

## **PACIFIC MANUSCRIPTS BUREAU**

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### **Trip Report**

**PMB fieldwork in Dunedin and the ASA/ARANZ conference in Christchurch**

**21 September – 2 October 2014**



The Hocken Collections at the University of Otago

### **Summary**

The main purpose of this trip was to:

- Copy archives at the Hocken Collections – Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago, Dunedin
- Attend the Australian Society of Archivists/Archives and Records Association of New Zealand (ASA/ARANZ) conference in Christchurch

I left Australia on Sunday 21 September and flew via Brisbane to Dunedin. Sharon Dell, the Librarian of the Hocken Collections at the University of Otago kindly met me at the Dunedin airport at 8:30pm. Sharon was most generous throughout the week, allowing me to stay at her home and share her food whilst I was working with the Hocken collections.

On Monday 22 September I began work with a tour of the Hocken Collections. The Hocken Collections at the University of Otago was opened in 1910 and contains over 10 kilometres of archives, 200,000 books, 17,000 pictures and 2 million photographs. The Hocken Collections were established by Dr. Thomas Morland Hocken, a Dunedin doctor and important collector of books, newspapers, maps, pamphlets, photographs, pictures and artefacts relating to New Zealand, the Pacific and early Australia. An 1885 report described a visit to Auckland during which he spent time “in his favourite pursuit of collecting literary

materials relating to the early history of the Colony”. Today he is remembered primarily for the collection of books, manuscripts, maps and paintings that make up the Hocken Collections which bears his name. Hocken donated artefacts to other institutions, including a notable New Zealand Maori artefact collection which he bequeathed to the Otago Museum in Dunedin. The Hocken Collections also have an exhibition and publications program. There are two busy reading rooms where international and local visitors undertake research using the Hocken Collections.

It was refreshing and relaxing to work in such a professional and extensive archive. Anna Blackman, the senior archivist looked after me, and on my first day we discussed which collections the Bureau could digitise. Anna and her staff were most helpful in retrieving and delivering archives for me to copy. The Hocken Collections are one of the most professional archives I have visited. The staff were generous and the documentation, storage, condition and treatment of the collections by staff was of the highest standard.

I set up my equipment in the main seminar room of the Hocken Collections. It was clean with heavy curtains and included several large tables where I could prepare collections and set up my digitisation equipment.



The PMB digitisation setup at the Hocken Collections

Whilst working at the Hocken Collections I digitised the following titles:

**PMB MS 1402 Milne, Peter, Rev. Diaries, 19 July 1870 – 27 September 1924. PDF. Available for reference**

**PMB MS 1403 Milne, Peter, Rev. Journals, 1868-1906. PDF. Available for reference**

**PMB MS 1404 Paton, Frederick James, Rev. Journals, 1908-1935. PDF. Available for reference**

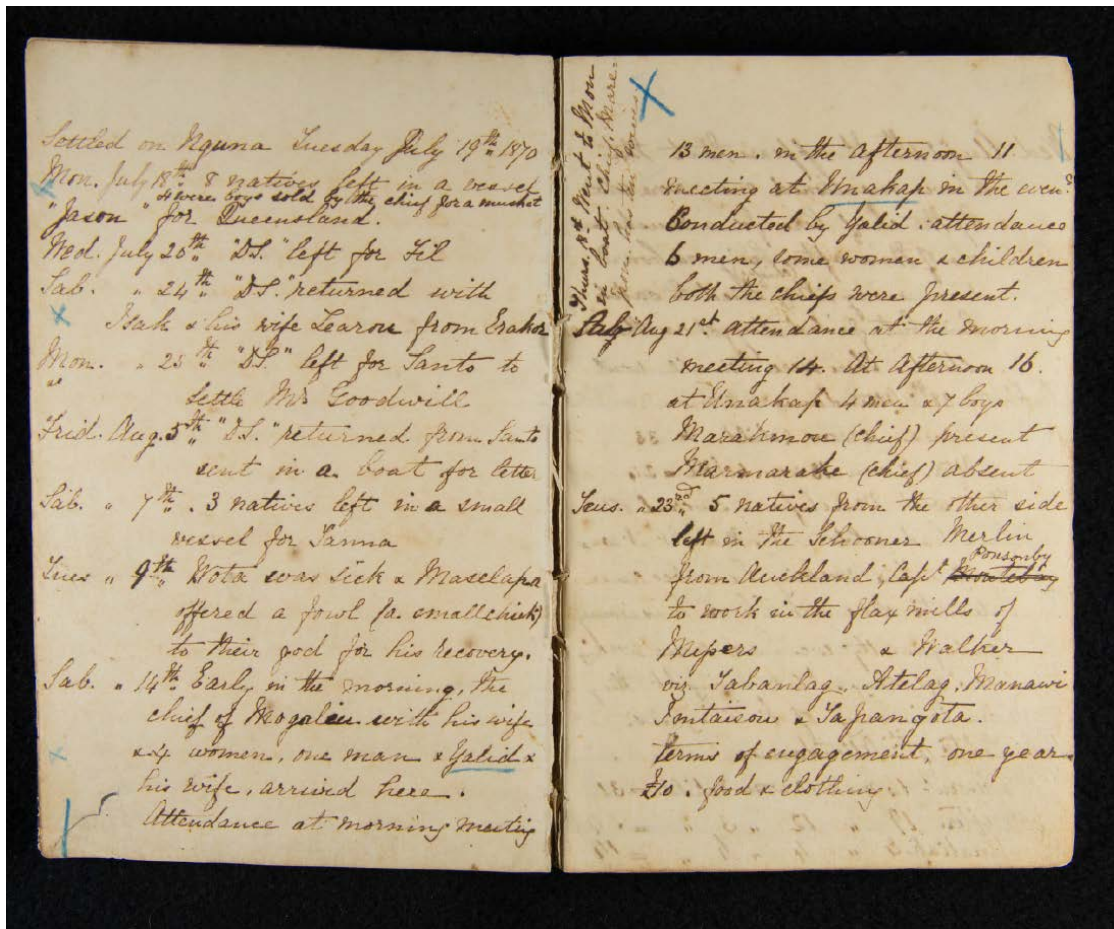
**PMB MS 1405 Milne, William Veitch. Papers, 1920s-1930s. PDF. Available for reference.**

**PMB MS 1406 Nihill, William. Papers, 1841-1854. PDF. Available for reference.**

**PMB MS 1407 Milne, Peter, Rev. Papers, c.1875 (partly copied), PDF. Available for reference.**

All of the collections I digitized during this visit have a connection with missions in the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu). Reverend Peter Milne trained and was ordained as a missionary to the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) with the Free Church of Scotland, under the Presbyterian Synod of Otago and Southland. He married Miss Mary Jane Veitch in December 1868 and they quickly departed for the New Hebrides via Dunedin, settling on Nguna Island in 1870. The Milnes faced a number of difficulties in the early years at Nguna, including the unscrupulous activities of European traders and planters. The first baptism took place in 1880, and after subsequent rapid evangelisation, the island was nominally Christian by 1896. Mary Milne left the island for Dunedin in 1906, to 'gather together her family', but died of a malarial illness in 1908. Reverend Milne continued his missionary work on Nguna until dying at age 90, in 1924. Mary and Peter had at least three children, including the Reverend William Milne, also a missionary on Nguna.

Whilst at the Hocken Collections I digitised Rev. Milne's diaries (PMB MS 1402) that relate to the New Hebrides mission from 1870-1924. I also copied Rev. Milne's journals (PMB MS 1403) which provide a more considered narrative concerning his early years and ministry training, before giving an extended account of the mission in the New Hebrides at Nguna. The journals date from 1868-1906. There are several numbered volumes with consecutive pagination. Part of the Rev. Peter Milne's papers (PMB MS 1407) were copied including six unrecorded tragedies and papers relating to the 'Kabuli Affair' (c.1875-1916).



A page from Rev. Milne's diary from 19 July 1870 (PMB MS 1402)

I digitised Rev. Frederick James Paton's journals (PMB MS 1404) from 1908-1935. Rev. Frederick James Paton, the son of the noted Presbyterian missionary John Gibson Paton, was born at Aiwa, New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) on 5 March 1867. After being educated in Australia and serving there for a short time as a Presbyterian minister, Paton returned to the New Hebrides and spent most of the rest of his life as a missionary there. He was particularly associated with Malekula, where he established a mission station in 1895. Paton worked alongside his wife Helen (died 1905) and second wife Christine (died 1914). He also served as a chaplain to Australian forces during World War I. Frederick Paton died on 12 December 1941. The journals include accounts of Rev. Frederick Paton's mission activity in the New Hebrides. For information, the Bureau has recently digitised another collection of Rev. Frederick James Paton (PMB MS 1392). This collection includes correspondence, news clippings and photographs and is held by descendants of the Paton family in a private collection.

William Veitch Milne (1877-1937) was the son of Peter Milne, a Presbyterian missionary on Nguna Island, Vanuatu. I digitised W.V. Milne's papers (PMB MS 1405) that consist of notes regarding church services in Vanuatu. The notes include the names of people baptized and of some members of the congregation.

William Nihill was one of the young student missionaries who accompanied G.A. Selwyn, the first Bishop of New Zealand, when he sailed to take up his appointment at the end of 1841. Selwyn's diocese, which extended to include the Pacific Islands, was one of the earliest colonial sees organised by the English Church and his government of it, greatly influenced



the future development of the colonial church. After Nihill was ordained he was given a cure on the Isle of Mare (alias Nengone) in the Pacific. Nihill died prematurely on the Isle of Mare (Alias Nengone) in April, 1855. The Nihill collection (PMB MS 1406) was digitised and consists of three letters written on the voyage out to New Zealand, letters written from Waimate, pages from his journal while on the Isle of Mare in the Pacific, and other related items including letters to Nihill's father on the occasion of his death. The Nihill collection dates from 1841-1855.

On Thursday 25 September, at the invitation of Anne Jackman, I visited Knox College Presbyterian Archives in Dunedin (PCANZ). This visit was to discuss the possibility of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau assisting Knox College Presbyterian archives with the digitisation and digital repatriation of photographic collections relating to the New Hebrides back to Vanuatu. There are around 3,500 photographs, dating from c.1857-1975, of the New Hebrides in the Knox College Presbyterian Archives. Anne Jackman and I discussed the possibility of developing a priority list for copying, in discussion with the church, academics and the people of Vanuatu. Anne is applying for funding from Lotteries and the Presbyterian Church to establish their own digitisation program. If this is successful Knox College may be able to undertake some of the digitisation themselves. If not, the Bureau plans to return to Dunedin in 2015 for one week to begin digitising these significant images. Anne Jackman also gave me printouts of the PCANZ collections relating to Vanuatu and Fiji.



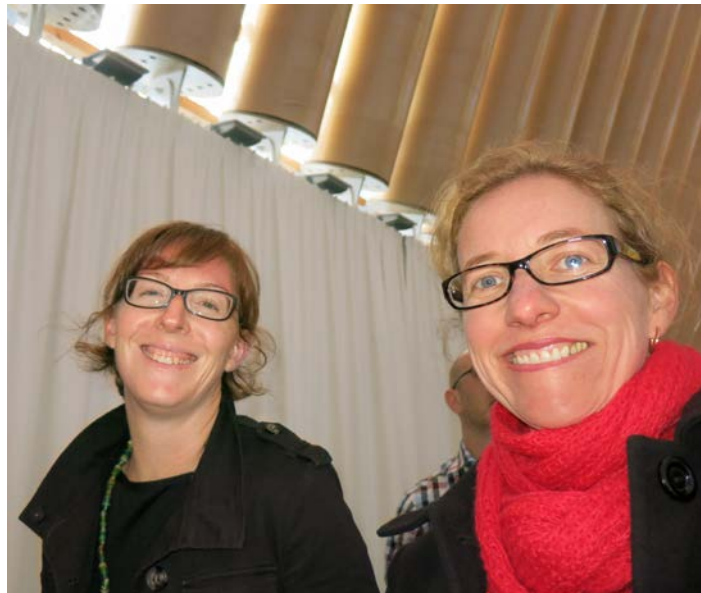
The entrance to the Knox College Presbyterian Archives in Dunedin (PCANZ)



A sample of the New Hebrides image collections that Knox College Presbyterian Archives in Dunedin (PCANZ) holds. Note the variety of different formats.

### **Christchurch**

On Tuesday 30 September I attended the opening reception of the combined Australian Society of Archivists/Archives and Records Association of New Zealand (ASA/ARANZ) conference, themed “Connecting: Past, Present and Future”, at the cardboard cathedral in Christchurch. It was good to see many familiar faces, and re-connect with archive professionals including Diane Woods from the Alexander Turnbull Library. I shared a room at the Christchurch YMCA hostel with Kari James, who is currently volunteering at the Solomon Islands National Archives (NASI).



Kari James (volunteer at NASI) and Kylie at the opening of the ASA/ARANZ conference in the cardboard cathedral in Christchurch.

The conference papers on Wednesday 1 October were many and varied. I found the most interesting and relevant papers were presented by specialist collection archives that had limited resources. I met Talei Masters (Secretary General PARBICA), Mark Crookston, Dick Overy, Stephen Innes and several other archivists who have a particular interest in Pacific

Island archives. It was proposed that the 2015 PARBICA conference be held in conjunction with ARANZ in Auckland in September. My paper titled “From microfilm to megabytes: re-inventing the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau in a digital environment” was well received with over 40 people at the session. Several archivists, including David Fricker from the National Archives of Australia, spoke to me afterwards about how I have used the open-source software ICA-AtoM to deliver PMB digital files.



Kylie presenting at the ASA/ARANZ conference, Christchurch

### **Thank you**

I would like to thank the following people for their support and assistance during my stay.

Sharon Dell, Director of the Hocken Collections, University of Otago, Dunedin.

Anna Blackman, Senior Archivist at the Hocken Collections, University of Otago, Dunedin.

All staff at the Hocken Collections.

Anne Jackman, Knox College Presbyterian Archives in Dunedin (PCANZ).

The organisers of the ARANZ conference.

Kylie Moloney  
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Pacific Manuscripts Bureau  
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