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JAMES CARROLL 1887-96 : "A WHOLESOME BLEND"

A thesis presented in partial
fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
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PREFACE

No doubt, as the years go on and the historian writes the history of New Zealand, he will bring into prominence figures of that description, and particularly notable amongst them will be the late honourable gentleman whose loss we are referring to to-day¹

This statement, made by the Right Honourable Mr Coates speaking in the House after James Carroll's death, has not proved to be an accurate prophesy. Carroll has been neglected by historians or spoken about in vague generalizations. This study is far from an attempt to fill the entire gap, rather, it takes a small part of Carroll's early political career and examines his attitudes to Maori and European society in that period.

In research for this topic one point immediately arose. It appeared that Carroll managed to be both a European with Europeans and a Maori with Maoris and was easily accepted by both groups. From this basic framework grew the picture of James Carroll, the Europeanized Maori, who because of his dual heritage and his ability to identify with both races, was a "wholesome blend". But this extended further. As well as being a "wholesome blend" in his own person, this was the basis of the ideal that he desired for all New Zealanders, as seen in his policies of equality and assimilation.

However, this policy must be seen in the light of the time in which James Carroll was living, a time of rapid land settlement particularly of Maori land in the North Island. If he was to succeed in making his ideals more concrete it was necessary for him to reconcile them with current Government policies and work within the framework of European society.

Because of the background of these years and Carroll's own background, his position was exceedingly complex. Due to his

1. PD, 212 (1927), p.14.

ability to be both a Maori to the Maoris and a European to the Europeans, at times it seemed that he was contradicting himself and letting down one or the other side. Especially after reading letters that he wrote to his European friends, it seemed that he regarded himself as a European and was easily able to identify with them. This would seem to point to Carroll "selling out" the Maori cause. But on reading further, through reported speeches in newspapers, Parliamentary Debates, official reports and especially through his speeches to Maori audiences, it became apparent that he was always recommending the same objective. His way of saying it to different audiences might vary but his plea was always for a nation of New Zealanders, the reality of the "wholesome blend" that was already in existence in his own person. After realizing this, initial contradictions no longer seemed as important and Carroll emerged as a New Zealand statesman intent on doing his best for his people, who were New Zealanders, rather than Maoris or Europeans.

The limitations upon the length of this thesis made it necessary for it to be confined to a limited number of years. An obvious starting date was 1887, Carroll's first year in Parliament, and 1899, the year Carroll became Native Minister would seem to be a suitable concluding date. However, the year 1896 was chosen, because of limitations upon the length of the thesis and the apparent change in Carroll's policy and in Government policy in that year.

Although this study has been limited to the years 1887-96, insight was lent by research into Carroll's later career as Minister of Native Affairs, the abolition of the Native Department and Seddon's role as Native Minister.

Most of the material for this thesis was provided by Parliamentary Debates, while official reports, reported speeches in newspapers and his remaining letters were also valuable. Secondary material was limited, although E.L. Adams' thesis on the life of Sir James Carroll, written in 1932, proved to be of some value.

Assistance from the staffs of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington; the General Assembly Library, Wellington; National Archives, Wellington; the Massey University Library, Palmerston North; the Gisborne Public Library and the Wairoa Star must be acknowledged. I would like to thank the Department of Maori Affairs for permission to use their files in National Archives. More specifically I would like to thank Mrs Maureen Macdonald for typing this thesis and fellow class-members for encouragement and assistance. I would also like to thank Mr Graham Butterworth of the History Department, Massey University and my supervisor, Professor W.H. Oliver for suggestions and encouragement.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AJHR	Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives
AJLC	Appendix to the Journals of the Legislative Council
HBH	Hawkes Bay Herald
MA	Maori Affairs files held in National Archives, Wellington
PBH	Poverty Bay Herald
PD	Parliamentary Debates
NZH	The New Zealand Herald



PLATE I

Sir James Carroll at Papawai Pa, Greytown. Early 1900's.
(Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)