

Pambu

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NEW LIGHT ON THE CELEBRATED PRITCHARD AFFAIR

New light on the celebrated Pritchard affair in Tahiti, which brought England and France to the brink of war in 1844, is contained in a manuscript letter book which the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau has recently microfilmed for its member libraries.

The book is one of sixteen valuable items on Tahiti and the Eastern Pacific which the Territory of French Polynesia acquired at the sale of the Ropiteau-O'Reilly manuscripts in Paris in June. (See Pambu Nos. 9-12 for further details). The Territory of French Polynesia paid a total of 49,550 francs (about \$8,000) for these items, including 12,000 francs (nearly \$2,000) for the papers on the Pritchard affair.

The Pritchard affair concerned the British consul in Tahiti, George Pritchard, a former missionary of the London Missionary Society. On March 13, 1844, after strenuously opposing French intervention in Tahiti for several years, he was deported from that island by the French administration which had become established there. This act led to lively exchanges between the British and French Governments, hotly worded editorials in the newspapers of both countries, and a general agitation for war. War was only averted when the French Foreign Minister, M. Guizot, promised that his government would pay Pritchard an indemnity for the "losses and sufferings" he had incurred through being forcibly removed from Tahiti. However, the indemnity was never paid, for the Guizot government fell before agreement had been reached on the amount of it.

The documents on the Pritchard affair now owned by the Territory of French Polynesia are in a book of 71 pages containing

The Pacific Manuscripts Bureau was established in 1968 as part of the Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, Canberra. Its purpose is to locate unpublished documents of value concerning the Pacific Islands and to obtain copies of them on microfilm for four world libraries specialising in Pacific research. The four libraries are the National Libraries of Australia and New Zealand; the Mitchell Library, Sydney; and the Library of the University of Hawaii, Honolulu.

copies of nineteen letters, all in Pritchard's hand. The letters date from November 26, 1836, to February 15, 1837. They are mainly concerned with the arrival in Tahiti of two French Roman Catholic priests, Fathers Laval and Caret. It was the forcible deportation of these priests, at what appears to have been Pritchard's instigation, which led to the arrival of French gunboats in Tahiti and the island's subsequent annexation.

Five of the documents are copies of letters that Pritchard himself wrote to Moerenhout, the American consul; to the United States Secretary of State; and to a visiting U.S. commodore. Others are copies of letters exchanged between Moerenhout, Queen Pomare IV, Fathers Laval and Caret, and Pritchard.

The Pacific Manuscripts Bureau microfilmed the documents in Tahiti in August, thanks to the courtesy of the Governor of French Polynesia, Mr. Pierre Angeli, and the Directeur des Affaires Culturelles, Mr. Marc Darnois. All the other manuscripts which French Polynesia acquired at the Ropiteau-O'Reilly sale were copied at the same time. These are (with their auction sale catalogue numbers in brackets):

1. A six-page account, written by Chenard de la Giraudais, commander of l'Etoile, the consort of Bougainville's ship La Boudeuse, which visited Tahiti in April, 1768. The manuscript contains Giraudais' views on the Tahitians.
10. A letter written in Tahiti on February 6, 1799, by the L.M.S. missionary John Harris, describing political agitation on the island, the arrival of the whalers Sally and Cornwall, an affair between a native woman and the missionary Thomas Lewis, etc.
12. A journal of the missionaries Henry Nott and James Elder describing a preaching tour round Tahiti in 1802. Among many other things, the missionaries speak of a visit to the great marae of Mahaiatea where numerous pigs and human sacrifices had just been offered to the god Oro.

21. A letter from King Pomare II to the London Missionary Society, London, dated January 1, 1807. In this, Pomare speaks of banishing Oro to the island of Raiatea, and expresses the wish that the Tahitians will be able to adopt English fashions through receiving English clothing and other goods. He also requests "plenty of guns and powder, as wars are frequent in our country," as well as paper, pens and ink. The letter is written in Tahitian, and has an English translation attached.
24. A journal kept by the missionaries William Henry and John Davies during a tour round the island of Huahine "preaching the Gospel and instructing the natives." The journal includes "observations and remarks on the face of the country, number of inhabitants &c." The tour of Huahine - the first of its kind - was made after civil war in Tahiti had forced the missionaries to flee from that island.
25. A letter from Pomare II dated September 25, 1812, to the missionaries on Moorea informing them of his determination to abandon false gods and ancient rites against evil spirits, and stating that he sincerely wished to embrace the Christian religion, which he considers the only true religion, etc.
31. A letter from the missionaries John Williams, L.E. Threlkeld and J.M. Orsmond from Raiatea to the L.M.S. in London, dated September 5, 1819. It is a collective report on affairs at the missions on Raiatea and Tahaa following the introduction of Christianity.
48. A letter from the missionary George Platt from Bora Bora, dated May 28, 1828, describing a visit to the island of Maupiti where the natives claimed the angel Gabriel had appeared to them and had told them to chase out the white people.
58. A letter from Queen Pomare IV and her second husband Ariifaaite to the missionary Henry Nott dated February 4, 1836, asking to be readmitted to church membership. Their long separation from the church weighed heavily on them. They said they would be happy to re-enter the community and to pray to God for sinners such as themselves. (The letter is in Tahitian, with an English translation appended).
80. A letter dated May 11, 1846, from Queen Pomare IV at Raiatea to the directors of the London Missionary Society. The letter was written when the queen was living in exile following the establishment of the French protectorate in Tahiti. In it, the queen said she would never live under the French protectorate, that plenty of blood had already been let in fighting between the Tahitians and the French, and more would run yet. The

French governor, Bruat, had refused an offer from her of peace. "The French Government wants to reduce the population to mercy and destroy us all," the Queen said.

85. A 94-page report entitled "Look Again, or a few observations on the affairs of Tahiti from 1845 to 1849 by an eye-witness." The report was the work of the Rev. J.M. Orsmond and was addressed to the President of France. It was written seven years after Tahiti had become a French protectorate and after Orsmond had severed his connection with the London Missionary Society. The report speaks in the most flattering terms of the French administration, and of the feelings of gratitude towards the French that Orsmond had aroused among the Tahitians.
92. A letter from Queen Pomare IV dated August 26, 1851, to the President of France complaining that after fifteen years of the protectorate she was denied participation in the government of her country. She said that Governor Lavaud had often discussed matters with her, but that the new Governor, Bonard, did not, and that she felt a stranger in her own country.
119. A letter in Tahitian from Queen Pomare IV to the French Governor, dated September 18, 1872, announcing funeral arrangements for her small daughter. (With French translation).
129. An account book kept from 1877 to 1882 by Pomare V, Tahiti's last king, who died in 1891. In the main, it is a book of receipts for money lent to the king, signed by his creditors and sometimes countersigned by him.

In addition to the above items, the Territory of French Polynesia acquired two rare printed items at the Ropiteau-O'Reilly sale. One was the only known copy of a report on the sixth assembly of the L.M.S. Society at Huahine and Maioiti, printed at the Mission Press, Huahine, in 1824. The other was a copy of the newspaper Polynesian Gazette for October 27, 1885, which was published at Levuka, Fiji, and printed on tapa.

SINGLE LETTER SELLS FOR \$1,900

A single letter written in 1902 by the French artist Paul Gauguin to the Governor of Tahiti, Edouard Petit, was sold to an unknown bidder for 11,500 francs (about \$1,900) at the Ropiteau-O'Reilly auction in Paris in June.

It was the second most expensive item at the sale, the most expensive being the copies of letters in the hand of George

Pritchard described above. The letter was written at Hiva Oa, Marquesas Islands, and was described in the catalogue as being a sort of open letter of protest against the actions of the Governor and of the neglect of France's Oceanic possessions.

The Gauguin Museum at Papeari, Tahiti, which was interested in acquiring the letter, could not match the price offered by the successful bidder. However, the museum did get four other Gauguin items. These are:

131. A letter written at Punaauia, Tahiti, to a settler, M. Monrose, concerning a complaint against the French administration.
132. Another letter attacking the administration and its Governor.
135. A copy of a rare edition of Gauguin's book Noa-Noa, published in Paris in 1926.
136. A copy of the 1951 facsimile edition of the book Avant et Apres, with illustrations by Gauguin.

FILE OF RARE TAHITIAN NEWSPAPER MICROFILMED

A microfilm of the monthly Tahitian-language newspaper Te Ve'a Maohi has been added to the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau's "library" of rare Pacific printed materials.

The microfilm contains the issues of the newspaper from Vol. 6, No. 6 (June, 1936), to Vol. 14, No. 3 (March, 1944). It was obtained through the kindness of Dr Bengt Danielsson, the Swedish anthropologist and writer, who has at his home at Paea, Tahiti, possibly the only surviving file of the newspaper.

According to the O'Reilly-Reitman bibliography of Tahiti, Te Ve'a Maohi began publication in January, 1930, during the administration of Governor Bouge. Articles were published in Tahitian, Tuamotuan, Marquesan and Mangarevan. It is not known whether the newspaper ceased publication in 1947 or 1948.

The O'Reilly-Reitman bibliography does not list any known holdings of the newspaper, whereas for most other newspapers published in Tahiti since 1844 such details are given.

"THE MOST INTERESTING
MAN I EVER MET"

James Lyle Young, whose adventurous business career in the South Pacific from 1875 almost until his death in 1929 was described in some detail in Pambu No. 5, is still remembered by at least one of his former business associates in New Zealand.

He is Mr Arthur E. Playle, who, until recently, was managing director of the New Zealand trading firm, Henderson and Macfarlane Ltd., of Auckland. Mr Playle joined Henderson and Macfarlane in October, 1916. At that time, Young held 4,996 of the 5,000 shares in the company and was managing director. He was also managing director of S.R. Maxwell & Co. Ltd., whose head office was in Auckland, with a branch in Papeete.

"I do not know when Mr Young purchased his interest in Henderson & Macfarlane, but he sold his shares in 1921 to Mr Edward Anderson", Mr Playle said in a recent letter to the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau.

"He was 67 years of age when I first knew him. I admired him very much as a very able businessman of kindly disposition. It was his custom to leave the office at noon each day for 'a cup of coffee', and on his return about twenty minutes later he usually spent until 1.00 p.m. talking to me about Tahiti, particularly the trade in pearlshell, copra and vanilla. Occasionally I typed his translations of native chants and songs.

"I recall that about 1920 he shipped to the Bishop Museum, Honolulu, a number of cases containing artifacts he had collected in the Islands. He was an inveterate cigar smoker and frequently used a spittoon which was always near his desk.

"He seldom had his business letters typed, but sent them off in his own handwriting, which was firm and distinctive. He made quite an impression on me during the five years I was associated with him, and I can say that he was the most interesting man I have ever met."

Besides regaling the P.M.B. with his reminiscences of J.L. Young, Mr Playle has lent the Bureau an unpublished history of Henderson and Macfarlane Ltd. for microfilming. The history was compiled several years ago by the late Mr L. Hallett, of Auckland.

One learns from this that the founders of Henderson and Macfarlane Ltd. were two Scottish immigrants, Thomas Henderson and his brother-in-law John Macfarlane, who arrived in Wellington (then called Port Nicholson) in 1840. They acquired land in the area

when the first lots were put up for sale in April, 1841, and in 1842 Henderson built the most pretentious building in town, the Commercial Hotel. In the same year, Henderson and Macfarlane went into partnership as merchants and shipowners. For the next twenty years, they were the largest employers of labour in the colony, both of European settlers and Maoris. The kauri timber and gum industries kept 300 Maoris busy. To export the timber, Henderson and Macfarlane acquired their own ships, and designed a house flag for these featuring a circular saw. It was thus that the Circular Saw Shipping Line was established.

In 1849, when the gold rush to California began, Henderson and Macfarlane started a passenger and cargo service to California from New Zealand. This was the beginning of a shipping service that was to last for 110 years. A few years later, the company also opened up trade with Australia, China, South America and Mauritius. Henderson, who was the more active of the two partners, was also closely associated with the founding of the New Zealand Insurance Company in 1859, the Bank of New Zealand in 1861, and the Mercantile Agency Company and Auckland Gas Company.

After John Macfarlane died in 1860, an elder brother, Thomas, came out from Scotland to take his place in the firm. Henderson's brother, Thomas, also joined it.

In 1870, the firm began to look into the possibilities of trade with the Pacific Islands. All Circular Saw Line ships not engaged in the timber trade were sent to investigate the potential of sandalwood, pearl shell, vanilla, copra, etc. In 1874, the company became associated with a well-known Pacific personality, Handley Bathurst Sterndale.

"This man Sterndale", Hallett says in his history, "had been marooned on the island of Suvarrow for 12 months and had been rescued by the notorious 'Bully' Hayes (perhaps the only time anyone had been pleased to see him) and when he came to Auckland he wrote a report for the Government on the trade possibilities of the Pacific.

"It was not hard to interest Mr. Henderson, for Sterndale had a wealth of knowledge of trading in the Pacific, an extensive experience of most types of Islanders, an understanding of the missionaries and their methods, and a first-hand acquaintance of the successful trading procedure used by Godeffroy, the dominant trading concern at that time in the Islands.

"On his suggestion the island of Suvarrow, lying 2,000 miles N.E. of New Zealand and 500 miles due East of Samoa, was to be annexed by Henderson & Macfarlane and used as their main trading base.

"Early in 1875 the company dispatched the 85-ton brigantine Ryno under Captain Miller to establish a trading station there under Sterndale's management. She was loaded with trade stores, timber, arms and material of all kinds necessary to build the post. To protect the station Sterndale persuaded the firm to supply three ship's guns for use against South Sea adventurers, also a supply of rifles, ammunition and cutlasses.

"Sterndale's first act was to erect a fort of concrete, earth and timber in a position overlooking the anchorage, and mount the three small cannon on wooden carriages. He did not have long to wait, as the first caller was a strange cutter which anchored in the lagoon.

"It turned out to be from Samoa with a Chinese in charge of a Polynesian crew seeking pearl shell. Sterndale gave them the order to quit and backed it up with a shot from one of his guns. They lost no time in beating out from the island.

"With this invader vanquished, Sterndale set about getting the place in order and had natives from another island planting coconuts for the company, although there were already wild groves of them on the island. Incidentally, in his excavations he found traces of old concrete dungeons presumably from earlier Spanish settlers.

"Suwarrow was to be an important station for many years to come, until it was abandoned when Henderson & Macfarlane withdrew from the South Sea trade. During those years they had built a small lighthouse, a large brick reservoir and a coral wharf at the anchorage.

"A few months after the establishment of the trading post, there was a difference of opinion between Sterndale and Henderson & Macfarlane on its control and the firm took steps to remove him.

"Since there was no direct control by the authorities in the Pacific in those days over these scattered islands, it was necessary for the firm to despatch the schooner Kreimhilda late in 1876 under the command of Captain Fernandez (of the gunboat Pioneer fame) to take possession of the station and bring back Sterndale.

"However, Sterndale refused to give up the management and he and Mrs Sterndale withstood a siege for two weeks, for when the schooner's people tried to destroy his water tanks by gunfire he replied with his rifle and the two parties reached a stalemate.

"It was at this stage that the brigantine Ryno arrived with Henry Mair (brother of William and Gilbert) as supercargo. When

Mair learned of the position, he was desperately anxious to help his friend Sterndale. In spite of his pleas to the captain, he was refused permission to land; so he awaited his chance in the middle watch and dived overboard.

"Nerves on edge, fearing each moment that the man-eating sharks would get him, he swam the long distance to the shore, where he lay exhausted; and while he was thus he had a strange experience. Hearing a clink of metal he strained his eyes and saw a small dark shape slowly moving by a clump of bush and on investigation it proved to be a turtle digging in the sand. At the bottom of the hole was a broken chest of buried treasure. Since he was clad only in a singlet and shorts, he put a few coins in his pocket and two or three of the rings on his fingers, and buried the rest again. Then he made his way to the flimsy house where Sterndale was living.

"He found Sterndale sick and temporarily helpless, with Mrs Sterndale very business-like with a large revolver. Her relief at the sight of him was overwhelming, and after a short consultation they decided to abandon the house and move to the fort which they accomplished without mishap. But it was a bad move.

"Next day Captain Fernandez moved in behind the fort and had green brushwood placed round their shelter to smoke them out. With the water supply running low the manoeuvre was successful.

"On his return to Auckland Captain Fernandez, his slim soldierly figure in a close-fitting jacket, argued very strongly against a charge of attempted murder being brought against Sterndale for his part in the resistance at Suwarrow, and was successful. After a few months of futile litigation on the part of Sterndale regarding his employment by Henderson & Macfarlane he left for America where he lived for a few years before he passed away."

Hallett's history of Henderson & Macfarlane goes on to speak of many other aspects of the firm's trade with the Pacific Islands, and of the ships that carried it on. Among these was the "iron-screw cargo boat" Janet Nichol, which took Robert Louis Stevenson and his wife on a cruise of the Pacific in 1890. Mrs Stevenson described this cruise in a book published in 1915.

The history takes the story of Henderson and Macfarlane down to the year 1902, by which time J.L. Young had entered the firm as a partner and "the day of free and unrestricted trading in the Islands was ending." In these circumstances, Henderson and Macfarlane began to sell the various trading posts and coconut plantations they had established throughout the Pacific to Burns Philp, Lever Bros., and the Pacific Islands Company.

Although Hallett's history fills only 33 pages of typewritten foolscap, it will undoubtedly prove a valuable guide for later historians investigating the development of the Islands trade from New Zealand.

DETAILED STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE TROBRIANDS

A detailed study of the Biga Boyowa language of the Trobriand Islands of Papua, has recently been microfilmed for the member libraries of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau. The study is the work of Father Bernard Baldwin, M.S.C., who was stationed at the Sacred Heart mission in the Trobriands for several years.

In an introduction to his work, Father Baldwin says that Biga Boyowa is the "language of the district commissioner's office [in the area], mission translations, school programmes and the anthropological works of Malinowski, Powell, Uberoi, and others."

He goes on: "Mastery of Biga Boyowa will enable conversation with people of the Lousancays, Marshall Bennets, Woodlarks, Laughlans, Amphletts and a goodly number of those living to the south, upwards of sixteen thousand people. To know the Boyowan language and culture is to know in a way the better half of the language and culture of the rest of the Massim people. Contact with these is frequent and familiar, and the evidence of interpenetration of their languages and culture with Boyowan abundant..."

Father Baldwin's study fills 110 typewritten quarto pages.

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