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**‘It is our Bounden Duty’:  
The Emergence of the New Zealand Protestant Missionary Movement,  
1868-1926**

**A Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**In**

**History**

**at Massey University, Albany,  
New Zealand**

**Hugh Douglas Morrison**

**2004**



**CERTIFICATE OF REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

This is to certify that the research carried out in the Doctoral Thesis entitled

**“ ‘It is our Bounden Duty’: The Emergence of the New Zealand Protestant  
Missionary Movement, 1868-1926”**

in the School of Social and Cultural Studies

at Massey University, New Zealand:

- (a) is the original work of the candidate, except as indicated by appropriate attribution in the text and/or in the acknowledgements;
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**CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION**

This is to certify that the research carried out for my Doctoral thesis entitled “ **‘It is our Bounden Duty’: The Emergence of the New Zealand Protestant Missionary Movement, 1868-1926**” in the School of Social and Cultural Studies, Massey University, Albany, New Zealand, is my own work and that the thesis material has not been used in part or in whole for any other qualification.

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**Supervisor's Name:** Associate Professor Peter Lineham

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**Date:**

## FRONTISPIECE



*Mr and Mrs McKenzie of Queenstown, with Pandita Ramabai (founder of the Ramabai Mukti Mission) and Indian children from the Mukti Mission orphanage.*

(Helen S. Dyer, *Pandita Ramabai: A Great Life in Indian Missions*, London: Pickering & Inglis, no date, facing p. 41)

*There are over a thousand millions of men and women who are not in any sense Christianised. Thirty-five millions of these pass every year, in one ghastly, reproachful, mournful procession, into Christless graves. Nineteen centuries have passed away, and only one-third of the population of our earth is even nominally Christian. These hopeless souls would belt this earth no less than forty times, if they stood with outstretched hands side by side, and this at the dawn of the Twentieth Century! Three millions, at least, have been baptised into the Christian faith during this century, and in that fact we greatly rejoice. But the natural increase of the heathen world in that time has been 200 millions.... It is surely time apathy gave place to enthusiasm, and niggardliness to generosity, selfishness to self-sacrifice, and indifference to compassion.* (Author unknown, *Missionary Messenger*, June (1899), p. 2)

## ABSTRACT

Between 1868 and 1926 a significant number of New Zealand Protestant Christians participated in the international missionary movement as missionaries and supporters. Early missionary sentiments were derived from historical British roots. A range of domestic and international influences progressively shaped the New Zealand movement from the 1890s, and there was demonstrable and sustained growth in the number of missionary departures. From 1900 onwards missionary support and enthusiasm was organised with increasing sophistication, and the base of national financial support grew accordingly. In the aftermath of World War One missionary interest and support continued to grow, with missionary departure rates in the 1920s reaching unprecedented levels. By the end of the 1920s greatest growth occurred amongst the non-denominational organisations, many of which identified with conservative evangelical churches reacting to liberalising tendencies in society and theology. For the same reasons a hitherto variegated and broadly evangelical theology of mission became increasingly splintered. By the 1920s a formalised, sophisticated, articulated and well-supported foreign missions movement was a central feature of New Zealand church life, although this was varyingly expressed at the denominational, regional and congregational level. Whilst it was not strictly true that the missionary movement was solely a women's movement, women were influentially central to it as supporters, participants and thinkers. Missionary service was an important vehicle by which they could enter public spheres of church life and exercise an influence. Children, young people and students were also prominent. The missionary movement was a religious movement, steeped in a theological rationale and drawing upon a prevailing set of spiritual sentiments that encouraged personal activism, consecration and practical loving service. Theological and spiritual motivation was intertwined with a complex mix of extra-religious factors. Therefore motivation was partly differentiated along lines of gender and intersected with prevailing imperialist sentiments. The New Zealand Protestant missionary movement, set in these terms, was both an integral part of the wider international missionary movement, and an important way by which New Zealand's emerging religious identity was shaped in the late colonial period.

## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project has its origins in a variety of starting points: a childhood spent looking out from my Oamaru home at the wide Pacific Ocean, wondering what lay beyond the horizon; an undergraduate interest and grounding in social and religious history, and in the social sciences; time in the 1980s variously spent around the table of a New Zealand-Indonesian missionary family in Central Java, on the colourful streets of Penang, Malaysia, and amongst slum communities in Manila, Philippines; theological study; critical engagement with the issues raised by a study of mission history; the consequent growing seed of an idea to critically examine the early history of the western missionary project in New Zealand; and a more recent and much appreciated two year refresher course on issues of historical precept and practice. Whilst the parameters of this project have had to be modified, the potential for further research and writing has greatly expanded, and the need to widen the search for public and private archival material has become more urgent. Historiographically this project has been conceived and executed at the same time that international and domestic interest has been awakened to the interdisciplinary importance of missionary archives. These records are equally important for the church communities from which they emanate, for the wider society in which they are located, and for the recipient societies, communities and churches in a myriad of locations worldwide. Their potential for analytical, interpretative and enriching story telling is boundless. As such this project, and those that may one day eventuate, serves to link the history of Aotearoa New Zealand with the history of the wider world – a theme that has long underpinned my own developing sense of self-identity.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AJHR</i>	<i>Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives</i>
ASAM	Australasian South American Mission
ASCU	Australasian Student Christian Union
<i>BDCM</i>	<i>Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions</i>
BIM	Bolivian Indian Mission
BMS	Baptist Missionary Society
BWMU	Baptist Women's Missionary Union
CIM	China Inland Mission
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CVM	Canton Villages Mission
<i>DNZB</i>	<i>Dictionary of New Zealand Biography</i>
FMC	Foreign Missions Committee
HO:DU	Hocken Library, Dunedin
<i>IBMR</i>	<i>International Bulletin of Missionary Research</i>
<i>JICH</i>	<i>Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History</i>
<i>JRH</i>	<i>Journal of Religious History</i>
LMM	Laymen's Missionary Movement
LMS	London Missionary Society
<i>MM</i>	<i>Missionary Messenger</i>
MWMU	Methodist Women's Missionary Union
NZABM	New Zealand Anglican Board of Missions
<i>NZB</i>	<i>New Zealand Baptist</i>
NZBHS	New Zealand Baptist Historical Society
NZBMS	New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society
NZBTI	New Zealand Bible Training Institute
NZBU	New Zealand Baptist Union
NZCMA/S	New Zealand Church Missionary Association/Society
<i>NZJH</i>	<i>New Zealand Journal of History</i>
NZSCM	New Zealand Student Christian Movement
<i>OW</i>	<i>Otago Witness</i>
<i>PCNZ PGA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand</i>
<i>PCSO PS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Southland and Otago</i>
<i>PGS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the General Synod of the Church of the Province of New Zealand</i>
PIVM	Poona and Indian Village Mission
PWMU	Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union
PWTI	Presbyterian Women's Training Institute
SAEM	South American Evangelical Mission
SIM	Sudan Interior Mission
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
SUM	Sudan United Mission
SVM	Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions
WCTU	Women's Christian Temperance Union
WSCF	World's Student Christian Federation
WTU	Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington