

Australian Influences on New Zealand's Emerging Protestant Missionary Movement,  
1885-1922

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**Introduction**

Not long after the recent Athens Olympic Games various sectors of New Zealand's sporting fraternity engaged in the usual self-analysis that follows such events. Whilst this was not as brutal as in past years, there was still a good measure of brow-beating – especially with respect to equestrian and yachting events which yielded less than the usual medal haul (that is, no medals at all). In the midst of this there emerged the suggestion that Yachting New Zealand should consider some kind of link up with its Australian counterpart in preparing for future Olympic campaigns. Now I'm not at all convinced that this would have gone down so well on the Australian side of the Tasman, but it was interesting to note the immediate reaction of the New Zealand television interviewer – “What, team up with Australia?! What on earth for?!” The note of incredulity was palpable.

The fortunes of New Zealand and Australia, of course, have been historically intertwined since the late eighteenth century. It should come as no surprise, then, that from time to time conversation should turn to issues of mutual involvement and partnership. This link has been well considered by historians in terms of its political, economic, social and cultural dimensions. The history and the future of our two nations are increasingly linked with that of the South Pacific and South East Asia, as well as with more traditional partners in the northern hemisphere. This is increasingly recognised in our historiography - as evidenced in the recent Blackwell history of Australasia and the South Pacific.<sup>1</sup>

The same is less true for our understanding of trans-Tasman Christianity and of religion more generally. Ian Breward's recent comparative church history is a path-

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Denoon, Philippa Mein-Smith, and Marivic Wyndham, *A History of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2000

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breaker that augurs well for the future.<sup>2</sup> Yet there is much more that needs to be understood, both in terms of historical and contemporary religious patterns. This paper attempts to extend that discussion further by considering some of the links between the Australian and New Zealand Protestant missionary movements in their formative years at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For New Zealand foreign missions participation and support was an important feature of emerging national and religious identity in the late colonial period. At the same time, it was part and parcel of the wider modern missionary movement that emanated from Western nations in the same period, and which enveloped such colonial entities as Australia and New Zealand. In this respect the missionary movement was indicative of the ways in which New Zealand was integrally linked within a wider set of international economic and cultural systems. Therefore it was shaped as much by external factors as it was by factors more intrinsic to New Zealand's location and context. This paper will examine this latter contention, with reference to representative ways in which Australian churches and Christianity influenced the development of New Zealand's missionary movement. It argues that Australia was an important early source of inspiration, missionary initiatives and training. In turn Australia formed one corner of a well-travelled triangle connecting the two sets of colonies (later dominions) with missionary destinations worldwide. The paper will focus on three representative elements of this relationship: Australian influences on the formation of the New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society; recruitment of New Zealanders by the Australian based Poona and Indian Village Mission; and the Australian based training of missionaries for the New Zealand Church Missionary Association. In turn this discussion will be set within a brief consideration of wider historical and historiographical contexts.

### **Early Relationship and Overall Trends**

From its inception the Protestant missionary impulse within Australia and New Zealand was discernibly interconnected. Indeed in terms of Wesleyan Methodist missions, arguably the first to emanate from New Zealand in the 1820s, the boundaries were profoundly blurred by the regional connexion that structurally

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<sup>2</sup> Ian Breward, *A History of the Churches in Australasia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

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incorporated Australian, New Zealand and South Pacific Wesleyan Methodists for most of the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> The Anglican Melanesian Mission, too, drew on both Australian and New Zealand support from its inception in the late 1840s. Whilst English support was more important in the early decades, by the 1880s and 1890s Australia and New Zealand were contributing up to a third of the Mission's annual revenue.<sup>4</sup> Australian and New Zealand Presbyterians both became formally involved in the Presbyterian New Hebrides Mission, through their support of four specific missionary families between 1866 and 1868.<sup>5</sup> That New Zealand and Australia should be so connected, with respect to foreign missions, was taken for granted by a number of contemporary observers. Prior to the 1890s these commentators suggested that Australia and New Zealand, together, should take overall responsibility for missionary work in the South Pacific.<sup>6</sup> Whilst somewhat premature this was at least prophetic in tone. By the 1920s the South Pacific was consistently the largest region receiving New Zealand missionaries and, after World War Two, the Papua and New Guinea territories became a significant focus for both Australian and New Zealand churches.

Missionary statistics for the period up to 1930 further highlight the ways in which early Australasian ventures were intertwined. At least 740 New Zealanders participated as foreign missionaries in this early period. Of this total at least seventy-two New Zealanders worked overseas in the employ of Australian based organisations. Apart from two significant exceptions (the Poona and Indian Village Mission and the South Sea Evangelical Mission)<sup>7</sup> most of these people did so because

<sup>3</sup> George G. Carter, *A Family Affair: A Brief Survey of New Zealand Methodism's Involvement in Mission Overseas*, Proceedings Wesley Historical Society of New Zealand, Volume 28, Numbers 3 and 4, Auckland: Wesley Historical Society (NZ), 1973; Allan K. Davidson, *Christianity in Aotearoa: A History of Church and Society in New Zealand*, Wellington: The New Zealand Education for Ministry Board, 1991.

<sup>4</sup> 'Subscription List of the Melanesian Mission for the Year 1880', *Church Gazette*, Supplement, April 1881, pp. VIII-XII; 'Subscription List of the Melanesian Mission for the Year 1890', *Church Gazette*, Supplement, April 1891, pp. XII-XVIII.

<sup>5</sup> J. S. Murray, *A Century of Growth: Presbyterian Overseas Mission Work, 1869-1969*, Christchurch: Presbyterian Bookroom, 1969, pp. 11-14; Stuart Piggin, *Evangelical Christianity in Australia: Spirit, Word and World*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 24-48.

<sup>6</sup> James Chalmers (LMS) quoted in the *Press*, 23 August 1877, p. 3; Rev. John Inglis, *Thesis-The Doctrine of Christian Missions, with Special Reference to the South Sea Islands*, Edinburgh: Morrison & Gibb, 1881, pp. 39-40.

<sup>7</sup> The PIVM employed at least forty-six New Zealanders in this period, and the SSEM at least seventeen New Zealanders. Hugh Douglas Morrison, "'It is our Bounden Duty": The Emergence of the

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they were not able to be employed by the equivalent New Zealand agencies. The movement, however, was not just one way. Whilst New Zealand-born missionaries were in the clear majority by the 1890s, Australian born missionaries were also present – at least seventeen were employed by New Zealand agencies between 1889 and 1930. Furthermore this two way movement was seen in the numbers of marriages between New Zealand and Australian missionaries. The marriages of Anna and Lily Trudinger (CIM missionaries from Adelaide) to two New Zealand CIM missionaries were simply the tip of the ice berg, with ongoing implications for the geographic identities of the families and their children.<sup>8</sup> Many New Zealanders, in this context, ended up as longer term Australian residents as a result of these trans-Tasman marriages.

Up until 1890 New Zealand foreign missionary numbers were relatively low, with a total of around thirty-one missionary departures by this date.<sup>9</sup> The rate of growth was slow, with an average of one per annum, although numbers began to grow noticeably from the mid-1880s. It is difficult, at this stage, to know how these numbers and rates compare internationally (especially with other colonial nations like Australia and Canada) due to a dearth of comparable national statistical studies.<sup>10</sup> From 1890, however, New Zealand numbers grew dramatically. In this decade at least 136 missionaries departed New Zealand's shores, at a median rate of ten per annum. It is in this period, especially from 1885 onwards, that we can more definitively trace a direct Australian influence on the emergence and development of New Zealand missionary involvement.

### **Three Examples of Early Australian Influence**

#### 1. The New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society

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New Zealand Protestant Missionary Movement, 1868-1926', PhD Thesis in History, Massey University (Albany), 2004, 'Appendix One', pp. 280-282.

<sup>8</sup> This was a celebrated evangelical family from Adelaide. The parents were Moravian missionary enthusiasts who originally immigrated to Australia to seek religious freedom. Of their twelve children, six went to China and two to the Sudan as missionaries. Morrison, p. 248.

<sup>9</sup> All statistics quoted are from Morrison, pp. 33-34, 65-66, 107-108 and 134-135. Notes of the sources used can be further found in Appendix Two, pp. 283-286.

<sup>10</sup> Analysis of one Canadian study suggests that numbers and growth rates were relatively comparable with those of New Zealand. R. C. Brouwer, *New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and India Missions, 1876-1914*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990, Appendix B, pp. 198-220.

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In the first instance the Australian influence can be traced to one specific denomination – the Baptists. In 1885 the Zealand Baptist Missionary Society (NZBMS) was officially constituted at the annual assembly of the New Zealand Baptist Union. The initial impetus for its establishment came directly from Baptist missionary enthusiasts in South Australia.

Baptists had been in New Zealand from the beginnings of formal European settlement in the 1840s. By the early 1860s there were Baptist churches in most of the main and provincial centres and, by 1881, Baptists made up two per cent of the population.<sup>11</sup> In 1882 the New Zealand Baptist Union was formed. Whilst there had been no New Zealand Baptist foreign missionaries up to this point there was a measure of missionary awareness. In 1883 the Rev. Charles Carter (an ex-BMS missionary now in ministry in New Zealand) suggested that one of the fledgling Union's objectives should be to accomplish 'our part in fulfilling the last commission of our Lord to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation'.<sup>12</sup> To this end the formation of the Baptist Union was an essential pre-requisite for any future missionary initiatives. It ultimately brought together individual churches that, whilst not theologically estranged, were often isolated and autonomous centres of mission and worship. Missionary support became an important potential vehicle by which this common Baptist identity could be strengthened.

Into this mix, late in 1884, there came a letter and proposal from the Rev. Silas Mead, minister of the Flinders Street Baptist Church in Adelaide. As a missionary enthusiast Mead was instrumental in forming the South Australian Baptist Missionary Society in 1864. This, along with a Victoria Baptist Missionary Society, initially existed to support and publicise existing English Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) work in East Bengal. In 1882 the first Australian Baptist missionaries (both single women)

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<sup>11</sup> Paul Tonson, *A Handful of Grain: The Centenary History of the Baptist Union of New Zealand*, Volume 1 – 1851-1882, Wellington: The New Zealand Baptist Historical Society, 1982, pp. 2-5, 50; *Census of New Zealand*, 1881, pp. 217, 221.

<sup>12</sup> 'Presidential Address', *New Zealand Baptist (NZB)*, 3:11 (1883), p. 355.

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went to work in East Bengal, as zenana<sup>13</sup> workers employed by the South Australian Baptist Missionary Society.<sup>14</sup>

In his letter Mead outlined a plan that he envisaged would incorporate all of the Australasian Baptist Unions, including New Zealand.<sup>15</sup> It was a co-operative plan for Baptist missionary work in East Bengal encompassing a number of contiguous districts centred on present day Dacca, with a combined estimated population of nine million. It envisaged a federation of Australasian Baptist Missionary Societies, working together but each taking responsibility for a specific district. In its detail the plan heralded a theme that would reoccur in antipodean Baptist missionary rhetoric over successive decades. In short if India was an English Baptist responsibility in general (stemming from the pioneering work of William Carey), then East Bengal should be a specifically Australasian Baptist responsibility. In hindsight later New Zealand Baptists also utilised an imperialist discourse, locating India within the ‘mighty’ British Empire’ to which New Zealanders, as Empire citizens, were ‘duty bound’ to ‘impart to it the truth that makes men free’.<sup>16</sup> In part this proposal was driven by Mead’s concern to create a more cohesive federal union of Australian Baptists.<sup>17</sup> It was also underlined a concern for an economy of effort in terms of how colonial missionary resources and finances might be deployed. Underneath it all, however, lay a clear theological imperative that colonial Christians engage in their wider spiritual responsibilities. Mead earnestly brought his letter to a close by saying:

I am sure that as we all realise this burden of the Lord laid upon our hearts, and earnestly pray, and eagerly work, and nobly give, in order to the winning of the tens of thousands of dark hearts living in Bengal to the light and love of our precious Saviour, there will be returned, even into our own bosoms, a tenfold blessing of holy joy, peace, and power. I can only pray that the presentation of these facts to the minds and hearts of

<sup>13</sup> The ‘zenana’ was the secluded portion of a Hindu or Muslim Indian home or household, reserved for women and therefore inaccessible to male missionaries. Early impetus for the entrance of single women into the missionary workforce came from increasing concern for the Indian women of the zenanas.

<sup>14</sup> Margaret Allen, ‘White Already to Harvest’: South Australian Women Missionaries in India’, *Feminist Review*, No. 65, (Summer 2000), pp. 96, 101; Ros Gooden, ‘“We Trust them to Establish the Work”: Significant Roles for Early Australian Baptist Women in Overseas Mission, 1864-1913’, in M. Hutchinson and G. Treloar (eds), *This Gospel Shall be Preached: Essays on the Australian Contribution to World Mission*, Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1998, pp. 132-133.

<sup>15</sup> *NZB*, January 1885, pp. 10-12.

<sup>16</sup> H. H. Driver, *Our Work for God in India: A Brief History of the New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society*, Dunedin: H.H. Driver, 1914, pp. 20-21.

<sup>17</sup> *NZB*, May 1885, pp. 65-66.

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the Australian, New Zealand, and Tasmanian Christians may, in an eminent degree, be used for the glory of God.<sup>18</sup>

Although it did not go ahead, Mead's plan served to push New Zealand Baptists more directly towards the idea of a New Zealand based missionary society. His letter was published in the *New Zealand Baptist* in January 1885. It struck a chord with similarly minded Baptist leaders. The editorial comment, presumably written by the influential Rev. Alfred North of Dunedin, strongly suggested that it was 'needless to say that our churches must deeply sympathise with mission-work in India, and that we should all be glad to take our place and part in the great and glorious work'.<sup>19</sup> The *New Zealand Baptist* continued to give Mead's ideas a high profile, publishing correspondence with the BMS in England and a further article by Mead, and advertising his impending visit to Auckland in March of 1885.<sup>20</sup> North had also introduced a regular missionary column to the monthly newspaper. Through this column Baptists regularly read BMS news updates and reports, interesting stories and news from other mission organizations, biographical sketches of 'native' converts, topical issues, and exhortations on missionary support.

The drive for a missionary society gathered further momentum with Ellen Arnold's visit to New Zealand in March and April of 1885. One of the two original Australian Baptist missionaries in India, Ellen was on furlough for health reasons and had been asked by Mead to do a grand tour of the Australasian colonies in support of his scheme.<sup>21</sup> Her tour covered at least all the main centres in New Zealand, including Sunday church meetings as well as small groups and children's meetings. It was the first time that many Baptists had heard from someone actually working in a missionary context overseas. She came primarily to foster public support for a Baptist Missionary Society in New Zealand. The editor of the *New Zealand Baptist* hoped that 'our Churches will be so healthfully influenced by [her] addresses that when they send their representatives to the Union meetings in October next, they will send them

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<sup>18</sup> *NZB*, January 1885, p. 12.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid*, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> *NZB*, March 1885, p. 41; *ibid*, April 1885, pp. 56-57; *ibid*, May 1885, pp. 65-66.

<sup>21</sup> Gooden, 'We Trust them to Establish the Work', p. 134. See also Donovan F. Mitchell, *Ellen Arnold: Pioneer and Pathfinder*, Adelaide: South Australian Baptist Union Foreign Missionary and Book and Publication Departments, 1932.

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under instructions to support the formation of the NZBMS'.<sup>22</sup> On penning a few farewell words to the Baptist public, Ellen Arnold echoed these very same words suggesting that, ultimately, the responsibility lay with the people 'to make it a success'.<sup>23</sup> When Alfred North gave public notice of the two resolutions he would table at the Union meetings, there could have been few Baptist readers who were unaware of what was to transpire. On Thursday 15 October 1885, the New Zealand Baptist Union unanimously agreed to the formation of a New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society, for missionary work in India.<sup>24</sup> By 1900 the NZBMS had placed nineteen missionaries in East Bengal and gained the wide support of the colony's Baptists.

## 2. Charles Reeve and the Poona and Indian Village Mission

The second example was somewhat more short lived than the first, but perhaps more dramatic in its contours. Stuart Piggin has argued that the wider period from about 1870 up to World War One was the 'high noon of Australian Protestantism' in which there was a relatively high percentage of church attendance (perhaps as much as forty per cent), and a strong commitment to social transformation and engagement.<sup>25</sup> As in New Zealand Australian religious revivalism, whilst not denominationally or geographically uniform, served to generally heighten religious enthusiasm. The Rev. Silas Mead, for instance, was influenced by early holiness sentiments in the 1860s and 1870s prior to the establishment of the English Keswick movement from 1875.<sup>26</sup> The Keswick movement itself had its greatest impact in Australia from the early 1890s with the establishment of such evangelical institutions as the annual Geelong Convention. Similar developments took place in New Zealand from the mid to late 1890s. Piggin further notes that, as a result of these developments, 'the most prestigious institutions of the evangelical movement and the accepted thermometer of its spiritual temperature were overseas missions'.<sup>27</sup> Several Australian based missionary ventures can be dated from this period – for example the formation of the

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<sup>22</sup> *NZB*, March 1885, p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> *NZB*, May 1885, p. 71.

<sup>24</sup> 'Minutes of the New Zealand Baptist Union Conference, 1885', in *NZB*, November 1885, p. 166.

<sup>25</sup> Stuart Piggin, *Evangelical Christianity in Australia: Spirit, Word and World*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 49-50. See also Hugh Jackson, *Churches and People in Australia and New Zealand, 1860-1930*, Wellington: Allen and Unwin, 1987, pp. 48-65.

<sup>26</sup> Jackson, p. 63.

<sup>27</sup> Piggin, p. 66.

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Queensland Kanaka Mission (and the later South Sea Evangelical Mission), the Australasian branch of the China Inland Mission, the various Australasian Church Missionary Associations, and the Australasian South American Mission (formed out of the original Canadian based South American Evangelical Mission).

Perhaps the most curious development of this period, however, was the emergence of the Poona and Indian Village Mission from 1893. The details of its origins are hazy, but the seemingly dynamic figure of Charles Reeve (the mission's founder) was central to its initiation and early growth. Little is known of his background and biographical details. It seems that his own Christianity was enlivened by revivalist influences in the late 1870s (possibly in Melbourne), and that he formed the mission with M. E. Gavin in response to a visit to Australia from an Indian Christian seeking missionary help in Poona.<sup>28</sup> An initial group, including Reeve and Gavin, must have departed shortly after. By 1896 there were up to ten Australian missionaries in Poona.

In that same year there is evidence of a representative in Dunedin acting on behalf of the Poona mission locally. Late in 1896 Reeve probably made his first visit to New Zealand, to speak on behalf of the mission and to seek recruits. He remained for several months. Reports of his meetings and lists of those involved as local supporters suggest that he quickly gained a ready profile in a range of denominations – but especially amongst Baptists, Brethren and Presbyterians.<sup>29</sup> Reeve continued to be welcomed to church pulpits and town hall platforms in New Zealand for at least the next decade. More spectacular than this, however, was the relative rush of recruits to his mission between 1897 and 1899. All up in the late 1890s at least forty-two New Zealanders went to India with the Poona and Indian Village Mission. Of these thirty-eight went between 1897 and 1899.<sup>30</sup> As far as I can work out this was an unprecedented level of recruitment, in such a short time span, by any missionary

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<sup>28</sup> Bare biographical details are alluded to in: Charles F. Reeve, 'How to Obtain Pentecostal Christianity', *White Already to Harvest*, 4:11 (November 1899), p. 154. For a brief outline of the mission's beginnings see the SIM website: [www.sim.org/aboutSIM/](http://www.sim.org/aboutSIM/).

<sup>29</sup> Reports in the *NZB*: January 1899, p. 11; February 1899, p. 28; April 1897, p. 59; May 1897, p. 75. *The Press*: 8 March, 1897, p. 5; 12 April 1897, p. 5. *Otago Witness*, 14 January 1897, p. 16. 'List of New Zealand Council Members', *White Already to Harvest*, 3:1 (January 1898), p. 13.

<sup>30</sup> Morrison, pp. 86-87. Biographical details are also to be found in pp. 296-351.

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organisation up until the present day. Whilst New Zealanders continued to work with the mission in later decades, they never did so again in the same numbers.

The details of this process are sketchy at best. It seems safe to assume, however, that recruits issued from the public profile and presence of Reeve in these years – both in churches and at various Christian conventions. Whilst a core of recruits came from the southern provinces of Otago and Southland (the heartland of missionary recruitment and interest in these early decades), the balance came from a broad range of other localities. They were drawn mostly from Anglican, Baptist and Brethren churches, with smaller numbers of Presbyterians and Methodists. At the same time the mission, and others like the China Inland Mission, regularly became recipients of the fundraising done by Presbyterian and other denominational youth groups (most particularly those banded together under the umbrella of Christian Endeavour).

It seems fair to argue, then, that this development reflected the confluence of external missionary agency or initiative and local religious enthusiasm. Missionary support and enthusiasm was a latent but potent force in the New Zealand of the 1890s, which only needed an outside spark to set it alight. In this respect it may have been purely incidental that the catalyst was from Australia. Yet it also illustrated that geographic proximity was advantageous for ongoing contact, support and recruitment. At the same time there were tensions in this relationship. In Presbyterian circles, for example, there were serious misgivings about the impact of the Poona and Indian Village Mission on denominational missionary finances.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore criticism turned on such issues as theology and strategy. Some referred to the Poona mission as a ‘Plymouthistic Mission’ (meaning Plymouth Brethren), from which ‘we shall soon see considerable departures from the faith’.<sup>32</sup> Again it was incidental that this was a problem emanating from Australia. The emerging faith missions were possibly perceived as a threat by the denominations. In this respect New Zealand Anglican and Presbyterian missionary growth and innovation in the 1890s may be partly understood to have been reactions to this threat.

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<sup>31</sup> *Christian Outlook*, 4 September 1897, p. 376.

<sup>32</sup> *Christian Outlook*, 9 October 1897, pp. 443-444 and 16 October 1897, p. 456.

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### 3. The Influence of Australian Missionary Training Institutions

Perhaps the most discernible and enduring influence in this period came from the growing number of Australian based missionary training institutions. For most denominations in New Zealand there were options for ministry training for those men seeking ordination prior to missionary work. Lay training options in this period were more or less non-existent for women and for men not seeking ordination. By 1900 there was a general training home in Dunedin for women which, in 1903, was handed over to the Presbyterian Church as a deaconess training institute.<sup>33</sup> A later attempt to establish a missionary training institute in Whangarei in 1912 appears to have been premature and came to nothing.<sup>34</sup> It was only with the establishment of the New Zealand Bible Training Institute (1922) and the Baptist Theological College (1926) that lay training became locally available to a broader spectrum of the population – especially those seeking work with nondenominational or Brethren missions.

By way of contrast there was a growing array of lay training options in Australia from the early 1890s, and it was to these that many New Zealanders turned in preparation for a missionary vocation. Again most of these institutions catered for non-denominational missionaries and were intensely practical in their training focus. One such home, founded in Melbourne in 1892 and run by a Mrs W. Warren was typical. Training centred on core biblical, doctrinal and historical subjects, basic medicine and first aid, ‘Gospel Work’ and other practical evangelistic and pastoral activities.<sup>35</sup> By 1900 New Zealanders were to be found at an array of such homes in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. For nondenominational missionaries the most influential of these were a combination of Adelaide institutions for men and women, founded in 1893 by the Presbyterian missionary enthusiast the Rev. Lockhart Morton.<sup>36</sup> The

<sup>33</sup> ‘Missions Report, 1903’, *PCNZ PGA*, pp. 101, 160.

<sup>34</sup> *NZB*, May 1912, p. 88; J. Oswald Sanders, *Expanding Horizons: The Story of the New Zealand Bible Training Institute*, Auckland: Institute Press, 1971, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup> E. C. Millard, *The Same Lord: An Account of the Mission Tour of the Rev. George. C. Grubb*, London: E. Marlborough and Co., 1893, p. 356.

<sup>36</sup> Marcus L. Loane, *The Story of the China Inland Mission in Australia and New Zealand, 1890-1964*, Sydney: Overseas Missionary Fellowship, 1965, pp. 14-15. These were Angas College (or Bel Air College) for men and Kensington College for women. See also David Parker, ‘Lockhart Morton’, in Brian Dickie (ed.), *The Australian Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*, Sydney: Evangelical History Association, 1994, pp. 269-270.

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move west to Australia thus typically preceded the longer term move overseas for many prospective New Zealander missionaries from the 1890s.

Two of these institutions were particularly important for the training of New Zealand Anglican women, especially those who worked with the New Zealand Church Missionary Association (from 1916 the New Zealand Church Missionary Society). The NZCMA was formed in late 1892 following the influential Australasian tour by the Rev. Robert Stewart (CMS China) and the CMS editorial secretary Eugene Stock.<sup>37</sup> Whilst women, from its inception, made up the majority of NZCMA missionaries (up to 1930 at least), they lacked a suitable training venue in New Zealand. From 1894 the NZCMA executive had reached an agreement with Marsden Training Home in Sydney over the training of its women missionaries. This was a distinctively Anglican institution that sought to foster ‘spiritual evangelical Christians’ who would be ‘staunch members of the Church of England’.<sup>38</sup> A further agreement, in 1903, also saw women being trained at St Hilda’s Missionary Training Home in Melbourne – an institution that was also used by the China Inland Mission.<sup>39</sup> Both of these institutions had high expectations of their students. Courses were invariably two to three years in length, with the same balance of biblical, doctrinal, and practical training cited earlier for Mrs Warren’s Home in Melbourne. An undated curriculum document for the Sydney Home indicated that women’s education was no less sophisticated than that of men. Courses in apologetics, comparative religion and pedagogy complemented the core courses.<sup>40</sup> High academic expectations of both Anglican men and women were further entrenched in the wake of the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910. In 1912 the NZCMA Executive acted upon the recommendations of Commission Five of the Conference (regarding missionary training), by setting formal standards for various categories of training.<sup>41</sup> Apart from nurses a university education was recommended for all men and women.

<sup>37</sup> *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, June 1893, pp. 458-460.

<sup>38</sup> Martin to Chatterton, 25 January 1894, ANG 143/3.22, Box 6, NZCMA Archives, Auckland.

<sup>39</sup> Barnes to Holloway, 10 September 1903, ANG 143/3.9, Box 4, NZCMA Archives.

<sup>40</sup> ‘Prospectuses, Exam Papers’, in *Ephemera* (6), ANG 143/5.3, Box 22, NZCMA Archives.

<sup>41</sup> ‘Preparation of Missionaries’, in *Historical and General Papers*, ANG 143/1.6 (2), Box 1, NZCMA Archives.

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There was also a mandatory phase of theological training required which, for women, continued to be provided by the Australian institutions until at least World War Two.

Whilst there seems to have been a relatively harmonious relationship between New Zealand mission agencies and their Australian educational providers, there were also some inherent tensions. Again the experience of Anglican women sheds some light on this. In the first instance there were tensions over where authority lay. NZCMA candidates were under the overall authority of the Executive. As students, however, they were also under the authority of their respective training institutions. New Zealand women at Sydney's Marsden Training Home, for example, were to be 'subject to the control' of the Home's Committee and of 'the Lady Superintendent'.<sup>42</sup> There was a certain late Victorian era girls' high school feel about these institutions, where the strict rule of the 'Lady Superintendent' was not unlike that of a school headmistress. Some individual students obviously struggled with this regime. The tension over authority was further exacerbated by the problems posed by the geographical distance between New Zealand and Australia. A handful of New Zealand women had attended St Hilda's in Melbourne between 1903 and 1907 and this was to all intents and purposes a quite amicable arrangement. Late in 1907 Ethel Baker returned to New Zealand for the summer highly critical of the expectations and operation of St Hilda's, which she argued left students exhausted and unfit for immediate missionary departure.<sup>43</sup> This came as news to the New Zealand based executive which was obviously embarrassed and acutely aware of the relational delicacies involved. These criticisms, it seems, were not isolated to one person and prompted a full investigation by the NZCMA. Their conclusion was that the 'constant grind from morning to night'<sup>44</sup> was a cause for concern, and the correspondence that ensued indicated that the Institution at least listened to the New Zealand concerns.<sup>45</sup> It is less clear if changes were made.

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<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Martin to Chatterton, 25 January 1894, ANG 143/3.22, Box 6, NZCMS Archives.

<sup>43</sup> Typed extract from NZCMA Ladies' Committee Minute Book, 10 December 1907, ANG 143/3.112, 'St Hilda's', Box 15, NZCMS Archives.

<sup>44</sup> 'Notes', n.d., ANG 143/3.112, 'St Hilda's', Box 15, NZCMS Archives.

<sup>45</sup> Barnes to Carr, 28 March 1908, ANG 143/3.9, 'Barnes', Box 4, NZCMS Archives.

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Reflection on this incident suggests that the Australia – New Zealand relationship may have been a derivative problem. It might be more significant to probe further a more generic issue - that is the gendered nature of missionary training - and therefore to ask to what extent women candidates were under more pressure than their male counterparts. Ethel Baker's criticisms highlighted the fact that women students at St Hilda's were expected to run many of the domestic functions of the home as well as do their studies and participate in practical church or community work outside the Home.<sup>46</sup> It is unclear whether the same demands were incumbent upon men in their equivalent institutions. That men saw this differently was hinted at by an Australian doctor who, in his report on the systems in operation at St Hilda's, wrote:

It seems to us that if a young woman cannot stand the strain inseparably and necessarily connected with a Training Home she would be unfit for the arduous work of the Mission field.... Concerning house work we think it might be even beneficial if they did somewhat more, say one hour daily!<sup>47</sup>

Again, as with the Poona and Indian Village Mission, it may have been purely incidental that the problem manifested itself in Australia.

### **Concluding Reflections**

At this point we are best placed to pose a set of hypotheses that emerge from these examples and from the wider literature. They are by no means 'givens' in this discussion, but are at best suggestive of further research and reflection. In the first place we might hypothesise that the relationship between Australia and New Zealand was akin to that of an older and younger sibling. Whilst it was obvious that there was a growing missionary consciousness amongst church goers and leaders in New Zealand by the late 1880s and 1890s, it was also true that much of the early initiative and drive came from enthusiasts in Australia. This was certainly true in the case of the Baptists, with the influence of Mead and the South Australian Baptist Missionary Society. It could also be argued that the emergence in New Zealand of such groups as the CIM, NZCMA and PIVM during the 1890s would have been less possible without direct Australian enthusiasm and encouragement. This hypothesis, however, would be less easy to sustain in terms of the longer term relationship. The mixed fortunes of the

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<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Dr J. J. Kitchen to NZCMA, 15 February 1908, in ANG 143/3.112, 'St Hilda's', Box 15, NZCMS Archives. Note that Dr Kitchen was closely involved in the administration of the Australasian branch of the China Inland Mission.

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Melbourne based Australasian South American Mission between 1901 and 1907, and the emergence of the phoenix Bolivian Indian Mission out of these ashes, highlights that early missionary enthusiasm in Australia was just as fragile as it was in New Zealand.<sup>48</sup> From 1900 onwards there were also numerous instances of New Zealanders moving across the Tasman to take up leading executive positions with Australasian denominational and nondenominational missions.

We might also usefully hypothesise, then, that whilst the Australian and New Zealand Protestant missionary movements developed within their own unique national settings, ultimately it may be more useful to conceive of an Australasian Protestant missionary movement. In many ways these trans-Tasman missionary ventures were decidedly ambiguous, and it becomes difficult to categorically state which were 'New Zealand' or 'Australian'. This was particularly the case for such groups as the China Inland Mission, the Australasian South American Mission and the South Sea Evangelical Mission. With executive functions variously located on both sides of the Tasman Sea, intricate familial trans-national familial links, and missionaries drawn with little distinction from both sides, it might be more accurate to consider these in wholly Australasian terms.

This is by no means a new way of understanding our histories. As early as 1979, for example, Ian Breward questioned the appropriateness of using a 'framework of national history' for the writing of New Zealand religious history. He argued instead that religion should be analysed in much broader terms – for example nineteenth century religion understood as 'an extension of the histories of British churches'.<sup>49</sup> With respect to missionary involvement more specifically I would further hypothesise that the New Zealand movement needs to be at least partially understood in the context of two sub-regional groupings – Australasia/the South Pacific and the Pacific Rim (including South and East Asia and both South and North America).<sup>50</sup> In turn we

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<sup>48</sup> Morrison, pp. 97-99.

<sup>49</sup> Ian Breward, 'Religion and New Zealand Society', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 13:2 (1979), p.141.

<sup>50</sup> Hugh Morrison, "'We carry the joyous news that has made us free": New Zealand Missionaries, the Bolivian Indian Mission and Global Engagement, 1908-1930', *New Zealand Journal of History*, forthcoming 2005.

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also need to set both the Australian and New Zealand movements within an even wider set of cultural and historical contexts – that of the modern international missionary movement. New Zealand and Australia are small enough to enable a truly national and trans-denominational study to be made of the wider Western missionary movement in microcosm. At present there are very few, if any, comprehensive studies of national missionary movements. Whilst the context is unique, a study of the New Zealand and Australian movement is as much a study of our inextricable involvement in the international missionary movement as it is a study of our emerging national or regional religious identities. Then again it could be argued that both countries were simply a subset of the British movement, or of the wider Anglo-American movement.<sup>51</sup> If so, then the study of the Australasian movement may facilitate a more nuanced understanding of the wider international phenomenon. The issue of allegiance and identity, for example, needs to be teased out not just with respect to the British Empire, but also in terms of wider cultural matrices, the growing influence of American Christianity, particular theological camps (especially after World War One) or denominational loyalties, and emerging regional identities and alliances after World War Two.

Finally we might hypothesise that the trans-Tasman missionary movements provide evidence of a vibrant and mutually sustaining relationship that survived well past Federation in 1901. In New Zealand historiography, at least, it seems to be a commonly accepted idea that Federation marked a decidedly final parting of the ways between the two sets of colonies. James Belich depicts New Zealand as the ‘seventh child’ of the late nineteenth century Australasian family that, in 1901, definitively departed its Tasman world (in favour of a closer extended familial relationship with Britain).<sup>52</sup> Whilst this was essentially true in political terms, it was by no means true with respect to a broader set of cultural parameters. The evidence from the missionary

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<sup>51</sup> For discussion of the trans-Atlantic dimensions of the movement see Andrew Porter, ‘Church History, History of Christianity, Religious History: Some Reflections on British Missionary Enterprise Since the Late Eighteenth Century’, *Church History*, 71, 13 (2002), pp.556-558. Here Porter draws attention to the notion of the ‘Atlantic System’ or connection (between the Old and New Worlds), in which American missionary involvement was an extension or variant of the missionary impetus emanating from Britain and continental Europe. If so, then New Zealand and Australia was also (albeit from a distance) intricately tied into that system.

<sup>52</sup> James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000*, Auckland, 2001, pp.46-52.

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movements is that this relationship existed in part until well into the post World War Two era. This was true of things like missionary marriages and family constitution, recruitment, administration and policy formation. The importance of Australian based missionary training, for the New Zealand movement, also endured in some quarters. At the same time, however, it was also true that this facet of the relationship was substantially changed with the advent of lay training options in Auckland during the 1920s.

The great early Church rhetorician Tertullian, in arguing against the adoption of Greek philosophy by the Christian apologists, was said to have issued this challenge ‘what does Athens have to do with Jerusalem? What does the Academy have to do with the Church?’<sup>53</sup> In a similar vein some may utter the challenge ‘what has Australia to do with New Zealand?’ Historical wisdom would say ‘lots’ and, furthermore, that ‘we should have got used to it by now’. Whilst acknowledging the need to pursue historiographies that allow for the nuances and contextual differences between the two, I am arguing here that there also needs to be a greater co-operation between the two. The Protestant missionary phenomenon was worked out in both countries in strikingly similar terms, and the two existed in what was at times a close symbiotic relationship. A study of its interrelated parts is necessary in order to understand it for its own sake, and for the light it sheds on our larger national, regional and international histories. It is nothing less than our professional responsibility, perhaps, to seek ways of sharing information, of comparing research, of conducting comparative research and of ultimately celebrating both our unique identities and our intertwined journeys.

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Rotorua, New Zealand  
October 2004

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<sup>53</sup> Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1984, p. 53.