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# Goemulgaw Lagal: Cultural and Natural Histories of the Island of Mabuyag, Torres Strait

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### COVER

Image on book cover: Pearlshelling station at Panay, Mabuyag, 1890s. Photographer unknown  
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# The LMS missionary B.T. Butcher on Mabuyag, 1905-1906

Anna SHNUKAL

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The Rev. B.T. Butcher of the London Missionary Society (LMS) spent a year on Mabuyag (1905-1906). This paper reproduces extracts from his diary during this period, when the island served as headquarters of the LMS mission to Torres Strait, together with explanatory notes and annotations from Butcher's personal and professional correspondence and other relevant sources.<sup>1</sup>

□ *The Rev. B.T. Butcher, Christian missions, London Missionary Society, Torres Strait*

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In late 1904, soon after his ordination, the energetic, resourceful, but rather unimaginative member of the London Missionary Society (LMS), the Rev. Benjamin Thomas Butcher, left England for Torres Strait. Born in London on 13 July 1877, the son of a fish wholesaler, Butcher was a conventional product of the Victorian-era English lower middle class in his social, cultural and religious formation: 'It was the white man's world and the British thought themselves in charge of it' (Butcher, 1963: 15). Wanting travel and adventure, trained in wood-working and blacksmithing as well as Latin and Greek, he began his theological studies at Cheshunt College in 1896 and was ordained on 1 November 1904 (Butcher, 1963: 16; Langmore, 1989: 284). The brutal murder of the Revs James Chalmers (Tamate) and Oliver Fellows Tomkins at Goaribari Island, Papua, in April 1901 spurred Butcher and his fellow students to replace them.

After an orientation trip around some of the LMS stations, he arrived on Mabuyag in May 1905. During his probationary year there he kept a diary, which offers a unique insight into the trials and travails of a recently-arrived missionary, as well as reflections on the general condition and concerns of the people, the difficulties of supervising the mission and altering traditional practices, as well as notes on various Mabuyag Islanders and others living in Torres Strait at the time.

Butcher's appointment as resident missionary was the first since Tomkins, who from mid-1900 supervised the Torres Strait mission from Mer (Murray Island) but who, from the end of October 1900 to March 1901, spent all but five weeks in New Guinea (Tomkins, 1901). Chalmers himself had moved from Mer to Saguane on Kiwai Island in 1891 and then to Daru in 1900 and afterwards made few visits to the island stations, leaving the pastors there with only occasional supervision.<sup>2</sup> Beckett (1987: 44)

suggests that Butcher's appointment may have been prompted by that of Charles David O'Brien as local protector in mid-1904 to take control over the Islanders' financial dealings. However, the decision had already been made and it was more likely to give closer supervision to the LMS mission teachers and ward off encroachment by the Church of England.<sup>3</sup> Government Resident Hugh Miles Milman (1905a) welcomed the additional missionary and promised him every assistance, believing he would

give better and increased supervision over the Teachers, who hitherto, for some years past, have undoubtedly been too much left alone, and in consequence had, in some instances at any rate, acquired an exaggerated idea of their own importance and had displayed some reluctance in submitting themselves to the control of the civil authorities.

As to the society's fear of a potential expansion of Anglican influence, both Butcher and the Rev. Edward Baxter Riley (1905) 'felt the necessity of having a man in the Straits as the Bishop of T.I. [sic] has some scheme on hand for the Anglicising of the Islands. He is getting a vessel for travelling about the Straits and visiting the fleets.' By taking up residence on Mabuyag, the island became the de facto Torres Strait headquarters of the LMS but, after a difficult and unhappy year, Butcher moved to Erub (Darnley Island), where he remained until his appointment to mainland New Guinea in 1912.

During his sojourn on Mabuyag, Butcher – at least as revealed by his diary and letters – managed to remain ignorant of the personal and political complexities of Mabuyag society, focused as he was on his practical and administrative tasks: supervising the mission, providing medical care, boat repairing and attempting to learn the local language.<sup>4</sup> He

also spent considerable time away visiting other stations. The ignorance was mutual: fifty years later his presence on Mabuyag had been forgotten and Eseli (1998: 60-63) omits him from his list of LMS missionaries who served on his island. Nevertheless, despite Butcher's long absences from Mabuyag, ill health and general unhappiness, his diary provides an invaluable, if fragmentary, eyewitness account of local affairs and acute observations of the physical and spiritual condition of the people, as well as rather conventional reflections on his 'civilising' work. For Butcher, Torres Strait was peripheral to the true work of the mission, the evangelisation of mainland New Guinea. However, his early years in Torres Strait covered a pivotal historical period, which encompassed significant changes in Queensland government policy following the death in 1904 of the long-serving Government Resident, the Hon. John Douglas, and the appointments of Milman as Government Resident and O'Brien as Protector of Aborigines and Inspector of Pacific Islanders. Butcher played a role in the famous quarrel between the Pacific and Mabuyag Islanders, the impetus for the founding of St Paul's Anglican Mission on nearby Mua; witnessed the effects of the pearling downturn of 1905, the closure of stations and the general unemployment that resulted; and observed the beginnings of Papuan Industries Ltd on nearby Badu. On several occasions he was drawn into local and state politics. However, as the Queensland government took over the secular functions once performed by the LMS, it seemed apparent to Butcher that the society's scarce resources could be better spent on the northern mainland and

he constantly pressured his superiors in England to relocate him.

Butcher was not the only foreigner living on Mabuyag: Butcher mentions his fellow residents, Andrew Struthers Cairns, the government teacher; John and Edith Cowling, who ran a pearling station and store; Isaia, the Samoan LMS pastor; and resident Pacific Islanders George Hankin, Kaio Kris and Jack Ware. Also mentioned are the government officials Hugh Miles Milman, Charles David O'Brien and John Moody Costin; fellow missionaries, Edward Baxter Riley and Frederick William Walker; LMS pastors Ambar, Mauga, Fa'avai, Ioane, Solo, Samuela and I'eu; the Anglican vicar at Thursday Island, John J. Jones; the 'mamooses' (head men), Waria from Mabuyag and Pasi from Dauar;<sup>5</sup> Captain Edward James Hamon and Alice Huddy of Erub; and Edward Mosby of Masig (Yorke Island). Three of his students, Aragu, Manoah and Poey Passi, are referred to in passing. Interestingly, Butcher does not mention the louche pearler and trader James Doyle, who also had a shore station at Mabuyag but was forced to leave at the end of 1905. European documents of the time usually do not name non-Europeans, although one can sometimes guess their identity.

In May 1906, Butcher moved his head station to Erub, where he remained until 1912, when he achieved his aim of relocating permanently to New Guinea. His published memoir (Butcher, 1963) focuses almost entirely on the mission station he formed at Aird Hill and contains little Torres Strait material (Figure 1).



FIG. 1. The Rev. Ben Butcher. Photograph probably taken in the late 1930s. Source: Rainey, 1947: facing p. 48 (Reproduced with the permission of Bible Society Australia).

### ARRIVAL ON MABUYAG

Butcher left for Sydney on 30 December 1904 and his diary begins on 1 May 1905 with his arrival in Torres Strait (NLA MS 1881/6/1). After an orientation trip on board the mission ship *Niue* to the mission stations of Buzi, Daru, Tureture, Mawatta and Boigu, when he fell victim to fever (probably malaria or dengue), he decided to locate himself at least initially at Mabuyag. He and his fellow missionary, Edward Baxter Riley, head of the Fly River mission and based at Daru, arrived there on 20 May 1905. The following day he noted in his diary: 'They seem very pleased that I have come among them and I fancy will rally round me.' The presence of a European missionary enhanced the prestige

of the island, although Butcher came to understand that his authority undermined that of the resident Samoan missionary, Isaia. His presence also indicated to the Anglicans that the LMS was not prepared to hand over the islands to them.

On 22 May, Butcher went for a walk on Mabuyag with the government teacher, Andrew Struthers Cairns<sup>6</sup> and

inspected a hill upon which I may probably build my house and certainly the position is very lovely and one I should like [to] obtain providing we can get the people to move their village in that direction viz. west of the present.

The present village is not healthy nor convenient in many ways, especially as regards gardens and I should very much like to see them living on the new site which has already been suggested to them. All behind the hills rise up full of beauty and strength and the most fertile ground in the island would be right at the people's doors.<sup>7</sup>

In the event Butcher did not build a house at Mabuyag but 'lived with a Samoan mission teacher and his wife in their very simple home among the palms' (Butcher, 1963: 52).

### BEGINNING THE WORK

Three days after his arrival Butcher began his studies of the western island language, now called 'Kala Lagaw Ya', and outlined his future plans:

It is difficult at first, especially the pronunciation of [word-initial] 'ng', but I shall manage it all right in the end.

I have to do a Doctor's work here and that takes a good deal of time.

We, that is C [Cairns] and I, had another walk and passed through some of the gardens of the people. They are full of promise and if only we can teach them cultivation it will be a grand thing for the island.

I shall request ground and try my best to start an industrial mission and also a training college for native teachers. I am longing to get these things going and God helping me it will not be long before some of them are started.

I am really feeling how much I need a wife both as a companion and as a helpmate. She could reach the women while I tackle the men ...

On the same day, 23 May, Butcher wrote to the Rev. Ralph Wardlaw Thompson, the Foreign Secretary of the LMS based in London. It is worth quoting his letter in full, as it illustrates Butcher's mindset upon his arrival and provides a context for his subsequent reflections and actions. The LMS in London was kept informed of Queensland government policy and personnel and was aware that the Church of England, being well established on Thursday Island and more favoured by the government, hoped to take over its work in the strait.

At last I have arrived at what will be, I expect, my headquarters for some time. Up to the present my life has been a wandering and uncertain one with no definite sphere, but things are now altered and I feel much for the better. You will have been informed by now that the N.G.D.C. [New Guinea District Committee] appointed Riley and myself to work together, which really meant Riley doing all the work and my doing all the looking on. I should have been no doubt appointed direct to the Straits; only I did not feel with the knowledge I then possessed I should care to undertake a work so different to that I had thought of in New Guinea. However things have turned out in such a manner that I am at last settled here and feeling there are some fine opportunities of good work being done. Riley will no doubt write you re some of the reasons of my coming here, but I thought it would be as well if I also communicated with you.

One of the causes that led to my coming was that I felt, the more I saw of the work and the ways of the teachers, how great was the need of a supervising missionary, and how large were his opportunities.

But things might have gone on as they were for a good while longer had it not been for us hearing a little concerning the intentions of the [Anglican] Bishop at Thursday Island.<sup>8</sup> Attempts at proselytising have been made, as you know, for some time, but he now seems to be about to enter upon a much more vigorous campaign. We have heard he is trying to get funds to purchase and run a boat for use in this district,<sup>9</sup> and, as my own conversation with the clergyman in charge at Thursday Island helped to confirm our ideas of his intentions, I felt I could delay no longer but must try and shew them that the L.M.S. intends to look after the islands in the future in no half-hearted fashion. So, as I said, I am here and only waiting for the arrival of the new ship to commence a vigorous visitation of the islands. Meanwhile I am not idle but am doing my best to learn the language and strengthen the work at Mabuig. I am already deeply grateful for the training I had at Livingstone College which is serving me in good stead here. Of course I got people coming for medicine for the shere [sheer] delight of swallowing it but on the other hand there are some very interesting cases to be attended to. At present I have no house but am living in one room in the Teachers abode. On the whole I am very comfortable though I shall be glad to have a place of my own.

Since arriving in N.G. my health has been rather bad and most of my boasted strength vanished. At Daru I was hardly ever free from fever and in consequence was able to do very little work, but things are much

better now and I am rejoicing in the sense of returning health and energy.

With regard to my plans for the future there is very little I can say until I know a little more about things. I am, however, very anxious to start some forms of industrial work and also to help the people to develop the resources of their islands. From what I have seen and heard I believe great things might be done in the way of rubber and cocoanut and pineapple plantations and perhaps more than all in the growing of hemp. If the Papuan Industries Ltd is only run properly it may do a grand thing in disposing of the produce of the people. Most of the missionaries are doubtful of the success of the scheme in New Guinea but both Riley and myself feel it will succeed in the Straits, if properly managed, concerning which proviso the gravest doubts are entertained among missionaries and others out here.

I should also like to feel that I am not cut off from New Guinea altogether, and if possible have the opportunity of touching the people west of Daru. A great number of these speak or understand the language I am now learning, and as, when I am at Saibai, I am quite near them it would be most easy for me to visit them.

I have other little schemes which I dare not confess just yet but as the time arrives when they become feasible I will duly inform you concerning them (Butcher, 1905a).

Four days after his arrival on Mabuyag, Butcher taught a scripture lesson in the school on the subject of creation. He had plans for the children, which included teaching them

English games of football and cricket 'and other games as I'm sure it will do good'. As Langbridge (1977: 154) recognized, the LMS missionaries' 'ideal of civilization for Torres Strait was a South Seas modification of the British way of life'. Butcher had little sympathy for Isaia,<sup>10</sup> whom he suspected of undermining him, and foresaw a competition between them for the loyalty of the local congregation.<sup>11</sup> Isaia, he thought, was 'most underhanded and I find it a great difficulty to get things to work well while he is here as he has a way of stirring up the natives and making them most awkward' (Butcher diary entry, 15 July).

Today I had a long talk with Isaia [sic]. He is a terrible fellow for lying and double dealing and the sooner the island is rid of him the better. I think it will be for God's work. I fear his long residence as teacher will give him a greater hold than I shall have for the present and I shall suffer by seeing the people fail to respond to my desires for their improvement owing to his secret machinations.

On 25 May, Butcher gathered the children on the veranda at about 7 pm and started to teach them the Christian hymn, 'Tell me the old old story': 'They are very quick at learning and picked up the first verse very well. It will be one of the joys of life to have them round me and to have some hand in their training.'

Passing through the village that day, he had seen people gathered in front of the house of the parents of a recently dead child (unidentified) and commented with some bemusement: 'They were having a great feast by way so I gathered of comforting the parents and in some manner affecting the child for good'. He was reminded of a similar English ritual: 'the big teas provided upon the return from a funeral service which I was pressed to attend, after conducting the

ceremony.' By this time traditional practices had yielded to Christian burial in the island cemetery<sup>12</sup> but there was an ongoing dispute about where this should be located. On 27 May Butcher

went through the process of a long harangue with the men over the burying question. They want to place the graves in a very unsuitable place and I have advised another situation. We came at last to an amicable arrangement ...<sup>13</sup> In the afternoon we went for a long tramp with one of the Samoans<sup>14</sup> and visited some mines of his where he has been trying to find gold not altogether without success. Some of the quartz certainly had a good deal of the metal in it and the mine might pay for working.

On 28 May, Butcher had a 'strong interview' with the men of the island, who had been urged on, so Butcher believed, by Isaia, 'to come and make all manner of trivial complaints and do a "growl" at me as they call it.' Butcher, well briefed on the general opinion of the Samoan LMS pastors, thought the reason was jealousy: 'He naturally resents my being here as he is now no longer the "Boss" and has lost half his position in the eyes of the natives.'

Card playing and gambling, introduced by the pearling crews, were now popular pastimes in the village. Butcher strongly disapproved of gambling and on 28 May told the men that it must stop. However, on the following day,

one of the head men came asking if he might collect and burn all the cards in the village. It was a difficult question to answer as the wrong lay not in the cards but in the gambling which was ruination to them. They however like many white people seem to find it hard to make the division so

I said he could go round and where people were ready to give up the cards for Jesus' sake he might take them but on no account to do so if they were unwilling. I am afraid my orders were exceeded as an irate old lady took Mr Cairns to task very severely and pointing down the camp cried out - 'You see smoke along there? That card belong we!' a really delightful piece of pidgin English.

### BUTCHER'S FIRST SUMMER

On 1 June 1905, Butcher noted that he had been five months away from his home in England and, now that summer had arrived, he complained about the heat, the lack of sanitation, the dirt outside people's houses and the effects these had on health. He was also suffering recurrent bouts of fever but continued to see to his patients. The trader and pearler, John (Jack) Cowling,<sup>15</sup> had returned from one of his many trips away from the island and, two days later, Cowling 'very kindly sent his boat and took me round to his place [at Panay] and after slowly climbing the hill I spent a very happy and quiet day with them. At night bucked up and was well enough to play one or two games of billiards with Mrs Cowling.' One of his few respites, it seems, was visiting the Cowlings and playing billiards 'on the delightful little table they have up there'. Although Butcher lived in the house of Isaia, his wife, Seluia, and their children, he seems to have had little non-professional contact with the couple or other non-Europeans, at least as evidenced by the diary. Because of the language difficulty and distinct social domains, it was accepted that Whites and non-Whites lived segregated lives and neither Isaia nor any of the Mabuyag people were invited to eat or play billiards with the Cowlings or go on walks with Cairns. Leisure time was spent

with people of one's own colour, class and language. The photographer James Francis (Frank) Hurley, who stayed on Mabuyag in early 1921, observed that 'the [White] missionary priests do not practise what they preach, neither do they regard the native as their equal. It has not been done "To dine with a native at your own board, nor to accept his hospitality in such a degree"' (Hurley, 1921).<sup>16</sup>

Butcher enjoyed teaching the children, finding it far more satisfying than dealing with the adults. He saw in the children the promise of a more salubrious and Christian (European-influenced) future. On the evening of 5 June he began teaching them 'a new hymn, "Come ye that love the Lord" which they like better than any they have yet had. To see them so eager and excited to learn and to watch their efforts is well worth any trouble you can take.' Less welcome was the embarrassing gift, a week later, of a whole dugong from 'Kaio, a good old Samoan'.<sup>17</sup> Embarrassing because such a large amount of meat was sufficient to feed a large family.

Government Resident Hugh Milman visited Mabuyag on 15 June and Butcher learned that the Queensland government had determined to take responsibility for the industrial training of the boys through the school. He himself had been making plans to that end. 'I am sorry from one point of view as now both school and industrial work are out of our hands we are shut off from the two great avenues of reaching the children.' The following day Milman expressed his approval of the site proposed for a new burial ground and he and Butcher discussed the position of the mission work and the current trouble between the Saibai Islanders and the European teacher.<sup>18</sup> He continued to fret about the gardens, which he thought could be improved: 'Just a little instruction would mean their receiving double the return for their labour that they receive today'.

June 1905 brought intense heat and an outbreak of measles throughout the village and Panay, some distance away.<sup>19</sup> Butcher suspected his first case on 9 June and isolated the individual, fearing that the disease would spread. On 10 June Masi's child died<sup>20</sup> and was buried in the afternoon:

It is a case of neglect and starvation and he [Masi] is largely to blame, as he has not brought it to me since Monday nor come for the food which I told him was ready and which he could have. These people can be very awkward at times and he certainly is one of the most awkward of all.

The Islanders had little immunity to measles. By 24 June there were 20 cases. Butcher, although ill with fever, acted as the local doctor, 'going from house to house to see my patients' (Butcher, 1963: 53) and by 1 July he was exhausted: 'Just one rush from morning to night with brief rests at meals'. By 4 July there were about 60 cases of measles, about a fifth of the population. However, by mid-July the epidemic had passed, with the loss of only one (unidentified) man. 'We would not have lost him if he had not sat at the door of his hut so that the heavy wind then blowing might cool his fevered body' (Butcher, 1963: 54). Preaching on 2 July,

I spoke of the woman who touched Christ's garment but emphasised the fact of her sickness illustrating it by the present sickness in the village and applying it to the sickness of their own hearts. These people are terribly self-righteous and it is a hard task to convince them of sin or even imperfection.

The following Sunday he again 'had to speak very straight', berating the Islanders for 'some immorality and evil that has been rather prevalent'. Meanwhile he continued to organize the work of the mission, on 7

July, for example, arranging to take the teacher's wife to Mua and then go on to Badu. Riley visited him around mid-July and they discussed 'the possibility of having [their own] white teachers on the islands', subsidised by the government, to develop the industrial work and what that would mean for the moral and economic betterment of the islands.

Still suffering from malaria and exhausted by his medical ministrations, he was more than ever convinced that Isaia was working against him. 'My parish was widespread, calling for sea journeys of hundreds of miles through what were often very stormy waters, and I felt I should never get around it effectively until I had a boat of my own' (Butcher, 1963: 55). He had been promised by the LMS directors that, if he went to Torres Strait, he should have 'sole and complete control' of a new boat (Riley, 1905) and in mid-July he sought help from the mamoose to arrange for a boat and crew to take him to Thursday Island to fetch the boat. But the people wanted to wait a week and Butcher suspected that Isaia was behind the delay. The men finally agreed to take him after a meeting at which he railed at the mamoose and castigated the 'selfishness and hardness of the people.... Their want of gratitude, their self-righteousness, their laziness and their unreadiness to help amaze me though I came prepared for a good deal. I do not suppose we have men in Torres Straits worse than those who can be found here?' Butcher left Mabuyag on 17 July and two days later took possession of the boat.

While on Thursday Island, Butcher had discussions with the Anglican vicar, the Rev. John Jones, and indicated that the LMS was not prepared to hand over the islands. This was the public stance of the LMS but privately, while moored at Daru on board the *Niue*, then in quarantine following the measles outbreak, Butcher wrote to his

superiors: 'I feel that we are not doing right in being so lavish towards the 1,000 or so who live in the islands while so many more thousands are entirely ignorant in the great dark land that I can see stretching away for mile after mile as I pace the deck.'

Butcher's work with the Mabuyag and Mua Islanders did not go unnoticed or unreported. Milman (1905a) wrote to Butcher's superiors that the people owed him 'a deep debt of gratitude for the care and attention he bestowed on them during the later epidemic of measles'. According to Cairns (Milman, 1906: 12), Butcher 'rendered very great assistance in giving medicine and advice, and he devoted a very large part of his time to personally waiting upon the sick ones. We were very fortunate in having his assistance at such a time. He has helped, too, in many other ways.'

By late July he was fully recovered from his recurrent bouts of malaria and on 30 July wrote a long letter to his superiors, comparing the good fortune of the Islanders, tended by 'five white government teachers and nine or ten native missionaries, one white missionary (myself) and a large missionary ship with a white captain, a government resident paying regular visits and to crown all Mr Walker with his industrial scheme' with the many thousands of New Guineans still unreached by missionary endeavour (Butcher, 1905c). He believed the government might be willing to provide a subsidy to 'place upon the main islands qualified men and women as missionary teachers' and 'dispense with the native teachers', whose salaries could be put towards any necessary additions to the grant. The offer of the LMS to take responsibility for Torres Strait education initially received support on economic grounds but in 1911 it was refused, the government deciding to abolish 'dual control' over the islands and place the Islanders entirely under government 'protection'.

## FIRST VISITS TO OTHER ISLANDS

Butcher and Riley travelled together to Erub for a united Erub-Mer May meeting on 11 August, at which about £30 was collected to build a new church at Daru.<sup>21</sup> He also performed a wedding service, rising early to 'translate the marriage service into Pidgin English.' They 'had a great difficulty to get [the pastors] to see the need of consulting us upon church matters. They make such awful blunders and do so much harm to the work by their wilfulness.' In the afternoon they 'had invited Miss Haddy [Huddy]<sup>22</sup> the school teacher and Captain Hammond [Hamon]<sup>23</sup> to come on board to tea but before they came I went on one of the Jap. boats and got into a diving dress and went down among the fishes'. Butcher and Riley then sailed for Mer, taking some 30 passengers with them, and arrived on 15 August. Three days later they conducted a big church meeting before breakfast 'at which several church members were readmitted and Pasi the mamoose of Dauar, who had been excluded from active membership and the Deaconate, was reinstated'.<sup>24</sup> On the way back to Mabuyag, they visited Masig (Yorke Island) on 19 August and met Edward Mosby, 'a queer character with one leg who resides there with his black wife - he is I believe an American who has run through thousands of pounds chiefly through speculation gambling and above all drink'.<sup>25</sup>

He returned to Mabuyag on 8 September and was immediately informed that Ambar, the Mabuyag LMS teacher on Mua, 'has acted immorally with one of the girls at Mua'.<sup>26</sup> This was a not uncommon event and on the following day he had a long talk with Ambar: 'Poor fellow I am real sorry for him as he seems so truly penitent and has acted so splendidly in confessing his guilt both to the church at Mua and here also. I have had to dismiss him but we prayed together.' That

same day George Hankin came to him for advice after coming across 'what seems to be a valuable deposit of gold and silver'. He took samples of the ore to Thursday Island, where he planned to meet F.W. Walker, who arrived there on 10 September with capital and plans to begin Papuan Industries Ltd (though Butcher does not mention the name): 'he has a grand opportunity and I long to see the scheme a grand success'. He was now officially gazetted to perform marriages: Banasa and Pad on 23 November (they were originally married by the LMS pastor in 1892) and Frank Waugh and Nagele Lifu on 29 November.

Butcher and Riley then travelled to Naghir (Mt Ernest Island) for the May meeting on 14 September. 'Riley presided and several of us spoke. Faovae [Fa'avai], one of the teachers, giving a splendid little address in pidgin English'. After the service at Naghir came dancing 'until the early hours of the morning'. Two days later, probably on Thursday Island, he had a conversation with O'Brien, the Protector of Aborigines, 'a splendid fellow', who sympathised with the work being done by the LMS.

### RETURN TO MABUYAG

When Butcher returned to Mabuyag on 17 September, he found Cowling's men on strike and had a long talk with them, telling them they were in the wrong 'and because I said so they did not appreciate my words to them'.

Butcher worked almost constantly and under pressure but from time to time he escaped his duties to visit Cairns or the Cowlings. On 26 September he sailed in a whaleboat (probably Cowling's) to Pulu and spent the afternoon there. Pulu was, he wrote, 'a place full of memories of the old heathen religious rites of the people. It is full of great rocks many

of which have strange legends attached.'<sup>27</sup> He continued to teach the children English games like rounders. The boys 'picked it up splendidly but I was very tired at the close' (3 October). He continually chafed at his enforced location on Mabuyag:

To be here is a sore waste of time as the men are on the boats and the children at school and I have nothing to do. I must get a station on the mainland and develop that. To be here is a waste of opportunity and loss of power. Surely it is not for such a life as I am living that the people gave their money.

On 10 October he held a service for the men taking shelter at Mabuyag from the rough weather:<sup>28</sup>

A lot of New Guinea Fly River boys are in through stress of weather and altogether we had at the short service I always hold - Japanese, Malay, New Guineans, Samoans, Torres Straits Islanders, Halfcastes and Englishmen. We were a cosmopolitan crowd but as most could understand Pidgin English I made the most I could of the opportunity. I taught them singing and we had a grand time with some of the old favourites.

The gales continued strong and on 11 October 'quite a number of boats have run in for shelter at Panay. Cowling is not yet back but lying weather bound behind some reef according to news some of the men have brought me'. Butcher made a short visit to Mua, possibly to return Ambar to Mabuyag, and by 14 October was back on the island. In the afternoon he took 'a long long walk to see the gardens and Cowling's cotton plantation. I was delighted with the lovely palms of many descriptions in the bush and surprised at the splendid growth of the cotton which was prospering famously.'

In late October Butcher offered £16 for one of Cowling's cutters 'which had only been built three years was now in the hands of the receivers. He had seen it lying half sunk in shallow water looking as if it might become a total wreck, and thought the receivers would be glad to get it off their hands'.

The cutter did not look up to much as she lay half sunken in the water, and I suspect that he thought sixteen pounds better than nothing as next morning I found myself its owner. We had to put her on the slip and get her caulked and re-coppered but even then she was a gift, a splendid little craft some thirty-five feet long in which, as captain and owner, I sailed thousands of miles and had some great adventures' (Butcher, 1963: 55-56).

### THE QUARREL WITH THE PACIFIC ISLANDERS<sup>29</sup>

Butcher worked at Panay on his cutter during October and November and ate with Cowling. Much of his diary describes in meticulous detail his boat repairing and other practical tasks: 'Building and carpentry, medicine and surgery, teaching and preaching, cooking and housecleaning all fall to the lot of the bachelor missionary who awakens each morning to this sameness of variety' (Butcher, 1908). So engrossed was he in his boat-building and future plans that his diary contains only two short entries on the events leading to the founding of what would become St Paul's Community on Mua (Banks Island).

By 1904, the year before the pearling downturn, there was a significant Pacific Islander community on Mabuyag, centred on Cowling's station. Out of a total population of 342, 52 were foreigners: 29 Pacific Islanders and 23 Europeans (Milman, 1904c) but by

1905 most of them had gone elsewhere. Among the Pacific Islanders who remained, most were married to local women from Mabuyag, Saibai and Gebar. There had been friction between the Pacific and Torres Strait Islanders for years. Cowling employed Pacific Islanders as divers and tenders and the local men as crew members and rouseabouts: the former were generally perceived to be 'superior', refused to accept the authority of the local clan leaders, earned higher wages and so could provide a more comfortable life for their partners and in-laws. The friction came to a head in a quarrel over the marriage of a 'half-caste' woman, Charlotte Ware, daughter of a Mabuyag woman by an Ouvéa man, to a 'full native', Zachariah Warriia, son of the mamoose. Butcher, fully preoccupied with repairs to his new boat and unaware of the quarrel's significance, was drawn into the fray. On 30 October he was awakened before daylight

by a father who told me his daughter was running away to Thursday Island with the young man of her choice. She is under age and her parents object to the union so I could not sanction it. I sent a message off to the boat that if they went on I would have another ship sent after them and the chief and his son would go to gaol. This fetched them and the girl came ashore and I went to sleep again.

Butcher made no entries in his diary between 31 October and 11 November, when he wrote:

Here is a gap.... I have had a good deal of trouble with the natives over the marriage of Saliti [Charlotte], the girl they tried to take into TI. Last Sunday week they came to me and had a long talk being greatly displeased with me for telling them openly of their faults

and after yarning on this returned to the everlasting marriage topic. I had had a visit from Jack [Ware] her stepfather telling me of impending trouble re the girl's ring so told him to bring it me. He did so and when the mamus at the meeting in the afternoon told me they had decided to fight the man who gave it them I pulled it out of my pocket and threw it to him as he sat on the ground and said very well then you will have to fight me. They were very angry and said a good deal that they ought not to and after I left them got talking about killing me. Now they are still angry and I have had to suspend the chief from church membership.

There was 'civil war' according to Kalingo Bani Joseph (pers. comm., 1992). The Mabuyag men tried to kill Jack Ware with a club but Kaio Kris shouted a warning (Sam Nako Kris, pers. comm., 2004) and George Hankin fired a shotgun over their heads. On 16 November a police boat with O'Brien arrived from Thursday Island to enquire about the trouble and spent two days on the island. Milman had instructed him 'to charge certain of the men so that he may punish them' but Butcher refused, his scruples not allowing him to interfere with the local court.<sup>30</sup> The ill-feeling between the two groups lasted for years. They could no longer live together and the foreigners were ordered to leave. Having received permission from Anu Namai to settle at Wag on Mua, the brothers, Elia and Aviu Ware and Samuel Kawane, went to collect the people from Panay, where they hired Cowling's *Yadi* to transport them across. On 27 December 1905 the first settlers disembarked at Wag to found the future St Paul's Community (Namok, n.d.; Katua Namai, pers. comm., 1981).<sup>31</sup>

## FURTHER VISITS TO OTHER ISLANDS

On 23 November Butcher again left Mabuyag to visit LMS stations 'with a party of natives of [Yam] who have been on a visit to Mabuig.' They sailed first to Yam, where the Samoan, Fa'avai, was in charge.<sup>32</sup> Their next stop was Masig, which they reached on 26 November. There he 'saw the native in charge of the church and held a short service before it got dark.<sup>33</sup> Then back to the ship as we found the greater part of the population away and very few on the island.' The party continued to Erub, arriving on 27 November, but 'found that Yeu<sup>34</sup> and two deacons were away in New Guinea getting food. Had old Captain Hammond [Hamon] in to lunch and went to dinner with Miss Haddy [Huddy] the schoolmistress.' He remained at Erub until at least 3 December, when he christened 'two dear little dark brown cherubs who entered as intelligently into the ceremony as any white children of the same age'.

By 9 December Butcher was at Daru to greet the LMS missionary boat *John Williams* bringing five new teachers, two of whom, Solo and Samuela and their wives, would work in Torres Strait, Solo eventually at Mabuyag and Samuela at Badu.<sup>35</sup> In December he received permission to relocate to Erub and informed the Mabuyag people. 'They are very much afraid now that their conduct may end in their being deprived of a teacher and I feel that such a course would be one of the best for their future good. A little time without a teacher would help them to value his presence more when he returned.' On 19 December he borrowed Cowling's boat, *Baroona*, 'and with two Southseamen as crew and Cairns as company set off [for Thursday Island].'<sup>36</sup> He also visited Saibai and on 21 December attended a service at Parem conducted by the Mabuyag LMS missionary, Mauga.<sup>37</sup> After further journeys he returned to Mabuyag, where he remained

until relocating to Erub. He wrote to his mother on 14 January 1906:

These Torres Straits islanders [sic] – whatever their faults may be - know their New Testaments or rather Four Gospels better than the majority of Christians in England. They are the only works they possess in their own language and so are read constantly. Thus Mauga was able to tell the story with the aid of my crude pictures in a more effective way than it had ever been heard before. It brought things near to the people and that night many of them never went to sleep but sat up and by the light of their fires talked over the many things they had heard and seen concerning the wonderful Gospel story until daylight broke and found them still talking and wondering (Butcher, 1905-1914).

### RELOCATION TO ERUB

In his report to Thompson for the year ending March 1906, Butcher alluded to the ‘somewhat unsettled nature’ of his first year’s work and his dashed hopes of working in New Guinea:<sup>38</sup> ‘I must confess that the year has been far from an easy and a happy one for me’. He considered both Erub and Mer, the only really fertile islands, as the site of his headquarters but remote Mer was ‘in a very bad position for reaching the other islands’. From Erub, however, he could carry on

a systematic visitation of the islands but also as my base was only a days sail from the district east of the Fly I should make a serious effort to get into friendly relations with the natives on that part of the coast. I was not alone in the opinion that this would be a good thing and also that this which is the most thickly

populated district in all British New Guinea would be the most fitting to receive the [proposed] new station (Butcher, 1907a).<sup>39</sup>

Although there was money to found the new station thanks to a generous bequest, the project was deferred owing to the scarcity of teachers.<sup>40</sup> Always optimistic, Butcher planned to use the time to train Torres Strait Islanders for future mission service ‘in the villages between the Bamu and the Aird rivers and work that part of the coast entirely without the aid of Southsea men’ (Butcher, 1906).

At the New Guinea District Committee meeting at Port Moresby from 19 to 22 March 1906, Butcher was received into full membership after his probationary year and promised the new mainland mission, when it was formed. He was also authorised to gather in and train the young Torres Strait Islander men as a one-year experiment, the expenditure ‘not to exceed £8 per man, and the number of men not to exceed 12’ (Dauncey, 1906).

In early May 1906 Butcher moved to Erub and took temporary charge of the Erub school; he received no salary but was allowed to occupy the teacher’s residence until the end of the year, when Editha Smallwood was appointed.<sup>41</sup> He taught nearly 80 children in the local school for three to four hours a day, assisted by Fa’avai, formerly at Yam and ‘a very intelligent Samoan pastor’. The continuing nexus between church and school at this time of transition to government-provided education and the gradual withdrawal of the LMS is illustrated by the fact that the school, ‘an excellent one built of concrete and iron’ was ‘used as a Church by the London Missionary Society on Sunday’ (Douglas, 1903b).<sup>42</sup>

While on Thursday Island on 12 December Butcher heard that O’Brien was to be transferred: ‘we fear it is a kind of punishment

for his faithful administration and fine stand for the natives' interest. Walker[,]<sup>43</sup> the [Anglican] Bishop [Gilbert White,] Hodel<sup>44</sup> and myself have all sent long wires to the authorities and hope he will be able to stay over.' O'Brien did leave in early 1907 and was replaced by John Moody Costin, a more pliable man. Butcher, however, stayed on at Erub, every second month visiting the Samoan teachers stationed on Mabuyag, Badu, Saibai, Yam, Masig, Erub and Mer and Boigu, with the smaller congregations of Dauan, Mua and Ugar being ministered to by local men (Butcher, 1908). He built a house using timber from an old house on Mer and 'a great deal of new timber but much of the old I used up in erecting a mission store and other work on the station' (Butcher, 1907a), while continuing to urge the LMS to withdraw to the mainland.<sup>45</sup> The Queensland government's increasing responsibility for the economic and welfare interests of the Islanders meant that 'the concerns of the Papuan Mainland became remote from those of the Islands Church' (Williams, 1972: 46) and Butcher's tasks were thus 'more pastoral than missionary' (Butcher, 1908).

Reporting on his activities for 1909, Butcher (1910b) noted that he was still headquartered at Erub but allowed to work in New Guinea. Walker, a former LMS missionary, who had established Papuan Industries Ltd at Badu and was 'in very close touch with Mabuiag and Saibai and Mua', had agreed 'to exercise an oversight of the work in these islands during my absence and will be able to do it far better than I have been able to from Darnley Island, over one hundred miles away'. Butcher continued to travel around the islands, supervising the mission and organising the provision of stores to the teachers. In late April 1911 he was absent when the Queensland governor came to Erub, since he was 'visiting other

parts of his widely spread charge'; on 30 April he was at Saibai, officiating at a well-attended church service which the governor attended (Macgregor, 1911).

There is a gap in Butcher's diary between 22 January 1907 and 1 January 1912. Other than recording the marriage of Dadiku from Mabuyag to Metusela from Badu (though of Mabuyag origin) at Badu on 15 January 1912,<sup>46</sup> it contains only one reference to Mabuyag, where Butcher spent two days, arriving from Badu on 17 May 1912 and leaving for Saibai the following day. He had a long discussion about the church with Solo, the Samoan pastor. 'Nothing has been done by the people to reduce the debt. Most men away.' There is no further reference to Torres Strait.

At the Papuan District committee meeting on 18 March 1912, Butcher learned he had been 'definitely appointed to the Aird Delta ... to start right in and form the station.' He and Riley continued their supervision of the Torres Strait mission until, on 20 May 1912, he left Saibai for Daru, now 'free to explore the delta and open up work among the tribes in that area' (Butcher, 1963: 89). He returned to Erub to say farewell to the people: 'The Islanders were very unhappy at my going, and had the call to this new task been less insistent I might have been content to settle down among these friendly people with whom I had spent such full and happy years.' The Rev. William George Lawes (1906) had considered Butcher to be 'one of those men who is never never going to be married' but on 28 December 1912 he married Lucy Georgina (Ena) Davidson in Brisbane<sup>47</sup> and early in 1913 the couple sailed to Papua (Butcher, 1963: 109). The family returned to Australia in 1938, Butcher retired to Leura in the Blue Mountains of New South Wales and died on 29 July 1973 (Langmore, 1989: 284).

## REFLECTIONS

Butcher's Mabuyag experiences tested to the limit all his resources – religious, emotional and practical: 'My work demanded much that is never included in the curriculum of a theological college, ... I was doctor, dentist, builder, carpenter, sailor and teacher by turns' (Butcher, 1963: 53). In retirement, he reflected on his early leadership of the Torres Strait mission: 'I have my doubts as to the wisdom of entrusting such a task to young, untried men, and often think how much more I could have done for the people had I but known what the years since have taught me' (Butcher, 1963: 121). The discipline of anthropology was not included in the curriculum of theological colleges until the 1930s 'and we had to do it on the field with little but our own native wit to help us. We were in danger of thinking the wild man knew little while we had much to teach, but one gets further when one is humbler and aware of how much we also have to learn'.

Although Butcher was not a physically impressive man – McCulloch (c.1921: 10) describes him as 'a weak, weedy sort of person' and contrasted him unfavourably with the pioneer missionaries he had met in Vanuatu – he had a remarkable career in Papua. He established a successful mission station at Aird Hill in 1914, close to the area where Chalmers and Tomkins were killed. Through toughness and perseverance and after initial setbacks, he accomplished his ambitions, replacing Chalmers in the Gulf Province and building a successful industrial mission, and he is much admired in Papua New Guinea (David Lawrence, pers. comm., 2012).

Despite Butcher's initial lack of sympathy for the Islanders as they transitioned to a life that left no traditional sphere unchallenged, where old and new customs and beliefs were 'strangely mingled' (Butcher, 1963: 58), he worked conscientiously and energetically for what he believed was their good. Wiser and

more attuned towards the end of his life to the deleterious effects of European commerce and lifeways on 'the faith and ancient traditions of the people', who could no longer 'tread the road their fathers loved' (Butcher, 1963: 138), he would look back on his unhappy year on Mabuyag as a most valuable experience. Two years later he would write: 'I have got to love these people and could settle down to a very happy and certainly comfortable life among the folk were it not for the greater desire to be on the Mainland in the thick of the fight' (Butcher, 1907b).

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## ENDNOTES

1. The paper draws primarily on the Rev. B.T. Butcher's diary for 1905-1907, held among his papers in the manuscript section of the National Library of Australia as NLA MS 1881 BUTCHER, Rev. Benjamin Thomas. Papers 1905-1938, as well as his published work and microfilmed correspondence, both personal and professional, held in the major Australian libraries as LMS Papua journals and letters. The diary (Butcher, 1905a) is one of several items of general interest, including: MS 1881/7: Manuscripts of 'Adventure ahead', 'The religion of a savage', and various school broadcasts about Papua New Guinea; NLA MS 1881/8a: Manuscript of 'Coconuts and cannibals', some of which was to appear in Butcher (1963); NLA MS 1881/11: 'Extracts from a missionary's letter: an abridged account of an exploratory trip up the Bamu River in New Guinea made by the Rev. B.T. Butcher, LMS, Missionary, in October 1910', by F.M. 12 pp. n.d., which contains brief mention of Erub (Darnley Island) and Ugar (Stephens Island) as points of departure and return. According to the scholarly notes provided by the NLA, some of this material appeared in Butcher (1963, c.1965). The paper also makes extensive use of the microfilmed Papua reports and letters of the London Missionary Society held in the National Library of Australia and various state libraries. Annual and other reports of the local government resident are cited under author's name and year reported on. Annual reports of the department responsible for Queensland Indigenous affairs are cited as Annual Report with the year reported on.
2. Chalmers had shared oversight of the western branch of the mission with the Rev. Frederick William Walker until the latter's resignation in c.1896. 'Another missionary will be required, more especially for Torres Straits, to superintend the various stations, and who could train and prepare teachers for the islands' (Chalmers, 1896).
3. A recommendation by the New Guinea District Committee in 1903 to transfer the Torres Strait churches to the Bishop of Carpentaria (Wetherell, 1993: 7) was rejected by the directors and Butcher's appointment served to underline their commitment to the Islanders.
4. Butcher (n.d.) tells us that, as a child, he 'had a love for tools and handicrafts and thoughts of being an engineer one day'. At one point he tried to help Balo, 'a fine, buxom woman, black of skin, comely and strong', who was suffering from toothache. Before a big crowd on the mission house verandah, he removed a back molar but it was the wrong tooth. To his surprise, nobody held it against him: 'Even Balo bore me no grudge and became a real friend, greeting me with a wide smile of welcome whenever I came her way, which proved that she had a very forgiving nature' (Butcher, 1963: 54). This is almost certainly Balo Ripai Wairu (c.1877-1946), daughter of Wairu or Nagu, the Argan clan leader from Badu, and Kaim; Balo married the Solomon Islander, William (Billy) Blanket, in 1911. According to Yopelli Panuel (pers. comm., 1982), Blanket was one of three Pacific Islanders who moved from Mabuyag to Badu after the trouble over Charlotte Ware's engagement.
5. For an account of the origin and use of the title 'mamoose' see Shnukal, *Aspects of early local administration, education, health and population on Mabuyag*, this volume.
6. Cairns was transferred to the Mabuyag Aboriginal School from Saibai after 'some trouble amongst the natives in regard to ... some of the School girls'. The Government Resident, however, expressed his satisfaction 'with the manner in which he has discharged his duties'. Cairns began teaching at Mabuyag in early March 1904, replacing Alice Huddy and her assistant, Winifred Steele, who moved to Erub. He refers approvingly to the arrival of Butcher in May 1905, believing 'that this will lead to much good among the Natives of this place, and will assist me the better to carry out the work I suggested in my previous letter'. He resigned in 1909, to be replaced by Mr Minniss (Cairns, 1905; Campbell, 1904; Douglas, 1904a; Fox, 1924).
7. 'The island was very hilly and I frequently took long tramps over the hills and through the bush where the bamboo grew luxuriantly, or down some ravine beautiful with masses of maidenhair fern. Sometimes I climbed the hills behind our house, from which I could look across the sea to the islands of Nagi, Moa and Badu and others so far off that only on very clear days could they be seen. No two days were alike and at times the scene was unforgettably beautiful' (Butcher, 1963: 52-53).
8. This was the first Bishop of Carpentaria, Gilbert White, a compassionate man who was at times an outspoken critic of government policy and a defender of Indigenous and Pacific Islander interests.
9. This was the old LMS boat *Niue*. Bishop Gilbert White had 'asked to buy the old *Niue* and now has the matter under consideration. I put £10 extra on the price because he is a Bishop. I don't like selling the vessel to him but he will get one even if we refuse him our old one, and if we can get a few pounds more out of him I think it will be better than selling at a lower figure to anyone else' (Riley, 1905).
10. Isaia belonged to the third (mainly Samoan) wave of Pacific Islander LMS missionaries, serving for 19 years at Mabuyag from August 1892 until his repatriation in April 1913. Visiting him in 1893, Chalmers professed himself 'well pleased with the Mission work done. Isaia, the Samoan teacher and his wife, are good workers. The school was always good, but now it has advanced wonderfully. He has built himself a good house, and

in all things good they make themselves one with their people. In their house, as well as when about they are clean and tidy, and their house is kept, as a teacher's house should be. This has a good effect. Everybody attends church and from the wrapt [sic] attention, I should fancy the teacher has got a good hold of the language, and preaches with much power. He is quiet and earnest.'

It was Isaia who organised the building of the new wooden church, which was opened with much fanfare in 1897, and translated the four Gospels, the catechism and a number of hymns into Kala Lagaw Ya. The Lifuan pastor, Elia, had translated the Gospel of Mark, a catechism, one hundred hymns and the Lord's Prayer into Kalaw Kawaw Ya, the Saibai dialect of the western language and Isaia was in the process of rendering these into the Mabuyag dialect during the visit of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition in 1898. His collaborators were Tom Nabua, Peter Papi and Ned Waria, who were also the expedition's main informants. *Evangelia lesu Keriso Mataion Minarpalaizinga* was published in London in 1900.

John Douglas thought Isaia 'an excellent clever man, but imperfectly equipped [to teach the children of Mabuyag]'. He derived great prestige from his position and his association with Europeans: in 1900 Edith Muston, the newly-arrived government teacher, and the second Mrs Cowling, lived with his family until her house was built and he worked 'in perfect accord' with Alice Huddy, who replaced Muston in 1901. Butcher also lived in Isaia's house while on Mabuyag but the two men did not get on well.

Most, if not all, of Isaia's children were born on Mabuyag and on 13 August 1904, a few days after the death of his son, Fuatau, Isaia applied for two years furlough, citing the ill-health of wife, Seluia, and their grief over the deaths of three of his children during the past 18 months: Benjamin (aged two years 1 month) and Fuatau (aged two); his only daughter, Nancy Mabuiag, born in August 1896 had died of diarrhoea on Thursday Island on 1 December 1897. Benjamin, born 1 January 1901 died 20 February 1903, is buried at Mabuyag, a little apart from the others in the main cemetery. I could find no grave on Mabuyag for either Nancy Mabuiag or Fuatau but many of the early stones have crumbled away. According to the Rev. Henry Moore Dauncey, Isaia, Seluia and their seven surviving children returned to Samoa on furlough in 1906, taking some young Mabuyag men. Isaia appears to have complained to the Samoan District Committee about his treatment on Mabuyag, for Butcher and Riley were instructed by the Papuan District Committee meeting of March 1908 to write 'a plain and unvarnished account of the matter'. Isaia and Seluia were much admired by the local people: Gisu and Sanawai named a daughter after her and the name continues to recent times in related families (Chalmers, 1893; Douglas, 1900a, 1900c, 1901a; Dauncey, 1906; Isaia, 1904; Langbridge, 1977: 97, 173-174; Lovett, 1899: 433; McFarlane, 1884; Nokise, 1983: 310, 372-373; Turner, 1908).

11. There are numerous references in LMS missionary records to the conflicts between European and Pacific Islander missionaries, usually over status and autonomy, although the relationship was essentially co-dependent. Unlike the Europeans, who tended to make brief visits every few months, the Pacific pastors resided for long periods of time on the islands and, as a result of their extended residence and similar worldview to the local people, they established longstanding relationships and assumed authority beyond the religious sphere. By 1905 the pioneer Loyalty Island pastors had been replaced largely by Samoans, who were renowned for interfering in island administration and conducting their own private business operations. Butcher's colleague Riley wrote to his superiors that 'A man who has got to deal with Samoans needs to have a double portion of the grace of God in his heart for they are very trying, especially with a new man, and having been so long without supervision' (Riley, 1903).
12. Harry Captain, the celebrated teacher from Erub, related how 'When the people were civilized by the missionaries, the missionaries gave them a heritage in the form of the book of Bibles and hymn books, and taught them the burial of the dead and Catechism, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and so on'. Depending on the age, status and sex of the deceased, the relatives traditionally would gather up the bones and skull after decomposition, paint them red, wrap them in bark and place them in graves or rock shelters or inside the house or under cairns in the case of violent death; or, for children, wear the small bones around the neck as a memento. One of the first Christian burials took place on Erub on 8 October 1877: 'we found the teacher and a number of natives collected near the beach. They had just buried a man who had died the night before -- so Christian burial has begun. Formerly, the body would have been hung up and tapped, to allow the juices to run out, which would have been drunk by the friends' (Captain, 1973; Chalmers and Gill, 1885: 27; Spry, 1876: 207).
13. This may be Koebur beside Kubaraw Koesa, the location of the present cemetery (Teske, 1986: 12).
14. The 9 September entry indicates that this was George Alumai Hankin (c.1858-1934), born in Tutuila, Samoa, of a Cornish father and Samoan mother. The family is well known in both American Samoa (as Hunkin) and Mabuyag. According to Allison Hankin (pers. comm., 1982), Hankin joined the crew of a whaling vessel and arrived in Sydney in the early 1880s, from where he sailed to Torres Strait. He married Kiriz Mamie

Bamia, granddaughter of Yamakuni from Pulu, and was given land by the mamoose. He evidently had an entrepreneurial bent and was among several Pacific Islanders who are attested as seeking (and sometimes finding) valuable metals in the islands and New Guinea. Hankin played a role in the quarrel over Charlotte Ware, firing a shotgun over the heads of the crowd. Hankin told Bishop Stephen Harris Davies at his confirmation at Mabuyag on 31 August 1923 that he had been baptised by a LMS missionary (Powell) in Samoa. Of his eleven Mabuyag-born children, nine survived to adulthood. The family remained on the island and the second son, Episaia, became chairman for many years, marrying Charlotte Ware in 1910.

15. John Cowling (c.1864-1929), 'a very good fellow' according to Butcher, was a trader and pearler from with a station and store located at Panay, the easternmost point of Mabuyag near the little harbour and jetty. In 1895 he was managing the Western Australian Pearlshell Fishing Co. but, after hearing news of rich pearl beds in Torres Strait, he 'was made commodore of the barquentine *Southern Cross*, and, with 15 vessels under him, commenced a 2000 mile cruise to the Strait' in 1896. After one of his divers reportedly found a copper ingot on a Mabuyag reef, the crew salvaged some tons of ingots and Cowling sailed to Thursday Island, only to have Customs take possession of them as 'treasure': a law case found in Cowling's favour, as the ingots were recovered outside the three-mile limit. By 1897 was already an established pearlsheller and trader living with his wife in a house on top of Panay Pad (Panay Hill) and had joined the Thursday Island Masonic lodge. In addition to Pacific Islanders he employed men from Mabuyag, Mer (Murray Island), Cape York, the Pacific and New Guinea, and 'divers from Saibai, Boigu, Dauan, Kubin and Poid would bring their shell here to him'. While living on Mabuyag, Cowling is said to have invented swimming glasses 'which, when worn over the eyes, made diving so much easier for the skin-divers', enabling them to dive to 12 fathoms. Cowling also purchased land at Mibu in New Guinea, where he established a coconut plantation and opened a store. In 1898 he gave 'considerable assistance' to the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition: in addition to his hospitality, Cowling wrote down Ned Warria's account of his genealogy and took the party to visit Pulu in his cutter.

The Murray Island government teacher records the birth of a daughter, Martha, to Cowling and Sep from Mer in September 1898. Sep later married Manoah Kaigey from Mer, one of Butcher's 'boys'. Cowling is recorded as the owner of the lugger *Martha* in 1899 and the schooner *Dart* in 1903, when he was manager of Mobiag Pearling Trading Co. He also owned the *Baroona* and the lugger *Tokyo*, crewed by Murray Islanders, which was later purchased by the Samoan skipper, George Cowley, who had worked for him at Panay and took his name (Sagi Ambar and Kame Paipai, pers. comm., 1982). By 1903 he and the other European storekeeper and pearler on Mabuyag, James Doyle, were Justices of the Peace but both were accused of using their position to advance their business interests and warned not to sit on the local court or interfere with local affairs. Nonetheless, the local administrators continued to place 'entire reliance' on his observations and took his advice on a range of matters.

Like Butcher, Cowling was also drawn into the Pacific Islander dispute: the men who left Mabuyag were employed by him as divers and the families were transported to their new home on Mua in his cutter *Yadi*. He was sent by John Douglas to report on Gebar (Two Brothers Island) as a possible settlement for them but found it 'unsuitable on account of having no great area suitable for gardens. I called the S. Seas together and as a result decided on looking at Moa, and after a visit of inspection reported to the Hon. John that I thought it would be very suitable, having a good anchorage at all seasons, and plenty of fair land suitable for their gardens. After a further inspection visit, Douglas called the Pacific men together and decided to recommend it to the government.'

According to Butcher's diary, Cowling had started a cotton plantation on Mabuyag by 1905, despite the barrenness of the soil, but, ruined by the pearling crash, he was compelled to close down his shelling operation and all his boats were seized.

Cowling also had business interests in New Guinea, attested at least from 1899 when he was keeping a store at the Pahoturi River, and after the crash he moved his entire operations to the mainland. On 15 January 1907 Butcher was visiting New Guinea and 'sailed across to Sobo Wabuda where I found Cowling living in real bush style but fairly happy. His "factory" was most interesting. He is engaged in preparing various roots for the market as well as copra and has about 40 men and women on the tiny island and when I saw them at work they were seated in a long house - men, women and babies all save the last mentioned busily scraping the roots with the exception of a few who were looking after an [sic] unique boiling apparatus or attending to the drying of the cleaned root. All seemed happy and the labour cannot be called dear when it pans out at about 5/- for a man and his wife.' In April 1908 he made a three-month trip inland to get samples of wild rubber with a view to forming a company; he had just returned from two weeks up the Mai Kussa river seeking land for cotton or cattle and spent ten days on Mabuyag repairing his boats and cleaning out his houses in preparation for sale. In May 1910 he was appointed a JP at Daru and that year he donated 1,300 coconuts for the mission at Mua, transported from Daru by the Anglican mission boat, Banzai. He appears to have moved between Mabuyag and New Guinea for many years.

In 1923 he sold a sailing cutter to the people of Poid: the *Karabai* was built at Thursday Island in 1915 and extensively refitted in 1921. In January 1929 Cowling left New Guinea and retired to a tiny farm outside Sydney near Picton, where he died on 23 June. He deserves to be remembered as the man who not only employed and trained significant numbers of Torres Strait and Pacific Islanders and provided goods not readily available elsewhere, but also as the introducer of a new species of sweet potato which flourished during the drought when the native species died off; he also advocated the growing of cassava, which he thought should be introduced to all the islands as a reliable food source (Anon, n.d.; Bruce, 1906; Butcher, 1963: 55; Chalmers, 1898; Cowling, 1908, 1927; Grand Lodge of Scotland, 1897: 118; Haddon, 1901: 117, 1904: 126, 6, 228; Lewis, 1996: 39; Milman, 1908; Queensland Department of Justice, 1899, 1903); Queensland Government Gazette, 21 May 1910; Reid, 1954: 114, 128; Roth, 1903; *The Carpentarian*, 1 January 1911: 331; The Parish Gazette, 1 February 1929: 4).

The Mrs Cowling of Butcher's diary is Cowling's second wife, the Mabuyag school teacher, Edith Rosa Frances Muston. Muston, one of the original group of European government teachers in Torres Strait. She began work on Mabuyag in March 1900 and, until completion of a teacher's house, she boarded with Isaia and his family, who were living in 'a fine large house', paying him 10/- a week for board and keep. Muston resigned on 1 December, having become engaged to John Cowling – 'an adventurous pearlsheller' (Douglas, 1901b: 4) – whom she married on 24 December 1900 in Townsville and the couple returned to Mabuyag to live. Muston was replaced as government teacher by Alice Huddy, another of the original government teachers. On 6 July 1902 she brought with her from Sydney the 25-year-old Winifred Steele, the daughter of a master mariner from Cooktown, as a 'lady-help' and in October left Steele in charge of the house at Panay until her return six months later. According to Steele, who was naturally put out, 'Mrs Cowling came back on June 6th and it soon became apparent that she was as tired of me as she gets of everybody and everything - "Change" is the keynote of her nature as witness her life the four and a half years she's been in the Colonies and by her own showing, all her earlier years in England'. Steele then applied for appointment as a teacher in one of the schools and was hired to assist Huddy, later accompanying her to Erub before her own appointment to open the Naghir school. John and Edith Cowling divorced in December 1910 (Douglas, 1900a, 1900c, 1900f; Steele, 1903; *Brisbane Courier*, 16 March 1911: 7; *Torres Straits Pilot and New Guinea Gazette*, 29 December 1900).

The third Mrs Cowling was originally Janet Wallis, a farmer's daughter from Ruth Richmond, Yorkshire. She had come out to Papua to be housekeeper for a 'rich planter' (Cowling) and they married in Port Moresby in 1920. Their only child, Sharratt, was born in c.1924 on Thursday Island and married the planter, Thomas James Holland, on 24 December 1941 at Madiri. Janet Cowling was accounted a hard worker and a more capable supervisor than her husband, who was considered too sympathetic to his workers. According to a contemporary observer, quoted by Lewis, 'John Cowling's good nature & indulgence of the natives is [sic] well recognised by those who know him best'. Janet remained on their plantation after Cowling's death and apparently managed it through the 1930s to the early 1940s. She was in her early 60s when Europeans were evacuated from New Guinea at the beginning of World War II and refused to leave, yielding 'only under strong persuasion'. She arrived in Cairns on 7 March 1942. Then owner of Mibu copra plantation and Madiri rubber plantation on the Fly River, both 'poor properties', she was granted an evacuee allotment of £2 per week which she repaid after receiving compensation for the loss of her launch *Goodwill*. Barrett visited the Madiri plantation after the war and found Cowling's daughter and son-in-law living there, the latter now the manager (Barrett, 1954: 20, 21; Clune, 1943: 71; Cowling, 1942; Lewis, 1996: 96, 249).

16. David Wetherell (pers. comm., 2012) points out that Hurley's visit to the islands and Papua was sponsored by the Anglican Australian Board of Missions. David Lawrence (pers. comm., 2012) notes that it was during this visit that Hurley took much of the footage for his silent film, *Pearls and savages*. Hurley's diaries are held by the National Library of Australia as NLA MS 883 HURLEY, James Francis. Diaries and papers. They were recently digitized. Diary A (MS 883/7), from 2 December 1920 through 31 January 1921, as [www.nla.gov.au/nla.ms-ms883-1-7](http://www.nla.gov.au/nla.ms-ms883-1-7); Diary B (MS 883/8) from 1 February 1921 through 30 April 1921 at [www.nla.gov.au/nla.ms-ms883-1-8](http://www.nla.gov.au/nla.ms-ms883-1-8).
17. Kaio Nelem Kris (Tanna Kaio), the ancestor of the Kris and Luffman families, was not Samoan but born c.1854 in Tanna, Vanuatu. There are many versions of how he made his way to Torres Strait. According to Gina Whap Baira (pers. comm., 2000), he came as a 14-year old stowaway in a schooner and was adopted by the mamoose of Panay as his son; according to Maryann Kris (pers. comm., 1982), he and an older brother jumped ship and the older brother went to work for a white family as a household servant and yard man. After the brother tried to kill the children of the family, Kaio ran away, swimming out to a passing boat, where he stayed in the hold and travelled up to Torres Strait. There he was discovered, beaten and thrown overboard. He floated on driftwood and landed on Mabuyag. The Mabuyag people wanted to kill him but the chief, Ambar, told them not to – 'skin colour like we' – and took him for his son. Other descendants claim that he and an older brother ran away from Tanna to Townsville and travelled north to Cairns. Kaio left his brother Luffman at Halifax to cut cane and went north to Mabuyag and the Halifax Luffman family is said

to be the descendants of this brother (Sam Nako Kris, pers. comm., 2004). Jimmy Luffman, his grandson, told Wolfgang Laade that Kaio came to Panay in a schooner with Europeans seeking pearlshell before the establishment of either mission or shelling stations. The skipper sent Kaio ashore to persuade the people to help them look for shell in return for flour, rice and sugar. They worked outside the reef among the small islands on the north-west side: Red Fruit, Aipus, Widul, down (to) *Yadi*. After the schooner was wrecked at Panay, the Europeans departed, leaving Kaio, who was made a brother of the Panay clan. In his early years Kaio had a bad reputation and reputedly participated in the raiding parties which stole women from Mua (Sam Nako Kris, pers. comm., 2004). He also claimed to have been a crewman on the beche-de-mer ship, *Woodlark*, which terrorised the Murray Islanders in c.1864. Later he became captain of one of John Bell's boats, presumably during the early 1870s.

Kaio married twice: to Kelam Waidorie from Gebar (Two Brothers Island), by whom he had six children (the Luffman family of Mabuyag); and to Akabu from Saibai, sister of Zawai, by whom he had six children (the Kris family of St Paul's). All were Mabuyag-born. Kaio is recorded as a pearl sheller and owner of the cutter *Royal George* in 1900 and of the *Lacandola*, a four-ton cutter purchased by Papuan Industries Ltd from the estate of the Filipino Heriberto Zarcal and sold to Kaio Kris for £22 in February 1907; this was the boat in which the family sailed to St Paul's Mission (Sam Nako Kris, pers. comm., 2004).

Kaio served St Paul's as policeman and councillor. As an old man, he was described by the Revd William Harold MacFarlane ('Coral') as a 'round-featured bald-headed old Tanna man, stout and corpulent'. He was baptised by the LMS, confirmed in 1922 in the Anglican church at Mabuyag and died in 1929 at St Paul's Mission and is buried there (Coral, 1925: 11; Costin, 1908; Eseli, 1998: 174; Haddon, 1908: 190-191; Luffman, c.1964; Shnukal, 1995: 5-7, 2008: 321-322).

18. This was Daniel Campbell, who replaced Andrew Cairns at Saibai. He began teaching on 29 February 1904 and soon there were rumours of 'serious friction' between him and some of the Saibai people, probably because he was said to treat the children harshly. The local Samoan pastor, Levi, assaulted him in 1907. 'An inquiry is pending, and no matter what its results may be, the feeling is pregnant that it would be unwise in the interests of the Department for Mr Campbell to return there after the usual Xmas vacation' (Anon, c.1902; Campbell, 1904; Queensland Department of Justice, 1907).
19. Panay is a small hilly point on the northeast side of Mabuyag about two kilometers from the village with a stone landing jetty; an old stone well and stone-lined paths can still be seen. It was the headquarters of the Dugong-Crocodile clan, which had its *kod* (men's ceremonial ground) nearby, close to the shore, at Dabangay, which faces the extensive reef feeding grounds of the dugong. Panay was the site of the first pearling station on Mabuyag managed by George Mortimer Pearson and of John Cowling's station from c.1897 (Done, 1915-1926: 49-50; Gill, 1876: 202; Haddon, 1935: 59; Teske, 1986: 8).
20. This is probably Setapanu Bani, third son of the Wagadagam clan leader (Kalingo Bani Joseph, pers. comm., 1992).
21. See Langbridge (1977: 146-147) for a discussion of the 'Mei' (May) meetings, which were held during the dry season in Torres Strait. Characterised both by fellowship and intense competition among the island congregations, they were modeled on the 'May' meetings of the LMS at Exeter Hall, London, and were also a means of collecting money for various church projects.
22. Alice Huddy was among the first European government teachers appointed to Torres Strait. She was initially appointed to the Yam Aboriginal School in June 1900 'at the rate of £7 per month terminable at a months notice'. Her next appointment was to Mabuyag, with instructions to open the school on 2 January 1901 and she was assisted from 1 November 1903 by Winifred Steele who was gaining teaching experience. Both women moved to Erub in April 1904 after the sudden resignation of George Septimus Bendall Harsant and were replaced at Mabuyag by Andrew Cairns. Although she did not like the people of Erub, she continued to teach there until her appointment to the reopened Yam school in December 1905. Government Resident Milman wanted to send her to a 'more accessible' island after her 'very good work' at Erub, not liking to leave 'a single woman so far away, communication with Darnley being most uncertain, the island often being for many weeks without being visited by any boat from Thursday Island'. On 4 April 1906 she arrived on Yam, where the Samoan LMS teacher Fa'avai had instructed the children in the absence of a government teacher. She applied for and was granted a sustenance allowance in 1907 after O'Brien wrote in support, citing her 'comparatively long and successful service amidst uncongenial and certainly unique surroundings'. He spoke highly of her 'work and influence among the adult native population as well as among her own school children'. In June 1907 Ethel May Zahel was appointed to teach at Yam, presumably because of Huddy's resignation: in December 1910, Miss Huddy, by then Mrs Howard and living in South Africa, applied unsuccessfully for a teaching position at Yam (Douglas, 1900b, 1900d, 1900f, 1901a; Howard, 1910; Milman, 1904a, 1904b, 1905b; O'Brien, 1906a; Roth, 1905; Schluter, 1906; Scott, 1904).

23. Edward James Hamon was one of Jardine's official staff employed for pearl-shelling, who later became a pearlsheller in his own right at Erub. Butcher describes him as 'an interesting old fellow to talk to', with a knowledge of French, Italian and Spanish. Hamon was working as a wardsman at St Andrews Cottage Hospital, Thursday Island in March 1891 but by the end of the year was master mariner and customs official at Thursday Island. Two years later he was employed as a signal man in the government service there but around 1894 he was living on Erub and by 1895 had been officially appointed as Assistant Inspector of Fisheries under the Pearl Shell and Beche de Mer Act. As the only resident European official at Erub, Hamon was responsible for punishing abuses of the act, advising the island's leaders and acting as clerk of court and unofficial registrar of births, deaths and marriages and *de facto* coroner, examining the bodies of paralysed divers and authorizing burials. He could be quick-tempered and in 1901 the government teacher, H. Rowland Newport, accused him of 'threats of personal violence'; that same year Hamon was convicted of assaulting Idagi of Erub and fined £5. In May 1903 Hamon, a 'good useful man' according to John Douglas, was 'at deaths door - an epidemic commencing with vomiting and purging, followed by fever'. The Bishop of Carpentaria met Hamon on Erub in May 1903 and described him thus: 'He is one of those remarkable men one so constantly meets in out of the way places. He started life as a 'middy in the Navy; ... He made two fortunes, but lost both on account of bank failures, and is at present living on this remote island'.

A well-known Torres Strait 'identity', Hamon was regularly invited to meet visiting government and church dignitaries, including Lord Lamington, Governor of Queensland, who visited his garden and cottage on 1 November 1900. By 1905, however, Butcher tells us that his house was 'is in a worse state than the native huts and altogether a most uninviting abode. He does all his own work and cooking and also acts as advisor to the natives.' Hamon's application for an old age pension was heard in July 1908, when his income was £13 per year and he had no accumulated property. He was recommended for a pension of ten shillings per week but by 1910 his health and eyesight were failing and he died on 1 August 1915. (Douglas, 1900e, 1903a, 1903b, 1904b; Ganter, 1994: 32; Guilletmot, 1910; Hamon, 1908; Newport, 1901; QSA JUS/N190/210/1891; JUS/N222/132/1894; QSA CPS13D/P7; 13D/P4; 13D/P9; 13D/P13; *The Carpentarian*, 1 July 1903: 89; *Torres Straits Pilot*, 3 April 1897).

24. Ait Pasi (c.1856-1933) was the last mamoose of Dauar, one of the three Murray Islands. He was installed by John Douglas after the death of Egod in July 1893. He was then appointed by Milman to succeed Ari Buziri as mamoose of Mer after Ari's death in 1911. According to Harry Captain, he was adopted unborn from someone who lived at Zomered and was given to Gamalai and Wam and the whole of Zomered was given to him as his birthright. He was a student at the Papuan Industrial School and Teachers' Seminary on Mer and he and Gadodo were Ray's main language informants in 1898. He also interpreted for the Samoan missionaries and gave invaluable cultural information to A.C. Haddon, the Rev. W.H. MacFarlane and A.O.C. Davies, the teacher on Mer from 1924 to c.1926. Pasi's son, Poey Passi became one of Butcher's 'boys' and was ordained on 18 November 1925 as one of the two first Torres Strait Islanders Anglican priests (Annual Report, 1911: 19; Bayton, 1965: 216; Captain, n.d.; Davies, c.1925; Haddon, 1908: xviii).
25. Edward (Yankee Ned) Mosby (1840-1911), so-called 'king of Yorke Island' was born at Baltimore, MD, USA, and came to Torres Strait c.1871 as second mate aboard the schooner *Three Brothers*. He took up diving about two years later and with three others bought a cutter, which they subsequently lost. He worked for Jardine out of Somerset and Naghir, signing burial certificates on Naghir on 8 June 1875 and 21 January 1876, for William Walton at Puruma and for the Merriman station at Tudu, before acquiring his own lugger and turning his hand to a small bêche-de-mer operation at nearby Zegei in c.1879, run, so the family told me, in partnership with Jack Walker (not known to be a relative of the Rev. F.W. Walker).

Mosby is first attested on Masig on 4 October 1878. By May 1882 he and Jack Walker were lessees of the northern half of the island, where the two operated a bêche-de mer station. It was here that Mosby built his house; only parts of a cement floor and an old tank remain near the freezer west of Mur. Four years later, after Walker had removed to nearby Dhamudh, Mosby had about fifty Islanders fishing for him 'besides employing natives from the mainland'. He married Kudin (Queenie) Uruba, oldest sister of Ganaia from Koedal, by whom he had three sons and a daughter; by Aikasa he had a fourth son (Lawrence Mosby, pers. comm., 1981). He became a naturalized British citizen in 1885.

The Tudu people had tried to poison him at Zegei and the Masig Islanders also tried to get rid of him by torching his house (Barney Mosby, 1927), though this is now accounted the work of a disappointed rival for Kudin. Sam Mosby (pers. comm., 1981) was told by his mother that his grandfather 'always had a gun beside him, even when he slept', possibly because he was rumoured to have a fine collection of pearls.

Mosby brought other Central Islanders to work for him and employed Pacific Islander and Cape York Aboriginal divers, as well as European carpenters. By the early 1890s, however, Mosby was the only European living on Masig. He built up a profitable fishing, trading and plantation business and in 1908 was working

three boats around Masig and one small boat at Poruma, had four swimming diving boats licensed in his name but also managed 'fifteen swimming diving boats and one pump boat'. Concerned that the children of Masig were being denied an education, Mosby paid for a schoolmaster, George K. Adrian, to open a school. In July 1909 Mosby took out Special Lease 1223 for 20 acres at £10 per annum for a 'Pearl Shell and Beche-de-mer Station, Massik Island'. At his death he left a personal estate valued at £773 to his wife and four sons and by the mid-1930s, the family 'owned four luggers [and] were earning approximately £2000 a year between them from the sale of bêche-de-mer, trochus-shell, and pearl-shell' (Adrian, 1899; Douglas, 1902; Gillan, 1981, 1982; MacFarlane, c.1925; Mosby, 1908; Pennefather, 1879, 1882; Reid, 1954: 153, 154; Rowan, 1898: 140; Teske, 1991: 29).

26. Agi Ambar (c.1866-1947) was appointed to Totalai on Mua around 1903 and served the community after its relocation to Adam until his dismissal in 1905, after which a deacon ministered to the community. After the Anglican takeover, he became skipper on the mission boat *Herald I* under the Rev. J.J.E. Done (Done, 1987: 104; Eseli, 1998: 100).
27. For information about Pulu, a small, rocky island off the west coast of Mabuyag, but inside its home reef, see McNiven *et al.*, (2009); Kris (n.d.: 2); Teske (1986: 40-46); Eseli (1998: 88).
28. Mabuyag Islanders think of their island as facing the southeast and the southeast trade wind blows for much the year (Bani, 1978: 53). Towards the end of the southeast season of Woewra (or Sager), the month of October can bring sporadic squalls and rough seas. Eseli (1998: 54-60), who watched the constellations each morning and evening, noted the strong southeast winds of October that accompany the special rain that brings new leaves. This rain, which falls between the turtle-mating and monsoon seasons, is called *Thoerapaw aari*, lit. 'sprouts' rain. October is a time of wind gusts, which Islanders see as reflecting the passage of the Dhogay constellation embarking again on its westward journey from the northeast corner of the sky. The wind 'gusts from northeast - yes, then from northwest, then from southwest, then the next day from southeast again. Then we have complete calm' (Eseli, 1998: 56-57).
29. For a detailed account of the causes of the quarrel and its aftermath see Shnukal (2008: 229-234).
30. O'Brien wrote a confidential memorandum on the quarrel. He arrived at Mabuyag on 16 November and called a meeting in the courthouse for the following day, where he spent three hours listening to grievances. Waria, the mamoose, acted as spokesman. 'As you are aware, most if not all of the recent trouble has arisen in connection with the refusal of the mother of a half-caste girl named Salit to consent to the marriage of her daughter with the son of the Mamoose, and the consequent refusal of Rev. Mr Butcher to marry the girl without the mother's consent. After hearing the natives very fully and interviewing the girl, her mother and her step-father (a Ware Islander known as Jack Ware), I told these people that the mother's consent must be obtained before the girl could be married, and that as you had already told them all about this in your office in my presence some days before on Thursday Island, we were both very angry that they had continued to cause trouble over the matter. Also that you and I had decided that Waria, Marci [Maki] and Joe should be brought into Thursday Island to be punished for creating a disturbance, and that Waria should be deposed by you if he did not keep the people in better order in future. Finally that they must let the girl Salit and her mother alone...

There was also a much involved complaint about a ring which Mr Butcher had become possessed of. The ring had been taken off Salit's finger forcibly by another Jack Ware of Yam Island at the mother's request, and had been finally handed to Mr Butcher who had taken it to prevent trouble. I told Yam Island Jack Ware that he must clear out to Yam or he would be punished and that he must not come to Mabuyag causing trouble' (O'Brien, 1905). [This Jack Ware was a countryman and possible relation of Charlotte's stepfather, Jack (Goba) Ware. He was well known as a troublesome individual, implicated in prostitution and the sale of alcohol at Yam Island.]

31. While relations between the two communities remained strained for a time, by the end of 1911 they were restored, the St Paul's people spending the post-Christmas week with friends and relatives at Mabuyag and returning with a gift of 'fourteen hundred cocoanuts for planting and 2000 for domestic purposes' (Anon., 1912).
32. Fatiolofa Fa'avai, a Samoan from the Apia District, was appointed to Port Moresby in 1899 and was living on Yam in 1906, where he 'rendered good service' during the closure of the school 'in keeping the children at their lessons as well as he could'. Butcher reports that in 1906 Fa'avai assisted him in the Erub school. He thought highly of Fa'avai but, according to Langbridge, Paul Guilletmot, who replaced Editha Smallwood as Erub government teacher in November 1909, 'complained that he was intimidating those who fetched water and firewood for him'. Fa'avai and his wife, Salu, adopted Morris, a 'halfcaste Samoan boy' and, when they and their four children took furlough in 1910, they were allowed to take Morris with them to Samoa 'on

condition that he remain there to be educated' (Butcher, 1907a; Langbridge, 1977: 104; Nokise, 1983: 312; O'Brien, 1906a; Pryce Jones, 1909, 1910).

33. The man is not identified but shortly afterwards Butcher placed a new teacher on Masig, probably Samuela (see below).
34. The Samoan I'eu (sometimes spelled Yeu) is mentioned as being present at the dedication of the new tin-roofed church of Erub on 14 September 1900. He conducted the marriage of Mimi from Mer and Sedoi from Erub in February 1905 at Erub and his cousin, Sene, wife of the Samoan teacher, Fatouai, died in childbirth on Yam in July 1907. I'eu is also recorded as the teacher on Yam in early 1913 Yam (Bruce, 1891; Harries, 1913; Nokise, 1983: 371).
35. Solo (Saul) came from Apolima District in Samoa and was ordained on 16 October 1905. He and his wife replaced Isaia on Mabuyag during the latter's furlough in 1906. In 1909, he was advised to return with his family to Samoa owing to the sickness of his wife. He and his wife, Sialofi, signed as witnesses to the marriage of Gaulai to Umis, on Mabuyag on 3 May 1911. Solo was reported to the Rev. Thomas Oliver Harries by William Lee-Bryce, Chief Magistrate at the time, for adultery with a local woman. Harries went to Mabuyag on 9 November 1912 and Solo confessed his culpability. Harries and Lee-Bryce both attended Solo's trial on 16 November. Harries wrote: 'Under the "Island's Laws" Solo and the girl are liable to a penalty of 2 pounds or imprisonment; but Mr Lee Bryce left the punishment of Solo to me.' He was dismissed and the family removed to Masig, from where they were repatriated in December (Dauncey, 1913; Harries, 1912; Nokise, 1983: 321, 323; Pryce Jones, 1909).

Samuela came from Samoa's Falealili District and was also ordained on 16 October 1905. He and his wife, Tautala, began work on Erub in late 1905 but were soon moved to Masig possibly at the beginning of 1906, if he is the new teacher referred to by Butcher. In May 1912, Samuela offered the ordination prayer at Aragu's ordination. In mid-January 1913 Harries visited Samuela and his wife and reported that they were doing 'an excellent work'. Since their last visit they had buried their baby son and Tautala's father had died. The following year he came into open conflict with Connelly, the newly-appointed government teacher, when the latter interrupted a church service to tell the people that God did not exist. Harries wrote bitterly: 'This is the latest of many incidents which go to shew that it is almost impossible for native pastors to serve efficiently on these isolated islands, where Government teachers have almost despotic power, some of whom seem to take delight in irritating our teachers, by thwarting them in all ways possible'. Samuela remained on Masig until the handover of the work to the Anglicans, when he, his wife and two children returned to Samoa on furlough. He was the only LMS teacher remembered by the Masig people interviewed by Teske in the mid-1980s (Butcher, 1905a, 1907a, diary entry for 3 May 1912; Dauncey, 1914; Harries, 1913, 1914; Langbridge, 1977: 170-191; Nokise, 1983: 321; Ohshima, 1983: 281; Pryce Jones, 1909; Teske, 1991: 31; Thomas, 1886: 374).

36. Margaret Lawrie (n.d.) was told that the Namok and Ware families travelled from Mabuyag to Mua with Butcher on 30 October 1905 but she gives no source for her information. According to Butcher's diary this was the date that he first became actively, though reluctantly, involved in the quarrel.
37. This may be Mauga of the Shovel-nosed Ray clan (Dugong moiety), son of Banai and Uruba and brother of Magala, who is said to have also worked at Tureture in New Guinea. He married Pudi, the widow of the Dauan LMS teacher, Mooka, and eventually returned to Mabuyag with her and her daughter, Leah. Leah married Adi Tom Nabua of Mabuyag and their first son, Sagi, was adopted by Anau Ambar (as was James, the son of Manua and Aigiwak Kaigey). Sagi Ambar was ordained as the first Mabuyag-born Anglican priest in 1951 (*A.B.M. Review*, 1 June 1951: 79; Eseli, 1998: 100).
38. 'He came out with the idea that he was appointed to the mainland of N.G. and the Straits is too limited an area for him' (Lawes, 1906).
39. Information about one of these excursions can be found in Butcher (1910a).
40. 'Many of our old Stations are without Teachers, and we cannot get men in the number we need either from the Islands or from New Guinea' (Dauncey, 1906). According to David Wetherell (pers. comm., 2012), the money probably came from the Arthington Bequest of £1 million to the LMS, although there were other smaller bequests around that time.
41. He was living in the teacher's house 'built of wood and iron in a grove of coconuts provides sufficient accommodation for a married couple, with verandahs both back and front. It was built by Robert Black the Government Carpenter at Thursday Island and cost about £150' (Douglas, 1903b; O'Brien, 1906b).
42. 'As a splendid site was available on Darnley Island, I decided to move from Mabuiag and make my headquarters there, and started to build my first house'. Inspecting the school on 27 April after two or

three weeks without a teacher, Miss Huddy having left to open the school at Yam, the local Protector of Aboriginals, O'Brien wrote: 'The children and parents were eager for the school to be reopened, which I told them would happen in the course of a few days when Mr Butcher arrived from Mabuiaig' (O'Brien, 1906a; Butcher, 1963: 56).

43. The Rev. Frederick William Walker (1860-1926), former LMS missionary and trader in New Guinea, was the founder and managing director of Papuan Industries Limited (PIL), established on Badu in 1906. He was described 'as the most hated man in Papua because he always took the side of the natives' (Austin, 1972; Williams, 1972). PIL was acquired by the Queensland government in July 1930 and renamed Aboriginal Industries. In 1934 it became the Aboriginal Industries Board (AIB), which became a corporation under the *Torres Strait Islanders Act* 1939, and later a semi-government corporation, the Islander Board of Industry and Service (IBIS), establishing stores on most of the outer islands in addition to those on Thursday Island and Badu.
44. Charles Frederick Hodel (1861-1953) from St Helier, Channel Islands, was a well-known Thursday Island merchant and a significant player in the local marine and transport industries. He began as a clerk in Burns Philp Pty Ltd and was publisher and editor of the *Torres Straits Pilot* in 1890, becoming the owner in 1893 and selling it in 1896. He managed and then acquired Brown and Campbells, which became Hodels Ltd. Its fleet was purchased by the Wyben Pearling Co. in October 1913 but the firm continued its other activities, among them acting as agent for all the protestant missions of the strait and Cape York. A regular churchgoer, Hodel was an early supporter of the LMS, acting as its unpaid agent from c.1903; he sometimes deputised for the Rev. F.W. Walker of Papuan Industries and for 12 months in 1912 he returned from retirement in Myola to relieve Walker as manager, while the latter took furlough (Hodel, 1912; Mann, 1973; Pryce Jones, 1909; Wyben Pearling Co. Ltd, 1913; *The Parish Gazette*, 1 July 1926: 8).
45. The transference of Papua (formerly British New Guinea) to Australian administration in 1906 meant consolidation and stricter enforcement of the Papua-Torres Strait border 'and consequently the man in the Straits finds himself isolated from the work in New Guinea and is under entirely different laws and customs duties'. As a result, 'Torres Straits can no longer be correctly described as a part of the New Guinea Mission as it is in every way a separate mission we are conducting in Australia' (Butcher, 1907a, 1908).
46. Metusela, though born on Badu, was the son of Bamia and Tai from Mabuyag. Dadiku was the daughter of Spear and Rosie Ware.
47. The wedding 'aroused much local interest, for my wife was well known and linked with two of the oldest Queensland families. Her father was greatly respected, a man of sterling character and a fine Christian gentleman, and her elder brother, Alfred, who followed his father into the Bank of New South Wales, rose to be General Manager and later received a knighthood in recognition of outstanding services he rendered Australia during the great depression of 1933' (Butcher, 1963: 109).