marsden’s Lieutenants*, p.15; Ibid., p.42.

<sup>30</sup> Stuart Piggin, ‘Halévy Revisited: The Origins of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society: An Examination of Semmel’s Thesis’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 9, no. 1, October 1980, p.19.

<sup>31</sup> LMS, *Board Minutes 1798-1801*, p.1, quoted in Johnston, ‘Antipodean Heathens’, p.68.

<sup>32</sup> Jane Samson, *Imperial Benevolence: Making British Authority in the Pacific Islands*, Honolulu, 1998, p.7.

<sup>33</sup> *Edinburgh Review*, II (1802), p.64, quoted in Marshall and Williams, p.303.

George Clarke and William Yate were CMS missionaries. Francis Tuckfield belonged to the WMS. Both these societies were Low Church Protestant evangelical bodies but there were some theological and practical differences between them. The founder of Wesleyan Methodism, John Wesley, wrote: '[o]ur main doctrines ... are three: that of repentance, of faith and of holiness. The first we account, as it were, the porch of religion; the next the door; the third, religion itself'.<sup>34</sup> Wesley combined the philosophy of justification (the experience or method by which a person is declared to be righteous in the eyes of God) by faith alone with an emphasis on the pursuit of holiness to the point of 'Christian Perfection'.<sup>35</sup> Wesley's theology promoted the use of laymen field preachers, religious toleration with Protestantism (people of all Protestant denominations were accepted in Wesleyanism), and a commitment to self-help through discipline.<sup>36</sup> Wesleyanism focused on personal spirituality based on salvation rather than ecclesiastical problems, and promoted the popularisation of hymns, *Bible* reading, social reforms, missions, and an insistence on bringing each individual soul into a personal relationship with God.<sup>37</sup> Puritanism had earlier removed all warmth, colour, and enjoyment from the Church, and Wesleyanism sought to return this partly through active participation in the singing of hymns, and partly through lively sermons – Wesley's sermons on such radical topics as universal salvation, free will, and equality were full of life and vigour. Wesleyanism, with its fiery sermons and hymn singing was, therefore, much more exciting and accessible to the masses than were ordinary Church of England services. It was on this

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<sup>34</sup> John Wesley to T. Church, 7 June 1746, *Letters*, 2:268, quoted in Henry D. Rack, 'Wesley, John (1703-1791)', *Oxford Dictionary of National*, online edition, accessed: 8 April 2008, available at: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29069>.

<sup>35</sup> F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingston (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, first published London, 1957, 3rd ed. Oxford, 2005, pp.919 & 1740.

<sup>36</sup> David Hempton, *Methodism and Politics in British Society 1750-1850*, London, 1984, p.23.

<sup>37</sup> Frederic Palmer, 'A Crisis in the Church of England', *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 7, no. 2, April 1914, p.232.

focus on hymn singing, lively sermons, and *Bible* reading that Tuckfield based his evangelical endeavour to the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip.

Despite its denominational divisions, evangelicalism was, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a philosophical unity in which ideas and movements were exchanged with great efficiency and speed.<sup>38</sup> The fact that George Clarke, William Yate, and Francis Tuckfield were English Protestant Low Church evangelicals was more significant than the fact that Clarke and Yate were Anglicans and Tuckfield was a Wesleyan.<sup>39</sup>

In their endeavour to raise funds and encourage men and women to give their lives to the cause of spreading the gospel to the 'heathen', missionary societies produced vast quantities of propaganda publications which proved extremely popular.<sup>40</sup> The *Missionary Register* – a monthly periodical which contained reports from evangelical missions around the globe – was one such publication. First published in 1813 and initially edited by the CMS secretary Josiah Pratt, the *Missionary Register* reached a large audience among British evangelicals.<sup>41</sup> The first *Missionary Register* included 'A Prayer for the success of Missions', which lamented that British Christians 'have had most abundant opportunities for communicating our Holy Religion to those who still *sit in darkness and the shadow of death*. But, with shame we confess, that we have not, either as a

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<sup>38</sup> Stanley, p.57.

<sup>39</sup> As Yate surmised: 'Episcopalians and Independents Presbyterians and Baptists – Moravians and Wesleyans – Arminians and Calvinists have all united in the one common acknowledgement that there is no salvation out of Jesus Christ and that without the knowledge of his name, the heathen must perish'; Yate, 'Journal', 27 June to 2 September 1834, MS-2544 ATL, p.121; Jessie Mitchell has made the argument that missionaries in Australia perceived themselves as members of an 'imagined community' of 'international evangelical Protestantism'; Jessie Mitchell, "'A City on a Hill'" Aboriginal Missions and British Civilisation, 1830-1850', Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw, Kiera Lindsey, and Stuart Macintyre (eds.), *Exploring the British World*, Melbourne, 2004, p.224, available at: <http://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=872344908332788;res=IELHSS>

<sup>40</sup> Susan Thorne, 'The Conversion of Englishmen and the Conversion of the World Inseparable: Missionary Imperialism and the Language of Class in Early Industrial Britain', Frederick Cooper, and Ann Laura Stoler (eds.), *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Berkeley, 1997, p.239.

<sup>41</sup> Porter, 'North American Experience', p.348.

people or as individuals, made a proper improvement of this talent'.<sup>42</sup> This was the evangelical fervour under which the CMS, the WMS, and the LMS were operated.

The editors of the *Missionary Register* had initially ignored the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, mentioning the continent only in regard to its importance in relation to missions to the peoples of the Pacific Islands.<sup>43</sup> In 1821 however, the authors acknowledged that although '[t]he insular continent ... has not hitherto come under observation in the Survey ... [a]ttention is now, however, drawn to the Aboriginal Heathen of the soil'.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, the *Missionary Register's* editors were influenced by the steady stream of positive narratives about Māori produced by the Reverend Samuel Marsden. In 1818, for example, the *Missionary Register* published a letter from Marsden in which he asserted that '[t]he greatest enemies of the Gospel must acknowledge, that the Natives of New Zealand are prepared for any instruction which the civilised world will bestow upon them, as they possess both talent and inclination for improvement'.<sup>45</sup>

In their 1991 history of *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black Town*, Brook and Kohen argue that the Reverend Samuel Marsden 'saw the Wesleyans as opponents, even though they were still allied to the Anglican Church'.<sup>46</sup> Brook and Kohen also claim that the Anglicans were 'obviously fearful' that

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<sup>42</sup> *Missionary Register*, London, 1813, Hocken Library (HL), Dunedin, p.31, italics in original.

<sup>43</sup> In 1797 the LMS had established three missions in the Pacific made up of thirty missionaries. These missions were supplied from Sydney and influenced by the sole director of the LMS in the Pacific, Samuel Marsden. Of these three, the Society Islands (Tahiti) mission – which was temporarily abandoned between 1808 and 1811 when Marsden was responsible for its resumption – survived to become the centre of the LMS endeavours in the South Seas. The missionary Reverend L. E. Threlkeld was based at the LMS Society Islands mission before establishing his Lake Macquarie mission in Australia. An account of this first mission to the South Seas can be seen in Michael Cathcart, Tom Griffiths, Lee Watts, Vivian Anceschi, Greg Houghton, and David Goodman, *Mission to the South Seas: the Voyage of the Duff, 1797-1799*, Melbourne, 1990.

<sup>44</sup> *Missionary Register*, London, 1821, HL, p.78.

<sup>45</sup> *Missionary Register*, London, 1818, HL, pp.525-526.

<sup>46</sup> Brook and Kohen, p.107.

some of their believers would begin to practice Methodism, and that '[t]he established church, in the guise of the [R]everend Samuel Marsden, did not want the Wesleyans involved with the expanding agricultural complex'. Following Governor Brisbane's arrival in the colony in early November 1821 therefore, 'Marsden began scheming to get the [CMS] directly involved with the Aborigines.'<sup>47</sup> Brook and Kohen go on to assert that Marsden delayed George Clarke's departure for Aotearoa/New Zealand, keeping him in New South Wales, 'to feel secure in the knowledge that the Native Institution ... [was] free from the possibility that its management could be taken over by the Wesleyans.'<sup>48</sup> While it is true that the Wesleyan missionary William Walker believed Marsden had formed a strong faction in New South Wales, and that he had 'the ear of some powerful men in London', the charge made by various historians that Marsden was strongly anti-dissenter is exaggerated.<sup>49</sup> Marsden was born and raised among a class and in a district which was heavily influenced by Wesleyan Methodism – the West Riding of Yorkshire, an area which had been visited by itinerant preachers from the early days of Methodism and had subsequently developed as one of the regions of England where Methodism was strongest. Marsden probably had a Methodist upbringing – his parents were literate and gave their three sons the same names as the Wesley boys.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, Marsden's wife Elizabeth was a Wesleyan and usually attended along with their children, the weekday religious services of the Wesleyan Reverend Samuel Leigh, with whom Samuel Marsden had a good relationship.<sup>51</sup> The Reverend Samuel Marsden represented both the CMS and the LMS in Australia and the wider Pacific. The WMS also often

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p.126.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p.145.

<sup>49</sup> Walker to WMS secs., 1 February 1826, quoted in *ibid.*, p.171; mission historian John Harris accuses Marsden of rejecting William Walker's second application for a position at the Native Institution 'simply because he was a Wesleyan'; Harris, p.50.

<sup>50</sup> For further discussion on the likelihood of Marsden's Wesleyan upbringing see Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, pp.5-6; John Blacket, furthermore, claimed that Marsden 'had been a member of the Methodist Church in England'; Blacket, p.23.

<sup>51</sup> Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, p.207.

sought his advice.<sup>52</sup> Until his death in 1838, the CMS, LMS, and WMS were – in relation to Aotearoa/New Zealand, Australia, and the wider South Pacific – heavily influenced by the direction, perceptions, and policies of Marsden, whose direct superintendence Clarke and Yate were under.

Marsden's opposing opinions of Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, and the effect this has had on the contrasting mission histories in these two countries, has left him with a divergent place in the national based narratives of missionary endeavour in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia. Robert Hughes described Marsden as 'a grasping Evangelical missionary with heavy shoulders and the face of a petulant ox'.<sup>53</sup> Biographer A. T. Yarwood commented on 'the bibulous nose of Marsden's later portraits', noting that although this 'gives colour' to contemporary accusations of drunkenness, such charges are probably untrue.<sup>54</sup> Alluding to contemporary critics of his commercial success in Australia, Yarwood compared Marsden to Kenneth Grahame's Toad of Toad Hall, noting that 'the populace takes pleasure at the sight of a gentleman in difficulties, the more so when he wears clerical garb'.<sup>55</sup> Historian John Harris declared that '[i]t is one of the more unfortunate aspects of early missions in eastern Australia that Marsden was so often closely involved in decision-making processes and in such an influential position'.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, Aotearoa/New Zealand historian J. R. Elder believed Marsden to have had a 'keen sympathetic mind and great tolerance and breadth of view, rare in a man of his age'.<sup>57</sup> Elder also claimed that Marsden 'saved the Maori race from itself'.<sup>58</sup> Historian Keith Sinclair later described Marsden as 'a man of sturdy physique, character and views', assigning him the label

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<sup>52</sup> Harris, p.81.

<sup>53</sup> Hughes, p.187.

<sup>54</sup> Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, p.252.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p.200.

<sup>56</sup> Harris, p.81.

<sup>57</sup> Marsden, *Letters and Journals*, Elder (ed.), p.46.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p.512.



‘Saint Augustine of New Zealand’.<sup>59</sup> Māori novelist Alan Duff’s Jake ‘the muss’ Heke thought of Marsden as ‘some white colonial fulla from the old days, when the Pakeha first arrived and changed the Maoris way of life.’<sup>60</sup> The more benign reputation of Marsden in Aotearoa/New Zealand relative to his standing in Australian historiography is reflected in his attitudes towards those countries’ indigenous inhabitants.<sup>61</sup>

Marsden’s failure in his various attempts to ‘civilise’ and Christianise a number of Aboriginal people of Sydney and Parramatta led him to assert that the Aboriginal peoples of Australia were not yet ready to be ‘civilised’ and Christianised. Soon after his arrival in New South Wales, Marsden had taken a ‘little Native boy’ into his home. The boy, whom Marsden named Tristan, was around four years old when he began to live with the Marsden family in about 1794.<sup>62</sup> Although Marsden’s attempt to ‘civilise’ Tristan had begun with modest success, Tristan eventually chose neither to ‘civilise’ nor to become Christian. Marsden had several Aboriginal boys living with him during the 1790s. Another boy, Harry, also returned to ‘the woods’ after years of living in Marsden’s home.<sup>63</sup> It was these failures which led Marsden to declare in 1819 – two years prior to the arrival of the first missionary appointed to work towards the Christianisation of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia – that ‘[t]he Aborigines are the most degraded of the human race, and never seem to want to alter their habits and manner of life’, and to conclude, ‘the time is not

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<sup>59</sup> Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, first published Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1959, revised edition with additional material by Raewyn Dalziel, Auckland, 2000, p.36.

<sup>60</sup> Alan Duff, *Once Were Warriors*, Auckland, 1990, p.175.

<sup>61</sup> See also A. T. Yarwood, ‘Marsden, Samuel (1765 -1838)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, online edition, updated continuously, accessed: 1 June 2007, available at: <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020176b.htm>; G. S. Parsonson, ‘Marsden, Samuel 1765-1838’, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, online edition, updated 7 April 2006, accessed: 28 May 2007, available at: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/dnzb>; and A. T. Yarwood, ‘Marsden, Samuel (1765-1838)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition, accessed: 8 April 2008, available at: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18101>.

<sup>62</sup> Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, p.52.

<sup>63</sup> Marsden to Archdeacon T. H. Scott, 2 December 1826, in Threlkeld, *Reminiscences*, Gunson (ed.), II:p.347.

yet arrived for them to receive the great blessings of civilisation and the knowledge of Christianity'.<sup>64</sup>

When 10,000 acres was granted for a mission to the Awabakal people of the Lake Macquarie area near Newcastle in 1825 – which was to be run by the Reverend Lancelot Edward Threlkeld and financed by the LMS – Marsden wrote to the CMS secretaries informing them of the proposed mission. He could not help but add his own opinion on the planned venture: '[w]hether anything can be done with these degraded Tribes I have my doubts. It is our duty to try what we can do. The time may come when they feel more wants than they do at present. They seem to have all they wish for, Idleness and Independence.'<sup>65</sup> Marsden's lack of faith in the potential of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia to 'civilise' and Christianise reflects his view – which corresponded with that of many of his contemporaries – that they were at the bottom of the European hierarchy of races.

Late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century European thought not only divided humankind into 'races', but also dictated that these be ranked in a racial hierarchy. This imagined hierarchy placed (most) European 'races' at the top and then ranked the non-European 'races' of the world below. The position a 'race' ranked on the hierarchy was determined by, among other things: their interest in obtaining 'superior' European goods, whether they cultivated the land which they occupied, the presence of a system of leadership and sub-classes which somewhat resembled those of Europe, and the presence of some form of religion recognisable to Europeans. In his 1790 *Philosophy of Natural Man*, William Smellie argued that '[i]ndependently of all political institutions, nature herself has formed the human species into castes and ranks.' Smellie

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<sup>64</sup> Marsden to Josiah Pratt, 24 February 1819, in Marsden, *Letters and Journals*, Elder, (ed.), pp.231-232.

<sup>65</sup> Marsden to Dandeson Coates, 21 November 1825, quoted in Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, p.241.

cited: '[h]ow many graduations may be traced between a stupid Huron, or a Hottentot, and a profound philosopher!' as evidence, concluding that '[h]ere the distance is immense, but nature has occupied the whole by almost infinite shades of discrimination.'<sup>66</sup>

The European racial hierarchy fitted into the Great Chain of Being – a hierarchy dating back to the ancient Greeks, in which everything in the known world was placed.<sup>67</sup> Upon the Great Chain of Being, humankind was below, and was thus inferior to, God and angels, who occupied the top two places on the Chain respectively. Below humankind sat primates, below which everything else was ranked, beginning with animate things and ending with inanimate objects. The organisation of animals into groups was a prominent feature of Enlightenment natural history, and this was easily extended to the 'races' of humankind. The perceived inferior 'races' of humankind were thus used to explain the link in the Chain between the European 'races' and primates, as each ascending link supposedly represented a slight improvement – that is, it was slightly closer to the European ideal of humankind – on that directly below it.

Samuel Marsden believed that '[c]ommerce promotes industry – industry civilization and civilization opens up the way for the Gospel,' later adding '[a] nation without Commerce will never be a religious nation'.<sup>68</sup> Marsden saw Aboriginal cultural conservatism (a traditionally focussed way of life which takes pride in a society that changes little) as an innate deficiency which

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<sup>66</sup> William Smellie, *Philosophy of Natural History*, quoted in Stepan, p.8.

<sup>67</sup> For a more in-depth analysis of the European racial hierarchy and the Great Chain of Being see: Stepan, chapter 1.

<sup>68</sup> Marsden Papers, 25 October 1810, and Marsden to Burder, June 1815, both quoted in Brook and Kohen, p.266.

would prevent their Christianisation.<sup>69</sup> Having had his evangelical desires frustrated among both the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales and convicts in the colony, Marsden turned his attention to the foundation of a mission to Māori.

Marsden's perceptions of Māori were first formed by his encounter with Huru and Tuki at the close of the eighteenth century. In 1793 these two men had been kidnapped from the east coast of Northland and taken to Norfolk Island in an ill-researched attempt to teach convicts at the penal colony to work flax. As flax-dressing was traditionally the work of women in Māori society, neither man was able to teach the Europeans anything about the skill.<sup>70</sup> Before these two men were returned to Aotearoa/New Zealand after six months' exile, they met Samuel Marsden.<sup>71</sup> New South Wales Governor Philip Gidley King reported that 'Woodoo [Huru] like a true Patriot thinks there is no country People or Customs equal to those of his own, which makes him less curious in what he sees about him, than his companion Tooke [Tuki].'<sup>72</sup> One can deduce that Huru relayed these opinions to Marsden upon meeting him, encouraging the chaplain's belief that these people were both superior to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia and that they were ready for the introduction of civilisation and then Christianity. Tuki's interest in European technology, which is implied in the above passage, would also have reinforced Marsden's belief in Māori potential to 'civilise' and Christianise. It was not until 1808, however, that Marsden was able to visit England in an attempt to persuade the CMS to send a mission to Māori.

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<sup>69</sup> For a more in-depth examination of cultural conservatism see: Josephine Flood, *The Original Australians: Story of the Aboriginal Peoples*, Sydney, 2006, pp.24-26.

<sup>70</sup> Hughes, p.101.

<sup>71</sup> A. P. B. Watson, *Chapel to Church: an Account of the Setting up of the Mission Station at Kerikeri in 1819 and of Events that Followed during the years 1824-1974*, Whangarei, 1974, p.5; Marsden, 'First New Zealand Journal', in Marsden, *Letters and Journals*, Elder (ed.), p.58-59.

<sup>72</sup> Governor Philip Gidley King, *Journal*, November 1793, pp.178-179, quoted in Hughes, p.101n.

Having spent fourteen months in England during 1808 and 1809 recruiting clergymen, convincing the CMS to finance a mission to Aotearoa/New Zealand, and discussing policy changes with the LMS, Marsden noted that 'it was resolved to send three missionaries out with me on my return journey to the colony. No clergymen, however, offered their services on this occasion.' 'The character of the New Zealanders', Marsden continued, 'was considered more barbarous than that of any other savage nation, so that few would venture out to a country where they could anticipate nothing less than to be killed and eaten by the natives. At length two mechanics [William Hall and John King] agreed to accompany me, and I was very glad of their offer.'<sup>73</sup> The difficulty Marsden faced in recruiting missionaries to 'civilise' and Christianise Māori, indicates that the image of Māori circulating in Britain at this time portrayed a 'savage' and dangerous people.

On his return to New South Wales from England, Marsden, with his two mechanics, sailed alongside some two hundred convicts aboard the *Ann* – which departed on 25 August 1809, and arrived at Sydney on 17 February 1810.<sup>74</sup> Also on board was the Māori chief Ruatara, whom Marsden spent much of the voyage conversing with. These conversations, on topics such as Māori religious beliefs and social hierarchy, further encouraged Marsden in his belief that Māori were ready to be 'civilised' and Christianised. Ruatara told Marsden that the first Māori woman was believed to have been made from one of the first man's ribs. This belief, which greatly excited Marsden, must have, he assumed, come from divine revelation.<sup>75</sup> Following his acquaintance with Ruatara, Marsden began encouraging Māori to visit him at Parramatta in 1810. By June 1819 Marsden had established a seminary at Parramatta for the pur-

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<sup>73</sup> Marsden, 'First New Zealand Journal', in Marsden, *Letters and Journals*, Elder (ed.), p.61.

<sup>74</sup> Higgins, p.17.

<sup>75</sup> Marsden to [J. M. Good], 15 November 1809, quoted in Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden*, p.126; Genesis 2:21-22, *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

pose of accommodating visiting Polynesians. Replying to the CMS Committee's suggestion that Aboriginal peoples of Australia be taken into the Parramatta seminary along with Māori and other Polynesians, Marsden claimed that his previous experience indicated that Aboriginal children who were taken at a young age took to the bush upon reaching a certain age, and as they grew older became addicted to alcohol, idleness, and other vices. Marsden also asserted that Māori would refuse to live with the Aboriginal peoples of Australia because they 'cannot bear their degraded appearance'.<sup>76</sup>

It was Samuel Marsden who preached the first sermon to Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand on Christmas Day 1814.<sup>77</sup> The CMS mission to northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori, initially undertaken by William Hall, Thomas Kendall, and John King, was thus established under the protection of Ruatara at Rangihoua in the Bay of Islands. A second station was established in 1819 at Kerikeri under the protection of Hongi Hika.<sup>78</sup> Marsden continued to support the mission with 'unwearied zeal' and acted as supervisor from his home in Parramatta, 'continually' keeping, noted the authors of the 1820 *Missionary Register*, 'his eye on its improvement, and that of the Natives.'<sup>79</sup>

While the Reverend Francis Tuckfield was among the first European missionaries to the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district, missionaries had been endeavouring to 'save' the Aboriginal peoples of the east coast of New South Wales for a number of years. The Reverend Lancelot Edward Threlkeld had, in 1825, founded a LMS mission to the Awabakal people of the Southeast

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<sup>76</sup> Marsden to Pratt, 24 February 1819, in Marsden, *Letters and Journals*, Elder (ed.), pp.231-232.

<sup>77</sup> Marsden reported that during this introduction to Christianity, '[t]he natives told Duaterra [Ruatara] that they could not understand what I meant. He replied, that they were not to mind that now, for they would understand me by and bye; and that he would explain my meaning as far as he could. When I had done preaching, he informed them what I had been taking about'; Marsden, quoted in the *Missionary Register*, London, 1816, HL, pp.470-471.

<sup>78</sup> Judith Binney, 'Introduction', in Judith Binney (ed.), *Te Kerikeri 1770-1850: The Meeting Pool*, Wellington, 2007, pp.12-13.

<sup>79</sup> *Missionary Register*, 1821, HL, p.79; *Missionary Register*, London, 1820, HL, p.61.

region on the shores of Lake Macquarie, south of Newcastle, New South Wales.<sup>80</sup> This was the first Christian mission to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia outside the immediate Sydney area. Threlkeld had reported that many European settlers in Australia believed the Aboriginal population of the continent to be 'a race of the monkey tribe' who had 'no regular language'.<sup>81</sup> This was because, Threlkeld explained, 'if it could be proven that the Aborigines of New South Wales were only a species of wild beasts, there could be no guilt attributed to those who shot them off or poisoned them as cumberers of the earth'.<sup>82</sup> 'No man who comes to this Colony and has ground and cattle and corn', Threlkeld concluded, 'can dispassionately view the subject of the blacks, their interest says annihilate the race.'<sup>83</sup> Soon after the establishment of his Lake Macquarie mission, Threlkeld had, furthermore, been warned by the Attorney-General Saxe Bannister that in order to prevent every attempt 'of a missionary nature among the Blacks' many Europeans would, if possible, banish him from the colony.<sup>84</sup>

In 1823 the Reverend Henry Williams arrived in Aotearoa/New Zealand to assumed leadership of the CMS mission to Māori, which was by then centred at the newly established station at Paihia. Both George Clarke and William Yate laboured under Williams' leadership during their time as missionaries to Māori. Williams and Samuel Marsden disagreed over Psalm 137:4 – 'How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?'<sup>85</sup> Williams overturned Mars-

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<sup>80</sup> A brief biography of Threlkeld can be found in Niel Gunson, 'Threlkeld, Lancelot Edward (1788-1859)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, online edition, updated continuously, accessed: 16 November 2006, available at: <http://www.adb.online.nu.edu.au/biogs/A020481b.htm?hilite=Threlkeld>

<sup>81</sup> Threlkeld, 'Journal', Wednesday, 14 December 1825, in Threlkeld, *Reminiscences*, Gunson (ed.), I: p.91; Threlkeld, in the *Christian Herald*, 24 June 1854, pp.158-159, in Threlkeld, *Reminiscences*, Gunson (ed.), I: p.46.

<sup>82</sup> Threlkeld, in the *Christian Herald*, 24 June 1854, pp.158-159, in Threlkeld, *Reminiscences*, Gunson (ed.), I: p.46.

<sup>83</sup> Threlkeld, quoted in Henry Reynolds, *Frontier: Aborigines, Settlers and Land*, Sydney, 1987, p.86.

<sup>84</sup> Threlkeld to LMS secs., 4 September 1826, quoted in Henry Reynolds, *This Whispering in our Hearts*, Sydney 1998, p.30.

<sup>85</sup> *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

den's civilisation before conversion policy – which 'had been tried and found wanting'<sup>86</sup> – and insisted, as instructed by the CMS committee, that all missionaries become proficient in te reo Māori in order to be able to preach in the language.<sup>87</sup> In his assessment of the reasons for Māori conversion to Christianity and in accounting for the delay between the initial arrival of the missionaries and the large-scale conversion which began in the 1830s, historian Harrison M. Wright argued that '[t]he new policies and new personnel of Henry Williams were at first no more effective than the earlier missionaries' efforts had been.'<sup>88</sup> 'Those who say that it was' Williams 'character which brought about change in the Maoris', Wright continued, 'are inaccurate.'<sup>89</sup> J. M. R. Owens disagreed with Wright's assessment. Owens saw Williams as the turning point for the mission, arguing that '[w]hen Williams arrived ... the whole emphasis changed.'<sup>90</sup> Owens believed that Williams' focus on preaching in te reo Māori – a reversal of Marsden's civilisation first policy – was key to the success of the mission. 'Literacy was', concluded Owens, 'the Trojan horse which introduced otherwise unacceptable ideas to the Māori camp.'<sup>91</sup> Historian Robin Fisher furthered Owens' emphasis on Henry Williams' role in the success in Christianising Māori. 'Perhaps the most important product of Williams' reorganization of the mission', concluded Fisher, 'was the progress made in learning the Māori language and in translating religious texts.'<sup>92</sup> Fisher also noted that '[b]efore Williams arrived the missionaries were often not even communicating among themselves, let alone combining in a co-

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<sup>86</sup> Rogers, *Te Wiremu*, p.40.

<sup>87</sup> *CMS Pamphlets and Sermons – 1817-52*, London, 1822, HL; Marsden believed: 'nothing in my opinion can pave the way for the Introduction of the Gospel, but civilization, and that can only be accomplished amongst the Heathens by the Arts.'; Marsden to Josiah Pratt, 7 April 1808, in Marsden, *Marsden and the New Zealand Mission*, Harvard-Williams (ed.), p.15; for an account of the reversal of Marsden's civilisation first policy see: Rogers, *Te Wiremu*, pp.63-64.

<sup>88</sup> Harrison M. Wright, *New Zealand, 1769-1840: Early Years of Western Contact*, Cambridge, 1959, p.138, available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb.03868.0001.001>

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p.139.

<sup>90</sup> Owens, 'Christianity and the Maoris to 1840', especially pp.33-34.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p.37.

<sup>92</sup> Fisher, p.147.



ordinated effort to acquaint the Maoris with Christian ideas.’<sup>93</sup> Further advocates of the thesis that the arrival of Williams enabled success include historians Judith Binney, James Belich, and Michael King.<sup>94</sup> Binney has suggested that the change in policy led by Williams was due to the failure of the first wave missionaries to become independent of their Māori protectors.<sup>95</sup> In addition to this, it was the lack of converts which brought about the change in emphasis from Marsden’s civilisation before conversion strategy.

Henry Williams supported the founding of the Te Waimate mission station, the first inland mission station in Aotearoa/New Zealand, at which both George Clarke and William Yate were to be based, although he opposed it being established as a farm. Marsden’s civilisation first policy overrode Williams’ opposition – as Williams’ biographer Lawrence M. Rogers has noted, ‘albeit for the last time’.<sup>96</sup>

When Clarke and Yate arrived in the Bay of Islands, and for a significant period of their time spent as missionaries to northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori, the ‘musket wars’ were taking place.<sup>97</sup> Historian James Belich has identified the ‘musket wars’ as ‘the largest conflict ever fought on New Zealand soil’; he estimates that they resulted in the deaths of approximately 20,000 Māori.<sup>98</sup> In 1821 the Ngāpuhi chief Hongi Hika returned from England via Sydney in possession of perhaps as many as 500 muskets.<sup>99</sup> The ‘musket wars’ were a consequence of Ngāpuhi having such a significant advantage

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p.148.

<sup>94</sup> Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, pp.88 & 213; Belich, *Making Peoples*, pp.165-169; King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, pp.142-143.

<sup>95</sup> Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.88.

<sup>96</sup> Rogers, *Te Wiremu*, pp.21-22.

<sup>97</sup> For a more in-depth account of the ‘musket wars’ see: Angela Ballara, *Taua: ‘Musket wars’, ‘land wars’ or tikanga? Warfare in Māori society in the early nineteenth century*, Auckland, 2003; see also Belich, *Making Peoples*, pp.156-164.

<sup>98</sup> Belich, *Making Peoples*, p.157.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p.160.

over other tribes in the ownership of firearms. The ‘musket wars’ began when the balance of power among tribes shifted, and came to an end when that balance was restored – when all tribes had muskets.<sup>100</sup> The conflict was thus fought between 1822 and c.1836. The vast majority of Aotearoa/New Zealand was affected; the rugged, remote areas of what would later be named the King Country and Fiordland were among the only areas to be spared.<sup>101</sup> The ‘musket wars’ affected both Clarke’s and Yate’s perceptions of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori and the outcome of the CMS mission to Māori because the conflict caused massive disruption to Māori life.

While missionaries were among the first permanent European residents of the Bay of Islands, whaling and sealing ships had been visiting the Aotearoa/New Zealand coast from the 1790s. Whalers and sealers initially visited Aotearoa/New Zealand as a result of Captain Cook’s and naturalist Joseph Banks’ descriptions of the country’s fauna, and the relative proximity of the growing convict settlement at Port Jackson (Sydney). The *Boyd* incident, combined with an economic slump in New South Wales and Van Diemen’s Land between 1810 and 1815, had prevented the expansion of whaling and sealing endeavours in Aotearoa/New Zealand after 1809.<sup>102</sup> The establishment of the CMS mission at Rangihoua in 1814 had encouraged European whalers and sealers, and other entrepreneurial Europeans, to return to the Aotearoa/New

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<sup>100</sup> James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict*, first published Auckland, 1986, 2nd ed. London, 1998, p.20; historian Angela Ballara, who disputes the label ‘musket wars’ itself, also disputes Belich’s timeframe for the conflict. Ballara argues that the ‘musket wars’ continued throughout the 1830s and into the mid 1840s – ‘after most areas were supplied with muskets to some extent, when the main groups of enemies were equally well supplied’; Ballara, *Taua*, p.25.

<sup>101</sup> King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, pp.133-134.

<sup>102</sup> In 1809 the European vessel the *Boyd* had entered Whangaroa Harbour, north of the Bay of Islands. In retaliation for the mistreatment of a Māori crewmember, all on board the vessel with the exception of a woman and two children were killed – as many as seventy Europeans. The widespread reporting of this incident had a vast affect on European perceptions of Māori. As Samuel Marsden observed: ‘[t]his most awful calamity extinguished at once all hopes of introducing the Gospel into that country.’; Marsden, ‘First New Zealand Journal’, in Marsden, *Letters and Journals*, Elder (ed.), p.61.

Zealand coast.<sup>103</sup> By 1830, as many as thirty ships, with crews totalling approximately 1,000 men, were at anchor in the Bay of Islands at any one time.<sup>104</sup> In order to service these visiting ships and their crews, the settlement of Kororāreka developed. At least 530 Europeans were living in the settlement and the surrounding areas by 1839.<sup>105</sup> On his visit to the Bay of Islands in 1835, Charles Darwin observed that in Kororāreka '[t]here are many spirit-shops' adding that 'the whole population is addicted to drunkenness and all kinds of vice.'<sup>106</sup> Darwin described the European inhabitants of Kororāreka as 'the very refuse of society'.<sup>107</sup> Clarke himself claimed that many of the European inhabitants of Aotearoa/New Zealand were 'far more accomplished heathen than the NZDs'.<sup>108</sup> Despite this, as historian Judith Binney has observed, Aotearoa/New Zealand was, in 1820, a Māori world.<sup>109</sup> The situation to which George Clarke and William Yate were arriving was very much Māori controlled. It is important to remember however, that evangelical missionaries were not the only Europeans with whom Māori interacted.

The language of colour is far less prevalent in Aotearoa/New Zealand than in Australia in nineteenth-century descriptions of 'the other'. This is perhaps a reflection of European perceptions of Māori being fashioned through favourable comparison to other 'heathen', while European perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia were shaped in opposition to European notions of themselves. In his pioneering work on whiteness studies, *The Wages of Whiteness*, David Roediger has explored the definition of 'civilisation' in opposition to 'savagery' during the European colonisation of North America.

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<sup>103</sup> Judith Binney, 'Two Communities, 1820-1839', Judith Binney, Judith Bassett, and Erik Olssen, *The People and the Land Te Tangata me Te Whenua: An Illustrated History of New Zealand, 1820-1920*, Wellington, 1990, p.14.

<sup>104</sup> King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, p.122.

<sup>105</sup> Belich, *Making Peoples*, p.199.

<sup>106</sup> Charles Darwin, quoted in Wright, p.31.

<sup>107</sup> Charles Darwin, quoted in Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, p.47.

<sup>108</sup> Clarke to his parents, 22 August 1827, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.19.

<sup>109</sup> Binney, 'Two Communities, 1820-1839', p.11.

Roediger – who uses whiteness studies as a category within labour history – asserts that ‘white’ attitudes toward land use were influenced by perceptions of Amerindians.<sup>110</sup> This is also true of the European colonisation of Port Phillip – and wider Australia – where European perceptions of whiteness and its links with ‘civilisation’ were defined in opposition to the perceived ‘savagery’ of the Aboriginal peoples of the district. Roediger has also argued that in the United States, ‘[s]ettler ideology held that ... “lazy Indians” were failing to “husband” or “subdue” the resources God had provided and thus should forfeit those resources. Work and whiteness’, Roediger concludes, ‘joined in the argument for dispossession.’<sup>111</sup> Again this holds true for the European invasion of the Port Phillip district and wider Australia, where it was argued that because the Aboriginal peoples of the area failed to use the land which they occupied, they had no ownership of nor right to the land.

Historian Leigh Boucher has concluded that the defining of the settler colonial self permeated depictions of race in nineteenth-century Europeans observations of life in Victoria.<sup>112</sup> Claire McLisky has applied Boucher’s arguments to her discussion of the missionary Daniel Matthews, who worked on the Maloga Mission during the period 1874-1888. McLisky argues that Matthews’ principal category of self-identification was Christian virtue rather than race. Matthews contrasted this category of Christian virtue with the categories of ‘the suffering and sunken blacks’ and ‘wicked white men’.<sup>113</sup> This conforms to Boucher’s argument that in the early nineteenth century, whiteness was in-

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<sup>110</sup> David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*, first published 1991, 2nd ed. London, 1999, p.22.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>112</sup> Leigh Boucher, ‘Unsettled Men: Settler Colonialism, Whiteness and Masculinity in Victoria 1851-1886’, PhD thesis, University of Melbourne, 2005, referenced in Claire McLisky, “‘All of One Blood’? Race and Redemption on Maloga Mission, 1874-88’, Leigh Boucher, Jane Carey, and Katherine Ellinghaus (eds.), *Historicising Whiteness: Transnational Perspectives on the Construction of an Identity*, Melbourne, 2007, available at: <http://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=863637624565074;res=IELHSS>, p.410.

<sup>113</sup> Daniel Matthews, *From Darkness to Death: A Record of Sixteen Years of Gospel Work and its Results Among the Aboriginal Blacks of Australia*, London, 1890, p.7, quoted in McLisky, p.410.

ferred rather than explicit; a consciousness of racial difference did exist during this period, however, it was an underlying one.

Evangelical endeavour to the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip began virtually simultaneously with the European settlement of the district. In May 1835 John Batman had arrived on the shore across the Bass Strait from Van Diemen's Land. On 6 June 1835 the first of the two 'Batman Treaties' – which involved the lease of land around Melbourne and Geelong – were signed, signalling the beginning of the European invasion of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales.<sup>114</sup> While the 'Batman Treaties' were later nullified, on 9 September 1836 New South Wales Governor Sir Richard Bourke issued a Government Order authorising the settlement of Port Phillip under the Crown Lands Regulations of New South Wales.<sup>115</sup> The Reverend Francis Tuckfield arrived in Port Phillip as a missionary to the Aboriginal population of the district in 1838, only three years after the beginning of European settlement. Moreover, excluding the 'Wild White man' William Buckley, no Europeans had lived in the area southwest of Geelong until the year prior to the establishment of the Bunting Dale mission.<sup>116</sup> Missionary endeavour in the Port Phillip district, therefore, began almost concurrently with initial European settlement. This is in stark contrast to the east coast of New South Wales where attempts to 'save' the Aboriginal peoples of the Sydney and Parramatta areas began only in 1821, thirty-three years following initial European settlement.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Robert Douglass Boys, *First Years at Port Phillip: Preceded by a Summary of Historical Events from 1768*, Melbourne, 1935, p.39; Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, p.11.

<sup>115</sup> Boys, p.51.

<sup>116</sup> 'Buntingdale Mission Memorial', *The Colac Reformer*, Tuesday, 29 August 1939, (this newspaper article has been pasted into the back of Tuckfield's journal, MS 7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.349-357).

<sup>117</sup> The first mission to the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales was undertaken by the Wesleyan missionary William Walker. A biography of Walker can be seen in, S. G. Cloughton, 'Walker, William (1800-1855)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, online edition, updated continuously, accessed: 10 August 2007, available at: <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020516b.htm?hilite=william%3BWalker>; additional information about Walker's missionary endeavours in Australia.

In 1837 a Government Mission was established outside Melbourne under the superintendence of George Langhorne. Langhorne believed the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be 'degraded savages' and 'promiscuous wanderers'.<sup>118</sup> The mission was situated about four kilometres from Melbourne at the junction of Gardiner's Creek and the Yarra River.<sup>119</sup> In November 1837 there were fourteen boys attending school and sixty adults camped nearby. By April 1838, however, the majority of the Aboriginal peoples who had frequented the mission had left following two serious incidents of violence at the hands of Europeans. The Government Mission closed in 1839.<sup>120</sup>

At the time of Tuckfield's arrival in the district in 1838, Port Phillip had a European population of 3,511.<sup>121</sup> Of these, 2,000 lived in Melbourne, a township which measured approximately one square mile.<sup>122</sup> The speed of pastoral settlement in the Port Phillip district of New South Wales was incredible. Only three years after the 'Batman Treaties' had been signed, there were already 310,946 sheep, 13,272 cattle, and 524 horses known to be in the district.<sup>123</sup> By 1845, a decade after initial European settlement, sheep and their European drovers had spread over the central third of the district in what historian Richard Broome has labelled 'one of the fastest land occupations in the history of empires'.<sup>124</sup> The violence which resulted from this struggle for re-

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lia can be found in the *Missionary Register*, London, 1823, HL, p.66, and the *Missionary Register*, London, 1824, HL, p.77; Walker complained: '[t]he more I see of the disposition and habits of the New Hollander, the more rigidly am I confirmed in the opinion that a great length of time must elapse before any extensive good will be effected.'; Walker to WMS secs., quoted in Harris, *One Blood*, p.49.

<sup>118</sup> George Langhorne to Governor Sir Richard Bourke, 26 November 1836, Michael Cannon (ed.), *Historical Records of Victoria, Volume 2A: The Aborigines of Port Phillip 1835-1839 (HRV 2A)*, Melbourne, 1982, p.158.

<sup>119</sup> Harris, p.124; Diane E. Barwick, 'Mapping the Past: An Atlas of Victorian Clans 1835-1904 Part 1', *Aboriginal History*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1984, p.115.

<sup>120</sup> Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, pp.37-39.

<sup>121</sup> Boys, p.56.

<sup>122</sup> Blacket, p.167.

<sup>123</sup> Boys, pp.83-84; in Aotearoa/New Zealand on the other hand, by 1851 the number of sheep (223,000) was still less than that of Port Phillip in 1838, Belich, *Making Peoples*, p.189.

<sup>124</sup> Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, p.54.

sources led to a loss of life ratio of approximately twelve Aboriginal deaths for every European killed on the Port Phillip frontier.<sup>125</sup> In addition to deaths at the hands of squatters, disease and increased inter-tribal fighting resulting from land loss greatly depleted the Aboriginal population of Port Phillip. From a pre-contact population of approximately 10,000, by 1853 only 1907 Aboriginal people remained alive in Port Phillip. Beverley Nance has estimated that of these 8,000 deaths, 5,000 resulted from disease, and inter-tribal violence, violence at the hands of Europeans, and 'natural causes' accounted for 1,000 deaths each.<sup>126</sup> On the other hand, while European squatters charged that they were constantly in danger of being killed by the Aboriginal population, only approximately 59 Europeans were killed on the Port Phillip frontier to 1850.<sup>127</sup>

Niel Black, a pastoralist who arrived in Port Phillip in 1839, the same year in which the Bunting Dale mission station was established, kept a journal which he sent home to his native Scotland in order to describe to his friends and family the life of a squatter and to encourage them to follow his example and seek their fortunes in Australia.<sup>128</sup> Black, who declared the Protector of Aborigines Charles Sievwright 'the most unpopular man that ever breathed', reported in his journal in late 1839 that the best way to make one's fortune in the colony was to move far from town 'and take up a new run, provided the conscience of the party is sufficiently seared to enable him without remorse to slaughter natives left and right.'<sup>129</sup> 'It is universally and distinctly understood', he went on to state, 'that the chances are very small indeed of a person taking

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p.xxiv.

<sup>126</sup> Beverley Blaskett, 'The Aboriginal Response to White Settlement in the Port Phillip District 1835-1850', MA thesis, University of Melbourne, 1979, pp.394-395, cited in Broome, *Aboriginal Australians*, p.61.

<sup>127</sup> Beverley Nance (born Blaskett), 'The Level of Violence: Europeans and Aborigines in Port Phillip 1835-1850', *Historical Studies*, vol. 19, no. 77, 1981, pp.533.

<sup>128</sup> Niel Black, 'Journal of a few of the first months spent in Australia', Box 99/1 SLV, p.1.

<sup>129</sup> Niel Black, 1840, quoted in Mitchell, 'Flesh, Dreams and Spirit', p.75; Black, 'Journal', 9 December 1839, Box 99/1 SLV, p.28.

up a new run being able to maintain possession of his place and property without having to recourse to such means – some times by whole sale’. ‘I believe’, Black continued, ‘that great numbers of the poor creatures have wantonly fallen victims to the settlers scarcely less savage tho [*sic*] more enlightened than themselves, and that 2/3rds of them does not care a single straw about taking the life of a native’. Black concluded however, that ‘this need not deter any one from coming’ to Port Phillip.<sup>130</sup> This was because, he believed, although the Aboriginal peoples of the district ‘cannot easily be checked till a few of them are shot’, the murder of a few meant that ‘thus effectively frightened ... they are easily kept down, afterwards by threats till they become civilized, but they like all savages, are treacherous and not to be much trusted.’<sup>131</sup> As Henry Reynolds has observed, ‘violence vied with wool as a product of the [Australian] frontier’; ‘rifle bolts clicked in concert with the shears.’<sup>132</sup>

It was a common belief among Europeans during the first half of the nineteenth century that that it was the application of labour to the production of the needs and wants of life that set the ‘civilised’ apart from the ‘savage’. A derivation of this was the belief that the cultivation of the land which one occupied was a mark of ‘civilisation’. The Enlightenment idea of progress had, by the late eighteenth century, become an assumption that societies progressed through a natural development sequence. This entailed beginning as a ‘savage’ hunter-gatherer society, ‘rising’ to become nomadic pastoralists, then eventually reaching the ‘superior’ stage of civilisation based on agriculture and commerce.<sup>133</sup> The semi-nomadic lifestyle the Aboriginal peoples of

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<sup>130</sup> Black, ‘Journal’, 9 December 1839, Box 99/1 SLV, pp.28-29.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 December 1839, p.35.

<sup>132</sup> Henry Reynolds, ‘The Land, the Explorers and the Aborigines’, *Historical Studies*, vol. 19, no. 75, October 1980, p.214.

<sup>133</sup> Russell McGregor, *Imagined Destinies: Aboriginal Australians and the Doomed Race Theory, 1880-1939*, Melbourne, 1997, p.2; in his 1813 *Researches* the evangelical ethnologist and founder of



Australia chose to live – moving seasonally in tribal and family groupings within their appropriate territories – was perceived by Europeans to be a wholly nomadic hunter-gatherer existence. In 1838, the same year in which Tuckfield arrived in Port Phillip, the *Sydney Herald* – a newspaper later described as ‘the mouthpiece of the squatter class’<sup>134</sup> – charged that ‘this vast country was to Aborigines a common – they bestow no labor upon the land – their ownership, their right, was nothing more than that of the Emu or Kangaroo. They bestow no labor upon the land and that – and only that – it is which gives the right of property to it.’<sup>135</sup> Magistrate William Hull added in 1846, ‘[n]o nation or tribe can acquire or maintain a right to the soil, unless it profitably occupies or tills it’.<sup>136</sup> Perceived Aboriginal nomadism appeared in stark contrast to the settled lifestyle of Europeans and was thus seen as an inferior state of existence.

By the 1820s, Europeans had formed contrasting perceptions of Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia. These opposing perceptions were influenced by early European explorers of the Pacific, initial residents of Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia, and the first missionaries to Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia. These observations, and the opposing perceptions which they created, influenced evangelical perceptions of northern

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the Aborigines’ Protection Society James Cowles Prichard had advanced this theory. Prichard used the term ‘the Negro race’ to describe peoples who were ‘black’ and ‘savage’ and believed that in the beginning of humankind ‘black savages’ and ‘white savages’ were psychologically the same. ‘Black savages’ had, however, remained ‘in the beginning’, while ‘white savages’ had culturally advanced – which had led them to superior brain capacity; Bronwen Douglas, ‘Seaborne Ethnography and the Natural History of Man’, *The Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2003, p.15; Stocking Jr.; for discussion of the effect of the Enlightenment on evangelical theory, see Bebbington, pp.71 & 74; for discussion of the relationship between the Enlightenment and the construction of races, see Kidd, *The Forging of Races*, particularly pp.81-120.

<sup>134</sup> Alan Lester and Fae Dussart, ‘Trajectories of protection: Protectorates of Aborigines in early 19th century Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand’, *New Zealand Geographer*, vol. 64, 2008, p.211.

<sup>135</sup> *Sydney Herald*, 7 November 1838, quoted in Howe, p.25.

<sup>136</sup> William Hull, *Remarks on the Probable Origin Antiquity of the Aboriginal Natives of New South Wales*, Melbourne, 1846, p.21, quoted in Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, p.73.

Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, Australia.

## Chapter Two: Success as a Lens for Perceptions of Māori – George Clarke

Strangers shall submit themselves unto me:  
as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me  
– 2 Samuel 22:45<sup>1</sup>

[T]he Lord will override the cruelty of the New Zealanders  
– George Clarke<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter the CMS missionary George Clarke is used as a case study to examine evangelical European perceptions of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori between the 1820s and 1840. In particular, the focus is on his views through three key stages: before his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the first few years of his residence among northern Māori, and after he had lived in Aotearoa/New Zealand for a number of years. Key influences on his perceptions will also be examined, including the writings of early explorers, the writings of his predecessors, and finally his experience of preaching and living among northern Māori. Here it is argued that the most influential lens through which Clarke's perceptions of northern Māori were made was assessing whether his missionary endeavour to them was experiencing success. It is also argued that Clarke's unexpected and prolonged residence in New South Wales influenced his perceptions of and relationships with northern Māori, both through his encounters with the Aboriginal peoples of the Sydney and Parramatta areas during his superintendence of the Parramatta Native Institution at Blacktown, and through his association with Samuel Marsden. The way in which Clarke's differing perceptions were recorded – in private letters

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<sup>1</sup> *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

<sup>2</sup> George Clarke, 'Journal', Thursday, 22 June 1826, qMS-0465 ATL, p.505.

to his parents, in letters to his London supervisors, and in his journals – is also considered.<sup>3</sup>

Within the general histories of Aotearoa/New Zealand, George Clarke has received some attention, most of which has been devoted to his position as Chief Protector of Aborigines – a post which Clarke occupied from 1840 to 1846. In Keith Sinclair's *History of New Zealand*, Clarke is mentioned once, in reference to his position as Chief Protector; although Sinclair does acknowledge that Clarke 'had been a missionary and before that a gunsmith'.<sup>4</sup> Sinclair had earlier written *The Origins of the Maori Wars* in which Clarke's government career is briefly discussed.<sup>5</sup> In James Belich's *Making Peoples*, Clarke is mentioned once. Misspelt as 'Clark', he is noted in reference to his advocacy of British intervention in the governance of Aotearoa/New Zealand.<sup>6</sup> Clarke again receives a single mention in Michael King's *Penguin History of New Zealand*, and again it is in reference to his position as Chief Protector.<sup>7</sup>

In 2004, biographer Roger Evans wrote: '[s]hould you look for George Clarke in history books, you would ... be disappointed. Little more than a byword among historians, his memorial is a token and dismissive reference in most annals of secular reference'.<sup>8</sup> Much of what has been written about Clarke is focussed around his role as Chief Protector of Aborigines. The historiography surrounding Clarke's life after 1840 includes: C. H. Wake's 1959 MA thesis, 'George Clarke and the Protectorate 1840-45' and his resulting 1962 article, 'George Clarke and the Government of the Maoris: 1840-45'; P. D. Gibbons' 1963 MA thesis, 'The Protectorate of the Aborigines 1840-46'; and he is also

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<sup>3</sup> Copies of Clarke's journals and correspondence are held at: MS-Papers-7394 and qMS-0463 – qMS-0465 ATL, Wellington.

<sup>4</sup> Sinclair, *History of New Zealand*, p.80.

<sup>5</sup> Keith Sinclair, *The Origins of the Maori Wars*, Wellington, 1957, p.28.

<sup>6</sup> Belich, *Making Peoples*, p.185.

<sup>7</sup> King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, p.166.

<sup>8</sup> Evans, p.iii.

mentioned in Alan Ward's 1971 article 'Law and Law-Enforcement on the New Zealand Frontier, 1840-1893'.<sup>9</sup> G. W. Shroff's 1967 PhD thesis, 'George Clarke and the New Zealand Mission, 1824-1850' and Roger Evans' hagiographical *Truth and Obedience: the Life and Letters of George Clarke*, both discuss Clarke before his appointment as Chief Protector as well as afterwards.<sup>10</sup> Both of these works are biographically focussed. There is also a brief entry on Clarke in the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*.<sup>11</sup>

Within Australian historiography, Clarke is discussed in Brook and Kohen's history of *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black Town*.<sup>12</sup> He is also briefly mentioned (as is William Yate) in Richard Broome's *Aboriginal Australians* with the purpose of highlighting the low place assigned to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia on the European racial hierarchy.<sup>13</sup> Unlike the preceding historiography, which has been either biographically centred or focussed on his time as Chief Protector, in this chapter George Clarke's correspondence is examined in order to assess his perceptions of northern Māori.

George Clarke was born in Wymondham, Norfolk, in the east of England on 27 January 1798. At age twenty he left the historic market-town in which he had grown up for London. Before leaving Wymondham he had trained as a gunsmith and carpenter under the supervision of his father, gaining skills that would influence his time in Aotearoa/New Zealand. After a period of seeking

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<sup>9</sup> C. H. Wake, 'George Clarke and the Protectorate 1840-45', MA thesis, University of Otago, 1959; C. H. Wake, 'George Clarke and the Government of the Maoris: 1840-45', *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, vol. 10, no. 39, November 1962, pp.339-356; P. D. Gibbons, 'The Protectorate of the Aborigines 1840-46', MA thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1963; Alan Ward, 'Law and Law-Enforcement on the New Zealand Frontier, 1840-1893', *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 5, no. 2, October 1971, pp.128-149.

<sup>10</sup> Shroff; Evans.

<sup>11</sup> Ray Grover, 'Clarke, George 1798-1875', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, online edition, updated 22 June 2007, accessed: 30 October 2007, available at: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/dnzb/>

<sup>12</sup> Brook and Kohen.

<sup>13</sup> Broome, *Aboriginal Australians*, p.30.

work in London, and probably working briefly as a gunsmith, Clarke offered his services to the CMS. Clarke's missionary calling was something his father disapproved of and subsequently Clarke's letters to his parents are saturated with attempts to justify his decision and to overcome his father's disappointment. Clarke's letters to his father also contain subtle attempts to encourage his father to be more religious. Following preparation at the Islington training institution in London, Clarke and his wife Martha (born Bloomfield) departed for Sydney aboard the *Heroine* on 25 April 1822. En route, they visited Rio de Janeiro and Hobart Town – where they stayed for over a month.

The Clarkes arrived in Sydney on 16 October 1822. From there they expected to be immediately forwarded to the Bay of Islands, Aotearoa/New Zealand to begin their work among Māori. It was not until 19 March 1824 however, that the Clarkes departed Sydney for Aotearoa/New Zealand. They arrived in the Bay of Islands two weeks later, on 3 April 1824. After sixteen years labouring towards 'civilising' and Christianising Māori, on 6 April 1840 George Clarke was appointed Chief Protector of Aborigines in Aotearoa/New Zealand; a post which he reluctantly accepted at the encouragement of his fellow missionaries in the hope that he might be able to 'render both the Government and the poor natives [an] essential service'.<sup>14</sup> Clarke's appointment followed his January 1838 recommendation '[t]hat the whole country be secured under the protection and guardian care of the British Government'.<sup>15</sup> This appointment marks the end point for this study of Clarke because although he resumed his work as a CMS missionary after being dismissed from his post as Chief Protector on 1 March 1846, this study concerns evangelical perceptions of Māori prior to 1840 – a year which saw a significant development in

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<sup>14</sup> George Clarke to his sister Mary Clarke, 7 August 1840, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.38.

<sup>15</sup> Dandeson Coates, *Documents Exhibiting the Views of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society on the New Zealand Question, and Explaining of the Present State of that Country*, London, 1839, p.44, quoted in Ward, 'Law and Law Enforcement', p.128.

Aotearoa/New Zealand history, the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. In 1849 Clarke was discharged from the employ of the CMS as a result of the controversy surrounding the missionary purchase of Māori lands. He afterwards became a successful farmer and in 1865, a Native Land Court judge. On 26 July 1875 George Clarke died of a stroke at Te Waimate, where he is buried. He was seventy-eight years of age. Fittingly, Clarke was carried to his grave by Māori pallbearers and two Māori clergymen conducted his funeral service.<sup>16</sup> George and Martha Clarke, who died on 8 December 1882, had thirteen children together, the eldest of whom, George Clarke (Junior) was born at Parramatta in 1823 and later wrote a book titled *Notes on an Early Life in New Zealand* (1903).<sup>17</sup>

Ostensibly, George Clarke offered his services to the CMS because he had ‘tasted that the Lord is gracious’ and was desirous that my poor fellow sinners may experience something of the same love’. ‘I hope that it is the love of the Saviour which constrains me to offer myself’ he continued in his letter to the CMS secretaries, ‘gladly’ offering himself to ‘go and tell the poor heathen that Jesus came into the world to save sinners’.<sup>18</sup> Clarke also appears, however, to have had difficulty finding employment in London.<sup>19</sup> Prior to his departure for Australia, a seemingly relieved Clarke reported to his father in a post script: ‘the [CMS] funds us with provisions of every sort and 40 pounds a year to meet any other expense, in any family they allow ten pounds for every child’.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Biographical information sourced from: Marsden, *Letters and Journals*, Elder (ed.), p.376n; Evans, pp.59, 104 & 123-124; Grover.

<sup>17</sup> Clarke [Junior], *Notes*.

<sup>18</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 9 October 1820, quoted in Shroff, pp.4-5.

<sup>19</sup> The population of England had increased by one third in the fifty years after 1750 which had led to widespread unemployment – perhaps one third of the working-age population were unemployed in England at the turn of the century; Broome, *Aboriginal Australians*, p.24.

<sup>20</sup> Clarke to his father, 16 April 1822, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.3; eight years later, Clarke gave further reassurance to his parents: ‘[y]ou perhaps are anxious to know how I am provided for, to which I answer my cup overflows.’; Clarke to his parents, 12 March 1830, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.27.

Clarke later said it was reading the accounts of Captain Cook's Pacific voyages which had sparked his 'first early desires for seeing and visiting foreign countries not without the dreamy hopes of one day becomming [*sic*] a Robinson Crusoe attaching myself to a few faithful attendants whom I might rescue from the feasts of cannibals like his man Friday, and others, as a compensation for my labours.'<sup>21</sup> As well as instilling a desire to 'save' the 'heathen', reading Cook and DeFoe shaped Clarke's preconceptions about the 'heathen' he sought to 'save'.

It is possible that Clarke had encountered Māori before leaving England. In 1820, the Ngāpuhi chief Hongi Hika visited London. It was the protection of Hongi that the CMS mission at the Bay of Islands was under following the death of Ruatara from pneumonia in 1815 until Hongi's own death from an infected musket ball wound in 1828. Historian Judith Binney has shown that it is quite possible that Clarke met Hongi while the two men were in London – Clarke is believed to have made a lock for a gun for Hongi.<sup>22</sup> If this meeting did indeed take place, then his interactions with the Ngāpuhi chief certainly shaped Clarke's perceptions of Māori prior to his departure from England and very possibly influenced his decision to offer himself to the CMS.

On the eve of his departure from London for Australia, Clarke wrote to his father expressing his hope that he would be able to one day describe to him 'face to face the deplorable state of the poor Heathen', indicating that he intended to one day return to England; or perhaps that he wished his father to Christianise so that they may meet again in heaven. In this letter Clarke also gave an indication of his anxiety at undertaking such a long journey in order

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<sup>21</sup> Clarke, 'Address to Mutual Improvement Society', c.1858, quoted in Shroff, pp.5-6.

<sup>22</sup> Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.90n.



to conduct his missionary endeavour. Expressing fear about his forthcoming voyage, Clarke wrote '[s]hould I be spared to see New Zealand' before concluding, in an attempt to console his fears, that '[t]his life ... is not worth thinking of only as it prepares us for a better.'<sup>23</sup> George's wife Martha – who nearly did not survive the outward journey – wrote to her mother in a similar vein before their departure.<sup>24</sup> She too was concerned about not surviving the voyage, and, like George, attempted to overcome this fear through her faith. She asserted that God 'is able to preserve me as well on the sea as on the land,' and asked 'if my soul be safe in Jesus what does it matter if I die and my poor body be food for fish instead of worms?'<sup>25</sup> Perhaps comforting themselves with the biblical passage Psalm 93:4 – 'The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, mightier than the mighty waves of the sea' – George and Martha Clarke departed England to begin their new lives endeavouring to 'save' the 'heathen'.<sup>26</sup>

En route to Australia the *Heroine* called in at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Here Clarke's preconceptions differed from the reality of experience and the evangelical found himself strongly affected by the mistreatment of African slaves. He reported in his journal: 'I have often heard of the degradation of the poor Africans and thought that surely the descriptions given of them must be too strong, the colours that were drawn I thought too dark, but a sight of them led me to exclaim that the half of their misery was not told.'<sup>27</sup> This experience had a profound influence on how Clarke perceived other non-European populations of the globe, including both the Aboriginal peoples of Australia and Māori.

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<sup>23</sup> Clarke to his father, 16 April 1822 MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.3.

<sup>24</sup> Clarke reported in his journal while on board the *Heroine* bound for Australia: '[o]ur Doctor has given up all hopes of Mrs. Clarke's recovery'; Clarke, 'Journal', Monday, 19 June 1822, qms-0465 ATL, p.376.

<sup>25</sup> Martha Clarke to her mother, April 1822, quoted in Evans, p.139.

<sup>26</sup> *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

<sup>27</sup> Clarke, 'Journal', Saturday, 22 June 1822, qMS-0465 ATL, p.378.

While in Hobart Town, Clarke dined with the Wesleyan Reverend Joseph Orton on several occasions.<sup>28</sup> Orton more than likely discussed his opinions of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia with Clarke – opinions which are further discussed in chapter four – thus influencing Clarke’s perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples he was soon to encounter in and around Sydney.

Immediately upon their arrival in New South Wales, the Clarkes went to Parramatta where they lived with the Reverend Samuel Marsden; arriving at his home six months after their departure from England. On 1 January 1823, after he had been in New South Wales for two and a half months, George Clarke was employed by Marsden as head of the Native Institution.<sup>29</sup> A year earlier the Native Institution had been relocated from Parramatta to an area on the track between Rooty Hill and Richmond, later to be called Black Town. The intention of the Native Institution was to ‘effect the civilisation of the Aborigines of NSW, and to render their habits more domesticated and industrious’, with the ‘hope of producing such an Improvement in their condition as may eventually contribute to render them not only more happy in themselves, but also in some degree useful to the community’.<sup>30</sup> When Clarke arrived at the Native Institution, it was apparently ‘little more than a dozen Aborigines camped around the unfinished foundations of a school building.’<sup>31</sup> Prior to this, Clarke had been occupied in instructing Māori and other Polynesian visitors to Marsden’s Parramatta residence.<sup>32</sup> One such Māori visi-

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., Wednesday, 11 September 1822 & Sunday, 15 September 1822, p.387; Clarke incorrectly identified his host as ‘Mr Horton’ in his journal.

<sup>29</sup> George Clarke was thus among the first examples of those guilty of initiating the ‘stolen generations’. For discussion of the capturing of Aboriginal children to supply the Native Institution see: Brook and Kohen, pp.30-31 & 262-263.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Rules of the Native Institution, 10 December 1814’, quoted in Peter Read, ‘Shelley’s Mistake: The Parramatta Native Institution and the Stolen Generations’, Martin Crotty and David Andrew Roberts (eds.), *Great Mistakes of Australian History*, Sydney, 2006, p.32.

<sup>31</sup> Shroff, p.25.

<sup>32</sup> Brook and Kohen, pp.133-134.

tor was 'Wattoo', who lived with Clarke at Parramatta for three months and who will be discussed later in this chapter.

In their history of *The Parramatta Native Institution and the Black Town*, Brook and Kohen charge that George Clarke was detained by Marsden in New South Wales rather than being forwarded immediately to Aotearoa/New Zealand because Marsden sought to prevent the Native Institution being managed by Wesleyans.<sup>33</sup> Marsden detained Clarke in New South Wales, not because of inter-denominational squabbling, but rather because of Clarke's training as a gunsmith. Hongi Hika, the Ngāpuhi chief who had visited New South Wales in 1814 and England in 1820 (where he possibly met Clarke) and under whose protection the CMS mission in the Bay of Islands was, had heard of Clarke's training and had 'been expecting Mr. Clark[e] for some time to make him guns.'<sup>34</sup> Marsden noted that he had

retained Mr. Clark[e] in New South Wales until I have a full explanation with Shungee [Hongi] relative to Mr. Clark[e]'s employment should he come to New Zealand. If Shungee is determined that he shall work as a gunsmith, Mr. Clark[e] must not come. If he will allow him to come as a missionary, he may then venture.<sup>35</sup>

Clarke's delay, moreover, highlights the extensive effects of the 'musket wars' and the volatile situation in northern Aotearoa/New Zealand to which he arrived in April 1824. The CMS missionaries found that they could not live in the Bay of Islands without the protection of Hongi. In return for this protection, however, Hongi demanded that the missionaries supply Ngāpuhi with muskets; and with the arrival of George Clarke who had trained as a gunsmith, Hongi hoped, also repair the tribe's broken muskets.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.145.

<sup>34</sup> Marsden, *Letters and Journals*, Elder (ed.), Monday, 29 September 1823, p.376; Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.90n.

<sup>35</sup> Marsden, *Letters and Journals*, Elder (ed.), Monday, 29 September 1823, p.376

In October 1823 Clarke protested to the CMS secretary Josiah Pratt that his being kept in New South Wales appeared mysterious to his friends and he – Marsden does not appear to have informed Clarke of his concerns relating to Hongi. Clarke went on to report to Pratt on his perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales. Clarke ‘*strongly believe[d]*’ the Aboriginal population to be ‘the poorest objects on the known habitable Globe’. ‘I have seen the miserable Africans come from the holds of the slave ships’, Clarke continued, referring to his time in Rio de Janeiro, ‘but they do not equal in wretchedness and misery the New Hollanders’. Clarke went on to state that to describe the habits and customs of the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales ‘would not only be tedious but exceedingly offensive’.<sup>36</sup> In November 1823, Clarke wrote, with evident disappointment, to his father: ‘[t]o the present our labours have been confined to New South Wales, amongst the poor Aborigines and there is still a doubt where and when we shall be removed.’<sup>37</sup> Here Clarke’s perceptions, influenced by Marsden and other Europeans in the colony, reflect common contemporary European perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia.

On 3 April 1824, George and Martha Clarke and their infant son George (Junior), finally arrived in the Bay of Islands, Aotearoa/New Zealand – as Brook and Kohen surmise: ‘[t]he Australian Aborigines’ loss was the New Zealand Aborigines’ gain.’<sup>38</sup> Hongi had evidently given Marsden the necessary assurances and Clarke was able to begin his missionary endeavour to those whom he had been sent from England to ‘save’. Having encountered African slaves at Rio de Janeiro and Aboriginal peoples of Australia at Sydney and Parramatta, Clarke’s opinion of the ‘heathen’ had already changed since he had

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<sup>36</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 21 October 1823, qMS-0463 ATL, pp.14-15, italics in original.

<sup>37</sup> Clarke to his father, 10 November 1823, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.8.

<sup>38</sup> Brook and Kohen, p.151.

offered his services to the CMS. Clarke had reported to his father in November 1823 that he had 'a very different idea now of the state of the heathen, than it was possible for me to have while in England' and concluded that he was now able to 'better understand the life of a Missionary'.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, Clarke's discussions with Marsden about Māori potential and his interactions with visiting Māori at Parramatta, such as 'Wattoo', shaped his perceptions of Māori prior to his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand. That Clarke had changed his ideas concerning the 'heathen' following his departure from England shows that evangelical notions of the 'heathen' adapted with experience. Clarke's frustration at not being forwarded to Aotearoa/New Zealand sooner shows his faith in Māori potential.

Clarke believed in the potential of Māori to become 'civilised' and Christian before he arrived in Aotearoa/New Zealand. His absolute conviction that the mission would succeed is perhaps best highlighted in the departing remarks he made to the crew of the *Coquille*, the ship which first brought him to the Bay of Islands from Sydney. 'If only you could be here in ten years', Clarke asserted 'in a mystic tone and with a benign air', 'you would find, I hope, by the grace of God, that great changes had been made.'<sup>40</sup> The *Coquille's* doctor and naturalist René Primavere Lesson, however, doubted Clarke's chances of success. He remarked that Clarke would 'have managed to gather up a few piastres [tattooed heads] or will have been eaten by his catechumens; these perhaps are the changes there will be.'<sup>41</sup> Based on his encounters with Māori in New South Wales and Marsden's enthusiasm (and perhaps meeting Hongi

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<sup>39</sup> Clarke to his father, 10 November 1823, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.8.

<sup>40</sup> René Primavere Lesson, *Voyage autour de monde ... sur la corvette La Coquille*, 2 vols., Paris, 1838-1839, reproduced in Andrew Sharp (ed.), *Duperry's Visit to New Zealand in 1824*, Wellington, 1971, p.77.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*; Clarke's relationship with the crew of the *Coquille* appears to have been strained – the French officers of the ship had threatened to throw the Clarkes' crying son George (Junior) overboard before they arrived at the Bay of Islands; Clarke [Junior], *Notes*, p.9.

in England), upon his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand Clarke believed that the mission would succeed.

Having for so long desired to be in Aotearoa/New Zealand among Māori, Clarke's initial perceptions of those he sought to 'save' were mixed. After residing at Kerikeri for four months, Clarke wrote to the CMS secretaries advising them that he found Māori to be 'kind beyond all description'.<sup>42</sup> Two days prior to this, however, Clarke had recorded in his journal: 'the New Zealanders are beyond calculation cruel' and prayed for the Lord to give them sympathy for 'those who are bone of their bone and flesh of their [flesh]' and to 'cut short the reign of him who is the destroyer'.<sup>43</sup> One week later, he added in his journal: '[m]ay the Lord change the hearts of these rude barbarians' after complaining of Māori destruction and theft of missionary property.<sup>44</sup> This is significant because it not only shows the unpredictable and changing nature of the missionaries' situation, but it also highlights that these missionary texts are first-hand observations recorded on a day-to-day basis; they have not been edited to form a coherent, non-contradictory account of events modified with the benefit of hindsight. Furthermore, these extracts demonstrate that, although Clarke's journals were forwarded to the CMS secretaries, they contained less filtered perceptions of Māori than do his letters to the CMS secretaries.

It is perhaps necessary to point out that George Clarke believed Māori to be fellow human beings. Belief in the humanity of Māori is something which is commonly taken for granted in studies of the early period of contact in Aotearoa/New Zealand but becomes evident when an Australian comparison is made. Having resided among Māori for nine months, Clarke wrote to the

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<sup>42</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 21 July 1824, qMS-0463 ATL, p.22.

<sup>43</sup> Clarke, 'Journal', 19 July 1824, qms-0465 ATL, p.417.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 26 July 1824, p.418.

CMS secretaries outlining his belief that Māori were ‘in reality what all men by nature are’. ‘I perceive’, he continued, ‘the same disposition in Europeans by nature as in the savages by whom we are surrounded exactly the same passions and consequently the same vices’.<sup>45</sup> Although he saw Māori as fellow humans, Clarke perceived them to be degraded. The ‘splendid difference between happy England and the poor heathen of New Zealand’, was, he believed, ‘the Gospel of Jesus’, which had ‘begun to be preached to’ Māori, and would soon ‘produce the same happy effects’ as it had in England.<sup>46</sup> Clarke, therefore, perceived Māori as fellow human beings who, although they were ‘savages’, had the potential to become ‘civilised’ and Christian by being introduced to knowledge of the gospel and the ways of ‘civilised’ European life.

Although Clarke perceived Māori to be fellow humans, capable of ‘civilising’ and Christianising, his early perceptions of them also involved a belief that they were dangerous ‘savages’. He wrote to his parents in March 1825 informing them that, ‘[a]lmost every man about us has a musket with a Bayonet at its end these muskets are the New Zealanders Idols he will part from every thing he possesses for one of these instruments of destruction’.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, giving an indication of what he knew to be the image of Māori circulating in Britain, Clarke wrote to his father in August 1827 reporting that he did ‘not doubt but you have heard long ago that we were all eaten up by the N. Zealanders’.<sup>48</sup> He wrote again two and a half months later: ‘I daresay dr Father you have heard many rumours about us and perhaps have seen in print that we have been swallowed up’.<sup>49</sup> Clarke’s comments echo earlier observations made by the first wave missionary Thomas Kendall, who the *Missionary Register* reported in 1815 as having written that ‘British Newspapers’ have reported

<sup>45</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 7 January 1825, qMS-0463 ATL, pp.24-25.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., pp.25.

<sup>47</sup> Clarke to his parents, 26 March 1825, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.11.

<sup>48</sup> Clarke to his father, 22 August 1827, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.19.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 7 November 1827, p.20.

that 'few vessels ever leave the coasts of New Zealand without the loss of some part of their crew' at the hands of Māori. Kendall concluded that 'this is a serious charge; which I cannot, however, believe to be true.'<sup>50</sup> Clarke initially perceived Māori to be dangerous, but he considered the image of them which was circulating in Britain to be overstated.

Clarke believed that his predecessors, the first wave missionaries to Māori, had experienced some success prior to his coming to Aotearoa/New Zealand. In July 1824, only three months after his arrival, Clarke wrote to his parents to tell them of his journey from Te Waimate to 'Marberry' – probably Lake Omāpere, several kilometres west of the mission station. '[O]ur path lay through woods so thick with underwood that it was impossible to leave the beaten path', he wrote. '[T]heir [Māori] paths appear ancient and doubtless were trodden by generations of savages generations ago, I have no doubt but they have often fled to the woods for shelter from the enemy and have been hunted through the paths we are treading as they now hunt the pigs in these woods.' 'Ten years ago,' Clarke concluded, 'in passing through these woods the heart of [a] European would have beat pit a pat at the moving of every leaf for fear of meeting a New Zealand cannibal but now we could walk through them more safely than perhaps we could through such woods in England'.<sup>51</sup> Two months earlier he had – recalling a journey along the same path – written in his journal that his '[i]magination, if indulged, would have carried me back to many a tragical [*sic*] scene'.<sup>52</sup> Māori, Clarke believed, were beginning to become less dangerous and more 'civilised' under the direction of the CMS missionaries; he believed that the mission was succeeding.

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<sup>50</sup> *Missionary Register*, London, 1815, HL, p.190.

<sup>51</sup> Clarke to his parents, 24 July 1824, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.9.

<sup>52</sup> Clarke, 'Journal', Tuesday, 1 June 1824, qMS-0465 ATL, p.413.



Clarke's expectations of Māori behaviour are perhaps best exemplified by his astonishment when Māori acted contrary to his preconceptions during the early period of his time in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Because he perceived them to be 'heathen' and 'savage', Clarke expected Māori to 'misbehave'. He expressed surprise in his journal in August 1824 at a group of Māori 'who for Heathens behaved pretty well'.<sup>53</sup> At the end of September that same year Clarke wrote a tribute to 'a native lad' named 'Wattoo' who had lived with Clarke for three months at Parramatta and since his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Clarke noted that '[f]or a New Zealander, Wattoo was of a mild disposition'. He also seemed surprised that although 'Wattoo' was 'but a poor savage', he 'never knew him to steal the smallest article from me.'<sup>54</sup> That Clarke perceived 'Wattoo' to be 'mild' and trustworthy, and that this surprised him, shows us that Clarke expected Māori to behave in a 'savage' manner – to be aggressive and untrustworthy. It also suggests that Clarke is mindful of his audience and is suggesting that the time 'Wattoo' has spent with Clarke, both in New South Wales and the Bay of Islands, was having a 'civilising' effect upon him.

After nine month's living in the Bay of Islands Clarke's perceptions of Māori had changed little since he first arrived in Aotearoa/New Zealand. At the beginning of 1825, he reported to his parents:

New Zealand ... and the natives thereof, remain much the same; savage warlike dispos[it]ions are the predominant features of a New Zealander. They actually thirst for blood, and glory in portraying their cruelty; nor will the case be otherwise till the Gospel of Peace be fully made known among them and received by them.

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., Sunday, 1 August 1824, p.423.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., Thursday, 30 September 1824, pp.425-426.

Accounting for the fact that 'this has not yet been fully done', even though 'missionaries have been long amongst them', Clarke reminded his parents that Māori were 'one of the most savage nations in the world, whose glory is in war and blood; the very message of peace is disgusting to a New Zealander'. Clarke concluded, however, that 'notwithstanding all the difficulties that there have been and still are very much has been done and is now doing toward evengalizing [*sic*] this dark corner of the earth'.<sup>55</sup> Having resided in the Bay of Islands for one year, Clarke, therefore, still perceived Māori to be 'savage'; in fact, he perceived them to be amongst the 'most savage' peoples of the world. Yet he firmly believed that Māori 'savagery' could be overcome with the knowledge of the gospel and the introduction of 'civilisation'.

While sailing southwards off the Coromandel Peninsula in mid-1826, Clarke recorded in his journal his reaction to the effects of the Ngāpuhi raids to the south of the Bay of Islands following their acquisition of significant numbers of muskets. Clarke noted that he had 'passed a number of Islands; where once live populous tribes, now become extinct, not an individual living upon them.' 'The circumstances of this depopulation', he continued, 'led us to mourn over the wretched state of the poor Heathen'. Clarke – echoing similar comments which would later be made by William Yate about the same islands – believed that 'nothing but unbounded cruelty, a thirst for human blood, and an insatiable revenge, has made those Islands what they now are.' He concluded, however, that 'doubtless, the Lord will override the cruelty of the New Zealanders'.<sup>56</sup> One-and-a-half years after he had arrived in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Clarke continued to perceive Māori as 'savage' and still held belief in their potential to be 'civilised' and Christianised.

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<sup>55</sup> Clarke to his parents, 6 January 1825, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.10.

<sup>56</sup> Clarke, 'Journal', Thursday, 22 June 1826, qms-0465 ATL, pp.504-505.

Clarke expected that it would 'be through the education of [Māori] children that our designs will be carried into execution'. He elaborated on his explanation to his parents regarding the mission's lack of large-scale success, concluding that before the educating of Māori children 'can be done there are works to be prepared for educating them, not to say anything about the difficulty of collecting children, this is a work of immense labour and time, and a very important object is attained when children can read and write.'<sup>57</sup>

One of the principal barriers to the 'success' of the CMS mission to Māori, Clarke believed, was the difficulty in acquiring a working knowledge of te reo Māori. At the beginning of 1825 Clarke wrote to his parents concerning why Māori had not yet been fully 'civilised' and Christianised when 'missionaries have been long amongst them'. He explained that '[t]here is a rude and barbarous language first to collect, then to learn, there are neither dictionaries nor Grammars to assist except a very imperfect one of a late date' – that of Thomas Kendall.<sup>58</sup> In September 1825 Clarke reported to the CMS secretaries that although Māori were sometimes 'attentive to our religious instruction', the missionaries suffered for 'want of a knowledge of their language in our religious intercourse with them.' If a working knowledge of te reo Māori could be acquired, Clarke believed, 'numbers of New Zealanders barbarous wretched and degraded as they now are' would 'bow' to the gospel.<sup>59</sup> Clarke lamented at the beginning of 1826 that he felt himself 'crampt [*sic*] in my work for want of Elementary Works and a knowledge of the language'.<sup>60</sup>

Having resided in Aotearoa/New Zealand for nearly two years, Clarke perceived that he was beginning to experience some small successes in

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<sup>57</sup> Clarke to his parents, 6 January 1825, qms-0463 ATL, p.10.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 26 September 1825, qMS-0463 ATL, p.32.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 2 January 1826, p.37.

Christianising and 'civilising' Māori. At the beginning of 1826 Clarke reported to the CMS secretaries that they would 'doubtless' be pleased to hear that the missionaries' 'prospects of usefulness are daily heightening, that prejudices are daily giving way, [and] that ignorance and superstition are giving place to the light of the everlasting Gospel'.<sup>61</sup> On the second Sabbath of June 1826 Clarke wrote in his journal: '[o]ur congregation this morning was very attentive, as much *so* as an English congregation.' Clarke noted that when his fellow CMS missionary James Kemp addressed the Māori congregation, 'there appeared much more serious[ness] about them than there used to be.' When Clarke himself addressed the Māori churchgoers that afternoon, 'their attention was pleasing'. 'Less than two years ago', Clarke continued, 'it was with difficulty that we could persuade even natives living about us to attend for a few minutes to our instruction, and very seldom would they put on European cloth[e]s even when given to them'. 'But now', he concluded,

generally speaking, our natives are lessons of instruction, and some of them labour hard for a shirt and a pair of trowsers [*sic*], [so] that they may be clean on the Lord's day; and instead of seeing 4 or 5 distressed creatures dressed in dirty native mats, sitting upon the seats of the chapel with their feet drawn under them, we have the pleasure of seeing and addressing 20, and sometimes more, attentive and clean natives, all in European clothes: this is encouraging<sup>62</sup>

This report is significant because it is based around the notion of Māori wearing European clothing as a marker of the success of the mission. Clarke and his fellow missionaries expected that in order to become 'civilised', Māori must dress in a European fashion. Two months earlier, Clarke had written in his journal with joy: '[o]ur native service was well attended there was upwards of 40 natives, most of them were dressed in European cloth[e]s'.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p.35.

<sup>62</sup> Clarke, 'Journal', Sunday, 11 June 1826, ATL qms-0465, p.501, italics in original.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., Sunday, 9 April 1826, p.446.

Historian Peggy Brock's work on 'Nakedness and Clothing in Early Encounters' – although focussed on Central Australia in the twentieth century – is relevant here. Brock has noted that missionaries held clear notions relating to the clothing of Aboriginal bodies. She goes on to discuss the Aboriginal-missionary tensions over when and how clothing should be worn which arose when Aboriginal peoples experimented with European clothing.<sup>64</sup> This also occurred – as we have seen above with Clarke and will observe in the following chapter in relation to William Yate – within the CMS mission to northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori. It is interesting that although Clarke was writing from a period when Marsden's civilisation before conversion policy had been replaced by Henry Williams' focus on Christianisation first, he is celebrating what he perceived to be success in 'civilising' Māori, that they were wearing clothes, before they had become Christian.

In late 1827 Clarke informed the CMS secretaries that he perceived there to be a 'gradual and general improvement of character' among Bay of Islands Māori; something he believed 'appears very evident when we contrast them with the strangers that at times visit us from a distant part of the Island'.<sup>65</sup> Clarke's definition of 'success' was based upon 'civilising' and Christianising Māori. The general evangelical definition – and thus Clarke's definition – of 'civilisation' is perhaps best described as Europeanisation. Missionary endeavour to 'civilise' Māori was, in reality, an attempt to Europeanise Māori. As we have seen above, this included encouraging Māori to dress in a European fashion. It also involved encouraging the introduction and use of European implements and means of cultivation. On an excursion to Te Waimate in September 1824, where he would later found a mission station, Clarke

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<sup>64</sup> Peggy Brock, 'Nakedness and Clothing in Early Encounters Between Aboriginal Peoples of Central Australia, Missionaries and Anthropologists', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, vol. 8, no. 1, Spring 2007, [article has no pagination].

<sup>65</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 6 November 1827, qms-0463 ATL, p.77.

wrote of local Māori: '[t]hese creatures are so poor and miserable that they had not so much as tin pot to boil a little water in'. '[A] few useful utensils', he concluded, 'would better their condition'.<sup>66</sup> Here Clarke declares his belief that the introduction of 'superior' European goods would inherently better the circumstances of Māori.

George Clarke and his family lived at Kerikeri from 1824 to 1831. In 1831 the Clarkes moved to Te Waimate, the new CMS mission station founded by George Clarke, William Yate, James Hamlin and Richard Davis in 1830. Te Waimate was the first inland mission station to be established in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In March 1830 Clarke had complained that it was often required that he travel forty miles around Kerikeri in order to visit two hundred Māori – 'they being so much scattered up and down the country'.<sup>67</sup> A year later, after relocating to Te Waimate, Clarke celebrated that in travelling only five miles around Te Waimate, he could visit between two and three hundred Māori.<sup>68</sup> Clarke lived at Te Waimate until 1840, when he moved to Auckland to take up his post as Chief Protector. Although Henry Williams had elected to abandon Te Waimate station at the close of the 1830s because it was proving to be too expensive to produce wheat and flour in Aotearoa/New Zealand relative to what they could be purchased for in Sydney, Clarke returned to Te Waimate in 1846, where he lived until his death.

Historian Lawrence M. Rogers has asserted that '[t]he decade from 1829 to 1839 was a period beginning with modest achievement which developed to extraordinary success' for the CMS mission to northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori.<sup>69</sup> In his account of Te Waimate, *The Waimate Mission Station*, M.

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<sup>66</sup> Clarke, 'Journal', Thursday, 9 September 1824, qms-0465 ATL, p.423.

<sup>67</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 6 March 1830, qMS-0463 ATL, p.115.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 21 February 1831, p.130.

<sup>69</sup> Rogers, *Te Wiremu*, p.155.

W. Standish notes that in the period 1831-1832, 74 Māori males were attending school at Te Waimate. By 1834-1835 this figure had risen to 86 and by 1835-1836, the school had 120 male Māori pupils. Standish also reports that there were about the same number of female pupils in school, and in addition to those attending the mission school, 'large numbers' of other Māori attended Sunday school or visited the missionaries to receive religious instruction. By 1836 the missionaries were regularly visiting about eighteen schools in the villages surrounding Te Waimate, which had been established by ex-pupils of the CMS schools.<sup>70</sup> Te Waimate was not the only station to be experiencing success. In 1836 the CMS claimed that 1,530 Māori regularly attended its public worship services and 1,019 Māori attended its schools. By 1837 these figures were 2,300 and 1,555 respectively. In the year prior to Clarke becoming Chief Protector, the number of Māori who regularly attended CMS church services nearly quadrupled. In 1840, 8,760 Māori were attending public worship and 1,796 were in school. The next year, Clarke's second as Chief Protector, the number of Māori regularly attending CMS services nearly quadrupled again.<sup>71</sup> Grant Phillipson has observed that '[m]uch ink has been spilt on the nature of Māori conversion in the 1830s.'<sup>72</sup> The point relative to this thesis, however, is not why Māori began to convert to Christianity, but rather that Māori did begin to Christianise in rapidly increasing numbers during in the 1830s.

By the 1830s, Clarke's faith that the mission would undoubtedly succeed had shifted to a perception that the mission was experiencing the beginnings of success. Clarke also maintained his belief that widespread success would

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<sup>70</sup> M. W. Standish, *The Waimate Mission Station*, Wellington, 1962, pp.20-21.

<sup>71</sup> Wright, pp.162-163.

<sup>72</sup> Grant Phillipson, 'Religion and Land: the Church Missionary Society at Kerikeri, 1819-1850', Binney (ed.), *Te Kerikeri*, p.55.

eventually occur. Having resided in Aotearoa/New Zealand for six years, Clarke concluded in a letter to his parents in 1830 that

the natives have many quarrels and fights among themselves yet they continue to behave well to us we have very little trouble with them and frequently they will listen with attention to what is said to them. Yes, my dr parents I have no doubt but you will hear that savage as New Zealanders now are they will be subdued by the power of the Gospel and instead of literally ... biting and devouring each other will live together in peace and love.<sup>73</sup>

Clarke had no doubt that Māori would eventually be 'civilised' and Christianised, a perception which was consistent throughout his time as a missionary in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Three years earlier, in 1827, he had reported to his father that 'respecting affairs in New Zealand everything goes as well as can be expected'. After describing increasing Māori interest in reading, writing and general religious instruction, Clarke concluded that he did not doubt that 'in the course of a few years many [Māori] will be [C]hristians'.<sup>74</sup> Later in 1827, Clarke informed his father that 'the day is not far distant ... when New Zealand will be a civilised country'.<sup>75</sup>

Clarke's observations of the beginnings of success were reported in the *Missionary Register* in 1834. 'It would cheer the hearts of Christians at home, as well as shame those who only bear the name, to see how a Sabbath is now spent in New Zealand', he was reported as having observed. 'Long before Service commences in the morning' the quote continues,

you see the Natives drawing together in little group[sic] around the Chapel, reading the Word of God, and hearing it read. Immediately the Chapel door is opened, an effort is made to get a place in the Chapel; and, at times, in about five minutes afterward, the Chapel is

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<sup>73</sup> Clarke to his parents, 12 March 1830, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.27.

<sup>74</sup> Clarke to his father, 8 January 1827, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.23.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 7 November 1827, p.20.



completely filled: for want of room, numbers are obliged to remain outside. The after-part of the day is spent much as the former: all is silence and order, except hearing from the little cottages the voice of praise, by two or three little families met together for that purpose ... The Gospel is making a great change in this part of New Zealand ... The Natives in connexion with Missionary influence and instruction have almost lost their ferocious appearance; and, instead of seeing them rushing about with their muskets and spears to revenge every little insult, we not infrequently see the old tattooed warrior coming from a distance of three, four, or more miles, and, with the greatest simplicity, ask how best to settle the real insults and losses which they sustain from a more unprincipled neighbour.<sup>76</sup>

Historian Anna Johnston has noted that '[m]ost published missionary texts are the end of a well-oiled and efficient production machine'; '[t]hey are', she concludes, 'fundamentally and frankly propagandist in nature'.<sup>77</sup> Conforming to Johnston's argument, the editors of *Missionary Register* published Clarke's perception that northern Māori were beginning to become 'civilised' and Christian – as was indicated, he believed, by the large-scale attendance at church services, where Māori behaviour and their appearance were of a 'civilised' European manner – while they ignored his explanation that widespread success was yet to occur. Clarke wrote to the CMS secretaries in October 1834:

Christian Natives ... have to contend with principles unknown to those educated and brought up in a Christian Land it is to be remembered that with our infant breath we suck in as it were the leading truths of Christianity not so the poor heathen they have to begin perhaps at 20 30 or 40 years of age first to unlearn all that they have learned to commence to learn anew<sup>78</sup>

Clarke believed that the mission's lack of large-scale success was due to Māori having been born in a 'savage' and 'heathen' part of the world and thus, Clarke explained, it would take longer than expected to Christianise and 'civi-

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<sup>76</sup> *Missionary Register*, London, 1834, Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) library, J. C. Beaglehole Room, p.456.

<sup>77</sup> Johnston, 'Antipodean Heathens', p.70.

<sup>78</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 28 October 1834, qMS-0463 ATL, p.192.

lise' them. The editors of the *Missionary Register*, however, ignored this perceived lack of widespread success, instead choosing to celebrate the small-scale successes of the mission.

In 1836, Clarke's accounts of the mission's increasing success were again quoted in the *Missionary Register*. Clarke was quoted as having reported that

[t]he demand upon our time, by the inquiring Natives from different Congregations, is very great. I have sometimes my house beset, before daybreak, by Natives coming for instruction: they think nothing of coming the distance of ten miles and some twenty miles. How different our work now is to what it was a few years ago, when we were obliged to go from house to house, entreating the people to give us a hearing, and begging them to assemble for instruction!<sup>79</sup>

Here the definition of 'success' is based upon Christianisation; the increasing Māori desire to learn about Christianity. Clarke was, by this time, beginning to perceive widespread success in the Christianisation and 'civilisation' of Māori. In May 1835 Clarke described the development of this success to his parents: '[t]here is a gradual improvement going on among the New Zealanders both in a temporal and spiritual point of view'. 'Some of the Chiefs are turning Merchants', he continued, they

have a good deal of Money and other description of property they have for several years left off fighting and are yearly enjoying the fruits of their labour. New Zealand is not like the same place it was when I first knew it ... At Waimate we have a very nice Farm ... and have native carpenters, native ploughmen and sawyers and I know not what<sup>80</sup>

'Success' is defined by Clarke as 'civilising', or more accurately 'Europeanising', as well as Christianising Māori. In August 1839, Clarke again celebrated the development of success within the mission in a letter to his parents. 'In

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<sup>79</sup> *Missionary Register*, London, 1836, VUW library, J. C. Beaglehole Room, p.471.

<sup>80</sup> Clarke to his parents, 8 May 1835, MS-Papers-7394 ATL, p.34.

our great Missionary work', he extolled, 'we have a great encouragement to proceed many of the New Zealanders are adorning by a consistent conduct of the religion of Christ their heathenish feasts are doing away ... war once the glory of the N[ew] Z[ealand]ers has in a very great measure subsided, the arts of peace are fast cultivating among them.'<sup>81</sup> Here Clarke's definition of 'success' is based on 'civilised', European behaviour. In this example, 'civilised' behaviour is measured in reference to religious change – specifically the abandonment of warfare and cannibalism.

When George Clarke left the CMS mission to take up his post as Chief Protector in 1840, the number of Māori who were assembling for worship under the direction of the CMS mission was estimated to be 28,000, of whom 1,590 had been baptised.<sup>82</sup> Keith Sinclair has estimated that this amounted to 'perhaps half the Maoris in the Bay of Islands' being 'at least nominally converts to Christianity' in addition to the 1,000 baptised and 10,000 regular churchgoers south of the Bay.<sup>83</sup> In 1845 Clarke himself estimated there to be 42,700 Māori regularly attending CMS church services, and a further 16,000 and 5,100 who attended WMS and Catholic services respectively. This was, Clarke supposed, out of a total Māori population of 110,000.<sup>84</sup>

George Clarke's observations of northern Māori were made through the lens of his perceptions of success in their Christianisation and 'civilisation'. In addition to his encounters with Māori, Clarke's notions of Māori were influenced by his encounters with other non-Europeans, such as African slaves and the Aboriginal peoples of the Sydney and Parramatta areas. Clarke's perceptions of Māori were further shaped by the observations of

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 31 August 1839, p.36.

<sup>82</sup> Rogers, *Te Wiremu*, p.178.

<sup>83</sup> Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, p.43.

<sup>84</sup> Wright, p.141.

Māori made by others, including James Cook, the missionaries who preceded him in the Bay of Islands, and the Reverend Samuel Marsden.

Throughout his missionary endeavour to northern Māori, Clarke maintained a paramount belief in the potential for Māori to be Christianised and 'civilised' and that this would be achieved by the CMS mission of which he was a part. Clarke's perceptions of Māori were recorded in his journal, his correspondence with the CMS secretaries in London, and his correspondence to his parents. One might expect Clarke's letters to his parents to contain a more frank account of his perceptions of his success than those which he forwarded to the CMS in his letters and journals – it was not his parents who were financing his life as a missionary. The CMS secretaries' expectation that their missionaries must succeed in their evangelical endeavours was directly related to financial support for the mission; if a mission did not convert the 'heathen', it was deemed to have failed and thus ceased to be funded. Clarke's letters to his parents, however, are not as different from his reports to the CMS secretaries as might be expected. Clarke's secular father strongly opposed his decision to become a missionary, and Clarke's letters to his father are saturated with attempts to justify his choice and overcome this disappointment; seemingly with exaggerations of his perceptions of the mission's success compounded by his underreporting on its failures.



Photo: Sam Ritchie, 2007

Figure One: The house at Kerikeri, known as 'Kemp House', in which George Clarke, his family, and William Yate lived. Built in 1821-1822, 'Kemp House' is the oldest surviving European building in Aotearoa/New Zealand.





Photo: Sam Ritchie, 2007

Figure Two: The house at Te Waimate in which George Clarke, his family, and William Yate lived. Designed by Clarke and built in 1831-1832, 'Te Waimate Mission House' is the second oldest surviving European house in Aotearoa/New Zealand.





Photo: Sam Ritchie, 2007

Figure Three: Headstone of George and Martha Clarke at Te Waimate cemetery.





Photo: Sam Ritchie, 2007

Figure Four: The Church of St. John at Te Waimate. This church was reconstructed in 1870 from the wood of the CMS Te Waimate church built in 1839.



### Chapter Three: *An Account of Māori – William Yate*

For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God  
– Romans 3:23<sup>1</sup>

Rejoice rejoice New Zealand  
Thy Saviour is at hand  
Soon shall thy lofty forests  
Bow down at his command  
And as they shake and tremble  
At great messiahs voice  
Each valley shall re echo  
The heart of man rejoice  
– William Yate<sup>2</sup>

This chapter focuses on the CMS missionary William Yate as a second case study to further examine evangelical European perceptions of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori between the 1820s and 1840. As with George Clarke, Yate's views over three key stages are considered: before his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand; the first few years of his residence; and after he had lived in Aotearoa/New Zealand for a number of years. The form in which these perceptions were recorded and formulated is also examined – in his letters to his parents, his letters to his CMS supervisors in London, his journal,<sup>3</sup> his published *Account of New Zealand*, and his evidence presented during an examination of 'upwards of five hours' on 12 and 13 February 1836 by the 'House of Commons' Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements).<sup>4</sup> The formulation of Yate's perceptions prior to his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand was influenced by the writings of early explorers and the writings of

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<sup>1</sup> *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

<sup>2</sup> William Yate, 'Journal', 1 June 1834, MS-2544 ATL, p.103.

<sup>3</sup> Copies of Yate's journals and correspondence are held at: MS-2544 and fMS-264 ATL, Wellington.

<sup>4</sup> Yate, 'Journal', 12-13 February 1836, MS-2544 ATL, p.181.

his predecessors. Yate's perceptions of Māori were then further developed as he preached and lived among them.

Like George Clarke, Yate's encounters with other non-Europeans, including Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales, Tongans, and African slaves, influenced his perceptions of and relationships with Māori. Unlike Clarke, however, Yate's perceptions of Māori were less focussed on whether his missionary endeavour was succeeding. It is argued that because of the interracial intimacy Yate experienced with young Māori men, his perceptions of northern Māori began to shift towards sympathy for some of the very same 'heathen' customs he had come to Aotearoa/New Zealand to destroy.

The historiographical discussion surrounding Yate has been devoted almost exclusively to his dismissal from the CMS and the reasons surrounding it; much of it being caught up in whether he was 'guilty' or not. As a result, his important *Account of New Zealand* and his perceptions of northern Māori contained within have been largely ignored.

In 1837 William Yate was dismissed from the CMS. His dismissal arose from rumours surrounding his relationship with Edwin Denison and a man 'improbably called' Dick Deck while returning to the Bay of Islands via Sydney from England aboard the *Prince Regent*, and for allegedly undertaking oral sex and 'ka titoitoi māua' (mutual masturbation) with young Māori men in Aotearoa/New Zealand.<sup>5</sup> His dismissal from the CMS, and the allegations upon which it was based, have dominated historiographical discussion of Yate and his role in the CMS mission to Aotearoa/New Zealand.

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<sup>5</sup> Binney, 'Yate, William 1802-1877'; Judith Binney, 'Whatever Happened to Poor Mr Yate? An Exercise in Voyeurism', *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 9, no. 2, October 1975, pp.114 & 117.

Prior to his dismissal from the CMS Yate compiled his writings on his experiences into *An Account of New Zealand*, which was published in 1835.<sup>6</sup> This was the first history of the CMS mission to Māori and the only published missionary account of this period in Aotearoa/New Zealand history which was not written retrospectively from old age.<sup>7</sup> In 1970 *An Account* was republished with an introduction by historian Judith Binney. In her introduction, Binney gave a succinct overview of Yate's life and discussed briefly the circumstances surrounding his dismissal from the CMS, concluding that '[t]he most probable verdict seems to be that although Yate was emotionally inclined to homosexuality, he was innocent of the physical act.'<sup>8</sup> Binney's introduction provoked what she termed 'some spurious sword play' in *Landfall*.<sup>9</sup> Short-story writer, novelist and playwright Frank Sargeson reviewed the edited *Account* in *Landfall*, notably criticising Binney's use of the word 'homosexual', which 'was not invented until the late nineteenth century'.<sup>10</sup> Five years following the twentieth-century publication of *An Account*, Binney continued her discussion of Yate and revised some of her earlier conclusions in her article 'Whatever Happened to Poor Mr Yate?', deducing that Yate 'was not the victim of a false scandal and colonial gossip-mongering'.<sup>11</sup> This article however, resembled the historiographical discussions of Yate which both preceded and have since followed; it focussed on his controversial dismissal from the CMS and whether or not he was guilty of the 'crime' of which he was accused.

Considering the extensive observations of Aotearoa/New Zealand and Māori that Yate produced – both unpublished and published – his minor place in the

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<sup>6</sup> The earliest indication of when Yate began drafting his *Account* is 6 March 1834, when he recorded in his journal that he was 'writing some remarks on New Zealand'; Yate, 'Journal', 6 March 1834, MS-2544 ATL, p.72.

<sup>7</sup> Judith Binney, 'Introduction', Yate, *Account*, p.xii.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.xix.

<sup>9</sup> Binney, 'Whatever Happened', p.111.

<sup>10</sup> Frank Sargeson, 'Review of *An Account of New Zealand*', *Landfall*, vol. 25, no. 3, September 1971, p.302.

<sup>11</sup> Binney, 'Whatever Happened', p.122.

historiography of the CMS mission to Māori is somewhat surprising. His dismissal from the CMS and the events surrounding it are the reason for the relative absence of his observations in the historiography. Because of his scandalous dismissal, Yate has been mentioned in general histories of Aotearoa/New Zealand. He is not named in Keith Sinclair's *History of New Zealand*, however Sinclair does write that in the first twenty years of the CMS mission to Māori, 'three [missionaries] had to be dismissed, one for adultery, one for drunkenness, and one "for a crime worse than either"'; the first being a reference to Thomas Kendall and the third being a caged reference to Yate.<sup>12</sup> In his *Making Peoples*, James Belich cites Yate's *Account of New Zealand* twice and notes that he was 'sacked' from his CMS duties after 'fall[ing] victim to the beast within'.<sup>13</sup> In Michael King's *Penguin History*, Yate receives a fleeting reference – again in the context of his 'sins of the flesh'.<sup>14</sup> Yate also has a *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* entry.<sup>15</sup>

'On Yate himself', Binney concluded in 1970, 'little of value has been written'.<sup>16</sup> More recently, the rise in historiography surrounding male homosexuality has encouraged further discussion of Yate. Lee Wallace's chapter 'Sexual Difference and the Expulsion of William Yate' in her 2003 *Sexual Encounters: Pacific Texts, Modern Sexualities*, explores 'the different uses to which the accusation of same-sex contact is put in both the original and more contemporary texts' and is based upon '[t]he suspicion of sodomitical misconduct that clouded the career' of Yate.<sup>17</sup> Here it is necessary to point out that Yate was never accused of sodomy. Chris Brickell begins his *Mates & Lovers: a History of Gay New Zealand* with discussion of Yate's position within

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<sup>12</sup> Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand*, p.37.

<sup>13</sup> Belich, *Making Peoples*, pp.136 & 301.

<sup>14</sup> King, *Penguin History of New Zealand*, p.146.

<sup>15</sup> Binney, 'Yate, William 1802-1877'.

<sup>16</sup> Binney, 'Introduction', Yate, *Account*, p.xxi.

<sup>17</sup> Lee Wallace, *Sexual Encounters: Pacific Texts, Modern Sexualities*, New York, 2003, p.4.

the homosexual history of Aotearoa/New Zealand.<sup>18</sup> Even this limited discussion of Yate's alleged homosexuality has been meagre. Vital evidence – for example the letter which Yate wrote to the CMS secretaries in 1832, five years before his dismissal, warning them that a certain European ship's captain was threatening to 'write to the [CMS] Committee and charge me with crimes of a most gross and horrid nature' having already 'given the Natives presents to confirm what he writes' – has not been considered in the discussion of the events which surrounded his expulsion from the CMS.<sup>19</sup> Annamarie Jagose also based her sexually-charged novel *Slow Water* on Yate's fateful return voyage from England to Sydney aboard the *Prince Regent*.<sup>20</sup>

Far from fulfilling his wish of being remembered as the man who introduced bees to Aotearoa/New Zealand,<sup>21</sup> historiographical discussion of Yate has been almost exclusively focussed on his dismissal from the CMS. Frank Sargeson surmised that the dismissal of Yate from the CMS was 'a sad piece of blown up nonsense' which resulted in 'the services of a useful missionary' being 'brought abruptly to an untimely end.'<sup>22</sup> While this is an overstatement, it is because of the scandal surrounding Yate and the relative absence of his observations in the historiography of missionary endeavour to Māori created by this scandal, that the writings of Yate are studied in this chapter to examine his perceptions of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori.

Judith Binney has argued that the Māori society on which Yate was commenting was experiencing a period of 'rapid internal change'. She also notes that Yate's observations must be studied carefully; although he was reasonably

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<sup>18</sup> Chris Brickell, *Mates & Lovers: a History of Gay New Zealand*, Auckland, 2008, particularly pp.23-30.

<sup>19</sup> Yate to CMS secs., 1 June 1832, fMS-264 ATL.

<sup>20</sup> Annamarie Jagose, *Slow Water*, Wellington, 2003; interestingly, Jagose portrays Māori as having taught Yate the sexual acts for which he was later dismissed from the CMS; Jagose, pp.148 & 174.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp.112-113.

<sup>22</sup> Sargeson, 'Review of *An Account of New Zealand*', p.304.

observant, Yate had a tendency to claim to have been witness to events which were related to him by others.<sup>23</sup> Yate's *Account of New Zealand* was received with scorn by his fellow missionaries. His colleagues believed that the book improperly over-emphasised the importance of his role in the CMS mission to Māori and also underplayed the difficulties faced by the missionaries.<sup>24</sup> William Williams, for example, considered Yate's observations to be unreliable and charged that he had a tendency to exaggerate or 'highly colour' his accounts of events.<sup>25</sup> George Clarke wrote with fury to the CMS after the publication of Yate's *Account* claiming that 'Mr Yate has strictly speaking little or no claim upon the Waimate Settlement; he has culled the labours of his noiseless brethren the Catechist, and with considerable clamour has invited the public to see what he has done.'<sup>26</sup> Clarke saw Yate as claiming credit for work which was not his own. Clarke also claimed that Yate's *Account* was 'irreconcilable with Christian simplicity.'<sup>27</sup> It is important to consider, however, that these critiques came after July 1836, when rumours about Yate's relationship with Denison had begun circulating around Sydney. These critiques were thus written during the period when the remaining CMS missionaries in Aotearoa/New Zealand held a solemn day of fast and prayer, burned all of Yate's Te Waimate possessions, renamed the area in which he had worked 'the Vale of Achan', and shot his beloved horse Selina in reaction to the events which surrounded his dismissal from the CMS.<sup>28</sup> The critiques of his former colleagues are likely therefore, to have been made with ulterior motives. Yate claimed that he 'would never knowingly or willfully [*sic*] lead a person astray in his conclusions as to the character of the people – the effect which the gospel has produced upon them – on the success of the benevolent intentions of

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<sup>23</sup> Binney, 'Introduction', Yate, *Account*, p.ix.

<sup>24</sup> Binney, 'Yate, William 1802-1877'.

<sup>25</sup> Binney, 'Introduction', Yate, *Account*, p.x.

<sup>26</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 10 September 1836, qMS-0463 ATL, p.215.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 25 October 1836, quoted in Shroff, p.201.

<sup>28</sup> Binney, 'Whatever Happened', p.115.

the Church Missionary Society in sending a portion of her labourers into this portion of the great harvest field of the world.’<sup>29</sup> The CMS secretaries furthermore, wrote a preface to Yate’s *Account* in which they observed: ‘[t]he following pages describe so fully the plans and operations of the Church Missionary Society, in reference to the Mission established in New Zealand, that it would be superfluous to add any thing upon that subject’.<sup>30</sup> Yate’s perceptions of northern Māori which are contained within his private letters to his parents, his writings for the CMS, his published *Account* and his evidence to the Select Committee – all written before his dismissal – provide a useful insight into evangelical European perceptions of Māori in the first half of the nineteenth century.

William Yate was born in Bridgenorth, Shropshire, in the west of England on 3 November 1802. After completing an apprenticeship as a grocer, Yate offered his services to the CMS and attended the Society’s Islington teaching institute in London in 1825. In 1827 Yate sailed for New South Wales, where he spent time with the Reverend Samuel Marsden at Parramatta before being sent to Aotearoa/New Zealand. On 19 January 1828 Yate arrived in the Bay of Islands. By the time Yate presented evidence to the Select Committee in 1835, he had visited Sydney five times.<sup>31</sup> Two of these visits had been to supervise the printing of mission booklets; once in 1830, when he spent six months in Sydney, and once in late-1832.<sup>32</sup> Yate also visited Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, and Sydney in 1831 on an unsuccessful search for the missing ship *Haweis*.<sup>33</sup>

While in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Yate lived with George Clarke and his family, first at Kerikeri, and, after 1832, at Te Waimate. Yate spent the final two

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<sup>29</sup> Yate, ‘Journal’, 27 June to 2 September 1834, MS-2544 ATL, p.127.

<sup>30</sup> Yate, *Account*, p.xxvii.

<sup>31</sup> *Report of the Select Committee*, 1836, p.201.

<sup>32</sup> Binney, ‘Introduction’, Yate, *Account*, p.xiv.

<sup>33</sup> *Report from the Select Committee*, 1836, p.203; Binney, ‘Introduction’, Yate, *Account*, p.xv.

years of his residency in Aotearoa/New Zealand at the Te Waimate mission station. On his return to England he conducted a fundraising campaign for the station during which he considered Te Waimate 'his church'.<sup>34</sup> The relationship between the Clarke family and Yate was one of good friendship. Yate became a favourite of the Clarke children, one of whom, the fourth son, had been named William Yate Clarke in his honour. The relationship soured, however, after Yate's dismissal from the CMS. As a result of the rumours surrounding Yate which had led to his dismissal, 'Yate' was struck from William Yate Clarke's name.<sup>35</sup>

William Yate lived and worked among northern Māori between 1828 and 1834, a period of almost seven years – although it is important to note that he spent much of this time in Sydney and at sea. On 26 June 1834 he departed, without CMS permission, for England, to accompany his sister on her voyage to Aotearoa/New Zealand. It was on this visit to England that Yate's *Account of New Zealand*, which had been drafted from his journals, was published. *An Account* was published in London in 1835 and was so popular that a second edition followed that same year. While in London, Yate presented evidence to the 'House of Commons' Select Committee on Aborigines (British Settlements). Having become momentarily famous due to his well-received book, Yate departed aboard the *Prince Regent* on 25 February 1836 accompanied by his sister and bound for the Bay of Islands via Sydney, soon to become infamous. It was on this voyage that Yate's supposed relationship with the ship's third mate Edward Denison and the mysterious Dick Deck occurred, from which arose the accusations that led to his dismissal from the CMS in 1837.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Binney, 'Yate, William 1802-1877'.

<sup>35</sup> Interestingly, George Clarke appears to have forgiven Thomas Kendall for his affair with Tunga-roa, but not Yate for his 'crime'. Clarke wrote in his journal in December 1824: '[w]e were glad to see poor Mr Kendall and one of his children' at a meeting between the CMS and WMS Aotearoa/New Zealand missionaries; Clarke, 'Journal', Monday, 6 December 1824, qMS-0465 ATL, p.437.

<sup>36</sup> Binney, 'Yate, William 1802-1877'.



Yate reached Sydney although he never returned to Aotearoa/New Zealand. By 1838 Yate had returned to England. In 1846 he was employed as chaplain to an abandoned chapel for sailors in Dover, where he ministered until his death in 1877. Yate lived with Edward Denison for the remainder of his life following his return to England.

In addition to interacting with Māori, William Yate had encountered numerous other non-European 'heathen'. He told the Select Committee in 1836: 'I speak from the experience I have had in New South Wales, in New Zealand, in the Friendly Islands [Tonga], in the Navigators [Samoa], the Feejee [Fiji], and the Hapai Islands [Ha'apai Islands, Tonga] in the South Seas.'<sup>37</sup> He had also observed African slaves at Rio de Janeiro. Yate's perceptions of certain non-European peoples were informed in part by his experiences with other non-Europeans whom he had encountered. When Yate was asked by the Select Committee in 1836 whether the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales were 'generally in a very miserable and degraded state', he replied that in his opinion they were '[v]ery miserable and degraded; much below the New Zealanders.'<sup>38</sup> Yate's perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales were fashioned in comparison to Māori. His perceptions of Māori, moreover, were shaped in comparison to other non-European peoples he had encountered. In answering whether Māori were 'of industrious habits', Yate replied to the Select Committee: '[t]hey were much more industrious than any of the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands.'<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, in his *Account of New Zealand* Yate concluded that although '[v]iewed as an uncivilized people, the natives of New Zealand are industrious', adding that 'compared with their

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<sup>37</sup> *Report from the Select Committee*, 1836, p.203; although he had also spent time in Van Diemen's Land, Yate noted that he 'could not give any evidence whatever upon Van Diemen's Land' as when he was there he had 'spent the whole time at the government house', and had 'merely heard from the governor the state of the people'; *Report from the Select Committee*, 1836, p.206.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.201.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p.188.

more northern brethren [other Pacific Islanders], they are a hard-working race.’<sup>40</sup> Again in his *Account*, Yate observed that

[i]n the luxurious climate of the Friendly Islands [Tonga] ... [t]he natives are consequently idle, to a proverb; and when I was there, their reception of the Gospel had not excited them to improve their temporal condition, or to add, by industry, to their comforts: and since my return, in 1830, the Missionaries themselves declare, that the “natives will not work, and that their vagrant and idle habits are not at all improved.”

‘This is’, Yate concluded, ‘by no means the case in New Zealand.’<sup>41</sup> Here Yate echoes an earlier comparison made by the naturalist Joseph Banks, who reported that Māori were ‘fleshy but never fat as the lazy inhabitants of the South Sea Isles are’.<sup>42</sup> In contrast to the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, where, as we shall see in the next chapter, European notions of the Aboriginal peoples of the district were often shaped in opposition to European notions of themselves, Yate’s ideas about of Māori were frequently fashioned in comparison to other ‘heathen’.

While visiting Rio de Janeiro in September 1834 on his return voyage to England, Yate reported that seeing ‘this Metropolis of the Brazilian Empire has raised my ideas very much with respect to New Zealand.’ Yate’s observations led him to conclude ‘that a few years will raise the New Zealanders before many of the Portuguese and Spanish States of the continent of South America.’<sup>43</sup> While this is primarily a thinly disguised critique of Catholicism, it also highlights both that Yate’s perceptions of Māori were fashioned in comparison to his observations of other non-European peoples and his belief in the potential of Māori to become ‘civilised’ and Christian.

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<sup>40</sup> Yate, *Account*, pp.105-106.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p.106.

<sup>42</sup> Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire*, New York, 2002, p.88; Joseph Banks, *The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks 1768-1771*, J. C. Beaglehole (ed.), 2 vols., Sydney, 1962, II:p.11, available at: <http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/banks/contents.html>

<sup>43</sup> Yate, ‘Journal’, 3 September 1834, MS-2544 ATL, p.132.

In his 1835 *Account of New Zealand* Yate reflected upon his perceptions of Māori prior to his arrival in the Bay of Islands. While it is important to note that these perceptions were published some seven years after they were considered and have thus possibly been modified, they nonetheless provide an interesting insight into what Yate claims to have expected of Māori before his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Yate wrote that it was 'no small task' for the CMS Committee to find

persons of a suitable character for the undertaking; men who should be willing, with their lives in their hands, to go to the uttermost parts of the earth, to live among strange and savage people, with whose language they were unacquainted, and of whose manners and custom, all they knew amounted but to this – that they were a nation of ferocious barbarians.<sup>44</sup>

While it is possible that Yate was claiming that among his CMS colleagues in Aotearoa/New Zealand there were missionaries who were unsuitable for the task of Christianising and 'civilising' Māori, that he expected to encounter 'savage' and 'ferocious barbarians' who spoke a foreign language before his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand is significant because these preconceptions influenced the way in which Yate interacted with, and wrote about, Māori after his arrival among them. The above excerpt also highlights the state of fear in which Yate sailed to the Bay of Islands; Aotearoa/New Zealand was a destination where the beliefs and behaviour of the native population made them, in the imagination of many Europeans, 'savages' to be feared.

Yate's preconceptions were shaped, among other things, by the observations of Māori made by Captain James Cook and the Reverend Samuel Marsden, and also the experiences of the first wave missionaries to Māori. Yate began

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<sup>44</sup> Yate, *Account*, p.166.

his *Account* by asserting that the observations of Māori reported by Cook were 'remarkably correct', and had not yet been bettered.<sup>45</sup> He also noted that Marsden had, on his initial visit to Aotearoa/New Zealand in 1814, 'found [Māori] as he had anticipated, bold, daring, adventurous, warlike, and in the possession of good natural sense; presenting a fine field for Christian labours, and for the hand of civilization.'<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, referring to the discussion of the experiences of the first wave missionaries William Hall, John King and Thomas Kendall in the 'publications of the CMS', Yate noted that

[i]t was no small consolation to the friends of the Heathen, (and they took it as an earnest that the blessing of God was in reserve for this people) that a footing was obtained amongst them. Their faith was enlarged, and their hope was strengthened, as they heard, that, from day to day, the lives of these Labourers were preserved, amidst all the dangers of this savage land.<sup>47</sup>

Yate went on to claim that the only reason the first wave missionaries remained in the Bay of Islands was because of their ignorance of te reo Māori; because they were unable to understand the serious nature of the threats being made toward them, they had not fled.<sup>48</sup> Prior to his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand, therefore, Yate, influenced by Cook, Marsden, Hall, King, and Kendall, held certain preconceptions about Māori. Yate expected to encounter a people who, although frightening, had the potential to be 'civilised' and Christianised.

When he arrived in the Bay of Islands, Yate perceived Māori in a manner which paralleled his preconception that they would be 'savage', 'ferocious barbarians' who were to be feared yet who were capable of being Christianised and 'civilised'. Yate's categorising of Māori in this manner was based on

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p.3.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p.166.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p.167.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

their appearance, their beliefs and customs, their behaviour, and their language.

Yate's visual perception of northern Māori as 'savage' was based upon their clothing, their moko, their language, and their hair, which he viewed as 'uncivilised' when compared with the 'civilised' appearance of Europeans. 'I was very much struck with the savage appearance of some of the men of Mate[']s village', Yate reported in his journal in November 1833. 'Their hair was long and lank', he continued, 'and was so matted as to form two flaps hanging down ... altogether [they] had a most disgusting appearance'.<sup>49</sup> Six months later while on a visit to Kaitaia, Yate recorded in his journal that '[t]he natives are numerous in the neighbourhood, and though more rough and savage to look at than the more courtly Bay of Islanders they are very civil and kind'.<sup>50</sup> Here Yate appears to be surprised that the 'savage' appearance of the Te Rarawa or Ngāti Kahu Māori of Kaitaia was seemingly contradicted by their 'civil' behaviour.

As well as being inherently 'uncivilised', Yate perceived the influence of Europeans residing at and visiting Kororāreka to be having a negative effect on his and the other missionaries' attempts to 'civilise' Māori. 'The conversation of the [Māori] people', Yate exclaimed in late-December 1833, is 'very filthy. They need to be preached amongst them'.<sup>51</sup> On 21 April 1834 Yate reported that he '[w]ent round among the people of the near villages.' He noted that he found the people of these villages in the vicinity of Te Waimate station to be 'all very civil' and described 'their conversation' as being 'generally of a pleasing character'.<sup>52</sup> This not only indicates that Yate perceived language as

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<sup>49</sup> Yate, 'Journal', 5-14 November 1833, MS-2544 ATL, p.16.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 19 April 1834, p.91.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 26 December 1833, p.29.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 21 April 1834, pp.93-94.

a marker of civilisation, but also that he believed that he was beginning to experience success in 'civilising' Māori. Furthermore, in his *Account of New Zealand* Yate celebrated that the 'savage and debasing performance' of moko had been forbidden on the mission stations.<sup>53</sup> Again Yate specifies both his belief in the beginnings of success and his indicators of civilisation; changes in customs, appearance and language constituted success for the missionary.

As well as looking 'savage', Yate perceived northern Māori to behave in a 'savage' manner. Māori warfare, enslavement of captives, and cannibalism were, to Yate, further indicators of the 'savage' nature of those he sought to 'save'. While sailing southwards from the Bay of Islands in late 1833, Yate exclaimed: 'I went on shore where the ground was covered with the ovens in which the murdered victims had been cooked – and the barbarous partakers of this savage feast had left the bones strewn over the ground and which are now lying there as monuments of cruelty'.<sup>54</sup> Early the next year Yate came across more of the aftermath of the 'musket wars', or as he termed it, 'another monument of the most barbarous disposition, and warlike propensities of the Bay of Islanders, who here [have] taken and destroyed a pa and killed & enslaved its inhabitants.' He concluded, however, that '[t]hese times I trust are now nearly over in New Zealand as the gospel spreads it will carry love and peace along with it and will convert swords and spears into hooks and plough shares.'<sup>55</sup> In his *Account*, Yate observed that Māori were 'much inclined to warfare' and '[t]he horrid cruelties which are practised and the murderous exploits of which they boast, are far too appalling to relate to civilised man: suffice to say,' he added, 'that when an opportunity presents itself of falling upon a small party, unprepared to withstand them, or too weak to

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<sup>53</sup> Yate, *Account*, p.150.

<sup>54</sup> Yate, 'Journal', 27 December 1833, MS-2544 ATL, p.31; the primary purpose of this voyage was to accompany former Ngāti Porou slaves who had been captured in Ngāpuhi raids, but were now able to return to the East Cape.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 January 1834, pp.58-59.

do so, the whole are either murdered or enslaved.’ ‘Thus, perpetual wars break out; and will continue to do so’, he concluded, ‘till the glorious Gospel, which brings with it peace and good-will, be established among them’.<sup>56</sup> As well as indicating Yate’s perception of Māori as ‘savage’, these excerpts also bring to light his belief in the ability of Māori to become ‘civilised’ and Christian.

Not only did Māori look ‘savage’ and behave in a ‘savage’ manner in Yate’s opinion, he also believed many Māori customs and beliefs to be unreasonable and thus ‘savage’. Yate, a man who believed that God had created the entire world in six days,<sup>57</sup> exclaimed in his *Account*: ‘[t]heir ideas of Mawe [Maui], the being who, they tell us, fished up the island from the bottom of the sea, are truly ridiculous.’<sup>58</sup> Again in his *Account*, Yate reported that Māori women crying at a tangi ‘is most hideous’ and added that ‘as one discordant note mingles with another, the mind naturally reverts to that place of outer darkness, where there is nothing but “weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.”’<sup>59</sup> Here it is unclear whether Yate is indicating that the actual experience of a tangi makes him think of hell, or hell is where he expects the deceased is bound – possibly both. The example does, however, indicate Yate’s belief that Māori were ‘savages’ who needed to be enlightened with the knowledge of the gospel. While Yate acknowledged Māori belief in atua – which he translated as being a lizard who, when angry, ‘prays upon their vitals till they die’ – he believed ‘[t]he New Zealanders, though remarkably superstitious, have no gods that they worship; nor have they any thing to represent a being which they call god.’ ‘When, therefore, they have a desire to believe in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Chris’, he concluded, ‘there is only the

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<sup>56</sup> Yate, *Account*, pp.114, 134 & 135.

<sup>57</sup> Genesis 1, *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

<sup>58</sup> Yate, *Account*, p.142.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p.137.

natural hardness of the human heart to oppose its progress'.<sup>60</sup> Again here we can see both Yate's perception of Māori as 'savage' and his resolute belief in the potential for the success of the mission. Yate believed the mission to have been making progress in 'civilising' Māori prior to his arrival. He reflected in his *Account* that the fact that no slaves were killed upon the death of Hongi Hika in 1828 – something that was likely to have occurred under traditional Māori custom – was a mark of the early success of CMS missionary endeavour in Aotearoa/New Zealand.<sup>61</sup>

The Ngāpuhi chief Hongi Hika had provided protection for the CMS mission stations in the Bay of Islands following the death of Ruatara in 1815. The death of Hongi was an extremely significant event in the course of the CMS mission to Māori. The missionaries feared that upon Hongi's death, the mission station would be sacked. After Hongi had been shot and was expected to soon die, Clarke wrote to the CMS secretaries: '[t]he last 4 months have probably been the most remarkably trying since the commencement of the mission; for some weeks we daily expect to be driven from the Island.'<sup>62</sup> George Clarke (Junior), 'not much over four years old' at the time, later recalled his parents and he fleeing their house in the middle of the night when 'Hongi died[,] commending the missionaries to the care of his people'.<sup>63</sup> Yate reported in his *Account* that 'by day and night [Hongi] watched for the welfare of the' missionaries, and added that upon the death of Hongi, 'had not a general understanding been established – that, let whatever would happen, the Missionaries were not to be molested – his removal might have been fatal to this settlement.'<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp.141, 142 & 145.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p.242.

<sup>62</sup> Clarke to CMS secs., 3 July 1827, qMS-0463 ATL, p.69.

<sup>63</sup> Clarke [Junior], *Notes*, p.13.

<sup>64</sup> Yate, *Account*, p.175.



One of Yate's predecessors, the first wave missionary Thomas Kendall, wrote near the conclusion of 1822 that during his time in Aotearoa/New Zealand, he had 'been almost completely turned from a Christian to a Heathen'.<sup>65</sup> This 'struggle with the devil' is explained by historian Judith Binney as having occurred because, 'Kendall, half-blinkered by his Calvinist-influenced world views, tried to understand Maori cosmology.'<sup>66</sup> Kendall, who, like Yate, came to Aotearoa/New Zealand to convert Māori to Christianity, began a romance with Tungaroa, the daughter of an elderly tohunga, Rakau in 1821. Kendall was eventually dismissed from the CMS for his adultery in August 1823.<sup>67</sup> Kendall, the 'Pakeha who succumbed to and yet withheld himself from the Polynesian world he encountered', holds similarities with the experiences of Yate.<sup>68</sup> Yate too had his worldviews altered by his perceptions of Māori.<sup>69</sup>

Yate wrote to the CMS secretaries in mid-1832 requesting their opinion on baptising polygamous Māori. He suggested that 'the Natives here are so situated that a case may occur in which it would be an act of great injustice for a man to force away one of his wives if he happens to have two.' Yate outlined a situation where a man has had two wives for ten years, both of whom have children to the man, and both of whom 'are equally dear to him and he is equally dear to them.' As neither of these women wishes to be separated from their husband, Yate outlined, one would have to be separated by force should the man be eligible for baptism. 'I think it would be decidedly wrong', he concluded, 'to refuse the man baptism because he *could* not remove one of

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<sup>65</sup> Thomas Kendall to Reverend John Eyre, 27 December 1822, quoted in Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.10.

<sup>66</sup> Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.10.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.; Binney, 'Kendall, Thomas 1778?-1832', *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, online edition, updated 7 April 2006, accessed: 28 May 2007, available at: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/dnzb/>

<sup>68</sup> Binney, *Legacy of Guilt*, p.20.

<sup>69</sup> In her discussion of Yate, Binney parallels him with Thomas Kendall, asking: '[w]hat was William Yate? Was he a man, perhaps like Thomas Kendall, who learnt that a sense of sin is not always discerned where he had been taught to expect to find it?'; Binney, 'Whatever Happened', p.112.

his wives'.<sup>70</sup> Yate's advocacy of tolerance of polygamy within the Christianisation is a significant shift from standard evangelical thought.

Later in the same letter in which he had promoted toleration of Māori polygamy within Christianity, Yate wrote of a European ship's captain threatening to 'put one of us [missionaries] away as an utu.'<sup>71</sup> It is telling that here Yate provides no English translation for the Māori word utu; an indication that he may have been beginning to think Māori. Both Yate's argument for accepting polygamous Māori within Christianity and his use of Māori terms for Māori notions without translation or explanation – in this case utu – show that he was beginning to become tolerant of certain Māori practices which lay outside of Christianity. Furthermore, on 1 January 1834 Yate reported in his journal that he had to wear some 'native mats which I borrowed from my boys' because all of his clothes were wet.<sup>72</sup> The belief that European clothing was a mark of civilisation was common throughout evangelical missionary endeavour to non-Europeans.<sup>73</sup> While it is important not to read too much into this – undoubtedly wearing traditional Māori garments was preferable to going naked in the evangelical mindset – it is significant that he expresses no unease in dressing in 'uncivilised' garments. As historian Peggy Brock has observed in her work on twentieth-century missionary endeavour in Australia, missionaries had clear ideas about whether bodies should be clothed or naked.<sup>74</sup> After a significant period of contact, Yate's perceptions of Māori began to shift towards sympathy for some of the very same 'heathen' customs he had come to Aotearoa/New Zealand to replace with Christianity and 'civilisation'. Yate's world-views were ultimately changed by his perceptions of Māori.

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<sup>70</sup> Yate to CMS secs., 1 June 1832, fMS-264 ATL, italics in original.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Yate, 'Journal', 1 January 1835, MS-2544 ATL, p.37.

<sup>73</sup> Gunson, *Messengers of Grace*, p.274.

<sup>74</sup> Brock, [article has no pagination].

On 13 November 1831 Yate baptised a Māori carpenter, who took the name Edward Parry Hongi. Hongi had accompanied Yate on a visit to New South Wales earlier that year, and escorted him to Sydney again in 1832. Hongi was among the many Māori who wrote Yate intimate letters, thirty of which he translated and included in his published *Account of New Zealand*.<sup>75</sup> These men were key informants of Māori culture and practice for Yate, and the intimacy which he shared with them – enabled in part by the fact that he was not encumbered by family – facilitated his shift towards sympathy for some of their ‘heathen’ customs.

In a journal entry in which he both lamented the death of ‘Coleman Aoheke’ and celebrated his Christianisation – which will be further discussed later in this chapter – Yate noted that ‘I call him a youth though he is a husband and a father’.<sup>76</sup> This provides an interesting insight into Yate’s paternalistic perceptions of Māori. Yate perceived Māori to be childlike people whom he could father into ‘civilised’ Christians, something which is implied throughout his writings. Paternalistic perceptions of non-Europeans were common throughout nineteenth- and early twentieth-century evangelical endeavour. In his examination of ‘Colonial Conversions’, Nicholas Thomas has emphasised that missionaries characterised those they sought to ‘save’, not by ‘race’, but rather by their lack of Christianity. ‘The dominant movement of colonial history in this imagination’, asserts Thomas, ‘is not the establishment of a fixed hierarchical relationship but a process of conversion that abstracts infants from the social milieux of savages and socializes them under the guidance of white missionaries.’<sup>77</sup> Thomas concludes that although ‘[h]ierarchizing and assimilating colonialisms are, on the surface, radically opposed ... [b]y imagining

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<sup>75</sup> Yate, *Account*, pp.249-281.

<sup>76</sup> Yate, ‘Journal’, 23 September 1833, MS-2544 ATL, p.5.

<sup>77</sup> Nicholas Thomas, ‘Colonial Conversions: Difference, Hierarchy, and History in Early Twentieth-Century Evangelical Propaganda’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 34, no. 2, April 1992, p.385.

that others were part of a family', missionaries were 'able to reconcile common humanity and hierarchy'.<sup>78</sup> Yate was able to justify his perception of Māori as equal yet degraded fellow humans through his view of them as children.

Although his perceptions of Māori were not as focussed through the lens of success as were George Clarke's, from the 1830s Yate did perceive the mission to be experiencing success. Yate wrote to the CMS secretaries from Te Waimate in June 1832: '[i]t gives me unfeigned pleasure to be able to say that all is going well here with regard to those natives who are living near us and in our families. Our chapel at Waimate is crowded to excess with an attentive congregation every Sunday'. 'You cannot really enter into our feelings', he continued, 'but you can form some conception of the pleasure which a crowded house of prayer, of large dimensions affords us in this distant and still-uncultivated savage land.'<sup>79</sup> In early-October 1833, Yate received, 'with great pleasure', a letter from 'Kotaiwa' which outlined Māori desire for Christianity. The letter reported that the Māori from Mangakahia, to the southwest of Te Waimate, had '[f]inished the road through the wood for your horse and you to come ... We were thirty five men three weeks and four days and we all say – "No – no payment must we have for this work". It is a road for the teachers to come to teach us and tell us about Jesus Christ. This is our payment – this is our satisfaction.'<sup>80</sup>

From the 1830s, paralleling the other missionaries reports on success, Yate believed he was beginning to experience success in encouraging Māori to desire attaining 'civilisation' and Christianisation. On Christmas Day 1833, Yate reported that he had spoken to some Māori about

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p.387.

<sup>79</sup> Yate to CMS secs., 1 June 1832, fMS-264 ATL.

<sup>80</sup> Yate, 'Journal', 1, 2 & 3 October 1833, MS-2544 ATL, p.8.

the state of the Ancient Britons our ancestors – who before the introduction of the gospel were clothed no better than they now are – that they tat[t]ooed their bodies and were not better in their conduct towards each other than the tribes of New Zealand now are – but when the gospel was preached and believed all was set right – they became changed in their nature industry took the place of idleness – kindness of cruelty – peace of continual war – and happiness of misery – so that they soon discovered godliness is indeed “profitable having promise of the light that now is, and of that which is to come”<sup>81</sup>

Yate understood Māori to be human and to have the potential to be Christianised and ‘civilised’ as had, he believed, his ancestors.

Yate’s perception that Māori were becoming interested in Christianity is reaffirmed in his journal entry for 23 September 1833. Yate lamented that he ‘[r]eturned to Waimate where I found poor Coleman Aoheke dead.’ Yate went on to reflect upon a conversation he had had with ‘Coleman Aoheke’ not long before his death:

“[i]s it time”, he one day asked me, “is it indeed time that Christ is willing to save sinners[“] – and “that he is disirous [*sic*] of saving sinners?” My answer was, “Yes he is able and willing to save the uttermost all that come into God by him”. “Ah! Ah!” said he – “it is good – it is good – then I shall be saved – Jesus will not send my soul to hell. Ah! Ah! my heart is light now – it was dark before but now it is light – fear of death made my heart dark and sin made me afraid of God – afraid of you – afraid of death – afraid of judgment”

Yate then told ‘Coleman Aoheke’ that ‘Jesus Christ came to deliver them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage’. To this ‘Coleman Aoheke’ replied (according to Yate) ““Oh Mr Yate! Why did you not tell me that before? But you did tell me it. Aye I remember it now: Why did I not remember it now you spoke to us in the chapel one day a long time ago about that””. Yate went on to report that ‘Coleman Aoheke’ ‘continued in

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 25 December 1833, p.27.

this teachable frame of mind to the very last [and] [h]is only anxiety was to see his wife and child baptized before his death.’<sup>82</sup> This excerpt from Yate’s journal shows that he perceived himself to be experiencing success in Christianising Māori. Yate often used the phrase ‘teachable state’ to describe the mindset of Māori. Yate concluded his obituary: ‘Thus died Coleman Aoheke – redeemed by the servant of God from the slavery of an earthly master – and redeemed by God himself from the still more dreadful slavery of sin the world and the devil.’<sup>83</sup>

While on board the *Buffalo* returning to England in 1834, Yate copied his ‘Introductory Remarks’ to his *Account of New Zealand* into his journal. ‘I insert these remarks and observations here’, he explained, ‘to preserve them as the [CMS] did not think it proper to publish them in my book, and I deem them important.’<sup>84</sup> In his ‘Introductory Remarks’, Yate announced that ‘[m]uch had been accomplished for the Christianisation and civilization of the New Zealanders.’ While he acknowledged that ‘[m]uch however remains to be done’, Yate went on to celebrate that ‘[t]o the eye of the philanthropist it must be a pleasing scene to behold a nation just emerging from the depths of barbarism and savage ignorance and becoming associated with civilized man.’ ‘To the Christian’, he continued, ‘the pleasure is much enhanced by the consideration that as the nation uses in civilization she also uses in Christianity [and] becomes the object of the divine compassion and love’.<sup>85</sup>

In the same vein as his ‘Introductory Remarks’, Yate also recorded some ‘Concluding Observations’ to his *Account* in his journal while aboard the *Buffalo*. Within these, Yate extolled that

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 23 September 1833, p.5.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p.6.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 27 June to 2 September 1834, p.118.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p.125.

[w]hen reviewing the seven years of my life passed in connexion with the New Zealand Mission I am encouraged [*sic*] to hope from the improvements which the people have already made that the time is not very far distant when the nation will be acknowledged as a fully Christian Nation, and when the blessings of the Gospel will spread over the whole country – when wise and salutary laws based upon the laws of God will be instituted and universally regarded.

‘That there is such a day approaching’, Yate concluded, ‘I cannot doubt.’<sup>86</sup>

‘When first discovered by Europeans’, Yate noted in his *Account*, ‘the New Zealanders were indeed a savage and barbarous people; and, till within a very few years, there has apparently been little or no difference in their national character. The intercourse which they have had with civilized man, and their knowledge of the blessings of which are to be derived from the acceptance of the Gospel’, he continued, ‘have, in some measure, changed the character of the inhabitants of these islands on the eastern coast, and north of the Thames [Hauraki Gulf].’ Yate concluded, however, that ‘[t]he great body ... of even these natives still retain a large portion, if not all, of their original manners; and are, in many instances, still addicted to the superstitions and observances of their forefathers.’<sup>87</sup> Later in the book, Yate celebrated that ‘[p]olygamy does not now exist to any thing like the extent it did formerly; and infanticide and self-murder are almost banished from among the natives in the neighbourhood of the Bay of Islands.’<sup>88</sup> Again using British ‘civilisation’ as the yardstick, Yate announced that with the spread of the gospel among Māori:

the New Zealanders of another generation will no more think of practising the customs of their forefathers, than we should think of following the ancient Britons in all their rude and savage manners; or

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p.129.

<sup>87</sup> Yate, *Account*, p.81.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p.99.

than we should [think of] paint[ing] our bodies blue and red, because the Druids did so before us.<sup>89</sup>

'How many happy Sabbaths have I spent at the Waimate!', Yate exclaimed in his *Account*. '[A]nd how has my innermost soul rejoiced, as I have seen the once-deluded people of this land listening with delight to the sound of the "church-going bell", and hastening with willing feet to the House of the Lord!'<sup>90</sup> These opposing claims may at first appear contradictory; certainly a further indication of Yate's earlier assertion that the missionaries were in an unpredictable and changing situation. Yate's scattered observations however, also demonstrate his perception of northern Māori as 'savages' who, although terrifying, held the potential to, and indeed who were beginning to, be 'civilised' and Christianised.

By the time Yate left Aotearoa/New Zealand, 147 Māori adults and 74 Māori children had been baptized in the Bay of Islands, while attendances at the church services had increased drastically.<sup>91</sup> Prior to his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand, William Yate's preconceptions of Māori were influenced by the writings of his predecessors and his encounters with other non-European 'heathen'. Yate's experiences with other non-Europeans further shaped his perceptions of Māori, whom he often compared to other Polynesian peoples. Yate's observations of Māori furthermore, shaped his perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia.

Prior to his encountering Māori, Yate perceived them to be 'savage' and 'ferocious barbarians' who were to be feared. Yate also, however, perceived his predecessors to have experienced some success in Christianising and 'civilising' Māori prior to his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Having lived

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p.150.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p.199

<sup>91</sup> Binney, 'Introduction', Yate, *Account*, p.ix.



among Māori in the Bay of Islands, Yate continued to categorise Māori as 'savages' based on their appearance, their customs, their behaviour, and their beliefs. Despite this, after a significant period of contact Yate began to sympathise with some Māori customs and beliefs – most significantly writing to the CMS requesting permission to baptise polygamous Māori. By the mid-1830s however, Yate conformed to the belief shared by his contemporaries that the mission was beginning to experience significant signs of success in their endeavour to Christianise and 'civilise' Māori.

## Chapter Four: Failure as a Lens for Perceptions of the Aboriginal Peoples of Port Phillip – Francis Tuckfield

The Lord is my helper,  
and I will not fear what man shall do unto me  
– Hebrews 13:6<sup>1</sup>

Oh how different is spending the Sabbath at home in England  
from spending it on a Mission Station like this  
– Francis Tuckfield<sup>2</sup>

WMS missionary Francis Tuckfield is the case study examined in this chapter to explore evangelical European perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, Australia, in the late-1830s and early-1840s. Tuckfield's observations of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip are assessed through an examination of his personal journals, his official letters to his WMS supervisors in London, and his private letters to his parents in Cornwall. Although Tuckfield's missionary endeavour to the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip continued from his arrival in the district in 1838 until the closure of his mission station, Bunting Dale, in 1850, only his writings on his experiences until 1842 are readily available.<sup>3</sup> Tuckfield's perceptions are thus assessed over three key stages: prior to his arrival in Port Phillip, during the period of initial contact with the Aboriginal peoples of the district – until mid-1840, and after a significant period of contact – from mid-1840 until the end of his journals and correspondence.

Whiteness studies is used in this chapter as a category of analysis to assess Tuckfield's use of the language of colour. Tuckfield's perceptions of himself

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<sup>1</sup> *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Tuckfield, 'Journal', Sunday, 12 January 1840, MS 7667, Box 655 SLV, p.108.

<sup>3</sup> Copies of Francis Tuckfield's journals and correspondence for the period 10 November 1837 to 20 May 1842 are held at: MS 7667, Box 655 SLV, Melbourne.

and other Europeans in the district – who were often labelled ‘Whites’ (always capitalised) by Tuckfield – were defined in opposition to his perceptions of the Aboriginal population – who were frequently labelled by Tuckfield as ‘blacks’ (always lower case). Conversely, Tuckfield’s perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip were made through the lens of his perceptions of Europeans.

This chapter is centred around Tuckfield’s lamentation of the negative effects of pastoralism on the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip while at the same time praising the introduction of pastoralism to the district. This seemingly contradictory view is the focus of an examination of the wider evangelical concern over the harm done to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia through contact with Europeans and their simultaneous belief that the Aboriginal peoples needed to be ‘saved’ by Europeans.

The writings of Francis Tuckfield have received relatively little attention in the historiography of evangelical missions in Australia. Tuckfield’s endeavours have appeared, until recently, only in works attempting to account for the ‘failure’ of nineteenth-century missionary endeavour to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia. This preoccupation with failure in the study of Tuckfield and his Bunting Dale mission station was begun by John Blacket in his 1914 *Missionary Triumphs among the Settlers in Australia and the Savages of the South Seas*, and continued by G. W. Greenwood in his 1956 address: ‘The Reverend Francis Tuckfield’s Magnificent Failure at Bunting Dale’.<sup>4</sup> This framing of research around accounting for failure was perpetuated in 1990 by John Harris, who cited Tuckfield’s experiences in commenting on the failure of

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<sup>4</sup> Blacket, particularly pp.164-167; G. W. Greenwood, ‘Reverend Francis Tuckfield’s Magnificent Failure at Bunting Dale’, *Heritage: a Journal of the Methodist Historical Society of Victoria*, no. 6, 1956, pp.3-21.

nineteenth-century Aboriginal missions in his colossal *One Blood*.<sup>5</sup> Harris concluded that '[i]t is hard to sum up the early missions [in Australia] with any other word than *failure*.'<sup>6</sup> While Tuckfield himself perceived his mission to have failed, this emphasis on failure has generally overlooked Tuckfield's perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip. More recently, Amanda Barry has referenced the letters and journals of Tuckfield, among others, to examine Aboriginal education in south-eastern Australia in her 2008 PhD thesis 'Broken Promises'.<sup>7</sup> Jessie Mitchell also examined the writings of Tuckfield and others to explore life and to re-examine notions of failure on Aboriginal mission stations in the second quarter of the nineteenth century in her 2005 PhD thesis 'Flesh, Dreams and Spirit'.<sup>8</sup> These two excellent theses have moved past the historiographical preoccupation with failure. The most historiographical attention given to Tuckfield, however, has been by Heather Le Griffon, who used Tuckfield's correspondence and interwove a biography of the missionary in her 2006 history of the Bunting Dale mission, *Campfires at the Cross*.<sup>9</sup> Tuckfield also has an entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.<sup>10</sup> Building upon the previous work on Tuckfield, this chapter focuses principally on Tuckfield's perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district.

Francis Lee Tuckfield was born in Germoe, Cornwall, in southwest England on 10 May 1808. He spent his early working life as a miner and seasonal fisherman. At the age of seventeen he converted to Wesleyan Methodism while

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<sup>5</sup> Harris, particularly pp.122-141.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p.131, italics in original.

<sup>7</sup> Barry, 'Broken Promises'.

<sup>8</sup> Mitchell, 'Flesh, Dreams and Spirit'.

<sup>9</sup> Heather Le Griffon, *Campfires at the Cross: an Account of the Bunting Dale Aboriginal Mission 1839-1851 at Birregurra, near Colac, Victoria with a Biography of Francis Tuckfield*, Melbourne, 2006.

<sup>10</sup> C. A. McCallum, 'Tuckfield, Francis (1808-1865)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, online edition, updated continuously, accessed: 11 March 2008, available at: <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020494b.htm?hilite=Tuckfield>

attending a Wesleyan Revivalist meeting at a tin mine at Gwennap, Cornwall. Following a period of active local preaching, he was accepted as a candidate for the ministry. In 1837, having attended the Theological Institute at Hoxton, London for two years, Tuckfield was appointed to the position of missionary to the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, Australia; an appointment which apparently delighted both himself and his wife Sarah (born Gilbert).<sup>11</sup> The twenty-nine year old newlyweds, who had married only one month earlier, departed England in November 1837 aboard the *Seppings* bound for their new life in Australia.

On 17 November 1837 the *Seppings*' captain informed his passengers that land was now out of sight. Francis Tuckfield was suddenly struck by the magnitude of the journey he had begun and realised that he may never return to his native Cornwall.<sup>12</sup> Less than a week later however, he made clear his reasons for undertaking such a journey. He wrote in his journal that he 'felt much liberty last night in praying for the natives of New South Wales'.<sup>13</sup> Here Tuckfield expressed interest in those he intended to convert, and also indicated the personal gain which he believed he experienced through his desire to 'save' the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip. Tuckfield's choice of language here is significant. Prior to arriving in the colony, and thus prior to having met any Aboriginal people, Tuckfield referred to those among whom he was soon to live as 'natives'.

Tuckfield only wrote in his journal during the first seven weeks of the arduous voyage to Australia. During the seventeen week duration of the voyage,

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<sup>11</sup> Le Griffon, p.21.

<sup>12</sup> Tuckfield, 'Journal', Friday, 17 November 1837, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.7.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., Thursday, 23 November 1837, p.18; the term 'New South Wales' was used by Europeans as a label for the entire eastern half of the continent of Australia until 1836, when South Australia's boundaries were set. The state of Victoria was established in 1851, having previously been referred to as the Port Phillip district of New South Wales; Hughes, p.xxviii.

both Francis and Sarah Tuckfield were often seasick; Sarah's discomfort being compounded by morning sickness as she was pregnant with their first child.<sup>14</sup> During this time Francis Tuckfield found himself torn between his desire to arrive in Australia as soon as possible to begin his evangelical endeavours, and his sheer relief every time the sea and wind which carried the *Seppings* became still.<sup>15</sup> To combat their distress the newlyweds comforted each other by talking of their friends back in England and reminding one another that those same friends would be praying for them.<sup>16</sup>

On 17 March 1838 the *Seppings* arrived at Hobart Town. Francis Tuckfield then spent over three months in Van Diemen's Land, often with Joseph Orton, discussing plans for the mission to the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district and listening to Orton's opinions about the Aboriginal population. The Reverend Joseph Rennard Orton had arrived in Sydney on board the *Auriga* in late-1831 as Chairman of the New South Wales District of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Australia. Prior to this posting, Orton had been stationed in Jamaica, where his perceptions of the non-European population influenced his opinions of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip.<sup>17</sup> A major part of Orton's role as Chairman was to provide the official connection between the Wesleyan Church and the colonial government. In 1836 the Wesleyan Church in Australia had formed a separate district in Van Diemen's Land, of which Orton was appointed inaugural Chairman.<sup>18</sup> In addition to hosting George Clarke at Hobart Town in 1822, Orton had spent ten weeks visiting mission stations in Aotearoa/New Zealand during 1833 and it was his

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<sup>14</sup> Sarah Tuckfield was born 'about' 9pm Sunday, 12 August 1838 at Geelong; Tuckfield, 'Journal', 23 July 1839, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.78.

<sup>15</sup> For example: Tuckfield, 'Journal', Sunday, 3 January 1838, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.27.

<sup>16</sup> For example: Ibid., Sunday, 26 November 1837, p.22.

<sup>17</sup> Upon observing some Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip, Orton noted that he 'was reminded of past scenes in the West Indies'; Joseph Orton, *Aborigines of Australia*, London, 1836, p.9.

<sup>18</sup> Le Griffon, pp.9-10.

enthusiasm which was behind the founding of Bunting Dale in the Port Phillip district later in the same decade.<sup>19</sup>

Orton first visited the Port Phillip district with John Batman on 20 April 1836.<sup>20</sup> He had met with the 'Wild White Man' William Buckley on this visit and asked him a range of questions relating to the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip.<sup>21</sup> Having consulted Buckley, Orton reported that he 'could not discover that [the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip] possess the most indistinct notion of a Supreme Being; nor have I been able to ascertain the slightest vestige of religious worship, or of superstitious observance.' He added however, that 'they seem to have imbibed the ludicrous notion, that the white people are their ancestors returned to them, and that after they die they will "*jump up white man*".'<sup>22</sup> Buckley had been accepted by the Wathaurong people of the Southeast region because they believed him to be the reincarnation of their recently deceased tribal leader. Buckley later explained: '[t]hey have a belief, that when they die, they go to some place or other, and are there made white men, and that they return to this world again for another existence.'<sup>23</sup> This belief – which appears to have been prevalent among the Aboriginal peoples of south-eastern Australia –<sup>24</sup> further complicated missionary attempts, such

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<sup>19</sup> J. Russell Orton, 'Orton, Joseph Rennard (1795-1842)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, online edition, updated continuously, accessed: 18 March 2008, available at: <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A020269b.htm?hilit=Joseph%3BOrton>

<sup>20</sup> John Eggleston, 'Memorandum of the Rise of Wesleyan Methodism in the Town of Melbourne', MS13040, Box 3723/5 SLV.

<sup>21</sup> Orton, *Aborigines of Australia*, pp.5-12; William Buckley had escaped from the party, led by Lieutenant-Governor David Collins, who had founded the short-lived penal settlement at Port Phillip Bay in 1803. Buckley had lived with the Wathaurong people of Port Phillip for thirty-two years until he presented himself to a group of European visitors to the area led by John Batman on 6 July 1835.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9, italics in original.

<sup>23</sup> John Morgan, *The Life and Adventures of William Buckley*, quoted in Andrew Sayers, 'Jump up Whitefellow: the Iconography of William Buckley', *Voices*, vol. 6, no. 4, Summer 1996-1997, p.15.

<sup>24</sup> The Reverend L. E. Threlkeld recalled being told by an Awabakal Aboriginal mourner that the deceased woman was now in England; Threlkeld, *Reminiscences*, Gunson (ed.), I:99; in 1864 the Reverend William Ridley observed that the Kamilaroi of northern New South Wales word for white person was 'wunda' meaning 'ghost'; John Ferry, 'The Failure of New South Wales Missions to the Aborigines before 1945', *Aboriginal History*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1979, p.32.

as those of Francis Tuckfield, to 'civilise' and Christianise the Aboriginal peoples of Australia.

Although Orton believed the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be 'superior to the natives in the neighbourhood of Sydney,' he wrote of their 'awfully degraded condition': describing them as 'the most degraded heathens' and writing of their 'intellectual as well as moral debasement'.<sup>25</sup> This debasement was, in Orton's opinion, inherent to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia. 'It is an appalling fact', he wrote to the WMS secretaries in 1836, 'that these barbarous creatures, not satisfied with the practice of infanticide, are cannibals – and that of the grossest and most shocking description. Their wandering habit', he continued, 'renders it inconvenient to carry about their young infants, and it is not infrequently the case that when a second child is born, before the former is able to walk, one or the other is destroyed and eaten by them.'<sup>26</sup> Orton's evidence for such an outrageous claim was his personal observation of 'the disparity of years between children of the same parents'.<sup>27</sup> Upon returning to Melbourne after a three year absence however, Orton wrote that '[t]he migrating habits of the natives is not the greatest difficulty to contend with'. He reported that '[t]he Government is fast disposing of their lands' and that this, in addition to the 'Squatters Act', has resulted in the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip becoming 'pilfering – starving – obtrusive mendicants, and after enduring incalculable deprivations, abuses and miseries who gradually pine – die away – and become extinct'.<sup>28</sup> Contact with Europeans had, Orton believed, further debased the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip. It was these opinions, discussed at length during his three month

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<sup>25</sup> Orton, *Aborigines of Australia*, pp.7, 10, 6, & 12.

<sup>26</sup> Joseph Orton to WMS secs., August 1836, reproduced in Cannon (ed.), *HRV 2A*, p.84.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 May 1839, p.120.



stay at Hobart Town, which are likely to have shaped Tuckfield's preconceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district.

In addition to discussions with Reverend Orton, Tuckfield's preconceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip were also influenced by the writings of the missionaries who preceded him in New South Wales. In a letter to his WMS supervisors in London, Tuckfield highlighted his awareness of the experiences of his predecessors by discussing the Wellington Valley mission to the Wiradjuri people of the Riverine region.<sup>29</sup> Prior to his arrival in Port Phillip and based on these sources of information about those he intended to 'save', Tuckfield perceived the Aboriginal peoples of the district to be 'degraded', possibly cannibalistic nomads who were already facing extinction because of contact with Europeans.

Having been in the district for less than one month, Tuckfield reported to the WMS in August 1838: '[o]ne of the most disgusting features of their character is that of killing and eating their children occasionally.'<sup>30</sup> Here Tuckfield echoes Orton, and like Orton uses circumstantial evidence, showing the influence of Orton's beliefs about the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip on Tuckfield's perceptions.

On 25 June 1838 the Tuckfields sailed from Van Diemen's Land to Port Phillip aboard the *Adelaide*. The voyage took twenty-two days, the majority of which were spent in violent storms in Bass Strait.<sup>31</sup> During the initial period following his arrival in Port Phillip, Tuckfield divided his time between seeing to the needs of the European Wesleyan Methodist population of Melbourne – who numbered thirty persons of a total European population of 2,000 living in a

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<sup>29</sup> Tuckfield to WMS secs., 31 June [*sic*] 1840, MS 7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.147-148.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 12 August 1838, reproduced in Cannon (ed.), *HRV* 2A, p.107.

<sup>31</sup> Le Griffon, pp.32-33.

town which measured one square mile – and searching for an appropriate site for the new mission station.<sup>32</sup> Contrary to G. W. Greenwood's claim in his 1956 address 'Reverend Francis Tuckfield's Magnificent Failure at Bunting Dale', Tuckfield was not accompanied by William Buckley in his searches for a suitable site for his mission station; this mistake was later repeated by C. A. McCallum in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.<sup>33</sup> Tuckfield, in fact, reported to the WMS that he had wished 'to spend so much time with Buckley as convenient, for the purpose of obtaining all possible information as to the language, customs, habits etc. [of the Aboriginal population of Port Phillip] ... In this however I was disappointed.'<sup>34</sup>

By late 1838 Tuckfield had selected an area for the mission station on the Barwon River, approximately fifty-five kilometres south-west of Geelong – near the modern-day hamlet of Birregurra. Tuckfield's chosen site was later confirmed by Orton and Governor Gipps. The station was named 'Bunting Dale' in honour of Tuckfield's London supervisor Jabez Bunting. Bunting Dale was visited by Gulidjan ('Colijon' to Tuckfield), Wathaurong ('Wod-dow-row'), and Dhaugurdwurrung ('Dantgurt') peoples of the Southeast region. The mission was financed in part by the WMS and in part by the colonial government in Sydney.<sup>35</sup> The object of the mission – which began proper in mid-August 1839 – was 'to induce the natives to abandon their erratic habits and settle near the Mission Establishment in order that we may teach them the arts of civilized life, and by the blessing of Almighty God they may become ... acquainted with the doctrines and duties and privileges of our most holy

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p.40.

<sup>33</sup> Greenwood, pp.5-6; McCallum; Lawrence Niewójt, 'Review of *Campfires at the Cross*', *Aboriginal History*, vol. 31, 2007, p.200n.

<sup>34</sup> Tuckfield to WMS Secs., 12 August 1838, reproduced in Cannon (ed.), *HRV 2A*, p.105.

<sup>35</sup> Le Griffon, p.ix.

religion.’<sup>36</sup> Tuckfield later informed his parents of the means to this end: ‘when the blacks are on the station, we teach the children to read and endeavour to instruct them in the way to Heaven, and teach them to worship etc. and when they leave us to go into the bush one of the Missionaries travels with them’.<sup>37</sup> Tuckfield, therefore, sought to Christianise and ‘civilise’ the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip.

Although at one point when frustrated by Aboriginal inter-tribal fighting on the station Tuckfield wrote that they were ‘more like cats & dogs than men’, he firmly believed the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be fellow human beings who shared the common ancestry of Adam and Eve.<sup>38</sup> He saw them, however, as fellow human beings who were inherently degraded, and had also been further degraded by contact with Europeans, and thus needed to be Christianised and raised to the rank of civilised man. Echoing Orton and many other Europeans in Australia, Tuckfield ranked the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district – those he intended to ‘civilise’ and Christianise – as ‘the most degraded of the species’ of humankind.<sup>39</sup>

Tuckfield held faith in the potential of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to become Christianised and ‘civilised’. Furthermore, prior to his arrival in Australia he perceived that his task in doing so would not be too difficult. On New Year’s Day 1840 Tuckfield lamented in his journal: ‘[w]hen I reflect on the last year’s labour, it seems that I have done scarcely anything.’<sup>40</sup> Later that year he reflected that ‘[p]revious to my arrival here I thought I should have but little difficulty in preaching Christ crucified in about 9 or 12 months’. The

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<sup>36</sup> Reverend Benjamin Hurst to Charles Joseph La Trobe, 7 May 1840, reproduced in Cannon (ed.), *HRV 2A*, p.148.

<sup>37</sup> Tuckfield to his parents, 25 March 1841, quoted in Le Griffon, p.163.

<sup>38</sup> Tuckfield, ‘Journal’, 23 May 1841, quoted in Mitchell, ‘Flesh, Dreams and Spirit’, p.54.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, 12 May 1841, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.228.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, Wednesday, 1 January 1840, p.106.

task of 'raising these wild hordes to the rank of civilised man' was, however, much more difficult than he had anticipated.<sup>41</sup> '[T]o settle down the minds of barbarians without an interpreter [*sic*], without a word of their language written or any person to give the best information as to it[s] idiom' Tuckfield reflected, 'were circumstances which did not impose my attention.'<sup>42</sup> At the close of his initial period of contact, Tuckfield revealed that he had initially perceived his task in Christianising and 'civilising' the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be not only possible, but achievable in a relatively short period of time.

On the voyage from England to Australia, in his journal Tuckfield labelled the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip 'natives'. In the period following the establishment of the mission, Tuckfield continued to refer to the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip as 'natives', both in his official letters to his WMS supervisors in London and in his letters to his parents. In his letters to the WMS Tuckfield also labelled the Aboriginal peoples of the district: 'the comparatively unknown tribes of this extensive territory', 'savages', 'untutored barbarians', 'half starved barbarians', 'rude barbarians', 'the aboriginal race', 'aborigines', 'wild hordes', 'heathen', and occasionally 'blacks'.<sup>43</sup> In his private journals and in his letters to his contemporaries located within Australia, however, the term Tuckfield most frequently used when describing the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip during the period he was at Bunting Dale, was 'blacks'.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Tuckfield to WMS Secs., 31 June [*sic*] 1840, MS 7667, Box 655 SLV, p.146.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p.162.

<sup>43</sup> See for example: Tuckfield to WMS Secs., 31 June [*sic*] 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.127-176.

<sup>44</sup> While Tuckfield's journals were forwarded to his WMS supervisors in London – as were most if not all nineteenth-century evangelical missionary journals – missionary journals often contain a more personal and less filtered account of events than do official reports and letters.

In his letters to the WMS during the early period of the mission, Tuckfield most often referred to Europeans who had emigrated to Port Phillip as 'Whites, while he occasionally referred to them as 'civilised man' and 'Europeans'. Tuckfield, furthermore, labelled the European 'convict shepherds & stockmen' as 'the outcasts of England' in his official letters. In his journal he identified Europeans living in the district most often as 'Whites', although occasionally he labelled them 'Europeans'.<sup>45</sup>

This use of the coloured terms 'blacks' (always lower case) and 'Whites' (always capitalised) perhaps indicates Tuckfield's adoption of the language of other Europeans in the colony. Tuckfield's use of the language of colour, however, also encompassed his notion of 'the other', which was derived from his expanding knowledge of the local Aboriginal peoples' belief system and ways of life, and how these were in stark contrast to his own convictions.<sup>46</sup>

Tuckfield's usage of the term 'White' is perhaps unusual in the context of Port Phillip in the first half of the nineteenth century. Leigh Boucher has noted that in the 'various writings and speeches' of his subject Thomas McCombie, 'there is an almost complete absence of the designation "white"' and that '[m]oving between "Britisher", "Englishman", "settler", "colonist", "man", and "mankind", the racial specificity of the coloniser population [of Victoria in the nineteenth century] was surprisingly vague'.<sup>47</sup> Thomas McCombie, a Scotsman from Aberdeenshire, arrived in Port Phillip in April 1841. During his time in Port Phillip, McCombie worked as a journalist and later as a politi-

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<sup>45</sup> Tuckfield, 'Journal', MS7667, Box 655 SLV.

<sup>46</sup> Jessie Mitchell has explored the identifying and labelling of different populations in Australia during this period, noting that it is 'possible that missionaries considered the division between "white" and "black" the most fundamental one on the Australian frontier'; Mitchell, "'A City on a Hill'", p.224.

<sup>47</sup> Leigh Boucher, "'Whiteness" before "White Australia"?' , Boucher, Carey, and Ellinghaus (eds.), *Historicising Whiteness*, available at: <http://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=82827224-5117010;res=IELHSS>, p.19.

cian after initially having been a squatter.<sup>48</sup> In the writings of McCombie and his contemporaries, Boucher argues, 'the category of whiteness itself had little purchase.'<sup>49</sup> While Francis Tuckfield too used a variety of labels for the European population of the district, he differed from McCombie and Boucher's other case studies in that he often used the term 'Whites' when discussing the coloniser population. Claire McLisky's study of the missionary Daniel Matthews suggests that, although whiteness had not yet emerged as a social category in the late-nineteenth century, Matthews regularly used the term 'white' to describe men of European descent whom he believed were responsible for the degeneration of Aboriginal peoples.<sup>50</sup> Matthews never labelled himself or his family as 'white'; he used the term in the context of expressing disapproval of others.<sup>51</sup> Francis Tuckfield, on the other hand, perceived himself and other Europeans living in the district as 'Whites'. Tuckfield's use of the language of colour is a significant point of difference from his contemporary missionaries in Aotearoa/New Zealand, where the language of colour was not prevalent.

As was the case with his contemporaries in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Tuckfield's preconceptions and early views of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip contained the belief that they were to be feared. While Tuckfield viewed the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip as fellow human beings, created in God's image and able to be 'civilised' and Christianised, after an initial period of contact he maintained his perception that they were to be feared. In early 1840 he had observed in his journal that 'it is scarcely safe to manifest our displeasure at their conduct except that we have a gun with us' after

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<sup>48</sup> Fergus Farrow, 'McCombie, Thomas (1819-1869)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, online edition, updated continuously, accessed: 5 November 2008, available at: <http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A050154b.htm>

<sup>49</sup> Boucher, "'Whiteness' before 'White Australia'?", p.17.

<sup>50</sup> McLisky, p.411.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p.410.

threatening to remove some Aboriginal people from the station for inter-tribal violence.<sup>52</sup> Tuckfield perceived the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be 'cruel' 'barbarians' who looked 'as savage as bears' and who committed 'inhumane & villainous' acts of 'savage barbarity'.<sup>53</sup> In mid-1840 he wrote to the WMS reporting that '[t]o mention the various displays of exasperated feuding and the various acts of cruelty perpetrated through revenge which I have witnessed ... would I apprehend shock your feelings or exhaust your patience.'<sup>54</sup> These experiences led Tuckfield to fear the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip.

Tuckfield's sense of identity as a 'White man' was formed by his perceptions of the relationship between blackness, savagery and danger. One month after founding Bunting Dale, Tuckfield left the station to sit his ordination examinations and attend the Wesleyan Methodist District Meeting in Hobart Town. He lamented in his journal: 'I left my dear family to day [*sic*] on the Mission Station surrounded by the Natives and only two Whites and a female for the district Meeting. This seems, to be one of the trials of a Missionary to be obliged to leave his family in an unprotected state.'<sup>55</sup> Four months later, in January 1840, Tuckfield recorded in his journal his concern at there being 'no White man on the Station but myself.'<sup>56</sup> Later that month Tuckfield reported that he had 'spent the day in teaching the blacks' and concluded that 'Mrs. T. & myself feel it rather lonesome to be left in this distant part of the World among Savages who scarcely know anything of the value of human life'.<sup>57</sup> Two days later, after announcing that '[t]he dray has just arrived and another man with [the overseer] Williamson', he wrote: '[w]e are three Whites now which is a very great relief to our minds to have company when there are so

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<sup>52</sup> Tuckfield, 'Journal', Thursday, 16 January 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.112.

<sup>53</sup> Tuckfield to WMS Secs., 31 June [*sic*] 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.171-172 & 162; Tuckfield, Journal, 7 May 1841, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.223.

<sup>54</sup> Tuckfield to WMS Secs., 31 June [*sic*] 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.171-172.

<sup>55</sup> Tuckfield, 'Journal', Wednesday, 18 September 1839, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.81.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., Friday, 10 January 1840, p.107.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., Monday, 13 January 1840, p.109.

many blacks'.<sup>58</sup> The blackness of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip was, for Tuckfield, associated with savagery, barbarism and a potential threat to the safety of his family; the presence of whites, for Tuckfield, encompassed security. Tuckfield's belief that the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip were black 'savages' who were to be feared continued through his initial period of contact with them and was maintained after his having lived among them for a significant period of time.

It is important to note that Tuckfield described himself not only by the coloured term 'White', but also in the gendered term 'White man'. Furthermore, when describing his relief at the arrival of two additional white men on the station, Tuckfield indicates that protection and safety are part of his understanding of whiteness and masculinity. Tuckfield's concern as a 'White man' included a fear of leaving his family among the Aboriginal peoples who frequented the mission station; he feared those whom he was in the colony to Christianise. This is a reflection of what he understood to be his required role as a husband and a father – a duty to protect his family. It also signals his belief that women and children were vulnerable and thus needed protecting.<sup>59</sup>

Tuckfield, furthermore, saw paternalism as common between the Aboriginal peoples of Australia and Europeans; he perceived his notion of his own role as a husband and father as a duty to protect his family to be present in Aboriginal gender relations. Tuckfield noted that often when Aboriginal men

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., Wednesday, 15 January 1840, p.111.

<sup>59</sup> Judith Godden has explored the presence of white women exacerbating racial tension and the reasons for this, including white women's vulnerability and fear of Aboriginal peoples in Judith Godden, 'Women Settlers and Aborigines', BA (Hons) thesis, University of New England, 1973, cited in Kathryn (Kate) M. Hunter, 'White Women's Diaries and Victoria's Frontier: 1840-1855', BA (Hons) thesis, University of Melbourne, 1991, pp.19-20; see also Claudia Knapman, *White Women in Fiji 1835-1930: The ruin of Empire?*, Sydney, 1986, pp.8 & 11 for a summary of Judith Murray-Prior's (born Godden) argument that white women's attitudes to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia (fear, revulsion, indifference, and ignorance) exacerbated inter-racial violence in New South Wales in the nineteenth century and Knapman's counter-argument.



approached what they perceived might be a dangerous situation they left their women and children behind, away from the perceived danger in an effort to protect their families.<sup>60</sup> The Christianisation and 'civilisation' Tuckfield sought to convert the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to, however, was based on a particular form of domestic and familial arrangements. Tuckfield, therefore, also perceived Aboriginal women to be subjugated in a way which European women were not. When an Aboriginal man named 'Karn Karn' built a European-style house on the mission station, several other Aboriginal men also expressed interest in building on the station. They told Tuckfield, however, that 'as they *have three wives* each they should require a larger house than Karn Karn.' Tuckfield 'told them, they might have as large houses as they were disposed to build; but if they intended to imitate the White man in one thing they should in another viz in the disposal of two of their wives out of the *three*.'<sup>61</sup> The Aboriginal men in turn informed Tuckfield that as it was appropriate for Europeans to strive to own a number of horses and bullocks, so too was it proper for Aboriginal men to have a number of wives, because, the men said, 'we have no other animals to do our work.' 'Good Lord,' Tuckfield later wrote, 'when will this day of oppression pass away.'<sup>62</sup> 'Civilisation' and Christianity – here amounting to monogamy and the appropriate use of domestic animals – would, Tuckfield believed, improve Aboriginal gender relations by making them resemble European ideals.

Tuckfield's concepts of whiteness were constructed in opposition to his understandings of the blackness of the Aboriginal peoples to whom he was in the colony to preach the gospel. '[B]lacks', he believed, were to be feared, while the presence of 'Whites' provided him with a sense of security. More-

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<sup>60</sup> See for example: Tuckfield, 'Journal', Saturday, 14 December 1839, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.94 and Tuckfield, 'Journal', Friday, 12 December 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.178-179.

<sup>61</sup> Tuckfield, 'Journal', Tuesday, 11 May 1841, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.226, italics in original.

<sup>62</sup> Tuckfield quoted in Le Griffon, p.169.

over, the 'blacks' use of the land which they occupied was perceived by Tuckfield to be 'uncivilised' and was thus something which he sought to change in his endeavour to Christianise and 'civilise' the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip. This perception of nomadism as inherently less developed conformed to contemporary European thought.

Tuckfield opposed Aboriginal nomadism and sought to persuade the Aboriginal peoples who frequented Bunting Dale to settle permanently on the station. In early 1840 Tuckfield had reported: '[i]t is very discouraging when I find that the blacks have forgotten to a very considerable extent what they have acquired [,] by leaving [,] their improvement does not appear.'<sup>63</sup> Not only did Tuckfield see Aboriginal nomadism as inferior to the settled existence of Europeans, he believed it to be hindering his efforts to Christianise them. In an attempt to persuade the end of their nomadism, Tuckfield encouraged the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to cultivate crops on the mission land. In March 1841 he wrote to his parents informing them that the mission 'garden is cultivated by the natives under the direction of the missionary for instance if I want any thing done in the garden I can either do it myself or call in some blacks to do it'.<sup>64</sup> This extract shows Tuckfield experiencing some success in the 'civilisation' of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip, but not in their Christianisation.

Tuckfield was not only afraid of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip, he was also afraid of their becoming extinct; he believed the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be dying out. In 1840 he reported to his London supervisors that it was 'not at all infrequent' for tribes who regularly came and went from Bunting Dale to return to the station each time 'fewer in number than they

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<sup>63</sup> Tuckfield, 'Journal', Monday 6 January 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.107.

<sup>64</sup> Tuckfield to his parents, 25 March 1841, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.210.

were when they left', and lamented that the site of Bunting Dale was once the 'haunt of a small tribe but now with the exception of one family is depopulated'.<sup>65</sup> Writing in 1842 to his Adelaide-based fellow missionary the Reverend B. J. Tiechermann, Tuckfield noted that Bunting Dale was 'central for four tribes or rather the remnants of' those tribes, as there were 'not more than 260' surviving members.<sup>66</sup> Concern over depopulation was common among humanitarians during the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>67</sup> The Reverend Lancelot Edward Threlkeld claimed in 1841 that it was 'perfectly apparent that the termination' of his mission to the Awabakal people of the Southeast region at Lake Macquarie, 'has arisen solely from the Aborigines becoming extinct in these districts'.<sup>68</sup>

Tuckfield blamed pastoralism for causing much depopulation among the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district. While he acknowledged that many Aboriginal deaths were caused by inter-tribal fighting, he blamed what he perceived to be an increase in this on the 'exterminating progress of the white man' – European encroachment into Aboriginal lands.<sup>69</sup> Not only did Europeans deny the Aboriginal peoples access to their traditional lands, Tuckfield believed, but sheep – which had been introduced by Europeans – ate food that traditionally sustained the game animals which were vital to Aboriginal sustenance.

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<sup>65</sup> Tuckfield to WMS secs., 31 June [*sic*] 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.140-141 &155.

<sup>66</sup> Tuckfield to Reverend B. J. Tiechermann, 17 March 1842, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.321-322.

<sup>67</sup> For discussion of the doomed race theory in relation to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia see McGregor. Of particular significance is his discussion of humanitarianism, the doomed race theory, and the Reverend L. E. Threlkeld; McGregor, especially pp.8-18.

<sup>68</sup> Threlkeld, '11th Report: The Final Report of the Mission to the Aborigines Lake Macquarie, New South Wales, 1841', Threlkeld, *Reminiscences*, Gunson (ed.), I:pp.168; Threlkeld had earlier blamed the European murder of Aboriginal people, Europeans supplying Aboriginal people with alcohol, the European theft and rape of Aboriginal women, and introduced diseases for Aboriginal depopulation, factors which he believed would 'surely, secretly, and speedily annihilate the Aborigines from the face of this Land'; Threlkeld, '7th Report of the Mission to the Aborigines Lake Macquarie, New South Wales, 1837', Threlkeld, *Reminiscences*, Gunson (ed.), I:pp.136-137.

<sup>69</sup> Tuckfield to WMS secs., 16 August 1842, quoted in Le Griffon, p.205.

Less than a year after the establishment of the mission station, Tuckfield wrote to his WMS supervisors in London lamenting the negative effects of pastoralism on the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip. He reported that the 'introduction of the numerous flocks', had meant that 'a serious loss has been sustained by the natives'. '[W]ithout an equivalent being rendered', Tuckfield continued, 'there [*sic*] territory is not only invaded; but their game is driven back, their ... valuable roots eaten by the White man's sheep and their deprivations, abuses and miseries are daily increasing.' The 'appalling result' of this 'contest between the feebleness of untutored barbarism, and the skill and power of civilized man', Tuckfield concluded, would be 'the final and utter extinction of the aboriginal race.'<sup>70</sup> '[T]he blood of the black man', Tuckfield continued later that year, is 'pouring forth and reeking up to heaven while the evils which the European intrusion has inflicted are daily increasing.'<sup>71</sup> Tuckfield, therefore, blamed 'White man's sheep' and their drovers for causing much depopulation among the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip.

In mid-December 1839 Tuckfield 'asked the Dantgurt [Dhaugurdwurrung] tribe who among them had been stealing the settlers sheep' and informed them that the 'settlers are greatly complaining of them & that if they did not give over stealing they would [be] shot or get punished in some way.'<sup>72</sup> On the other hand, as well as warning the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district not to interfere with pastoralism, Tuckfield explicitly encouraged the large-scale European annexation of Aboriginal lands through pastoralism.

Earlier in the same letter to his supervisors in which he had lamented the devastating effects pastoralism was having on the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip, Tuckfield had celebrated that Port Phillip's 'physical aspect is of the

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 31 June [*sic*] 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.139-140.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 30 September 1840, quoted in Le Griffon, p.145.

<sup>72</sup> Tuckfield, 'Journal', Sunday, 15 December 1839, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.95.

most favourable character'. This was, he believed, because it 'enjoys from its position a genial climate, and an abundance of moisture' which had allowed for '454,260 head of sheep and 35,000 head of cattle [to be] already grazing on its fertile plains'. 'If this is the state of things, with in [*sic*] the comparatively narrow limits of Australia Felix & within the short period of about three years', Tuckfield extolled, 'what a magnificent empire may Australia yet become.' 'Let the capabilities of her geographical position be judiciously improved and the ... influence of the Christian religion be diffused', he concluded, 'and Australia may be a happy home for millions of the family of man.'<sup>73</sup>

Upon learning that his brother Joseph had emigrated from Cornwall to North America in 1841, Tuckfield wrote 'with surprise and regret' to his parents, lamenting that Joseph had not instead moved to Australia, where 'those who wish to better their circumstances very materially should emigrate' to.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, in investigating the feasibility of establishing a mission on the Goulburn River in 1842, Tuckfield had reported that he believed that pastoralism would reduce the cost of the mission.<sup>75</sup> In 1843 Tuckfield opened a subscription list to purchase sheep to help enable Bunting Dale to be self-supporting.<sup>76</sup> By 1844 he believed that Bunting Dale's number of sheep and harvest of wheat were large enough, to not only become self-supporting, but were surplus enough to assist other mission stations.<sup>77</sup> By 1846 there were 2,000 sheep and 120 cattle grazing on Bunting Dale.<sup>78</sup> Tuckfield's humanitar-

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<sup>73</sup> Tuckfield to WMS secs., 31 June [*sic*] 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.129 & 137-138.

<sup>74</sup> Tuckfield also wrote to his older brother William seven months later encouraging him to move to Port Phillip. Interestingly, Tuckfield actively discouraged his sister from emigrating to Australia unaccompanied because her doing so might have caused scandalous gossip; Tuckfield to his parents, 25 March 1841, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.204; Francis Tuckfield to William Tuckfield, 14 October 1841, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.305 & 318; Greenwood, p.14.

<sup>75</sup> Le Griffon, p.205.

<sup>76</sup> Greenwood, p.15.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p.16.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17.

ian beliefs – expressed in his concern that pastoralism was driving the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to extinction – appear therefore, to be inherently contradicted by his belief in the necessity, inevitability, and benefit of the introduction of ‘White man’s sheep’, and, by implication, white men.

Tuckfield was concerned for the welfare of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip; he was, after all, in the colony to ‘save’ them. For Tuckfield – as for the vast majority of nineteenth-century evangelical missionaries – ‘saving’ the ‘heathen’ involved ‘civilising’ and Christianising them. The nineteenth-century evangelical understanding of ‘civilising’ is perhaps best defined as ‘Europeanising’. As the historian Richard Broome has noted, ‘the missionaries sought to make Europeans out of their black brethren’.<sup>79</sup> A major aspect in Europeanising the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip was encouraging them to replace their semi-nomadic lifestyle with the settled existence of Europeans. Pastoralism was intended to encourage this by enabling them to live in a settled manner thus allowing food to be provided for them without their having to travel in a nomadic fashion. Although Tuckfield suggested that the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip had managed ‘to subsist previous to our coming among them’ and that it would therefore ‘be a disgrace to the British character, were our presence to doom them to starvation,’ he considered Christianising and ‘civilising’ them to be the solution.<sup>80</sup> Pastoralism and ‘the Gospel’, Tuckfield believed, were ‘the means of raising these wild hordes to the rank of civilised man.’<sup>81</sup> Tuckfield’s notions of what it was to be white, then, included a belief that the privileged benefits of being ‘civilised’ were enabled by pastoralism. Although he understood that pastoralism was driving the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to extinction, Tuckfield also believed

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<sup>79</sup> Broome, *Aboriginal Australians*, p.32.

<sup>80</sup> Tuckfield to WMS secs., 31 June [*sic*] 1840, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.143.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

that it was pastoralism that could save them from extinction by enabling them to live in the 'civilised' manner of whites.

In mid-December 1839 Tuckfield reported in his journal that he had around fifty Aboriginal children in school on the mission. 'It would be very interesting if we could keep them' he added, 'they would very soon learn to read.'<sup>82</sup> In this extract both the focus of Tuckfield's evangelical efforts towards Aboriginal children and his frustration at Aboriginal nomadism are evident. Tuckfield focused his attempts to Christianise and 'civilise' the Aboriginal people of Port Phillip at the children of the tribe. While he encouraged the Aboriginal adults to work in the mission garden and tend to the station's sheep, he spent much time teaching and preaching to the Aboriginal children in the mission school. Furthermore, in May 1841 Tuckfield reported in his journal that while he was 'reasoning' with some Aboriginal children in school on the 'impropriety of leaving the mission station to wander in the bush', one of the boys, about 10 years old, said 'with apparent feelings of deep concern' that he wished to become Tuckfield's adopted son.<sup>83</sup>

Tuckfield initially perceived the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be superstitious. In early 1840 he described the Aboriginal belief that a person could be killed by an enemy throwing certain possessions belonging to that person in the fire. 'This', he noted in his journal, 'is a superstitious notion which prevails among all the blacks', concluding the entry: '[m]ay God whom we serve come to our help!'<sup>84</sup> When Tuckfield accidentally shot himself in the hand – very nearly shooting himself in the head – in mid 1841 however, he noted that '[t]o witness the sympathies of the natives who cried and scratched

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<sup>82</sup> Tuckfield, 'Journal', Tuesday, 17 December 1839, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.99.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., Friday, 7 May 1841, pp.220-222.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., Tuesday, 14 January 1840, pp.109-111.

themselves on this occasion was truly affecting'.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, in the Melbourne Supreme Court in September 1841 Tuckfield defended a reciprocal killing of another Aboriginal by a man named Bon Jon. Tuckfield argued that the practice of killing a man as punishment for murder was the same as the British practice of hanging a person found guilty of murder.<sup>86</sup> After a significant period of contact, therefore, Tuckfield's initial dismissal of Aboriginal superstitions and customs had softened.

Tuckfield did experience a few isolated incidences where he believed he was succeeding in his endeavour to 'civilise' and Christianise the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip. In early 1839, soon after the establishment of the mission station, Tuckfield rejoiced when a local Aboriginal elder reproached several colonists for not attending church, telling them that 'if they did not go the Great Being who lived above would be angry with them, and ... send their spirits where there is a great deal of fire'.<sup>87</sup> In late September 1840 Tuckfield wrote to his London supervisors with delight, reporting that an Aboriginal boy aged eight or nine returned to the station after a week in the bush and knew his lessons better than before he left. According to Tuckfield he had spent his time in the bush repeating what he had learnt in the mission school with his friends.<sup>88</sup> In May 1841 Tuckfield reported in his journal that he had 'between sixty and seventy natives on the station they are at present very quiet and regular at their work and the children are attentive to their read-

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<sup>85</sup> Highlighting the seriousness of the accident, Tuckfield observed: '[w]hat a miracle my life is preserved. The view which I have had on the shortness & uncertainty of human life has been such as I never had before'; Tuckfield, 'Journal', Wednesday, 21 April 1841, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, pp.216-217.

<sup>86</sup> Suzanne Davies, 'Aborigines, Murder and the Criminal Law in Early Port Phillip, 1841-1851', *Historical Studies*, vol. 22, no. 88, April 1987, pp.326-328; Barry Bridges, 'The Extension of British Law to the Aborigines for Offences Inter Se, 1829-1842', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 59, no. 4, December 1973, p.267; Le Griffon, p.224.

<sup>87</sup> Tuckfield to WMS secs., 20 February 1839, quoted in Mitchell, 'Flesh, Dreams and Spirit', p.83.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 30 September 1840, quoted in Le Griffon, p.128.



ing.<sup>89</sup> These three reports of success were recorded by Tuckfield in his letters to his WMS supervisors in London and in his journal, which was forwarded to his supervisors. In September 1841, pastoralist Anne Drysdale reported in her personal diary that Tuckfield had confided to her that he 'understood their language well and is much interested about them but has little hope of doing them any good'.<sup>90</sup> Overall, Tuckfield perceived himself to have failed in his endeavour to 'civilise' and Christianise the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip at Bunting Dale; he had no converts to Christianity, and he had been generally unsuccessful in his attempts to encourage the Aboriginal people of the district to abandon their nomadic lifestyle and 'civilise'.

At the same time that the Reverend L. E. Threlkeld was declaring his Lake Macquarie mission a failure because there were no Aboriginal peoples to preach to, Tuckfield too was proclaiming the Bunting Dale mission a failure because there were no Aboriginal peoples on the station. Because of this, by 1842 Tuckfield had looked to set up a new mission station elsewhere in the Port Phillip district. Upon returning from investigating the feasibility of establishing a mission at the junction of the Goulburn and Murray Rivers, Tuckfield wrote to the Reverend McKenny: 'I am sorry to inform you that we have not a single black upon the station ... and I fear our present Mission is a complete failure.'<sup>91</sup>

In early 1848 the superintendent of the Wesleyan Missions in Australia, the Reverend W. Boyce, who had visited Bunting Dale to assess the situation in late 1846, decided to close the station.<sup>92</sup> Convinced that the mission was a failure, the government then informed Tuckfield that the grazing licence for

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<sup>89</sup> Tuckfield, 'Journal', Saturday, 8 May 1841, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.224.

<sup>90</sup> Anne Drysdale, 'Diary', 27 September 1841, quoted in Hunter, p.41.

<sup>91</sup> Tuckfield to the Reverend John McKenny, 28 May 1842, quoted in Le Griffon, pp.205-206.

<sup>92</sup> Le Griffon, p.262.

the land upon which the station sat would be revoked at the end of 1850.<sup>93</sup> Upon receiving notice that the WMS would no longer fund Bunting Dale, Tuckfield wrote to the Superintendent of the Port Phillip district Charles Joseph La Trobe: '[t]hat these means have been attended by some benefit to the Natives is quite certain, and that more good has not been realised is amongst the immutable dispensations of a wise and most gracious providence, for reasons that we cannot comprehend.'<sup>94</sup> La Trobe disagreed, charging that he had not even 'civilised' one individual.<sup>95</sup> The Bunting Dale story is one which is common in the history of missionary endeavour to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia in the first half of the nineteenth century – a lack of converts often led to missionary societies discontinuing funding.

Tuckfield subsequently left the Bunting Dale station and ministered to several churches of European congregations in Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania. On 6 June 1856, Francis Tuckfield's wife Sarah died at West Maitland in the Hunter Valley, near Newcastle, New South Wales. She was buried in Sydney. Together the evangelical couple had had eight children of whom seven survived childhood – three daughters and four sons. Two months later while in Hobart Town, Francis Tuckfield met Mary Stevens, whom he married on 5 January 1857. Together they had four children – three sons and one daughter.<sup>96</sup> Tuckfield was then appointed to the Wesleyan Methodist church in Portland, Victoria in 1864. On 21 October 1865, the Reverend Francis Tuckfield died aged fifty-seven, having contracted pneumonia and bronchitis

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<sup>93</sup> McCallum.

<sup>94</sup> Tuckfield to Charles Joseph La Trobe, 7 July 1848, quoted in Peter Corris, *Aborigines and Europeans in Western Victoria*, Canberra, 1968, pp.76-77.

<sup>95</sup> Charles Joseph La Trobe to Colonial Secretary, 18 November 1848, quoted in *ibid.*, pp.77.

<sup>96</sup> Two of Tuckfield's sons became Wesleyan ministers and all four of his daughters married Wesleyan ministers; Le Griffon, p.282.

while officiating at the funeral of a young child at the Portland cemetery a few days earlier.<sup>97</sup>

Upon his arrival in Port Phillip Tuckfield had immediately noticed the differences between the Aboriginal peoples of the district and himself. Tuckfield categorised the Aboriginal peoples' traditional beliefs and lifestyle as 'savage' and marked their differences from himself and other Europeans with the term 'blacks', which he determined to be a marker of barbarism and danger. In opposition to this, Tuckfield perceived and categorised himself, his family, and other Europeans residing in Australia as 'Whites'; a term which for Tuckfield encompassed civilisation and superiority.

Although Thomas McCombie did not use the term 'white', and the missionary Daniel Matthews used the label only in reference to Europeans whose behaviour he disapproved of, Francis Tuckfield defined himself as a 'White man'. This examination of whiteness as a category of analysis for Tuckfield does, however, conform to Boucher and McLisky's findings that in southeast Australia during the nineteenth-century, the presence of whiteness as a racial category was inferred rather than explicit. Whiteness, for Tuckfield, encompassed the security of his family and the markers of 'civilised man', to which he endeavoured to raise the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district. Tuckfield believed that the privilege of whiteness – civilisation – would be enabled for the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip by pastoralism. Identifying, labelling, and exploring Tuckfield's concepts of what whiteness entailed has allowed us to see that these concepts were constructed in opposition to his ideas and experiences surrounding blackness. These notions of whiteness and blackness, and the links between them, were predecessors to the more con-

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<sup>97</sup> The biographical information in this paragraph was sourced from Le Griffon, pp.281-283.

crete European perceptions of 'race' which developed at the close of the nineteenth century.

Tuckfield initially perceived the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be the most degraded of the species of humankind. While this perception remained throughout his time at Bunting Dale, other opinions which he held about those he intended to 'save' changed over the period. His early opinion of the customs of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip as inferior superstitions later softened, as he defended the Aboriginal custom of reciprocal killings and was moved by traditional expressions of Aboriginal lament when he injured himself.

Tuckfield ultimately perceived himself as having failed in his endeavour to Christianise and 'civilise' the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip. During his ten years at Bunting Dale he had no Aboriginal converts to Christianity. Furthermore, those Aboriginal people who he had convinced to settle on the station ultimately left, while the children he kept in school and those he adopted eventually returned to 'the bush'.

By 1861, four years before Tuckfield's death, 540,000 Europeans had invaded Port Phillip. They occupied all of the land excluding only the mountains and the 'Mallee country' in the northwest of the district, which they considered not fit for habitation. Fewer than 2,000 of the original inhabitants of the land had survived the invasion.<sup>98</sup>

In his hagiographical *Missionary Triumphs*, John Blacket asserts that although Bunting Dale 'ended in comparative failure', '[a]ll was not lost labour'. Blacket relates the tale of a 'black fellow' visiting Tuckfield in his garden in

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<sup>98</sup> Barwick, p.109.

Geelong 'some years after the mission had been abandoned'. Apparently, the Aboriginal man 'leaned on the fence, and called out, "Massa Tuckfield! Massa Tuckfield! Be that you? 'Member me?"' Tuckfield evidently recognised the man and asked him what he remembered from his lessons at the mission school at Bunting Dale. 'The native threw back his blanket from over his chest and produced a copy of the New Testament, with a portion of the Wesley Catechism, which had been translated by the missionaries into the native tongue' from which he proceeded to read.<sup>99</sup> This is an improbable story which, even if true, hardly indicates success in Tuckfield's missionary endeavour to the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip.

Tuckfield firmly believed the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be fellow human beings, a belief which contrasted with many other Europeans in Australia at this time. Although he saw them as belonging to humankind, Tuckfield perceived the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip to be inherently degraded, and to have been further degraded through their encounters with Europeans. Tuckfield's simultaneous belief in the extreme degradation of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip and their potential to overcome this is perhaps best exemplified in a public lecture which he gave on the 'Conditions of the Aborigines of Australia.'<sup>100</sup> In this address Tuckfield spoke of the 'mental gifts and aptitude in receiving instruction and facility in communicating doctrines utterly unknown before' as well as the 'sagacity and acuteness ... virtues of hospitality and cheerfulness, good humour and mildness of disposition' of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip. He also, however, expressed his belief that 'no portion of the human race could have sunk lower in brutal licentiousness and moral degradation' than they.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Blacket, p.166-167.

<sup>100</sup> The date of which is unknown.

<sup>101</sup> Isaac Hebb, 'The Story of Bunting Dale, Part IV', *The Colac Herald*, 4 July 1951, quoted in Le Griffon, p.223.

As did Henry Williams in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Tuckfield disagreed with Samuel Marsden's civilisation before conversion policy, believing instead that once Christianised, the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip would become 'civilised'. Tuckfield wrote to his fellow missionary Tiechermann in March 1842 expressing his belief that: 'All merely civilising schemes have hitherto failed and if ever we benefit the Aborigines of Australia I am quite convinced it must be by bringing the Gospel to exert its full & civilisation [*sic*] influence upon them.'<sup>102</sup> Despite this, while he lamented the negative effect pastoralism was having on the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip, Tuckfield also encouraged the widespread introduction of pastoralism to Port Phillip because he believed that pastoralism would enable the Aboriginal peoples of the district to 'civilise'.

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<sup>102</sup> Tuckfield to the Reverend B. J. Tiechermann, 17 March 1842, MS7667, Box 655 SLV, p.323.

## Conclusion

And they went forth,  
and preached every where,  
the Lord working with them  
– Mark 16:20<sup>1</sup>

This thesis has examined evangelical missionary perceptions of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, Australia, from the 1820s to the 1840s. This study concerns evangelical endeavour in both Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia because during this period these two places were part of a common Tasman world. In order to gain insight into evangelical views of the indigenous populations of the Tasman world, three case studies have been examined – the CMS missionaries George Clarke and the Reverend William Yate at Te Waimate and before that Kerikeri in the Bay of Islands, Aotearoa/New Zealand, and the WMS missionary the Reverend Francis Tuckfield at the Bunting Dale mission station, southwest of Geelong, in the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, Australia.

George Clarke, William Yate, and Francis Tuckfield's perceptions of those they endeavoured to 'save' have been examined over three key stages: prior to their arrival at their respective mission fields – in other words, their pre-conceptions; during the initial period of encounter – their early perceptions; and after a significant period of contact – their established perceptions. How these missionaries' observations were recorded has also been investigated. What has emerged is that evangelical perceptions of non-Europeans were not fixed, they changed with experience. This analysis of evangelical views has

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<sup>1</sup> *Holy Bible*, King James Version.

demonstrated adaptation and evolution of ideas through the missionaries' preconceptions, early perceptions, and established perceptions.

The discussion has examined the nature of evangelical missionary perceptions of the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia during a time when European 'racial thinking' was in an especially formative phase. At the time when evangelical humanitarianism was perhaps at its peak, evangelical missionaries saw both northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip as having the potential to become 'civilised' and Christian. These two mission fields had very different experiences of success and failure. In northern Aotearoa/New Zealand, Māori were perceived to be embracing Christianity and 'civilisation'. In Port Phillip, on the other hand, the Aboriginal peoples of the district were seen to be becoming extinct at such a rapid speed that Christianising and 'civilising' them was perceived to be more difficult than was anticipated. These opposing experiences of success and failure demonstrate that evangelical views were not static: they adapted, continually being altered by experience. On the other hand, the similarities in missionary endeavour in the Tasman world during this period reveal evolution in evangelical ideas. That missionary encounters with a range of non-European populations further shaped missionary ideas about the indigenous peoples of the Tasman world, and that missionary opposition to 'heathen' customs and practices at times softened over a period of contact, demonstrates evolution in evangelical thinking during this period.

European explorers and missionaries' observations of Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia influenced evangelical preconceptions of, and subsequent interactions with, these indigenous peoples. Because access to these observations was widely available in England, particularly in evangelical circles, missionaries could read first-hand observations of those they



sought to 'save' before departing England. Evangelical perceptions of Māori and the Aboriginal peoples of Australia were further influenced by the Reverend Samuel Marsden's contrasting opinion of these indigenous peoples. Marsden represented both the CMS and the LMS in Australia and the wider Pacific and the WMS also often sought his advice. Marsden's opinions and actions had a pervasive effect on the course of missionary endeavour toward the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia during the early-nineteenth century.

Prior to his arrival in Aotearoa/New Zealand, George Clarke's perceptions of Māori were shaped by his experiences in Sydney and Parramatta, where he conversed with Samuel Marsden and encountered Aboriginal peoples of the surrounding areas, Pacific Islanders, and visiting Māori. Clarke initially perceived Māori as dangerous 'savages', however he believed the image of Māori circulating in Britain which portrayed them as such to be overstated. Clarke saw Māori as having the potential to Christianise and 'civilise'; something he believed would undoubtedly occur. Clarke's perceptions of Māori developed after his arrival in the Bay of Islands were influenced by his preconceptions and were often made through the lens of evaluating whether or not his endeavour to Christianise and 'civilise' them was succeeding. Throughout his preconceptions, his initial perceptions, and his observations made after a significant period of contact, Clarke maintained an absolute belief that Māori could, and would, become Christianised and 'civilised'. By the time Clarke left the CMS to take up his post as Chief Protector in 1840, he perceived northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori to be embracing Christianity and 'civilisation'; he believed his endeavours, and those of his fellow missionaries, to Christianise and 'civilise' Māori to be experiencing widespread success.

Because of his scandalous dismissal from the CMS, the Reverend William Yate's perceptions of northern Māori have been largely ignored in the historiography of missionary endeavour in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Yate's preconceptions of Māori were shaped by knowledge of other Europeans' observations of, and his own encounters with, non-Europeans. Yate's perceptions of northern Māori were subsequently made through the lens of favourably comparing them to other non-European 'heathen' populations whom he had encountered. This lens of favourable comparison was exacerbated by Yate's close relationship with a number of Māori men, who were key informants of Māori customs and culture for the missionary. While less focussed on success than Clarke, Yate too perceived Māori to have the undoubted potential to Christianise and become 'civilised'.

Yate expected to encounter Māori 'savages' who were to be feared yet who were capable of being Christianised and 'civilised'. These preconceptions paralleled his initial perceptions of northern Māori – views which were based upon Māori beliefs, customs, behaviour, and language. After a significant period of contact, Yate began to sympathise with certain Māori customs, some of which he had come to Aotearoa/New Zealand to replace with Christianity and 'civilisation'. By the time Yate left Aotearoa/New Zealand for the final time in 1834, he perceived himself and his fellow missionaries to have begun to experience large-scale success in their endeavour to convert Māori to Christianity and a 'civilised' way of life.

The Reverend Francis Tuckfield's perceptions of the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales were often made through the lens of comparing them to Europeans – contrasting 'blacks' and 'Whites'. Tuckfield's perceptions of these peoples were influenced by earlier and contemporary observations of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia. Tuckfield's initial

perceptions were centred on a fear of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip because they were black 'savages', a dismissal of their customs and beliefs, and a conviction that they were degraded but had the potential to become Christianised and 'civilised'. While Tuckfield's initial fear of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip persisted, his objection to their 'superstitions' softened after a significant period of contact. Tuckfield initially believed that his task of Christianising and 'civilising' the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip would be achieved quickly. While he soon discovered that his duty would take longer than expected, Tuckfield maintained his belief that the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip had the potential and ability to overcome their extreme degradation and become Christian and 'civilised'. While he ultimately believed he had failed in his endeavours to achieve this, Tuckfield attributed this failure to Aboriginal depopulation caused by interaction with Europeans, particularly pastoralists. Although Tuckfield lamented this depopulation, he also saw the introduction of Europeans and pastoralism as necessary to 'saving' the Aboriginal peoples of the Port Phillip district. This seemingly contradictory perception was common among evangelicals in Australia, who perceived the Aboriginal peoples to be degraded, both inherently and through contact with Europeans, while also maintaining that interaction with Europeans was the only way for the degradation of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia to be overcome.

It must be remembered that this thesis is comprised of only three case studies; there is abundant room for extrapolation in research into evangelical perceptions of the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia during the height of British evangelical humanitarianism. Moreover, the same questions applied to different case studies could yield an altered set of conclusions. This examination of three missionaries has, however, illuminated evangelical perceptions of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori and

the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip during the period 1820s-1840s while also situating these particular missionaries' experiences within the broader field of race, religion, and empire. The strength of using such case studies is that it allows evangelical perceptions to be examined in-depth.

More generally, this thesis has also contributed to the broader historiography of race and religion in the British Empire by highlighting the differences and similarities in evangelical missionary endeavour in the Tasman world in the period 1820s-1840s. The differences in missionary endeavour to the indigenous peoples of northern Aotearoa/New Zealand and the Port Phillip district during this period, such as the contrasting lenses through which the indigenous populations of these places were viewed and the divergent experiences of success and failure, show that evangelical attitudes toward non-Europeans were diverse and that experience altered evangelical perceptions. The similarities in missionary endeavour to these two places, such as belief in the potential of the indigenous peoples to 'civilise' and become Christian and a fear of those indigenous peoples because they were 'savages', highlight the existence of an evangelical community within which ideas and information flowed freely. The body of evangelical literature circulating in Britain contained evangelical observations of non-Europeans. These views shaped subsequent evangelical perceptions of these peoples, which were in turn circulated in Britain, further shaping evangelical perceptions of indigenous peoples.

The Aotearoa/New Zealand aspect of this study concludes on the eve of the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, a document which acknowledged Māori sovereignty and ownership of land. Upon the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840 Aotearoa/New Zealand formally became a part of the British Empire. At this time Māori still far outnumbered the Pākehā population of Aotearoa/New

Zealand. Conversely, the Australian aspect of this thesis concludes at a point where the population of the Aboriginal peoples of Port Phillip – and wider south-eastern Australia – was at an unprecedented low and displacement from their lands was all but complete. This demise was the result of the European colonisation of Australia, which had formally been a part of the British Empire from 1788. The different histories of racial interaction present in this study continue throughout the history of Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia.

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