

**THE WRITING ON THE WALL**  
**RECONCILIATION AT ST JAMES'**  
**A DISCUSSION PAPER**

**PREPARED FOR THE PARISH**

**BY**

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**'You can't have reconciliation unless you know the truth.'**

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, ABC Radio National, Sunday 28 December 1997

**Pilate asked him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.' Pilate asked him, 'What is truth?'**

John 18:37-38

**Parish Church of St James  
King Street  
Sydney**

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# **THE WRITING ON THE WALL RECONCILIATION AT ST JAMES' A DISCUSSION PAPER**

## **Introduction**

At its meeting of 2 December 1997 the Parish Council asked me to prepare and implement a way by which to determine the place of this parish in the process of reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. What follows is a discussion paper I have prepared to set out some of the questions that might be involved in that exploration. This paper does not seek to set out any definitive answers to the many questions raised both by parishioners and in the general society. Neither does it propose what, if anything, the parish should do. It does seek to set the boundaries of the discussion within the parish. It also seeks to lay to rest some of the myths and misapprehensions that come from all sides of the debate. For this reason the paper has what may seem to be a large number and quantity of endnotes. I have included there a considerable amount of detail that may be informative for readers. Please do not ignore them.

I do not pretend to be a neutral participant in this discussion. Like many others, I hold strong views on the matters we will discuss. I cannot hide that fact and I do not intend to do so. What my views are will emerge both here and in any discussions that follow. What I undertake, however, is to find a process that will lead, if not to a complete consensus, to a frank and open exchange of views. I also undertake to help parishioners to avoid errors of fact or history that might affect how we think about the questions that will arise.

## **How has the question arisen at St James'?**

In a sermon preached on Australia Day 1997, the Rev'd David Gill drew attention to some memorial plaques on the walls of the church. After describing the plaques, he said:

Three plaques, each proclaiming the suffering of European colonisers at the hands of indigenous Australians. But not a word about the anguish of Aboriginal people at the hands of their invaders. Our beloved building silently teaches a seriously distorted history of the nation.

Why worry, some would say, when history is past and over? The point is that while history may be past, it is certainly not over. Our perceptions of yesterday influence our decisions of today and shape our dreams for tomorrow. As the Governor-General reminded Australians, in an important speech last August, "The past is never fully gone. It stays to shape what we are and what we do."

Coming to terms with that past will mean dealing with what Bishop Bruce Wilson calls "Australia's original sin". It will require intensified efforts towards a just reconciliation between indigenous and immigrant Australians. And, God willing, it will lead us to discover what the Christian gospel suggests is the ever-present possibility of a new beginning.<sup>1</sup>

The memorials to which he referred are those of Captain Collet Barker,<sup>2</sup> John Gilbert<sup>3</sup> and Edmund Kennedy.<sup>4</sup> Kennedy's memorial contains a section devoted to his Aboriginal companion, Jackey Jackey.<sup>5</sup> The issue David Gill raises is not that of the events themselves, but the memorials to those events; what they say and do not say.

### **The writing on the wall<sup>6</sup>**

In commemorating deaths at the hands of indigenous Australians, the memorials both describe and make implications about the relationships between those indigenous Australians and their European victims. Captain Barker is described as having been 'treacherously murdered' by Aboriginals. There is no doubt that Aboriginals speared Barker while he was exploring the mouth of the Murray River in 1831. Whether their action was either treacherous or murder is another question. Treachery implies a form of betrayal based on a commitment of loyalty. A dictionary definition includes such phrases as 'violating allegiance', 'betraying trust'. Murder is a legal word implying unlawful killing with malice aforethought or a wicked intention to kill another person. Another meaning of 'murder' is to kill inhumanly or barbarously. The circumstances in which the behaviour of the Aboriginals who killed Barker might be described as either treacherous or murder are not apparent from the memorial itself. Charles Sturt was of the opinion that his death was in retaliation for the misdeeds of some white sealers who had previously visited the place.

There is a profound irony in the story of Collet Barker. During the time that he was commandant of the penal establishment in Raffles Bay on the Cobourg Peninsula in what is now the Northern Territory, he developed good relationships with the local Aboriginals. Professor D J Mulvaney says:

Surgeon Braidwood Wilson<sup>7</sup> arrived about this time, a survivor from shipwreck. He and Barker established an immediate rapport. After their first meeting, Barker noted with pleasure, "*that he thinks with myself, that most of the quarrels with the blacks have commenced with fault on our side*". When Wilson published his *Narrative of a voyage Round the World* in 1835, he remarked that Barker:

*had a great deal of difficulty to contend with, in his method of treating the natives; as no other individual in the settlement could be brought to consider these poor beings in any other light than wild beasts.*

The mutual respect and humanity which such attitudes fostered is evident in Barker's journal.<sup>8</sup>

Commenting on Barker's death, Mulvaney and Green describe the local situation in this way.

These were violent times for Aborigines on Encounter Bay, as they suffered the full impact of lawless sealers, who, based on Kangaroo Island, captured women and killed if necessary. Sturt was probably correct to claim that Barker's murder was in retribution for the mayhem inflicted on their people. ...

In Sydney on 23 May 1831, the Governor issued an order which combined a eulogy of Barker's service with a warning to officials

‘to be more guarded, when likely to meet with Natives who have not been accustomed to see or associate with Europeans’. Unfortunately there were already many settlers willing to assume that Aborigines were treacherous savages to be ‘guarded’ against by carrying arms. In any case, Barker probably died because the ‘natives’ were accustomed to associate with Europeans. As the reader of Barker’s journals must conclude, the Aborigines got it terribly wrong. They chose as a pay-back victim one of the most humane friends that Aboriginal people had encountered in a responsible post since 1788.<sup>9</sup>

A person whose reputation was that of humanity and mutual respect died at the hands of Aborigines. Given that Barker had such a reputation, it may be understandable why his fellow officers, who erected the plaque, chose the words they did.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, they may simply have assumed that any death of a white man at the hands of Aborigines should be so described.

Like Barker, John Gilbert and Edmund Kennedy were killed in attacks that seem from the existing reports not to have been directly provoked. In both these cases too, there have been suggestions that the deaths were in retaliation for the actions of others. Various forms of pay-back were practised among the traditional peoples of Australasia and Oceania, so these actions must be seen in their context. To the Europeans they may have seemed unprovoked and treacherous. To the indigenous persons they may have been the proper fulfilment of traditional law.

### **Not only in Australia**

The plaques about whites killed by Aborigines are not the only ones on our church walls that refer to white men killed by indigenous persons. Three plaques record the deaths of two soldiers and a naval officer in the First Maori War in New Zealand. In 1840, the British Crown entered into the Treaty of Waitangi with a number of Maori chiefs. That treaty set out certain conditions for the British occupation of New Zealand and still dominates race relationships in that country.

From 1843 to 1848, the First Maori War<sup>11</sup> was conducted between the British and certain Maori groups that rejected the implementation of the Treaty of Waitangi. On 1 July 1845, Lieutenant George Philpotts RN ‘fell at the assault on the *pa*<sup>12</sup> at Ohaeawae’.<sup>13</sup> Lieutenant Edward (also known as Jack) Beatty of the 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment led the advance party in the assault.<sup>14</sup> Beatty was wounded in the attack and died ten days later.<sup>15</sup> On 6 August 1846, Ensign Henry Middleton Blackburn, also of the 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment, was ‘killed in action with the rebel natives in the Valley of the Horokiwi’.<sup>16</sup>

Another plaque records the deaths of Lieutenant Edward Murray Tupper RN and Seaman William Kennedy of the HMS *Iris* who were killed by the ‘natives of Tana’ while on service ashore on 1 July 1858. The *Iris*, a British frigate, arrived for service on the Australia Station of the Royal Navy in 1857 and was the local flagship from 1859 to 1860. With other ships on the station it took part in the Second Maori War in 1860. The two persons in the memorial were killed on the island of Tana, a part of the present day Vanuatu.<sup>17</sup> They were engaged in a punitive expedition against the

inhabitants of the island who had killed the master and two seamen from a Sydney schooner *Anne and Jane*.<sup>18</sup>

A victim of the Second Maori War, which lasted from 1860 to 1870, was Captain John Phelps of the 14th Regiment, who died on 25 November 1863 from wounds received in an engagement at Rangariri three days earlier.<sup>19</sup> Phelps is the only victim mentioned in these memorials who was born in Australia.

More significant ecclesiastically is the plaque commemorating John Coleridge Patteson,<sup>20</sup> Bishop of Melanesia. Patteson was killed on Nukapu, a small island in the northern part of the Santa Cruz group in what is now the Solomon Islands, on 20 September 1871. His death is believed to have been in retaliation for the activities of blackbirders who had kidnapped some local men several months earlier. Patteson's memorial is in Latin<sup>21</sup> and records only the fact of his martyrdom and none of its circumstances. His killers are not identified. The memorial expresses no opinion about those who killed Patteson other than that implied by his martyr status.

### **The very stones cry out from the wall<sup>22</sup>**

The fact of the Treaty of Waitangi and the military nature of the deaths of six of the men celebrated, gives their memorials a quite different flavour from those of the Australians. It is entirely likely that the 'treacherous' Aboriginals who 'murdered' Captain Barker were also engaged in what they saw as a self-defence exercise. Similar comments might be made about the death of Kennedy, although there is less information available upon which to base a firm opinion. In the case of Gilbert it appears that the attack on his camp was the result of the actions of Aboriginals accompanying him. They had apparently assaulted some local women. In this case, also, some claims about self-protection might be made. Overall, the various accounts of deaths at the hands of indigenous persons that are recorded on the walls of St James' reveal the complex and conflicted interactions between Europeans and the local inhabitants as European expansion into the Pacific area continued during the nineteenth century.

The tone of the five memorials related to military action is more dispassionate than the tone of those memorials relating to the deaths of the three explorers. In some ways death is to be expected in military expeditions. When it comes, it is to an extent impersonal. Those who actually fell were not the result of any special selection. By contrast, those who died in what were regarded as unprovoked attacks were seen to have been personally wronged. In retrospect these judgements may also be questioned.

The point of mentioning these memorials in some detail is not to deny any of the events as recorded. It is to point out issues in the interpretation and meaning of those events. The implicit and explicit doctrine of *terra nullius* that denied the recognition of Aboriginal occupation of Australia stands in stark contrast to the Treaty of Waitangi. Early colonists, and particularly Samuel Marsden, who dedicated St James' church, were more impressed with the Maoris, whose settled culture they could the more easily understand, than the Aboriginals, whose less settled ways made them more inscrutable to the English.<sup>23</sup>

The Maoris, in particular, conducted their warfare from strongly defended and well-constructed stockades and made good use of European firearms. Their military opponents easily recognised this form of warfare. Operating in small bands and in bush settings, the Australian Aboriginals adopted a form of guerrilla warfare quite new to British soldiers. This has made it easier to ignore the defensive actions of Australian Aboriginals and to interpret their behaviour in ways that scarcely do them justice. It is a common complaint of modern historians that the defensive guerrilla war waged by Aboriginal Australians against their dispossessors has been expunged from memory or interpreted in ways of which Barker's memorial is an example.

That there was a significant guerrilla war waged in the Sydney area has become better known since the publication of the historical novel *Pemulway the Rainbow Warrior* in 1987.<sup>24</sup> This book, based on white historical records and black oral history, tells the story of the leader of the Eora people, the original inhabitants of the Sydney area. Pemulway conducted his defensive campaign until his death in 1802. It was continued until 1805 under the leadership of his son, Tedbury. The details of this activity have, for the most part, gone without comment in the history as received by us. We may not assume that the indigenous inhabitants of other parts of Australia were less strenuous in defence of their lands and way of life.<sup>25</sup>

Professor Henry Reynolds of James Cook University has been writing about Aboriginal resistance to European expansion for some time. He notes that one of the effects of thinking that the land was unoccupied, *terra nullius*, was an increased tendency towards violence. If the land belonged to nobody, there was no need to consult or deal with its owners. If the land was unoccupied, the apparent inhabitants were interlopers, to be resisted and displaced rather than respected.<sup>26</sup>

Our memorials also reveal another aspect of the European view of Aboriginals. In the European mind, Aboriginals had what Henry Reynolds calls a 'contradictory role'. On the one hand they were loyal and faithful. This is the role of Jackey Jackey. His devotion to Kennedy, almost child-like in its simplicity, is praised. On the other hand Aboriginals were wild and savage. This is the role of the slayers of Collet Barker. Their savagery is condemned. The contradiction is drawn even within the description of Jackey Jackey's devotion, which is contrasted with the actions of the 'savages' who killed Kennedy.

This way of viewing Aboriginals accompanied the idea that, whatever attributes Aboriginals had, they were the result of their 'natural' state. Aboriginal qualities came from 'instinct rather than intellect, biology rather than culture'.<sup>27</sup> If people are viewed primarily in biological terms, they are deprived of an essential ingredient of their humanity. They are closer to the animal kingdom than the human community. Thus Aboriginals came to occupy a place analogous to either the faithful guide dog or the vicious pit bull terrier. In their guide dog role they were valuable and even necessary.<sup>28</sup> In their bull terrier role they were to be destroyed. All these features appear or are implicit in the memorials on our walls.

None of the events recorded in these memorials occurred locally. Apart from Kennedy, who is said to have been a communicant at St James', none of those commemorated appears to have had an association with the parish. As Sydney was

the regional headquarters, the naval and military memorials were placed here rather than in the places where the events occurred. These memorials were thus not, like many others on the walls, erected by grieving families in their parish church. Neither are they the responses of the parish community itself. These memorials, even that of parishioner Kennedy, are in the church because it was seen as an appropriate place for the larger community to make its permanent record of events and feelings. These are public expressions of community sentiment, not the permanent record of private grief. In that case, the public role of their continued presence will also need to be taken into account.

### **Can memories be healed?**

Until I undertook the research that has led to this paper, I never sought to understand the memorials on St James's walls. In this, I suppose that I am like most of those who have sat Sunday by Sunday at services. I took the plaques at face value, little understanding what they might reveal about our history, about our contemporary world and the pain upon which it has been built. Likewise I did not consider in any depth the original owners of the land on which the church stands.

A recent paper from the Australian Catholic Social Welfare Commission said that, 'at the heart of the reconciliation process is the question of how we share the land that is Australia. ... The way forward is to recognise the common ground and the sacred ground that is shared by all'.<sup>29</sup> Our memorials tell us that the present situation came about with much conflict. It remains to be seen whether conflict will characterise our future.

We should not be surprised that it is proving difficult for us to arrive at the common point suggested by the commission's words. After all, most of us are being invited to change the way in which we think about ourselves and our country. Not that we are alone in this. The process of colonisation has left a similar legacy in many parts of the world and particularly in those places where the colonisers came to outnumber the indigenous inhabitants. Australia shares this history with New Zealand, the United States and Canada. Much of South America has similar problems. In the Pacific region, Fiji has experienced communal tension between indigenous Fijians and the descendants of the Indians imported as labourers in the sugar cane industry. Where colonising minorities retained power, the transition to majority rule has also been difficult, as we know from South Africa.

Among principally immigrant countries, Australia has a good record of communal relationships. Nevertheless, however well we may think that our cultural mixture has worked, we have yet to come to terms with the original inhabitants whom we displaced. What are some of the difficulties that we face?

### **Language**

Some of us are worried about the language we use in this debate. The word 'indigenous' is a good example. Taken in its strict dictionary definition, the word means 'originating in and characterising a particular region or country; native'. In that sense, the majority of the inhabitants of Australia are indigenous to it. They were born here. They originate here. That some of their ancestors were born elsewhere does not detract from that.

More recent use of the word has appropriated it to be synonymous with ‘aboriginal’, one who was here from the beginning, or who was here before someone else arrived. Language is important. Its meanings have deep implications. In the accounts set out in the endnotes to this paper, several terms are applied to the original inhabitants. Among them are such terms as ‘savages’ and ‘natives’. In the language of their times, those words had connotations different from those we give to them. ‘Savage’ referred to a perception of the state of civilisation those people possessed. ‘Native’ referred to their indigenous quality. We would, however, be foolish to use those terms today, even if we intended their original meanings. They now have unacceptable connotations.

We can do only a certain amount to control the ways in which language is used. Certainly we should refrain from using language that we now know gives offence. We ought also to refrain from taking offence at the language of others. Above all we need to see beyond the symbols of language to the reality that we care about. That is to say, we should discuss the real issues, not the way in which they are expressed.

### **Politics and reconciliation**

Is reconciliation too political for St James’? It is inevitable that an issue as sensitive as this should provoke political division. In a sense that is a measure of its importance. Any issue that is important in national life will ultimately require action of some kind or other. Action in the public realm requires the use of power. The use of power requires political will.

To say that there can be no role for St James’ in national reconciliation because it is too political, is to say that there is no role for St James’ in any public matter. Surely we do not believe that? The question is rather whether we can make a sensible contribution. Such a contribution would be one that has an authenticity for us. It would be one that comes out of our own commitments, not from external sources, whether political, religious or social. If we cannot act in that way, we should not act at all.

### **What does it mean to say sorry?**

Perhaps the most difficult part of this discussion will revolve around what it means to say sorry. In September 1996 I went with Bishop Richard Randerson to present a submission to the stolen children inquiry on behalf of the Social Responsibilities Commission of General Synod. At that hearing, Bishop Randerson and I delivered an apology on behalf of the Anglican Church.<sup>30</sup>

In the course of the hearing we had a discussion with the commissioners about what it meant to offer an apology. We made it clear, and they agreed, that no person can be held accountable for the activities of another. There is such a thing as corporate responsibility, but that cannot operate over time without evidence of a continuing deliberate purpose. On the other hand, absolute individualism will not work either. None of us is unrelated to the activities of our forebears. We eagerly appropriate to ourselves those activities of which we are justly proud. We recognise, for example, the contribution made not only to the nation, but also to ourselves, by the Anzacs,

although none of us had any part in that event. We cannot have it both ways, rejoicing in the good but not regretting the bad.

As far as the specifics of the child removal policies are concerned, many of us cannot argue that we are at a distance from those policies and practices. Child removal policies were implemented until the 1970s. Thus any Australian citizen over the age of about forty has voted for governments that designed and implemented those policies. The policies were largely bipartisan. Neither can we now deny in the broader sense that we are the beneficiaries of the actions of our forebears, for better or for worse. As Robert Manne has written:

Without their personal participation, individuals do not bear guilt for shameful episodes in their country's history. On the other hand, because we are not only individuals but also members of a nation and because we live not only in the present but within a historical continuum, where the past has shaped the present and where what we make of this past will help shape the future, we are all deeply implicated in the history of our nation. It is not as individuals but as members of the nation, the "imagined community", that the present generation has indeed inherited a responsibility for this country's past.<sup>31</sup>

What the inquiry's commissioners sought from us was not a false acceptance of a responsibility we did not have. It was recognition of what happened, a recognition of its consequences and a recognition of how those consequences still exist. We could not fail but to give them that acknowledgment.

### **Is there a theological question here?**

In the sermon that began this discussion, David Gill referred to the story of Jonah. He pointed out that Jonah was exceptionally hostile to those whom he regarded as foreigners and outsiders. He declined to obey God's command to call the residents of Nineveh to repentance. When he was forced to obey and was, despite his own wishes, successful, he was resentful. The lesson that David drew from this story was that God continually asserts a universal, all-inclusive love even when we would prefer otherwise. More than that, he uses us despite ourselves. If we take this point to heart, we will begin by doubting our own objections to inclusiveness.

The word 'reconciliation' appears frequently in the New Testament. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes reconciliation with one's brother or sister a prerequisite of true worship.<sup>32</sup> More significantly, Paul regards reconciliation as the principal work of Jesus.<sup>33</sup> Just as Jesus, by his death, reconciled us to God, so he reconciled separated groups of people to each other. The example Paul used spoke of Jews and Gentiles, the division that most concerned him.<sup>34</sup> This instance of reconciliation transformed the infant Christian church from a sect to a universal faith. As I have said before,<sup>35</sup> we are beneficiaries of the incorporation of the Gentiles into the church. We have a real interest in reconciliation. Indeed, as it was for Jesus, the principal business of the Christian Church is reconciliation, between people and God, between individuals and between groups.

Thus we cannot doubt that the question of national reconciliation must concern us as Christians. If reconciliation concerns us as Christians it must concern us as a parish. If our walls speak to us of the community concerns of the past and if we have inherited both those walls and that past, how will we speak for the present and to the future?

### Conclusion

I began this paper by trying to understand our own building and some of its memorials. I did so because we cannot do anything unless we understand our own past. I then moved to consider the meanings of those memorials and our relationship to them. What I have not done is suggest any specific consequences that might flow from those understandings. There is a long way to go before we can arrive at any conclusions about consequences. What I invite the parish to do is to begin the exploration that will arrive at those consequences. We ought not to assume that the exploration will be easy. We ought not to avoid it because it will be difficult.

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### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> The Rev'd David Gill, General Secretary, National Council of Churches in Australia, *Jonah—and Australia Day 1997*, St James' Church, 26 January 1997.

<sup>2</sup> The text of the Barker memorial is:

Sacred to the memory of Captain Collet Barker of his Majesty's 39th Regiment of Foot, who was treacherously murdered by the Aboriginal natives on the 30th April, 1831 while endeavouring in the performance of his duty, to ascertain the communication between Lake Alexandrina and the Gulf of St Vincent on the South West coast of New Holland. In token of esteem for the singular worth and in affectionate remembrance of the many virtues of the deceased, this tablet is erected by Colonel Lindesay C.B. [later Major-General Sir Patrick Lindesay; see Douglas Pike (ed), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, (ADB) Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, Vol. 1, p.119] and his brother officers.

Collet Barker (1786-1831) was a captain in the 39th Regiment of Foot. He had served in Sicily, the Peninsular War and Ireland. He arrived with his regiment in Sydney in February 1828. He was first stationed at Fort Wellington on Raffles Bay in what is now the Northern Territory. Here, 'by personal example, and with great courage, he won the confidence of the Aboriginals'. He was then commandant of a penal settlement in King George Sound, the site of the present day Albany in Western Australia. Returning to Sydney in March 1831, he explored the area around the site of Adelaide (Mt Barker is named after him) and continued on to the mouth of the Murray River. It is here that he was speared on 30 April 1831. (ADB, Vol 1, p. 57.)

Mulvaney and Green give the following account of Barker's death:

The *Isabella* anchored in [the Gulf of St Vincent] on [13 April 1831]. The first three days were spent exploring the coast in small boats between Cape Jervis and Port Gawler. The Onkaparinga River was discovered on 15 April and they established camp. Barker set off inland with his long-time servant or batman, Private James Mills, and Kent, his tedious commissariat officer while at King George Sound. They walked to Mount Lofty and from there they viewed the peak which Sturt [1795-1869, ADB, Vol. 2, pp. 495-498] subsequently named Mount Barker.

The party returned to the *Isabella* on 21 April and spent the time until 27 April investigating the future Port Adelaide, which they discovered from Mount Lofty and the adjacent coast; Barker named the Sturt River. Barker's careful investigation established that no connection

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existed with the Murray river from that coast. On 27 April the same party, now accompanied by two soldiers and two convicts, set out to walk across country from Yankilla Bay to the Murray mouth, which they reached on 29 April.

On the following morning Barker told his party that he must cross the channel in order to gain a view from a high sandhill on the other side, and so survey the country. The river mouth was some 200 yards across and flowing strongly. As Barker and another man were the only persons able to swim, he decided to cross alone. This was despite the testimony of Assistant Surgeon R.M. Davis, aboard the *Isabella*, that Barker was 'indisposed for some days before he left the vessel, and suffered a great deal from pain of stomach and bowels on his journey'.

The tragedy which followed has been retold variously. Sturt's account of events contains some confusion, not surprisingly as he was not present, although his phrases re-echo in later revamped versions. What actually happened depends upon reports supplied to the Governor [Darling] by Kent and Davis, once the *Isabella* reached Sydney. Although Sturt acknowledged Kent's written notes, these have not survived; neither has the log of the *Isabella*.

Barker undressed (Davis referred to him as 'naked'), Kent 'fastened his compass to his head' and he lunged into the water. Davis stated that he crossed safely in about three minutes ... About five minutes later Barker had climbed the steep dune, estimated to be sixty feet high. ... Barker disappeared over the crest and his comrades never saw him again, although it is possible that they heard his agonised cries two hours later.

Out of sight on the other side, Barker evidently continued along the beach where he was followed by three armed Aborigines. The end came when he was struck in the left hip by a spear. He ran into the surf only to be pierced on his right side by another spear. A third missile entered his back and came out his chest and he fell into the water. According to Davis, he was pulled onto the beach and they 'drew their spears backwards and forwards through his body until he was dead'. Sturt has Barker struck in the hip, shoulder and frontally through the chest, followed by 'innumerable wounds' once he was dragged ashore. Both sources agree that they cast his body into the sea.

These gruesome details were obtained a few days later, through co-operative sealers and their female associates. (John Mulvaney and Neville Green, *Commandant of Solitude: the Journals of Captain Collet Barker, 1828-1831*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1992, pp. 23-25.)

<sup>3</sup> The text of the Gilbert memorial is:

*Dulce et decorum est pro scientia mori* ['It is sweet and proper to die for science', an adaptation of Horace, III *Odes*, ii, 13. The original context has 'one's country' (*patria*) instead of 'science'.] This monument is erected by the Colonists of New South Wales in memory of John Gilbert, ornithologist, who was speared by the blacks on the 29th of June, 1845, during the first overland expedition to Port Essington by Dr Ludwig Leichhardt, and his intrepid companions.

John Gilbert (1810?-1845) was a belatedly recognised and significant naturalist who worked with the celebrated John Gould. He met his death while on an expedition with Ludwig Leichhardt near the Gulf of Carpentaria.

The only competent bushman in the party, Gilbert soon became recognised as second-in-command, though like some of his colleagues he did not always harmonise with Leichhardt. He was, moreover, the only member of the party who did not become lost at some time, and the one who best understood the mentality of the Aborigines. Unfortunately, on 28 June 1845 near the Gulf of Carpentaria, Gilbert was killed by a flying spear when natives made a night attack on the expedition's camp, because some of their women had been molested by the two Aborigines with the party. (ADB, Vol. 1, p. 441).

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Ludwig Leichhardt [1813-1848? ADB, Vol. 2, pp. 102-104] records Gilbert's death as follows:

*June 28.*— ... After dinner, Messrs. [John] Roper [1822-1895, ADB, Vol. 6, p. 57] and [James Snowden] Calvert [1825-1884, ADB, Vol. 3, p. 333] retired to their tent, and Mr Gilbert, John [Murphy, aged 16 years], and Brown [Harry Brown, an Aboriginal of the Newcastle tribe], were plating [sic] palm leaves to make a hat, and I stood musing near their fire place, looking at their work, and occasionally joining in their conversation. Mr Gilbert was congratulating himself upon having succeeded in learning to plat [sic]; and, when he had nearly completed a yard, he retired with John to their tent. This was about 7 o'clock; and I stretched myself upon the ground as usual, at a little distance from the fire, and fell into a dose[sic], from which I was suddenly aroused by a loud noise, and a call for help from Calvert and Roper. Natives had suddenly attacked us. They had doubtless watched our movements during the afternoon, and marked the position of the different tents; and, as soon as it was dark, sneaked upon us, and threw a shower of spears at the tents of Calvert, Roper, and Gilbert, and a few at that of Phillips [William Phillips, a prisoner of the Crown], and also one or two towards the fire. Charley [Charles Fisher, an Aboriginal of the Bathurst tribe] and Brown called for caps, which I hastened to find, and, as soon as they were provided, they discharged their guns into the crowd of the natives, who instantly fled, leaving Roper and Calvert pierced with several spears, and severely beaten by their waddies. Several of these spears were barbed, and could not be extracted without difficulty. I had to force one through the arm of Roper, to break of the barb; and to cut another out of the groin of Mr Calvert. John Murphy had succeeded in getting out of the tent, and concealing himself behind a tree, whence he fired at the natives, and severely wounded one of them, before Brown had discharged his gun. Not seeing Gilbert, I asked for him, when Charley told me that our unfortunate companion was no more! He had come out of his tent with his gun, shot, and powder, and handed them to him, when he instantly dropped down dead. Upon receiving this afflicting intelligence, I hastened to the spot, and found Charley's account too true. He was lying on the ground at a little distance from our fire, and, upon examining him, I soon found, to my sorrow, that every sign of life had disappeared. The body was, however, still warm, and I opened the veins of both arms, as well as the temporal artery, but in vain; the stream of life had stopped, and he was numbered with the dead.

... The spear that terminated poor Gilbert's existence, had entered the chest, between the clavicle and the neck; but made so small a wound, that, for some time, I was unable to detect it. From the direction of the wound, he had probably received the spear when stooping to leave his tent.

The dawning of the next morning, the 29th, was gladly welcomed, and I proceeded to examine and dress the wounds of my companions, more carefully than I had been able to do in the darkness of the night.

Very early in the morning we heard the cooees of the natives, who seemed to be wailing, as if one of their number was either killed or severely wounded: for we found stains of blood on their tracks. They disappeared, however, very soon, for, on reconnoitring about the place, I saw nothing of them. I interred the body of our ill-fated companion in the afternoon, and read the funeral service of the English Church over him. A large fire was afterwards made over the grave, to prevent the natives from detecting and disinterring the body. (Ludwig Leichhardt, *Journal of an Overland Expedition in Australia, from Moreton Bay to Port Essington, ...1844-1845*, London, T & W Boone, 1847, facsimile edition, Adelaide, The Public Library of South Australia, pp. 306-311.)

John Roper, who received six spear wounds in the attack, also left, in a letter to the Zoological Society of London, an account of Gilbert's death that is in accord with Leichhardt's. Neither Leichhardt nor Roper speculated about the reason for the attack. Indeed, Roper said that the group was 'entirely unconscious of the evil designs of the natives; having always found those we had passed so friendly and well-disposed, we felt in as great security as you do in the midst of London'. (John Roper, letter dated

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Sydney, 12 May 1846, *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, No. CLXIII, 22 September 1846, pp. 79-80.)

<sup>4</sup> The text of the Kennedy memorial, composed by the Rev'd W B Clarke, from 1841 first incumbent of St Thomas's, North Sydney and notable geologist, is:

This tablet, erected by the Executive Government pursuant to a vote of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, in testimony of the respect and gratitude of the inhabitants of the Colony, commemorates the active services and early death of Assistant Surveyor Edmund Besley Court Kennedy, who, after having completed the survey of the River Victoria, was chosen by the government to conduct the first exploration of York Peninsula, where, after the most patient and persevering exertion to overcome the physical difficulties of the country, and the destructive effects of consequent disease, by which the expedition of thirteen persons was reduced to three, he was slain by the Aborigines in the vicinity of Escape River on the 13th December A.D. 1848, falling a sacrifice in the 31st year of his age to the cause of science, and the advancement of the Colony and in the interests of humanity. *Flebile principium melior fortuna sequatur.* ['May better fortune follow a beginning bathed in tears.' An adaptation of Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 7, Line 518. The original context tells how the death of some young men in battle secured the safety of their city. The intention of the Latin here is to pray that the tragic death of Kennedy may ultimately result in good.] The persons who perished by disease were Thomas Wall (naturalist) C. Niblet, James Luft, E. Taylor, W. Costigan, E. Carpenter, J. Mitchell, J. Douglas, Denis Dunn. *Requiescant in pace.* ['May they rest in peace.'] The survivors are William Carron (botanist), William Goddard and Jackey Jackey, an Aboriginal of Merton district who was Mr Kennedy's sole companion in his conflict with the savages and though himself wounded tended his leader with a courage and devotion worthy of remembrance, supporting him in his last moments, and making his grave on the spot where he fell.

Edmund Besley Court Kennedy (1818-1848) is one of Australia's most celebrated European explorers. His death in Cape York, accompanied only by Jackey Jackey, was within twenty miles of the supply ship waiting to take his party away. 'Kennedy died unmarried. His nature was unaffected and straight forward; actuated by high ideals and a strong religious sense as he was, his character was revealed in his deeds' (ADB, Vol. 2, p. 44). Edgar Beale, the author of the ADB entry, describes Kennedy's death as follows:

The hostile intentions of their shadowy escort were becoming alarmingly evident. Another swamp diverted Kennedy and Jackey from comparatively open bush into a small but very thick scrub, a dangerous situation for them. Jackey warned Kennedy to look out for tribesmen to his rear.

It was now mid-afternoon [13 December 1848], and rain was falling heavily. A group of warriors came up from behind, and this time began throwing their wickedly barbed spears. In earlier months swift retaliation would have followed, but there was none now; probably guns were not to be relied upon in such streaming rain, and they did not wish to reveal how defenceless they were; there was hope that pressing on would lead to either escape or cessation of the attack. Yet it went on as before. Jackey called to Kennedy to break the spent shafts. Though the men were not hit, the horses were wounded, and bucked around them. Kennedy and Jackey dodged the hissing spears, stooping and retreating. To the confused sound of neighing and rearing horses, the crack of snapping wood, and the slosh of movements under pelting rain, spears kept coming in unerring flight. Suddenly Jackey heard an agonised cry.

"Oh, Jackey Jackey, shoot 'em, shoot 'em!" A spear was stuck in Kennedy's back. Jackey fired, and luckily his carbine discharged its buckshot, however weakly, into the face of a native, who fell, sprang up, fell again, rose, wheeled around, and was helped away. Then they withdrew. ...

And now the Aborigines returned to the attack. Sneaking behind trees, they threw more spears even than before. Jackey was hit over one eye, and could not shoot properly because of the

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blood flowing from the wound. Kennedy was injured again, once in the right side, and once in the leg. ...

The assailants seemed to retire again. ... Jackey went to recover the saddlebags. As he hurried back, he saw Aborigines near Kennedy; they had stolen his watch and hat, red-lined cloak, pistols, two guns, quart and pint pots, ammunition pouch and spy glass; ...

The reason for this attack will never be known. There is some evidence of the shooting of a gin near Albany Island some years before, but the northern limit of the territory of this tribe, the Jadhaigana, was the Escape River, and beyond that were the friendly Djararaga. ... But on the other hand there is evidence that their motive was mere loot. Certainly they had gone off with their ill-gotten trifles, and their retreat, however long it might last, gave their victims at least temporary respite.

So Jackey was now able to tend Kennedy. He carried the suffering man towards running water to bathe his wounds, but had only gone about sixty yards into a dripping scrub when Kennedy asked him not to carry him far, and Jackey lowered him to the sodden ground again. Pain was making him roll his eyes, which had a blank far away look. Saying "Don't look far away," Jackey picked him up again and continued towards a creek about a quarter of a mile distant. ...

By this time they were near a small running stream; his wounds bathed in waters gratefully cooling in that clammy heat, Kennedy was resting in an open space near three pandanus trees. Evening was slanting in, and though the rain had intermittently been falling, the weather was becoming more clear. [Kennedy asked for writing materials and tried to write] But the effort was too great, and he collapsed. Jackey caught him and held the broken, wasted body, but he was past help. Kennedy lay dead in his arms, and Jackey turned aside, and wept. (Edgar Beale, *Kennedy of Cape York*, Adelaide, Rigby Books, 1970, pp. 216-219.)

Beale says that Kennedy was a communicant at St James' (p. 230).

<sup>5</sup> Jackey Jackey (d. 1854) came from the Muswellbrook area. He was taken at short notice in April 1848 to join the Kennedy expedition while only a young man. On his return to Sydney after the expedition, he was the hero of the day. He survived only six years of white civilisation, dying near Albury on an overland trip early in 1854. He fell into a campfire when drunk and was burned to death. (ADB, Vol. 2, p. 7).

<sup>6</sup> Daniel 5

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Braidwood Wilson (1792-1843), ADB Vol. 2, p. 612. The New South Wales town of Braidwood is named after him.

<sup>8</sup> D J Mulvaney, *The Search for Collet Barker of Raffles Bay*, Darwin, State Library of the Northern Territory, Occasional Papers No. 44, 1994, p. 11

<sup>9</sup> Mulvaney and Green, pp. 25-26.

<sup>10</sup> An account of the erection of the plaque is given in the *Australian*, 13 July 1832.

<sup>11</sup> How wars are named is a result of a view about the events. The term 'Maori War' is the oldest name given to these conflicts. They have also been called the Land Wars and the now usual New Zealand Wars. Were they rebellions by persons who owed a prior allegiance to the Crown, thus Maori Wars? Were they wars about the control of certain lands owned by the Maoris and at risk of being taken by settlers, thus Land Wars? Were they attempts by Maoris to assert a legitimate sovereignty over New Zealand, thus New Zealand Wars?

<sup>12</sup> A *pa* is a fortified Maori encampment.

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<sup>13</sup> The text of the Philpotts memorial is:

In memory of Lieut. George Philpotts R.N. who fell at the assault on the pa at Ohaeawai New Zealand 1st July 1845, aged 31. Erected by his brother officers of H.M. Ships Hazard and North Star.

The place, in the North Island of New Zealand near Kaitohe, is now spelt 'Ohaeawai'. Lieutenant Philpotts, from HMS *Hazard*, commanded 30 Royal Marines in this action.

Philpotts, with that strange presentiment men occasionally have, went forward knowing he was to die. He was an extraordinary character, and one who had shared the excitements of the First Maori War from the onset. ... Of bizarre dress, complete with monocle, he was the son of the Bishop of Exeter, yet his antagonism to the missionaries, whom he had accused of siding with the rebels, drew a personal rebuke from the Governor. ... He strode to his death with a bared cutlass, hatless, in a sailor's shirt and grey flannels. (Tom Gibson, *The Maori Wars: the British Army in New Zealand, 1840-1872*, London, Leo Cooper, 1974, p 51.)

An eye witness account of the battle by Private John Mitchell of the 58th Regiment records:

We expected scaling ladders, axes & etc to have been brought up, but alas there was but one ladder & that was brought up by a darky named Brown (a volunteer). It was placed against the outer fence by Lieut Philpotts R.N., he was killed in the attempt to get over the fence & fell over. (Michael Barthorp, *To Face the Daring Maoris: Soldiers' Impressions of the First Maori War, 1845-47*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1979, p. 103.)

<sup>14</sup> The text of the Beatty memorial is

In memory of Lieutenant Edward Beatty, XCIX Regiment, who fell in the assault of the native fortress at Ohaiowai in New Zealand on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1845: whilst gallantly leading the forlorn hope for which he had volunteered; and died at Waimate on the 11<sup>th</sup> of the same month aged XXV years. This monument is erected by his brother officers as a mark of esteem and regard.

<sup>15</sup> Gibson gives the following account of Beatty's death:

The advanced storming party of 2 sergeants and 20 soldiers, all volunteers from the three Regimental detachments [25<sup>th</sup>, 58<sup>th</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup>] and, as reality was to prove, dubbed not without reason 'the forlorn hope', was led by Lieutenant Jack Beatty of the 99<sup>th</sup>.

Some forty were killed or died of wounds, including ... Beatty. (Gibson, pp. 49, 50)

Barthorp says:

Command of the advance party, traditionally known as the 'forlorn hope' from the hazardous nature of its task, was given, at his request, to Lieutenant Jack Beatty of the 99<sup>th</sup> Grenadiers.

Lieutenant Beatty had been one of the first to be hit but Charles Stapp [a private of the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment] saw him fall and, despite the point blank fire, rushed to rescue him from the m19e round the stockade. (Barthorp, pp. 100, 104)

The strange phrase 'forlorn hope' appears on Beatty's monument. Readers who understood the traditional language would have been able to identify Beatty's role in leading the advance party of the assault on the *pa*. The spelling of the location differs from that on the Philpotts memorial.



Site of the *pa* at Ohaewai. The wall around the churchyard marks the boundaries of the fortifications.



the grave of Philpotts and Beatty at Waimate North.

<sup>16</sup> The text of the Blackburn memorial is:

In memory of Ensign Henry Middleton Blackburn 99th Regiment; who was killed in action with the rebel natives in the Valley of the Horokiwi, New Zealand, August 6th 1846, aged 23 years. This monument is erected by his brother officers in testimony of their esteem and regard.

The Valley of the Horokiwi Stream runs into Porirua Bay on the East coast of the North Island. The Maoris under chief Te Rangihaeata, were encamped in a strong *pa* at the head of the valley.

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An impetuous approach to the *pa* cost the lives of Ensign Blackburn, 99th, and two soldiers, and a thorough reconnaissance by [Major] Last [the officer in charge], decided him that the *pa* was too forbidding for any frontal assault and he contented himself with lobbing bombs from his three light mortars into its perimeter. (Gibson, p. 68)

Blackburn was acting as brigade-major at the time. Because of the loss of life that would inevitably follow, Major Last refused to allow the 99th to charge the *pa* in order to avenge Blackburn's death. Midshipman H F McKillop RN wrote after the battle:

Hunger being the best sauce, enabled us to make a hearty meal; and we soon forgot our little privations, and should have been jolly enough, had not the loss of poor Blackburn, who had been the gayest amongst us on the last night of our being together in this place, cast a gloom over our little party. (Barthorp, pp. 161, 163)

<sup>17</sup> John Bostock, *Ships on the Australia Station*, French's Forest, Child & Associates, 1988, p. 27.

<sup>18</sup> The text of the Tupper/Kennedy memorial is:

Sacred to the memory of Lieut Edward Murray Tupper R.N. aged 23 years and William Kennedy seaman aged 43 years, both of H.M. Ship 'Iris', who were killed by the natives of Tana, on the 1st July 1858 whilst on service on shore. This tablet was erected by the officers as a mark of their respect and esteem.

Captain William Loring of *HMS Iris* gave the following account of the incident:

16. In December last [1857] the Master and two Seamen of the Sydney schooner "Anne and Jane" had been barbarously and treacherously murdered, by the Tribe of Wagus, on the north-west side of the Island of Tanna. I fully ascertained the fact, and also the locality of the murder, and all other possible information; and I succeeded in seizing Wan Attaway, the Chief of the Tribe; and in the spirit of their Lordship's [of the Admiralty] letter of 13th of October, 1857, (M), anchored the ship off the beach, at 9 am, July 1st. In order to prevent unnecessary bloodshed, and as a sort of Declaration of War, a few shot and shell were fired, to drive away the savages who had assembled on the beach. We then landed with a hundred men, under the command of Lieuts. Deane and Bell, R.N., and Lieut Brent, R.M., and burnt the principal settlement, cutting down the cocoa-nut and bread-fruit tree, and destroying the bananas, &c., in the neighbourhood of the village of the Chief. In performing this service we were very much assisted by the Masters and native crews of the trading vessels "Terror", [an appropriate name] "New Forest", and "Hirondelle", — Messrs. Edwards, Mare and Rodd. We found the scrub very dense; and the eyes and ears of these native auxiliaries were very necessary to scout and give warning, as the savages were close upon us, and watching for an opportunity during the whole of our proceedings.

17. I regret to report the loss of Mr Edward M. Tupper, Mate, and Wm. Kennedy, Captain of the Hold, who separated themselves too far from the main party, and were taken at advantage and cut off by the savages. We succeeded in recovering the body of Mr Tupper, but not that of Wm Kennedy, and we re-embarked at 3 p.m.

18. But for the loss of Mr Tupper and Wm. Kennedy, I should have considered the day's work of destruction of property sufficient; but it now became advisable to show that this loss had nothing to do with our retiring, and on the following day we relanded, and committed further destruction among the fruit trees, without any molestation from the savages, and then returned on board and proceeded to the anchorage at Black Beach.

[*Iris* then proceeded to Woodlark Island on a similar retributive expedition related to the deaths of the crew of the Brig *Gazelle*.]

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25. I have since revisited the New Hebrides, and am glad to report that there has been no fresh outrages at Tanna; and I have every reason to suppose that our operations at Wagus will prove to have been salutary and sufficient.

26. I have endeavoured, but it is very difficult, to ascertain the loss of life on the part of the savages: I think that, in all probability, it did not exceed 5, as our object was to destroy property, not life, except when attacked. (Extract from the letter of William Loring, Captain in Command of the Australian Station to the Secretary of the Admiralty, 6 September 1858, *Journal of the Legislative Council of New South Wales*, 1858, Vol. III, pp. 689-90.)

<sup>19</sup> The text of the Phelps memorial is:

To the memory of John Shaw Phelps, Captain in H.M. 14th Regiment of Foot. Only son of J. C. Phelps Esqre of Gostwyck, Paterson River. Born in Sydney 21st May 1829, and died 25th Novr 1863, at the Queen's Redoubt, New Zealand, from wounds received while gallantly leading his company against the rebel Maories [sic] at Rangariri on the 20th Novr. This lamented officer served with much distinction in the Crimea, and in various engagements in New Zealand. Those who knew him to be a good son, a loving brother, and a sincere friend, deciding to record their sorrow for his loss have erected this tablet. Anno 1864.

The 14th Regiment arrived in Auckland from Ireland on 29 November 1860. The Regiment operated in the Waikato area and, on 20 November 1863, took part in the assault on the Maori *pa* at Rangariri. This was an extremely well placed and well constructed fort on the isthmus between the Waikato River and Lake Waikari. It was attacked from land and water by a British force in excess of 1,200 men from 3 pm on 20 November until dawn on 21 November when its defenders surrendered, having run out of ammunition. Casualties were high. The British lost 39 with 93 wounded. Fifty Maori bodies were counted and 183 prisoners taken. Lieut-Colonel Austen and Captain Phipps of the 14th Regiment died later of their wounds. Victoria Crosses were awarded to two officers of the Royal Artillery. The Queen's Redoubt referred to in the memorial was the principal British fortress in the Waikato area. (Gibson, pp. 108-112)

<sup>20</sup> The Latin text of the Patteson memorial is:

In memoriam Iohannis Coleridge Patteson, Primi Melanesiæ Episcopi et Martyris. *Vestigia Domini fideliter secutus in gaudium Domini intravit. XX<sup>o</sup> Die Sep. A.S.H. MDCCCLXXI. Cum dilexisset usque ad finem dilexit eos.*

An English translation of the text is:

In memory of John Coleridge Patteson, first Bishop of Melanesia and Martyr. 'He who has faithfully followed in the footsteps of the Lord has entered into the joy of the Lord' [I have been unable to identify the origin of this text. It is not biblical.] 20 September 1871 'Whom he loved he loved to the end' [an adaptation of John 13:1]

The letters 'A.S.H.' in the Latin text for the date of Patteson's death may contain a mistake, possibly on the part of the stonemason who carved the memorial. The probable correct text is 'A.S.N.'—'Anno Sancti Nativitatis'—'year of the sacred nativity', an alternative to the more common 'A.D.'—'Anno Domini'—'year of the Lord'.

John Coleridge Patteson, (1827-1871). Patteson, ordained by Bishop Philpotts of Exeter, the father of the Lieutenant Philpotts mentioned above, came to the South Pacific in 1855 as part of a missionary endeavour in the islands north of New Zealand. He was consecrated the first Bishop of Melanesia in 1861. Patteson made a great impression in the Victorian church. A celebrated two volume biography by his cousin, Charlotte Yonge, the noted Victorian novelist and Anglican apologist, was accompanied by a number of more popular accounts. A bas-relief depicting his death decorates the pulpit in Exeter Cathedral which is a memorial in his honour. He is regarded as a martyr of the Anglican Communion and is celebrated on the anniversary of his death, 20 September. See F L Cross & E A Livingstone, *The*

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*Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Third Edition, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 1234; Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, (Penguin History of the Church, Vol. 6), London, Penguin Group, 1990, p. 298.

John Gutch gives this account of Patteson's death:

On the morning of the 20th September [1871] they [Patteson's party aboard the mission vessel *Southern Cross*] were off Nukapu. It is a tiny atoll, its white coral beach fringed with coconut trees, with a wide encircling reef which cannot be crossed by a boat except at high water. As the *Southern Cross* drew near, they saw some canoes hovering outside the reef. Normally they would have come right out to meet the ship and boarded it six or seven miles from the island and Captain Jacob, the master of the *Southern Cross*, records that they thought at the time that the behaviour of the canoes was strange. However, the bishop had a boat lowered and accompanied by Atkin [the Rev'd Joseph Atkin, a New Zealand settler's son trained and ordained by Patteson], Stephen Taroaniara, and two other Melanesians, James Minipa and John Ngongono, rowed towards the reef. The canoes did not come out to meet them and seemed to be undecided whether to stay and greet them or not.

When they got near, the natives recognised Patteson and he suggested he should go ashore with them. It was low water, so the boat could not cross the reef, and at a convenient point Patteson transferred to one of the canoes which was dragged across the reef and, accompanied by two friendly chiefs, Moto and Taula, in two canoes, was paddled across the lagoon towards the beach. He landed and disappeared amongst the trees.

[The remaining party crossed the reef after the tide had risen and were attacked by a group of natives. Atkin, Stephen Taroaniara and John Ngongono were wounded, but James Minipa escaped injury by lying down in the boat. Atkin and Taroaniara later died of tetanus contracted from the spears; Ngongono recovered. Being anxious for the safety of the bishop, a party consisting of Atkin, Bongarde, the mate of the *Southern Cross*, an unnamed sailor, Joseph Wate, a Melanesian and Atkin's godson, and another Melanesian, Charles Sapiboana, waited until the next high tide and set out to look for him.]

At last about half past four they were able to cross the reef and saw two canoes coming towards them, one paddled by women towing the other. The women cast the second canoe adrift and turned back to the beach. Atkin and the others rowed cautiously towards the drifting canoe and as they drew near, the sailor said, 'Those are the bishop's shoes.' Then they saw a form wrapped in a coconut mat lying in the canoe. As they lifted it into the boat, there were shouts from the shore and four canoes set off in their direction. Wate thought they might be coming in pursuit of them, but probably they were merely coming to secure the drifting canoe. The body wrapped in the mat was lifted on board the *Southern Cross*: when the mat was removed, they saw that Patteson's skull had been crushed by a terrible blow on the right side of the head which must have killed him instantly. There was a second wound on the top of his head, a third on the body, and two arrow wounds on the legs. These other four wounds must have been inflicted after death. The body had been stripped except for socks and shoes and a branch of coconut palm with five knots in its fronds had been stuck in the mat in which it was wrapped. The expression on Patteson's face was one of peace and calm: 'There was no sign of fear on his face,' wrote Atkin to his mother, 'just the look that he used to have when asleep, patient and a little wearied.'

Clearly he had been attacked from behind, probably as he rested in one of the native huts. He himself has described how on his previous visit he had lain down to rest on a native mat with a pillow for his head. His assailant must have crept up behind and struck him a vicious blow with a club: the other four wounds had been inflicted afterwards and the five knots tied in the piece of palm for some symbolic reason. Then friendly islanders, aghast at what had happened, had handed the body over to their womenfolk: they had stripped and wrapped it in the mat and set it adrift for the bishop's companions to fetch away.

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‘It is quite certain,’ records Captain Jacob, the master of the *Southern Cross*, ‘some vessel [later identified as the blackbirder *Emma Bell*] had been here ill-using the natives a very short time previous to our coming, or they never would have killed the Bishop. Every year he called at this place he would give the Chiefs and people presents and remain a considerable part of the day ashore with them.’

Patteson was buried at sea the next morning. (John Gutch, *The Martyr of the Islands: the Life and Death of John Coleridge Patteson*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1971, pp. 206-209).

<sup>21</sup> I am indebted to Professor Kevin Lee and Associate Professor Dexter Hoyos of the Department of Classics at the University of Sydney for help with translating and identifying the various pieces of Latin in the memorials.

<sup>22</sup> Habakkuk 2:11; cf Luke 19:40.

<sup>23</sup> See A T Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden: the Great Survivor*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1977, pp. 16, 74-75, 100-102, 108.

<sup>24</sup> Eric Wilmot, *Pemulway the Rainbow Warrior*, Sydney, Weldon Publishing, 1987.

<sup>25</sup> See also Bill Gammage, ‘The Wiradjuri Wars, 1838-40’, *The Push from the Bush*, No. 16, October 1983, pp. 3-17. This is an account of a conflict in the Murrumbidgee area of New South Wales. Henry Reynolds, ‘Aboriginal-European contact history: problems and issues’, *Journal of Australian Studies*, N. 3, 1978, pp. 52-64. Part of this article is an account of Aboriginal resistance.

<sup>26</sup> Henry Reynolds, ‘Frontier history after Mabo’, *Journal of Australian Studies*, No. 49, 1996, pp. 4-11.

<sup>27</sup> Henry Reynolds, ‘The land, the explorers and the Aborigines’, *Historical Studies*, Vol. 19, October 1980, pp. 213-226.

<sup>28</sup> Reynolds emphasises the importance of Aboriginal guides to successful exploratory expeditions. He notes the salutary example of the ill-fated Burke and Wills expedition that tried to do without such help and kept itself apart from Aboriginal communities until it was too late (Reynolds, ‘The land, the explorers and the Aborigines’, pp. 214-216).

<sup>29</sup> Australian Catholic Social Welfare Commission, ‘Beyond Wik: contested meanings of justice and race and their implications for the future of reconciliation’, *Common Wealth*, Vol. 6, No. 2, November 1997, p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families (Sir Ronald Wilson, President), *Bringing them Home*, Sydney, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission, 1997, pp. 289-90. The text of the apology was as follows:

The [Social Responsibilities Commission] joins with other parts of the Anglican Church of Australia in offering its unreserved apology for the involvement of Anglicans, both individually and corporately, in the policies and practices that allowed the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children from their families. It may be that the church had no direct control over the policies themselves. It may be that its members and agencies, to the extent that they were involved, acted as part of already existing networks of welfare arrangements.

It may be that many of those involved believed that they were acting in the best interests of the children concerned. It may also be that many of them did not understand the full implications of their actions, performing only the tasks immediately in front of them. The SRC does not wish to impute any particular motives to those involved. It simply states that no amount of explanation can detract from the now observable consequences of those misguided policies and practices. A great wrong has been done to the indigenous people of Australia. It is for participation in that wrong that this apology is offered.

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The report quotes other parts of the submission with approval, see p. 582.

<sup>31</sup> Robert Manne, 'A sorry state of confusion', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Monday 22 December 1997, p. 15.

<sup>32</sup> Matthew 5:23-24.

<sup>33</sup> Romans 5:1-11; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21.

<sup>34</sup> Ephesians 2:11-22.

<sup>35</sup> See my sermon, *An Epiphany for everyone?*, 4 January 1998, p. 4.