11. Melanesian Society in the Valley

Plate 11.1: St Mary's Church of England Selwyn Mission church, Pioneer, Mackay, *ca.* 1900s. The land was donated by William Coakley, the Jamaican farmer who had lived in the valley since 1862. Luke Logomier, the lay preacher, is seated in the middle of the front row in a light-coloured coat. The building is reminiscent of a Malaitan men's or ceremonial house.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

To most European colonists, plantation society meant the lives of the planters, their managers, overseers, labourers, and their families. Yet, there was another much larger plantation world—that of the labour force—which consisted of Europeans, Melanesians, Asians, and the Aboriginal people of the valley. The first generation of Islander immigrants were mostly young men aged between 16 and 35, along with a small number of women. They also helped create plantation society. Men, women, and children drawn from more than 80 different islands and groups of islands across the Solomon and Coral seas came together and eventually formed a new pan-Melanesian society. Almost all of the original planter families had left the district by the early years of the twentieth century. The Islanders have remained and are well integrated into the local community. How they became one people—Australian South Sea Islanders—is the subject of this chapter and of chapters 9 and 12.

The Islanders were largely circular immigrants, each for a few years. Only a minority stayed on in the colony. For over 40 years they came from many different islands and spoke more languages and dialects than any other immigrant group that entered Australia. They were agriculturalist and marine people; some were mountain people who seldom came down to the coasts of their home islands. They practised ancestral and totemic worship. They all

had cultural similarities, but certainly not in language—until Pijin English became their *lingua franca*—and each island group had their own cosmological similarities, although even on one large island (Malaita, for instance) one area could have an emphasis on hereditary chieftainship, while another was more egalitarian and more like the 'Bigman' model where leadership depended more on an ability to persuade and lead by example. There were specialists in war, magic and medicine, leadership, and religion. Generally, inheritance was patrilineal, although on some islands land was passed on matrilineally, without women taking direct leadership roles.

Those Islanders who stayed in the colony for only a limited number of years—typically one three-year contract, followed by some shorter contracts—were able to maintain parts of their traditional cultures in Australia. The longer stayers changed much more, altering their worldviews to become colonists, adapting their beliefs and customs. The first generation of these immigrants retained substantial aspects of their customary religious life, building 'men's houses', and to a limited extent managed to establish ancestral shrines and continue worship and spiritual practices. Leadership styles also continued, albeit modified. Gradually, the large regional cultural differences that marked the diversity of their origins from around many different islands and island groups became blurred. The Islander community retained substantial aspects of their Pacific cultures, united through their shared working and other living experiences, kinship, customs, Pijin English, literacy, Christianity, and foods. The largely male community also began to include families. The presence of the few women 'normalised' the nineteenth century community and created the present-day Islander families, now all between three and six generations in Australia.

A Queensland style of Islander houses developed, using locally available building materials. They grew their own island foods—including root vegetables like taros, yams, and sweet potatoes—as well as consumed employer-provided foods of European origin. A pan-Melanesian community developed, which, while accommodating itself to colonial society, also developed a counterculture of survival that involved an amalgamation of aspects of multiple Melanesian societies, and an ability to use effectively the 'weapons of the weak', typical of colonial and plantation societies elsewhere. They had their own methods of achieving social equilibrium which often left other colonists in fear of their retribution. Although they lacked formal power, the Islanders had a variety of methods of dealing with antagonisms within and outside their immediate communities.

Accommodation

Housing and the way they developed village communities were a basic part of the creation of pan-Melanesian society. When they first arrived, the Islanders lived mainly on sugarcane plantations. Later, they were just as likely to be found on the district's small farms. The Government regulations specified minimum accommodation standards. On plantations their employers had to build barracks, which the Islanders preferred not to use. They were hot, with wooden walls, few windows, and often unlined galvanised iron roofs (Plate 11.2). Barracks were alien structures. These buildings forced groups from all islands to mingle, regardless of language, cultural differences, and animosities, which often caused problems. While the barracks were the safest places to keep their boxes of trade goods, Islander preference was to build their own accommodation. Allowing for differences in materials available, these were usually based on the style of houses they had built on their home islands. With no sago palm fronds to use for roof and wall materials, they used blady grass (Cogon grass, or *Imperata cylindrica*), which grew prolifically in the region. There was some bamboo available, and there was bark-sheeting, as well as in later decades the advantage of

access to pit-sawn wood and galvanised iron-sheeting. Pacific Islanders were adept at building, and access to axes and saws speeded up the process.

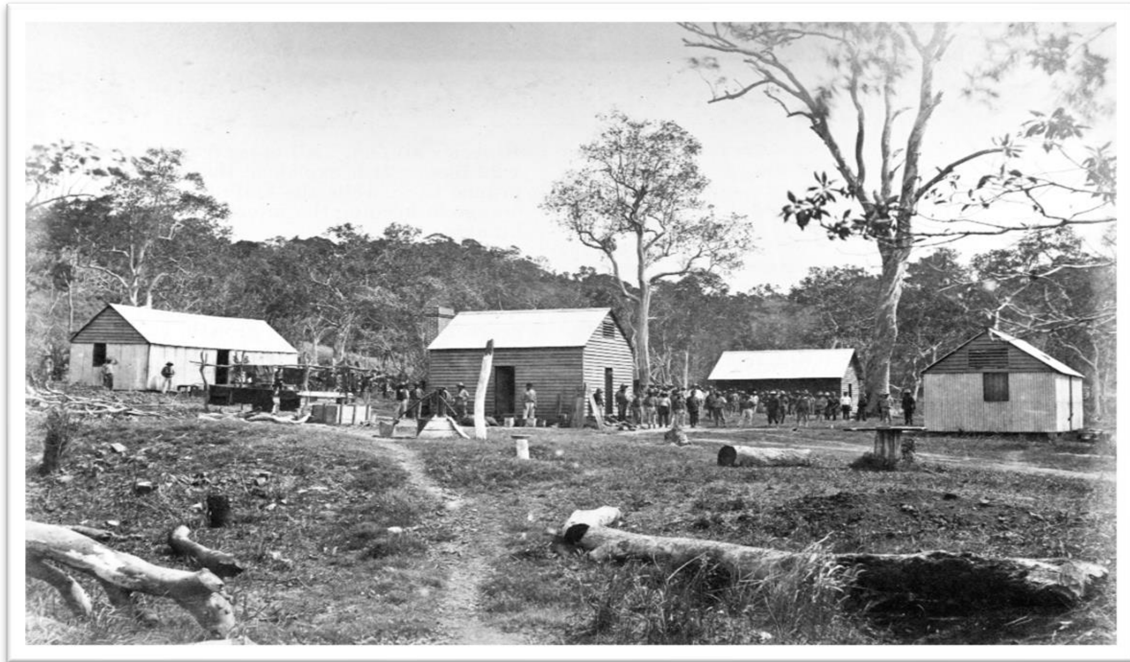


Plate 11.2: Barracks built for the Islanders on The Cedars plantation, 1870s.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

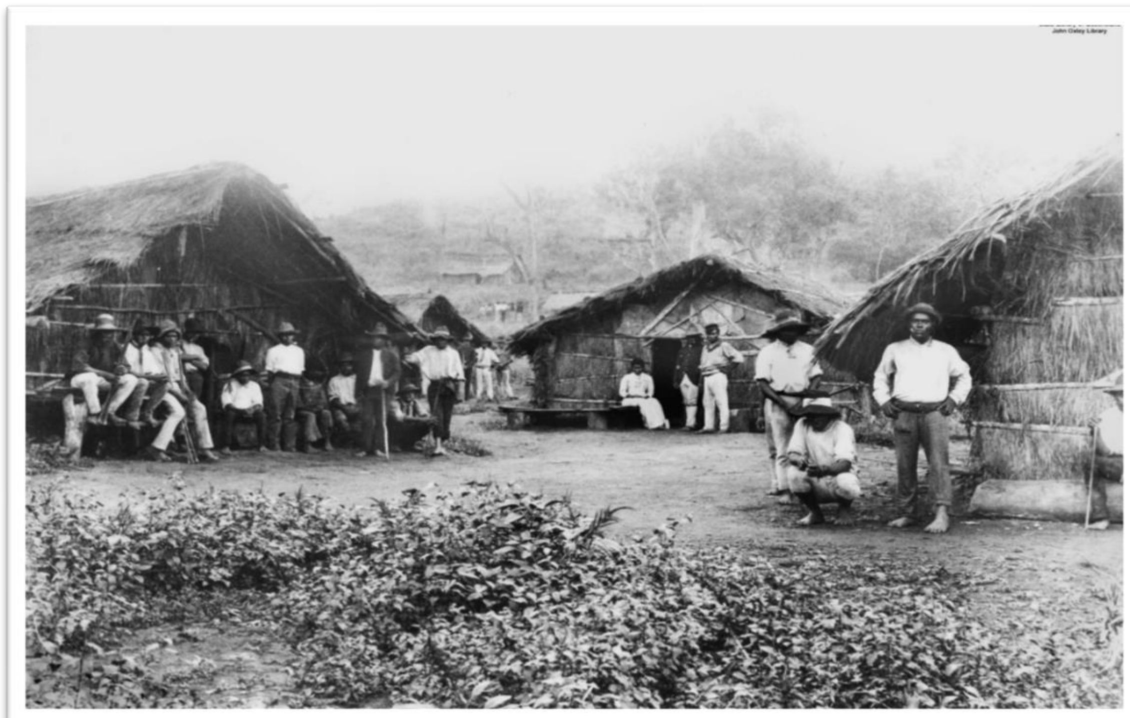


Plate 11.3: This photograph is from Mackay. Islanders on the plantations preferred to build their own leaf houses and to live with kin from their own island. Often there were central fireplaces within the houses, the smoke escaping through the thatched roof. Other kitchen fireplaces were built nearby, and river stones were heated and used in underground ovens. Note the woman seated in the centre of the photograph, and the other houses on the hill in the background.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

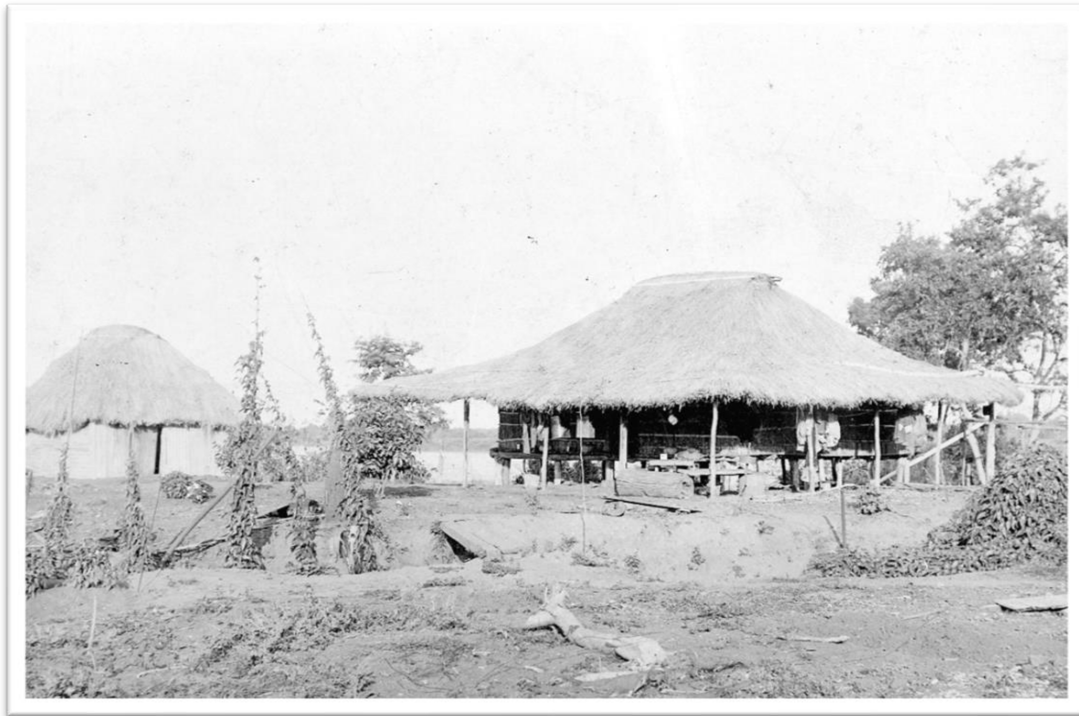


Plate 11.4: A typical Islander house at Mackay, *ca*. 1890. This home had a spacious overhang, creating a verandah. The thatched roof is made from blady grass, which is also used on the walls, held in place by batons. The smaller building may be the kitchen.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

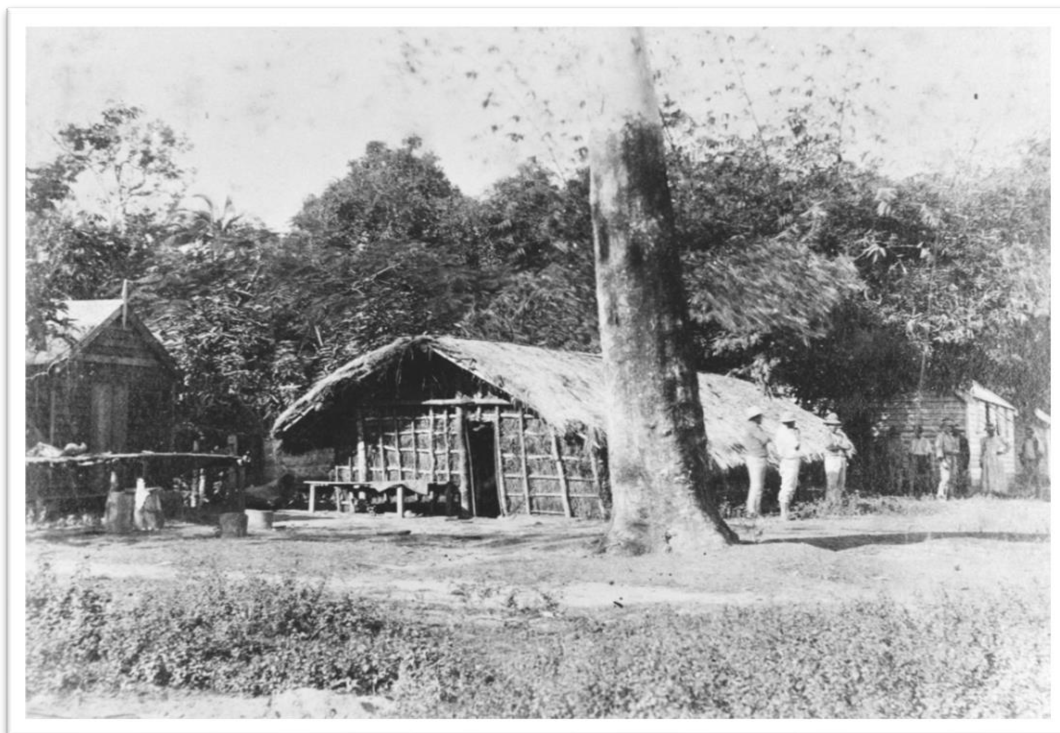


Plate 11.5: An Islander house on a Mackay district plantation. Batons are in use to secure the blady grass walls, and the sitting and sleeping platform outside is typical of a style still used in the islands.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

Plate 11.6: As the years progressed, the permanent settlers built increasingly complex houses like this one with its two levels, containing aspects of a European dwelling. Note the well-dressed woman sitting in the middle of the verandah and the two girls on the right. The photograph is from Mackay in the 1890s.
Source: Clive Moore Collection.

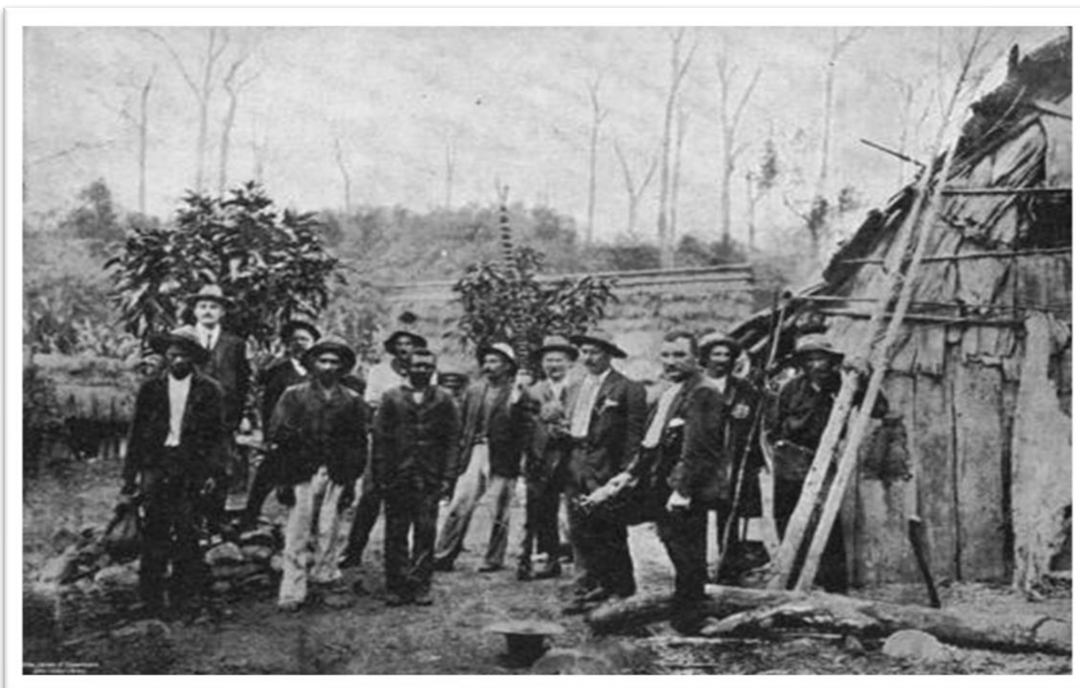


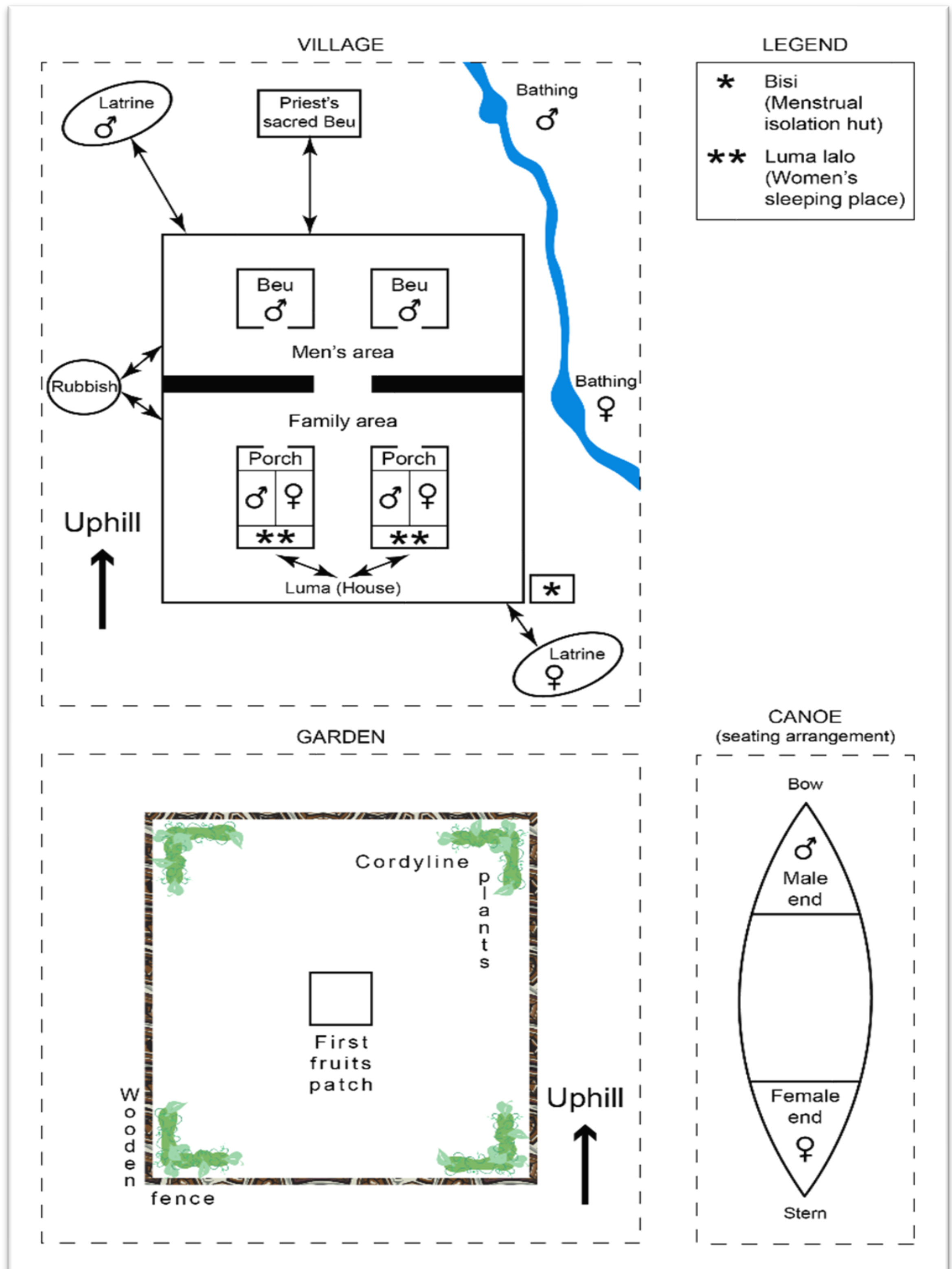
Plate 11.7: Islanders and Europeans next to Islander houses at an Islander cane farm at Mackay in 1909 after the 'deportation' years. The photograph may be from Finch Hatton Gorge to where Islanders fled to escape deportation. The wall to the right is made from wood slabs and bark strips.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

Plate 11.8: During the first half of the twentieth century the same style of houses was used as in the nineteenth century, usually based of designs from their islands of origin. This photograph shows Christy Fatnowna (b. 1927), Cliff Querro (an orphan who lived with the Fatnownas) and Henry Viti in the 1930s at Eulbertie, the Fatnowna home on Christensen's farm on the road to Eimeo and Black's Beach.
Source: Clive Moore Collection.

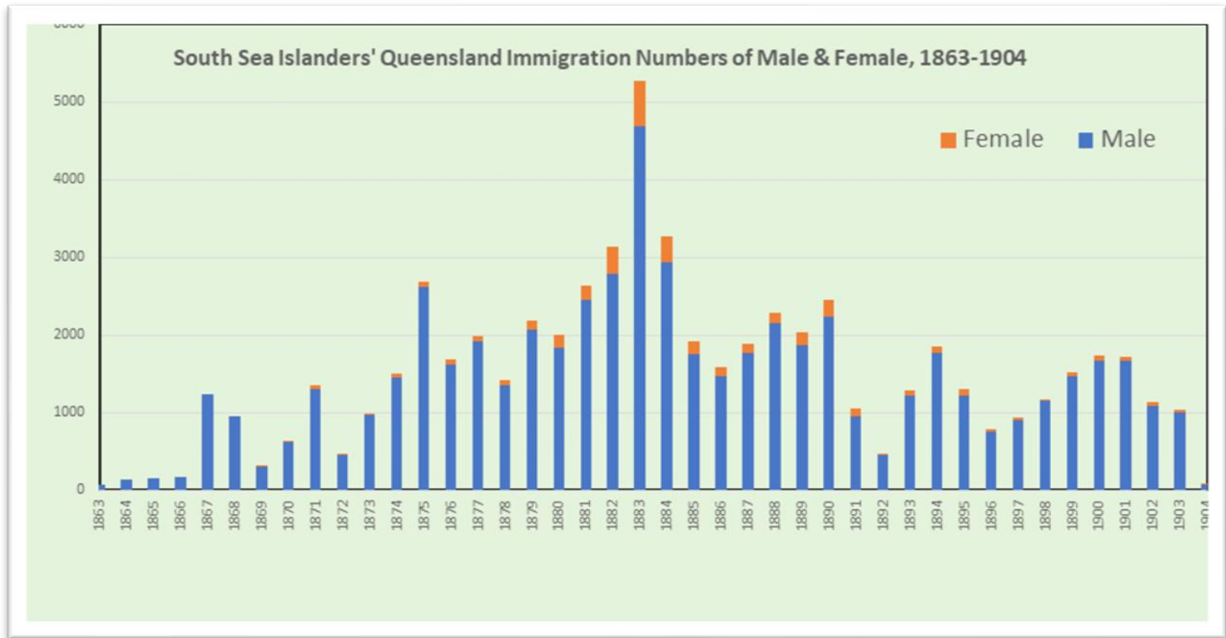
Observing Gender Divisions and Building a Pan-Melanesian Community

Another essential aspect of pan-Melanesian society was the presence of women—Islander, Aboriginal, and occasionally European—who made a difference to the largely male Islander communities. Graphs 11.1–2 show that the migration of a small number of Islander women was constant onwards from the 1870s, peaking in the mid-1880s, years during which labour recruiting extended to the islands off New Guinea. (The majority of the New Guinea labourers died from diseases or were sent home.) Six percent of the labourers were female. Many of the men remained single during their time in Queensland, then returned to their islands, where they had wives waiting, or were able to marry soon after arrival, given the upward social mobility created by the trade goods they brought home, and the allure of foreign knowledge. A minority among the indentured Islanders stayed on in Queensland, having arrived with wives, or formed relationships when in the colony. Most of the men stayed remained single into old age.

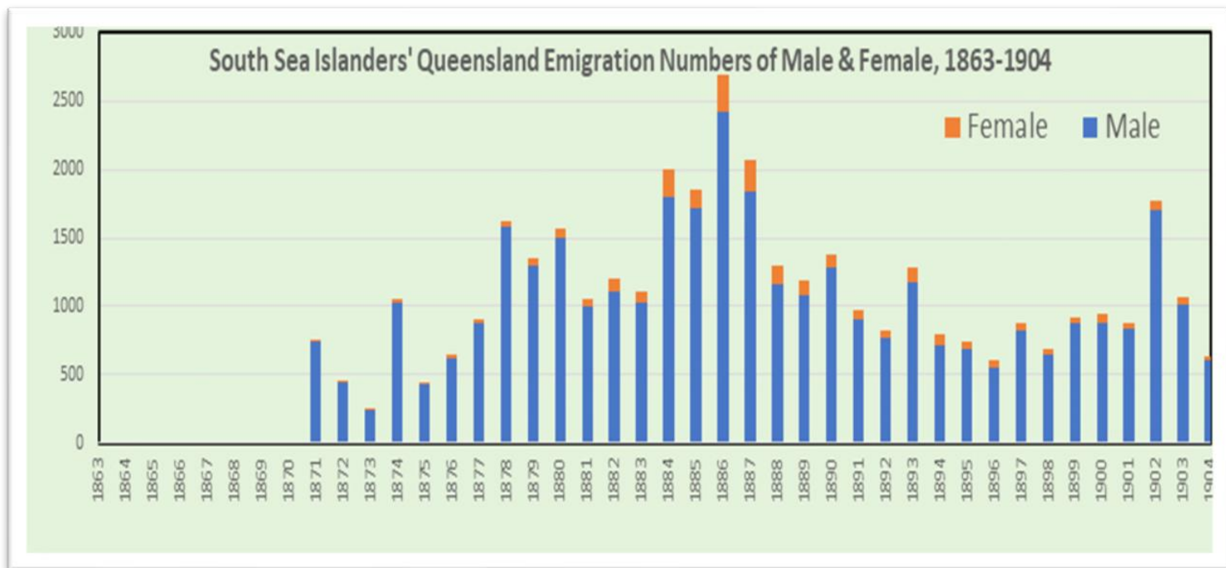
While of course not all of Mackay's Melanesians came from Malaita, a significant number (14.7 percent Queensland-wide) did, the largest group from one island. Plan 11.1 is of typical gender divisions in Malaitan houses, gardens, and canoes. As in most parts of Melanesia, there were taboos relating to menstruation and childbirth which required women and girls to live separately at these times. Other islands had different customs, although with many similarities. These island-origin customs, and divisions of houses into male and female sections, were continued in Australia. They believed that to ignore these customs would bring down the wrath of ancestral spirits and could cause deaths, requiring compensation payments to restore equilibrium.



Plan 11.1: Gender divisions displayed in Malaitan houses, villages, canoes, and garden design.
Source: Cartography by Vincent Verheyen, based on Ross 1973, 84, 124, 179. Clive Moore Collection.



Graph 11.1: South Sea Islanders' Queensland immigration numbers of males and females, 1863–1904. Women were six percent of the arrivals onwards from the 1870s. The high number of immigrants between 1882 and 1884 related to the ill-fated New Guinea islands recruits. In 1885, the Government announced the closure of the labour trade from the end of 1890, which accounts for the high numbers between 1886 and 1890. The jump in 1893 relates to the re-starting of the labour trade. Similarly, the increase in the 1900s, particularly in 1902 and 1903, marks the final years of the labour trade. Ships could recruit until the end of 1903, landing the final labourers in Queensland in early 1904.
Source: Courtesy of Padma Narsey Lal. Clive Moore Collection.



Graph 11.2: South Sea Islanders' Queensland emigration numbers of males and females, 1863–1904. Slightly larger numbers of women left than arrived. The staged deportation process began in 1902 when contracts were not renewed.
Source: Courtesy of Padma Narsey Lal. Clive Moore Collection.

Plate 11.9: Women planting cane at Bingera plantation, Bundaberg.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

Plate 11.10: Women hoeing between the cane rows, Hambledon plantation, Cairns. Note the child with her mother.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

Plate 11.11: Islander women with hoes, used to clear weeds from between the cane rows, with a European overseer mounted on a horse, Cairns, *ca*. 1895.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

Plate 11.12: Two Islander couples at River Estate plantation, Mackay, 1880s.
Source: Henry Brandon Collection, State Library of Queensland.

Retention of Cultures and Ancestral Religions

There is oral and photographic evidence of attempts to continue island culture in Australia, exhibited in forms of leadership, the practice of compensation payments and related activities, magic and sorcery, re-creating body ornamentation (augmented by trade store glass beads), and making weapons and musical instruments, as small as bamboo panpipes or as large as slit drums. 'Valuables' (traditional currency) from the islands were brought to Australia in small amounts, largely to enable payment of compensation for breaches of societal rules, or to pay for killings by assassins.

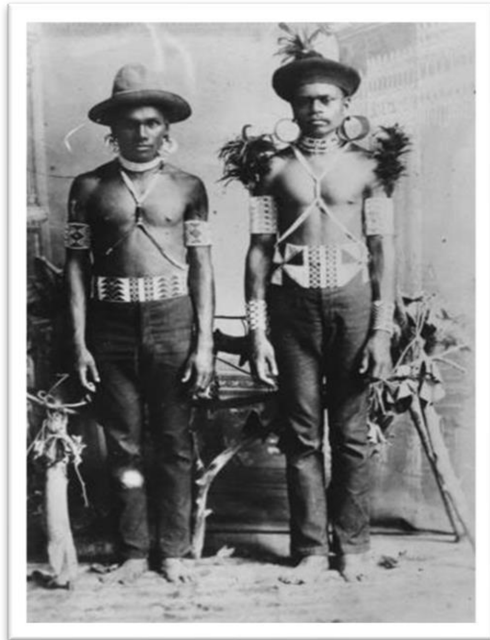


Plate 11.13: These two Mackay Islanders had their photograph taken in the 1890s. They are dressed in a combination of customary ornaments, but made from trade beads, and European trousers and hats. They appear to be Solomon Islanders.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

Plate 11.14: This photograph is of Malaitans at Innisfail about 1902 with a slit drum which can only have been made in Australia. Several of the men are also holding bows and arrows. The scene could just have easily been at Mackay.
Source: Clive Moore Collection.

Two leadership patterns emerged. One related to work categories: the 'new chums', re-recruiting labourers, time-expired, and ticket-holding Islanders, discussed in Chapter 9. The second category came with access to money, literacy, Christianity, and an ability to understand and manipulate colonial society, including limited access to the colonial legal and administrative systems. The longer they stayed, the more comfortable they were with their colonial surroundings and wages and other negotiations. They also made friends with European workers and employers, particularly the farmers, some of whom helped and advised the Islanders. It was these labourers who also fared best in handling prosecutions under the *Masters and Servants Act*, and the various other Acts which controlled their working conditions. The main leaders—certainly those visible to outsiders—were the time-expired and ticket-holding Islanders. They controlled resistance to work situations. As noted in Chapter 9, the chance of using the legal system effectively to their benefit was very low. Most resistance was through mechanism already operating in Melanesian society.

The cultures and cosmologies of the Melanesian immigrants, although disrupted and truncated, were successfully transplanted to Queensland. We need to try to think from their point of view. For instance, sickness and death, even accidents, were thought to have supernatural causes. Traditionally, when individuals fell sick, it was believed that they had broken some societal rule. Sickness was believed to have been inflicted by ancestors as a direct punishment for misconduct. Death had two explanations: either illness caused by ancestors or spirits, or murders by living people. Epidemics were thought to have been caused by antagonistic spirits.

Violent deaths occurred as early as the first arrivals in 1867, when in November one Islander used a tomahawk to murder another on Alexandra plantation. In seeking deaths in compensation for deaths, Melanesians did not always feel obliged to kill the person they thought directly responsible. Murders were often brutal but were rational in Melanesian terms. Certainly, the murders of several 'swaggies' (wandering rural workers) who had no ties to the district, can be explained in this way. When bodies were found, folk memory from the district is that murders were sure to be Islander-inflicted if the head of the victim was missing, or the skull smashed. Iron bars and lumps of lead on ropes, whirled around to add momentum before making contact were favourite methods of dispatch, as well as the use of the ubiquitous axes and cane knives, spears, clubs, bows and arrows, and occasionally shotguns, rifles and revolvers. It was possible to pay bounties to have individuals killed to avenge or rectify a wrong, and some men had reputations for doing this. Bounties posted in the islands were collected for deaths in Queensland.

The Queensland police often kept suspects under surveillance for years until there was sufficient evidence to bring a charge. In the meantime, of course, they may well have returned to their islands. Sometimes the police made mistakes, such as in the supposed murder of Sarah Baumgarten by Malaitan man Johnny Assina in 1894. He was found guilty and sentenced to death, although the evidence was circumstantial. Later, statements were made in support of his innocence, which caused his sentence to be commuted, and his quick deportation, probably under the *Vagrants Act*. At the time of the trial, the *Mackay Mercury* thundered at the audacity of the Islanders, whom the paper said 'boast of the immunity with which they can defy their employers and commit crime: '… . [It] is the boast of the Islanders that the white man will not hang them [as] reprisals will follow in the island trade…'[1]

What were called tribal fights also occurred. More correctly, they were usually methods of letting off aggressive energy, perhaps originally motivated by work, community, or interracial or interethnic tensions. Violent large-scale fights involving hundreds of men were reasonably common, but so too were events that were probably much closer to Sunday sport, full of gesticulations, shouting and threats, but with little real action. Faced with

warring Islanders, wiser Europeans got out of the way, allowing the situations to resolve themselves.

Less obvious were mechanisms of social adjustment such as sorcery, which had completely immeasurable dimensions, invisible but devastatingly potent for those who believed in its power. Practising sorcery and magic was mixed with natural healing using medical techniques. There were two main categories. The first was socially approved magic (which was not the property of specialists), such as for medical cures, gardening, fishing, healing, and sexual procurement. They used special chants, herbal cures, massage, and the slight-of-hand extraction of foreign objects from the bodies of the victims of sorcery. Women were generally not sorcerers, although they were healers. Many of the first generation carried around with them magical stones, powders, amulets, and concoctions tied up in small packages, all said to have magical powers. In the darkest corners of their huts there were old baskets or coconut shells, blackened with the smoke of years, containing magical treasures that no one would dare touch or even go near. Islanders interviewed in the 1970s reported that when the old people went out visiting, they would hang their baskets, containing these bespelled items, on trees or bushes well away from houses. Adults knew not to go close, and children were lectured on the possible consequences. Love magic was common in the largely male community and many young girls were said to have been lured into the waiting arms of suitors.

The most common testimony concerns magico-religious superstitions and taboos, particularly those associated with night and spirits. Some areas were thought to be haunted. One that reoccurs constantly in oral testimony is a large fig tree on the road at Habana, where a spirit lived. Everyone went quiet when they passed by, and horses were prone to bolt. According to Henry Bobongie, Jimmy Go Go at the Ngela Island Tarunga (spirit) hut (see Chapter 12) had a magical object that lit up and would chase visitors. When the old people died, their magical items had to be disposed of in running water. Charlie Viti had magic objects which had to be disposed of when he died. Even Matthew Malachi from Ngela Island, an Anglican lay preacher, had magical items in a small tobacco tin. When he died, his wife placed them into a creek, using running water to neutralise their power.

The second type of magic was destructive or protective magic. Destructive magic had the power to cripple, kill, or drive a person insane, and could be placed strategically around gardens, houses, and graves to ward off trespassers, or aimed at one individual. Based on oral testimony, the last reasonably verifiable case of death by sorcery in the Mackay district occurred in the 1930s. Reputed sorcerers, now long dead, are still spoken of in awe. Harry Marung from Tongoa Island, one of the sorcerers, was much feared. He was first recruited to work on the Yeppoon Sugar Co. plantation on the coast near Rockhampton, then he worked as a fencer and gardener in Rockhampton. He reached Mackay on foot, walking the 365 kilometres with Dick Guam, who afterwards returned to Rockhampton. Marung stayed and worked at Palms Estate and Homebush before moving to Sunnyside. He leased a small farm from Tom J. Osbourne, which he farmed until too old to work. Tall, dark, and bearded, he seldom smiled and was easily upset. He would starve himself for days to purge his body to be able to catch *mussing* and *sue*, malevolent magical forces. Marung seldom bathed and painted his face with charcoal when he was about to murder someone. In old age he lived with Joe Alma from Erromango and was eventually transferred to the Government's Eventide Home for the Aged in Charters Towers. Another man, from Maewo Island, who has family still at Mackay, sent shivers down spines. Even when old, he would climb up trees in a swamp at Andergrove, sitting there singing at night for hours. He was rumoured to be capable of astral travel. Another sorcerer was from Bougainville. Amongst early generations they were known as 'devil men', a Christian corruption of the role.

Generally, knowledge of sorcery was not passed on to the Australian-born. One man I interviewed in 1974 claimed that when young he had been considered for training as a 'sorcerer's apprentice' but failed from lack of dedication. In Queensland, destructive magic seems to have fulfilled similar functions to those it serves in Melanesia. It acted as an effective means of social control, reducing physical tensions between apposing groups. Of course, the employers and the missionaries had little idea of the complexity of Melanesian life around them. Taboo markers were used to warn off the unwanted; for instance, a path could be closed. Sorcerers reputedly crept around houses at night looking for food scraps or bodily items (hair, finger-nail cuttings, clothes etc.), or other refuse or belongings, to bespell. To prevent and monitor this, the ground around houses was kept bare and swept clean every evening, then closely inspected for footprints the next morning. Sorcerers were said to be able to make themselves invisible, to fly, to walk through walls, and to turn themselves into animals, reptiles, and birds.

Should we regard this all as fanciful superstition? Some of it undoubtedly was, but there are cases that leave me wondering. The present-day generation of Islanders is not short of stories, and when I began interviewing back in the 1970s, I talked to individuals who had known and feared the last assassins and sorcerers. There are many documented cases from the nineteenth century of dead Islanders turning up now and again, with no obvious cause. Today we can all think of reasons—heart-attacks, cancer, poison, internal bleedings, and perhaps old age, etc.—, but then we need to remember that the average age was 16 to 35, perhaps stretching to 50 years, for those who chose to stay. Take the example of Outapina from the New Hebrides, who died on River Estate plantation in 1876. He had just completed his contract, had his wages, and was living in a boarding house in Mackay's Chinatown. He became ill and died in two days. The findings of the inquest were inconclusive. The medical diagnosis was 'serious apoplexy', which probably translates as bleeding within internal organs. In another case in 1881, Terrai from Foulden plantation was found dead on neighbouring River Estate plantation. The inquest reported death from natural causes, noting that his only abnormality was a slight throat infection.

Many decomposed bodies were found around the district. An Islander's body was found on Te Kowai plantation in 1891, and another was found in a creek near Habana in 1893. In the Habana case, the man had absconded from a nearby farm 11 days earlier and had probably died at about the same time. In 1896, Joseph Antoney, an Eton farmer, found a decomposed Islander body on his farm. The man had been dead for about a fortnight and there were no suspicious marks on the body. In 1891, a Melanesian man died in strange circumstances on board a ship on a voyage between Rockhampton and Mackay. At the beginning of the voyage, he appeared normal, but then jumped overboard and had to be rescued. Afterwards he became extremely ill and died before the ship reached Mackay.

Suicide, usually by hanging, was the ultimate form of inner-directed aggression. It is evident that a few of the labourers were mentally disturbed when they enlisted, and then life in the colony drove them to greater depression, violence, deeper insanity, and suicide. Consumption of alcohol and subsequent depression may have been responsible for some of the suicides. Other interpretations are also possible. For example, in 1877 there was an elaborate double suicide on Pioneer plantation, which could easily have been ritual murder or the product of sorcery. Charlie Lorbacco and his wife Mary Narisse, both from Tongoa Island in the New Hebrides, had been in Queensland since 1869. Lorbacco was overseer of a small farm on the plantation. During the night of 13 August, he went to the house of a European labourer, pleading to be taken in until morning because he feared 'sickness' at his own house. He was sent home with promises of help in the morning, but the next day the couple were found shot dead. Their bodies were arrayed in all the clothing they possessed, as well as beads, feathers, and plaited human hair, and they were wrapped in dozens of yards of calico

recently stained red and yellow with ochre. All their other belongings had been broken or destroyed by fire. In another 1891 case, George and Geor were working on Homebush plantation; the couple had a four-month-old baby. One morning a distraught Geor told her husband that a 'devil-devil' was chasing her and wanted to kill her. She then hanged herself after attempting to strangle her child. Was this post-natal depression, was she attacked by a violent spirit, or was this in some other way the result of sorcery?

While these deaths seem bizarre, even today they would not puzzle Melanesians in Queensland or in the islands. Nineteenth century Mackay abounded in spirits and sorcerers, haunted trees, magic stones, and love potions, plants used to ward off evil, fearsome tales of cannibal monsters and ghoulish creatures, and astral projection. Melanesian society was violent and rumbustious, but self-contained. The Islanders coexisted closely with the Aboriginal population, wooing the women, and along the way acquiring their knowledge of local edible plants, medicinal herbs, and poisons, as well as an appreciation of their lifestyles and spirit world. However, except for a handful of European, Asian, or Aboriginal women who married into the Islander community, few other colonists ever became closely involved enough to understand the complexities of their behaviour.

Islanders adapted to life in Queensland on their own terms. Today, in suburbs in the cane towns of Queensland and New South Wales, a few of the more traditionally minded of their descendants claim that the spirit world and the physical world still blend. In the last few years, I have been told similar stories, both in the Solomon Islands and by Australian Islander descendants, about spirits appearing and premonitions of deaths or sickness. They do not discuss this with their non-Islander neighbours, whom they know would put it all down to quaint superstition and laugh. In the nineteenth century, their forebears were even more reticent to explain or discuss sorcery and their spirit world. And unlike the European leaders—mayors wearing robes and chains of office, priests wearing vestments, businessmen in fancy waistcoats, or rich women in ornate dresses, hats, and gloves—Melanesian leaders were inconspicuous. The art of the sorcerer was never to be seen, executioners operated by stealth, and leadership was usually confined to single language groups. The first over-riding colonial Melanesian category related to indentured labour. This was followed by literacy, Christianity, the limited number of marriages, and the politics of the deportation years in the 1900s, all of which marked out a new group of leaders who achieved their status through other colonial circumstances. Leaders had a 'presence' about them—one only has to look at photographs of Anglican lay-preacher Luke Logomier (Plates 11.1, 12.20), Harry Andrew (Plates 12.12–13), or John Kwailiu Fatnowna (Plate 12.17), to see these qualities.

Adoption of Christianity and Literacy.

Ever since the 1860s, there were Christian Islanders in the colony, the earliest from the Loyalty Islands and the southern New Hebrides. Over 1,100 of the Queensland Islanders who arrived between 1863 and 1872 were from the Loyalty Islands, and 715 of them were from Lifu (Lifou), one of the longest colonised of the Melanesian islands, first visited by sandalwood traders and missionaries in the 1840s. Loyalty Islanders also worked as crews on ships in the Pacific.

In the 1870s, moves began to establish Christian missions to the Islanders at Mackay. The argument in favour was that it would make them better behaved and create a pool of Christians through whom Christianity could be exported to the islands. With the support of Albert Maclaren, the local Church of England priest (who later established the New Guinea Church of England Mission), in 1882 Mary Goodwin Robinson began giving bible lessons at her home. She was assisted by Elizabeth Watt Martin at Mandurana near The Leap, the wife of Robert Martin, from Hamilton pastoral station in the 1860s and 1870s. They both knew the

planters and other important colonists, who promised financial support. Hyne and Bridgman at Meadowlands plantation donated a piece of land. Robinson operated the Robinson Mission (later renamed the Selwyn Mission), between 1882 and 1903, teaching Christianity, reading, writing, and arithmetic. Her husband Henry H. Robinson was a mill manager based at Lorne, Branscombe and Te Kowai, until the early 1890s when he moved to Marian further down the valley. His wife's mission moved with them. When he died, she moved the mission back to the original Meadowlands site, close to her house at Te Kowai. Old and ill, she left the district in 1903, replaced by Charles Sage, previously of the New Guinea Anglican Mission. Before she left, Robinson and Sage trained Islander lay-preachers as replacements. Two of these men, Joseph Barramulla and Jack Taloifulia, both Malaitans, eventually attended the Anglican mission college on Norfolk Island for further training, before being sent to Malaita as evangelists. Taloifulia, from Sulufou Island in Lau Lagoon, became the first indigenous Anglican priest on Malaita. After Mary Robinson left Mackay, the mission headquarters shifted to Pioneer on the Northside, on land donated by William Coakley, the Jamaican farmer who arrived in the district as a youth in 1862.

The Presbyterian mission was established at Walkerston in 1888, under Rev. J. MacLean McIntyre. Like Robinson, he had European assistants: Elizabeth Donaldson at Sandiford, 1890–96, and J. Walker at Miclere on the Northside, 1893–1903. F.J. Stevens continued the mission's work at Homebush until the 1920s. Between 1888 and 1895, the Presbyterian mission baptised 379 Islanders and persuaded 2,158 to take the pledge against alcohol. The mission's congregation contributed £200 to mission funds. In 1895, 300 Islanders were being taught at the mission, 538 services were held, McIntyre made 262 visits to plantations and farms, and 21 new converts were baptised. The Anglicans had similar success, with 580 baptisms between 1884 and mid-1908. At the end of the nineteenth century, there were Islander mission teachers on each plantation, spreading Christianity and basic literacy in their spare time.

During the final two decades of the nineteenth century, missions developed a considerable hold over the Islander community. Although the surviving Presbyterian mission records are less complete than those of the Church of England mission, the Presbyterian congregation seems to have been predominantly New Hebridean. Mary Robinson's Selwyn Mission had a more diverse congregation. However, when Islander numbers declined in the 1900s, the parent churches withdrew their support, leaving the Islanders floundering, not welcome among White congregations. St Mary's Anglican Church at Farleigh continued to operate under a succession of Islander lay-preachers. Then, in 1922 Harry Fatnowna converted to Seventh-day Adventism (SDA) and took almost the whole congregation with him. SDA colporteurs (booksellers) and travelling preachers were the first contacts. The first place of worship was at Jack Marau's big grass house. They also used temporary premises at Cowley's Road, Racecourse, and the old Masonic Hall in Sydney Street, Mackay. In 1925, a wooden-walled church with a timber and galvanised iron roof and a concrete slab floor was built at Farleigh Road, Dumbleton. Homebush mission hall was used when missionary work was done on the south side of the river. Finally, Farleigh mill gave them the land for the present SDA Farleigh Church.

The missions converted most of Mackay's long-staying Islanders and enabled the spread of Christianity in Melanesia when they returned home. Pacific Christianity is often a syncretic amalgamation of spiritual beliefs, which enables traditional religious practices to continue alongside Christianity. Islanders had many reasons to attend the missions: there was belief in the Christian message; literacy; employers encouraged their labourers to attend; and many did so out of curiosity, for entertainment, and to accompany friends. It was also a way to interact with friendly Europeans. There was always singing, fellowship and food. Many

appreciated the advantages of literacy as part of their package of new skills. Instruction was in Pijin English.

Table 11.1: Origins of Melanesians baptised in the Church of England at Mackay, 1888–1906.

ORIGIN	NUMBER	ORIGIN	NUMBER
New Hebrides		**Solomon Islands**	
Ambae (Aoba)	8	Buka-Buka (Bougainville or Buka?)	8
Emae (Mai)	1	Guadalcanal	25
Epi	16	Malaita	103
Futuna	2	Ngela	53
Maewo	2	Santa Cruz	2
Malekula	4	Santa Isabel	7
Malo	5	Savo	2
Mortlab	9	Solomon (Guadalcanal?)	28
			228
Paama	2		
Pentecost	1		
Espiritu Santo	18	**Uncertain Origins**	
Tanna	17	McKela	3
Tongoa	4	Foonalab/Fooulab	2
	97	Line	1
		Miraloa	1
Banks Group		Burra-Burra	2
Gaua (Lacona)	6	Unknown (SSI)	228
Mera Lava	2		**237**
Mota (Valua)	2		
Ureparapara	1		
	11	**TOTAL**	**573**

Source: Mackay Church of England Baptismal Records.

They also protected the mission staff from those who might seek to do them harm. There is an intriguing case that concerns Mary Robinson. She made enemies when she tried to persuade the Islanders to give up their weapons and cease all tribal fighting. The Malaitans in her congregation seem to have protected her when some of her enemies wanted to kill her. Even given a degree of Anglican hyperbole, there is probably truth in the description below.

> This came to the ears of the Malayta men, of whom a number were working near, and they inscribed on Mrs. Robinson's gate certain mystic signs which were interpreted to mean that if any man interfered with Mrs. Robinson in any way he would find himself dying by the most uncomfortable and painful death known…[2]

Malaitans may have just 'closed' the path, or they could have declared Mrs Robinson to be *ambu* (sacred), invoking their ancestral spirits to protect their Christian mentor.

Plate 11.15: Mrs Donaldson's Presbyterian Mission school at Oakenden Estate, 1880s.
Source: Clive Moore Collection.

Plate 11.16: The Presbyterian Mission church, with Rev. McIntyre and congregation at Walkerston.
Source: Clive Moore Collection.

Plate 11.17: Rev. McIntyre and the congregation of the Presbyterian Mission at Walkerston. There are seven children in the photograph.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

Plate 11.18: Mary Goodwin Robinson, founder the Church of England Selwyn Mission at Mackay.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

Plate 11.19: Islander women and children attending the Selwyn Mission. There are 16 children in the photograph.
Source: *Southern Cross Log*, XI, No. 124, 9 September 1905.

In conclusion, one mission practice worth noting is the annual 'tea meetings' run by both the Anglicans and Presbyterians, on the last Saturday before Christmas. They seem to have taken turns as they were held at both Walkerston and Pioneer missions. There were sports and games all day until tea and food was served, then everyone went to church, finished off with community singing in the evening, then a final feast and a long walk home.

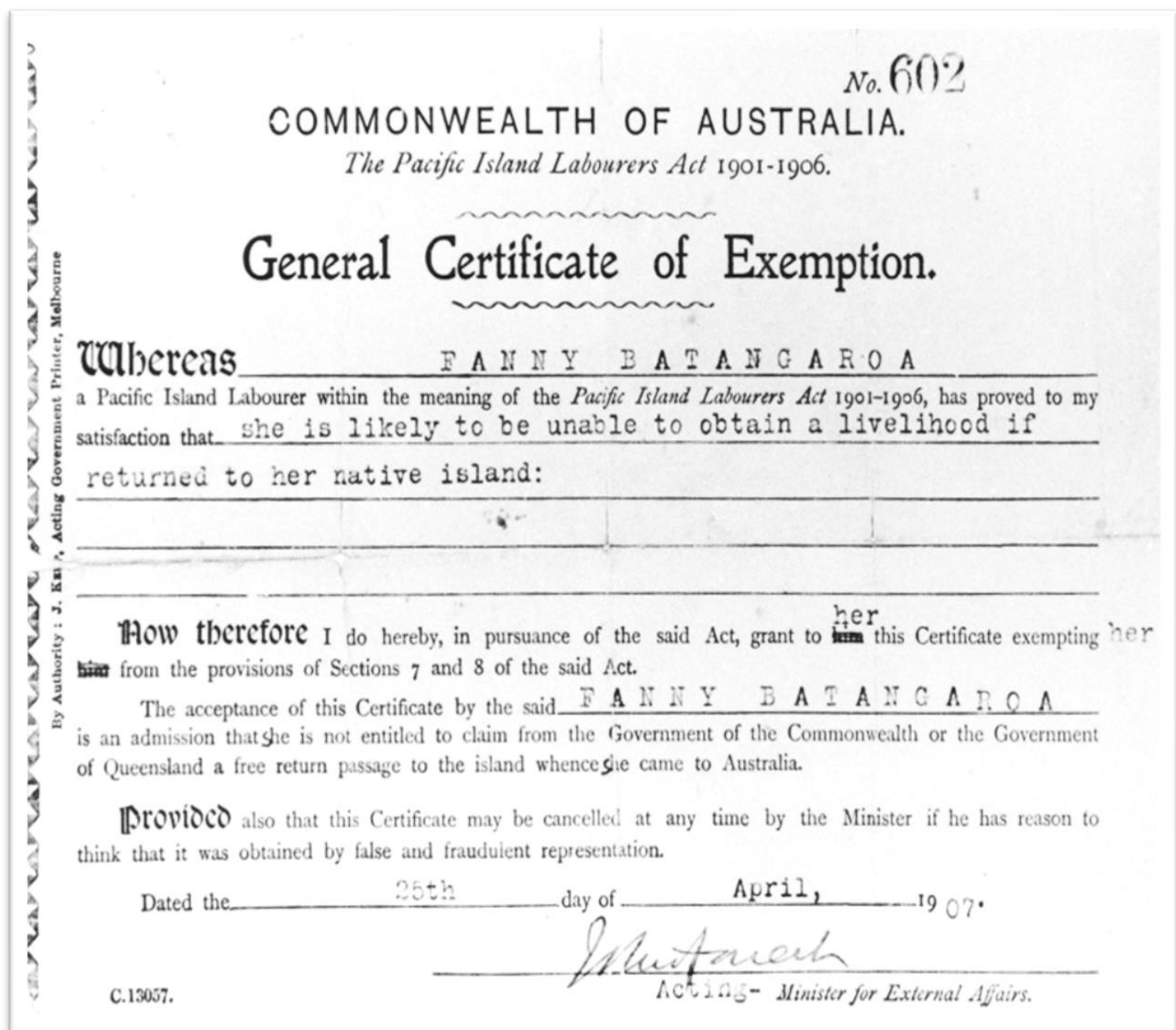
Deportation and White Australia

When 205 Islanders departed Cairns in 1906 on Burns Philp and Co.'s ship *Malaita*, one of them called out 'Good-Bye, Queensland, Good-Bye, White Australia, Good-Bye Christians',[3] a fitting comment of Australia's 1901 *Pacific Island Labourers Act*.

The Islanders always had to coexist within a racist colonial society in Australia, which regarded them as inferior and legislated to control and eventually to deport them. The first move to end the Melanesian labour trade was taken in 1885, when notice was given that importations would end after 1890. This was one reason, admittedly among many, for the stagnation of the sugar industry during those years. The reversal of this decision in 1892, at a time of economic crisis after a long drought, was avowedly no more than a temporary respite. Whether any government of an unfederated Queensland could have succeeded in further extending that policy is doubtful, although the question was never put to the test. Within the period of the 10-year extension granted in 1892, the Commonwealth of Australia came into being, and it fell to the new Commonwealth Government in 1901 to end the labour trade, as part of efforts to achieve a 'White Australia'.

In 1901, the national Government ordered recruiting to cease at the end of 1903 and as many Islanders as possible to be deported by the end of 1906. In 1901 there were around 10,000 Pacific Islanders in Queensland and northern New South Wales. The 1901 *Pacific Islanders Act* was discussed at length by the Parliament in October and November, with the

Bill assented to on 17 December. Between 1901 and 1904, the number of Islanders in Australia declined as limits were put on the number of new agreements, and the final group of first-indenture labourers ended their contracts and went home. In March 1904, the Queensland Government estimated that there were 8,557 Pacific Island labourers in the state; and there were a few hundred more living in northern New South Wales. In that year, 7,219 were working under agreements in Queensland and another 1,338 were unemployed or working, but not under agreements. No new agreements could be made or remain in force after 31 December 1906. Of the total number of Islanders, in the 1900s two-thirds were from the Solomon Islands and one-third from the New Hebrides (see Graph 12.1). The 1901 Act specified deportation for all Islanders, other than the remaining 691 ageing 'ticket-holders'. Eventually, others were also granted Certificates of Exemption under the terms of the main *Immigration Restriction Act, 1901–06*.



No. 602

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

The Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901-1906.

General Certificate of Exemption.

Whereas FANNY BATANGAROA

a Pacific Island Labourer within the meaning of the *Pacific Island Labourers Act* 1901-1906, has proved to my satisfaction that she is likely to be unable to obtain a livelihood if returned to her native island:

Now therefore I do hereby, in pursuance of the said Act, grant to her this Certificate exempting her from the provisions of Sections 7 and 8 of the said Act.

The acceptance of this Certificate by the said FANNY BATANGAROA is an admission that she is not entitled to claim from the Government of the Commonwealth or the Government of Queensland a free return passage to the island whence she came to Australia.

Provided also that this Certificate may be cancelled at any time by the Minister if he has reason to think that it was obtained by false and fraudulent representation.

Dated the 25th day of April, 1907.

Acting- *Minister for External Affairs.*

C.13057.

By Authority: J. Kemp, Acting Government Printer, Melbourne

Plate 11.20: This is the only Certification of Exemption that is known to have survived. It belonged to Fanny Batangaroa, born on 20 January 1891, who lived at Tweed Heads, in northern New South Wales. She was married to Jim Togo. Her 1942 Registration as an Alien Card suggest she came to Australia in 1899, aged eight, via Sydney, which seems unlikely. She also held a Free French Movement card in 1942, an indication that she was from a French island in the New Hebrides or from the Loyalty Islands.
Source: Clive Moore Collection.

The first half of the 1900s was a period of turmoil for the community. The Pacific Islanders' Association and mission groups tried their hardest to alleviate the effect of the planned mass deportation. With the help of the missions, the Islanders fought back, petitioning the Prime Minister, King, Governor-General, and Queensland's Governor. They were Australia's first Black pressure group and performed quite remarkably. Antonius Tui Tonga, Henry Tongoa, Alick Mallicoola, David Boymerrie, Joseph Barramulla, Luke Logomier, and Alec Sayven became the most significant leaders among Australia's Islanders in the 1900s, all based at Mackay.

A total of 7,068 Islanders were repatriated back to the islands between 1904 and 1908, and a further 193 were deported up to 1914. Around 2,500 remained, about 1,600 legally. The illegal component of the remaining Islanders is difficult to understand, although there can be no doubt that they were aided and abetted by the farmers, and local officials. There was a feeling in the sugar districts that deportation was an inhumane action, which it was.

Plate 11.21: Mackay Islanders ready for deportation, 1900s, on the deck of the steamer *Moresby*.
Source: State Library of Queensland.

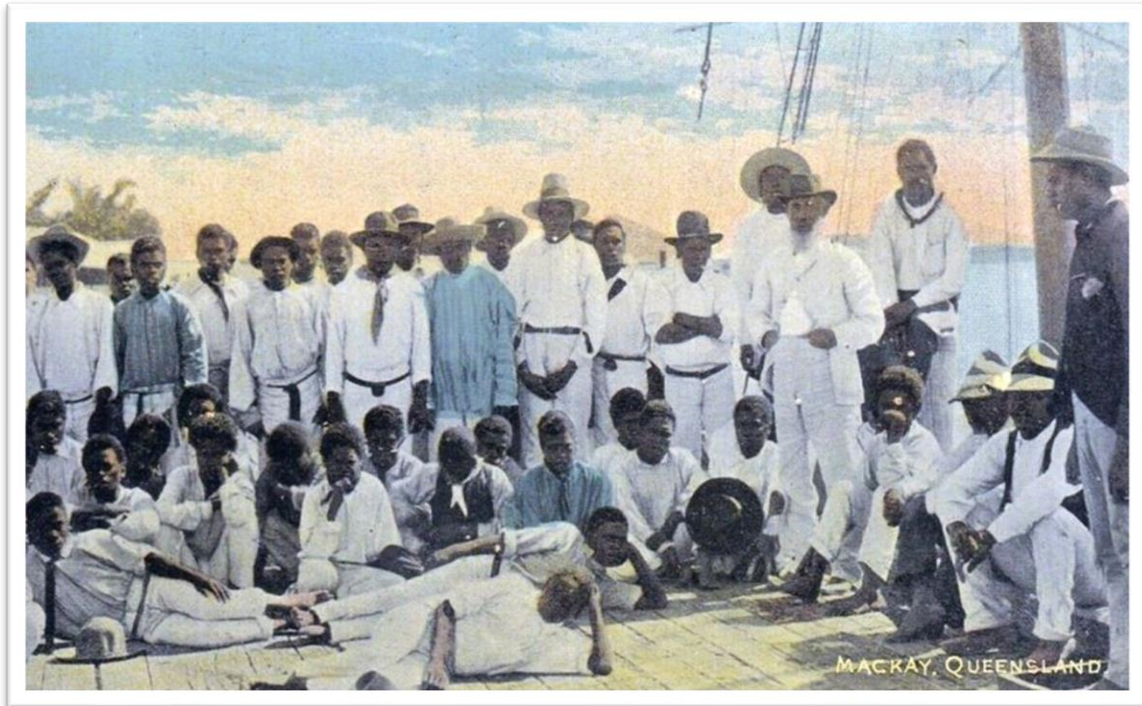


Plate 11.22: Islanders onboard a ship at Mackay in the 1900s, ready for deportation.
Source: Clive Moore Collection.

The main force of deportation fell on the newer labourers—those of less than 20 years residence. This primarily meant Solomon Islanders, although one anomaly in the Mackay Islander community is the number of prominent Solomon Islander families who managed to stay. The process took until 1908, longer than expected. Unlike the colonial Queensland Government, the Commonwealth had sufficient powers to ensure that the sugar industry survived its painful adaption to a wholly White labour force. An embargo was created to stop all importation of foreign-produced sugar, and a bounty system began, which subsidised sugar produced only with White labour. It is one of the persistent myths of Queensland history that Melanesians were employed exclusively on plantations and that their removal, of itself, resulted in the abandonment of the plantation system. In reality, the plantation system was always shaky and small-scale farmers were just as dependent as the largest planters on Islander labour. Moreover, as discussed in the previous chapter, the crucial transition from plantations to central mills and small farms occurred in the 1880s, when the labour trade was at its peak.

The most important 1900s Islander leader was Antonius Tui Tonga, a mysterious man who arrived in the Mackay district in 1876. He claimed to be the son of Seru Epenesa Cakobau (1815–83), Vunivalu of Bau. Cakabau was the leading Fijian chief for several decades before the cession of Fiji to Britain in 1874, and the respected elder statesman of the new Crown colony. Tui Tonga (as he was known) described himself as a British citizen whose parents were 'Tui Thacambau [Cakobau], King of Fiji' and 'Lakinia'.[4] Supposedly sent by his father to be educated in Sydney, possibly in 1872, there is no doubt that during the final decades of the nineteenth century Tui Tonga was the best-educated Pacific Islander in the Mackay district, and probably in all of Australia. He claimed to have been educated at the Methodist's Newington College in Sydney. However, although Cakobau did send his son Josefa to school there, Newington has no record of Tui Tonga. Unknown to the present-day descendants of Cakabau, it is possible that he was a servant, or an unacknowledged son.

The life of Tui Tonga allows us some insight into the complexity of politics, power and mobility in the Pacific and colonial Queensland during the final decades of the nineteenth century. By 1880, although described as under indenture, he was an overseer on Pleystowe plantation, an unheard-of occupation for a 23-year-old Pacific Islander, an indication that he was exceptional. Tui Tonga married four times, on the first two occasions in Mackay's Church of England Holy Trinity Church, in 1880 to Lelia from Myes (Emae) Island in the New Hebrides, and after her death, in 1885 to Fanny, from Ambae Island, also in the New Hebrides. This was the central church and not frequented by Pacific Islanders. His third marriage was in 1892, to Lilian from Malaita Island in the Solomon Group, to whom he had a son.

Between 1880 and 1885, in his spare time he acted as *agent provocateur* for the police, and in 1890 was an interpreter in court cases, helping obtain convictions of hotelkeepers and shopkeepers selling alcohol and firearms to Islanders.[5] For seven years from 1885, Tui Tonga was employed in the dispensary of the short-lived Government Hospital for Islanders, until he murdered his third wife and attempted to take his own life in 1892. Found guilty and sentenced to death, his sentence was commuted to 15 years imprisonment, of which he served only five, the rest turned into a period of good behaviour.

A week after he was sentenced, over 200 of Mackay′s residents, including leading citizens, petitioned the Governor for leniency, an indication of the high regard in which Tui Tonga was held. They argued that he had been temporarily insane through jealousy at the time of the murder.[6] The presiding judge noted that if Tonga had been White the jury would have found him not guilty, and that 'the Prisoner was a highly educated man speaking several European languages'.[7] Frank Buchanan, a fellow warder at the hospital, described him as 'a man of a good deal of education with a perfect knowledge of the English language'.[8] Edward R.N. McCarthy, Sub-Collector of Customs at Mackay, had known Tonga for many years and believed him to be the son of Cakobau. Dr Robert McBurney, the longest-established medical practitioner in the district considered him to be an 'educated man'.[9]

The St Helena Prison records reveal Tui Tonga as stout, 5 feet 8 inches (173 cm) tall, with two stars tattooed on his right shoulder, and a fern leaf, tree and fish on his right arm. Released in 1897 (which is remarkable without extenuating circumstances), Tonga returned to Mackay where he operated a boarding house for Islanders, and a farm. Where his money came from is unclear. His fourth marriage in 1900 was to a Scottish woman, Agnes Davidson Brown, a domestic servant in Townsville, to whom he had a daughter. Along with Lilian's boy, there was also another son from one of the earlier marriages.

In 1901, Tui Tonga founded the Pacific Islanders' Association in Mackay to fight against the mass deportation ordered by the Commonwealth's *Pacific Island Labourers Act*. The anti-deportation campaign spread through the southern Queensland and northern New South Wales sugar districts.

Plate 11.23: The grave of Tui Tonga, 1905. Originally there was no headstone. It was added by the Mackay South Sea Islander community as part of a project to commemorate all unmarked Islander graves in Mackay's cemetery.
Source: Courtesy of Clacy Fatnowna, 2020.

Tui Tonga was in poor health during his final years, which meant there was not much progress with the Association. When he died in December 1905,[10] his successor was the Association's secretary, Henry Diamuir Tongoa, also known as Harry Tonga. Henry Tongoa was not related to Tui Tonga, and neither were from the Polynesian Tongan group of islands. From Tongoa Island, between Epi and Efate islands in the New Hebrides, Henry Tongoa arrived in Queensland in 1880 as a six-year-old child, presumably accompanying a relative. In his teens he worked as an indentured labourer on Palms Estate plantation, close to Walkerston where the Presbyterian Kanaka Mission was based, becoming a leading hand on the plantation. Tongoa spoke no English when he arrived as a child, then became a star pupil at the mission, a Christian fluent in English who learnt to read and write to a high standard. In 1900, he began leasing 50 acres of land for £20 a year from Robert Walker on Broadsound Road. Three years later he was able to supply CSR's Homebush mill with his first 45 tons of cane from his 12-acre crop, with another three years left on his lease. Homebush paid him 14s. a ton. and he also grew vegetables for sale. By 1905, he was able to cut 100 tons of cane. He gave up his farm when offered a £100 annual salary as president of the Pacific Islanders'

Association, which he claimed was never paid. If the above date of his arrival is correct, he was not a ticket-holder—the Islanders who had arrived before September 1879 and were exempt from all future special legislation—a freedom that the Commonwealth honoured. Queensland established a Royal Commission in 1906 into the use of labour in the sugar industry, part of the recommendations from which caused the Commonwealth to ease its policy on deportation to allow more exemptions.

Plate 11.24: Henry Diamuir Tongoa.
Source: *Brisbane Truth*, 6 January 1907.

A series of petitions was presented between 1902 and 1906, and when it sat at Mackay, Henry Tongoa and two other Islanders, Noah Sabbo and William Seekis, gave evidence at the Royal Commission. Before Tongoa presented his statement and was interviewed, the Association members marched through Mackay to the Court House. Tongoa told the Royal Commission that he had taken up the lease in belief that it would enable him to remain in Australia. Sabbo, who had his own leased farm, was asked if the Islander farmers he knew had exemption from deportation. He calculated that only three of the 16 Islander farmers he knew had been granted exemption. They were all in the audience and were asked if they would be willing to live on a government reserve. They said no; they wished to remain on their present land. Sabbo and Seekis are further discussed in Chapter 12.

There seems to have been division between the New Hebrideans and Loyalty Islanders, and the Solomon Islanders. Only one Solomon Islander, Dick McKellar (also McLeo), served on the executive of the Association in 1906. Three new leaders emerged in the 1900s, all lay-preachers at the Selwyn Mission, and after it closed, at St Mary's Church at Pioneer. Joseph Barramulla, Luke Logomier, and Alec Sayven were all from Malaita. Most of the early political activity was from New Hebridean groups, with Solomon Islanders only participating at Mackay. The Fatnowna/Logomier, Stephen and Kwasi families are immediately identifiable. There is also some evidence that there was dissention within the ranks of the New Hebridean political leaders, and a shift in power from them towards the Solomon Islanders, certainly at Mackay. The two petitions presented to the Governor-General

at Mackay in 1904 were signed by a majority of Solomon Islanders, both children and adults, several with connections to the Anglican mission.

Table 11.2: Analysis of the island origins and religions of the Melanesians who presented two petitions in 1904 to the Governor-General at Mackay.

NAME	ISLAND	DENOMINATION	STATUS
Joseph Barramulle (Barramulla)	Malaita	Church of England	Adult
Joy Fatnahoona (Fatnowna)	Malaita	Church of England	Child
Sicel (Cicely) Fatanahoona (Fatnowna)	Malaita	Church of England	Child
Mabel Stephen	Malaita	Presbyterian	Child
Jessie Stephen	Malaita	Presbyterian	Child
Frank D`Arbinsan (Darboosie)	Ngela	Church of England	Adult
James Crosay (Kwasi)	Ngela	Church of England	Adult
Eliza Siletarse (Tass)	Maewo	Presbyterian	Child
Simon Boulesko	Pentecost	Presbyterian	Adult (?)
Harry Quier (Querro?)	Erromango (?)	Presbyterian	Child
Sam Marill	(?)	(?)	Adult (?)

Source: *Mackay Mercury* 23 July 1904; *Mackay Mercury* 7 January1907.

Memorably, in September 1906, Tongoa and Alick Mallicoola travelled by ship to Melbourne to seek an interview with Prime Minister Alfred Deakin. Helped by intermediaries, they met with Deakin twice, on 17 September and 1 October, presenting a 427-signature petition from the Association's members. There were 362 Mackay names on the petition, only 102 of them Solomon Islanders. Rather patronisingly, Deakin explained that the categories of exemption had been expanded, based on the Royal Commission's findings, and that possible arrangements had been made for employment in Solomon Islands, Fiji, and to a lesser extent in the New Hebrides, or for return to mission stations. As he had earlier, while Attorney-General, after a 1902 petition from Islanders, Deakin made clear that there would be no reversal of the deportation provisions of the 1901 Act, although he stressed that the categories allowed to remain had been liberalised.

On their way back from Melbourne, Tongoa and Mallicoola stopped off in Brisbane where they obtained an interview with Premier William Kidston about the future use of the Pacific Islanders' Fund, which contained the wages of deceased Islanders. They must have been aware that there were thousands of pounds of money hidden away in the fund, that rightfully belonged to Islanders' families. Once more, they were able to speak to the top politicians. They also visited Bundaberg and Tweed Heads to form branches of the Association.

By 1907, the battle was clearly lost, and the impetus faltered. In January 1908, Tongoa was replaced as chairman by David Boymerrie and there were unproven allegations of financial misdealing. Nevertheless, with over 400 members, these 1900s leaders built the

first modern Pacific Islander political movement in Australia, or indeed anywhere in the Western Pacific. Tui Tonga and Henry Tongoa used media and pressure tactics easily recognisable in modern political activism. It is unclear if Henry Tongoa remained in Australia. He sold his boarding house in Chinatown and by 1913 was back growing cane on an 80-acre block. Tongoa then disappears from Mackay history.[11] Even though the Islanders' protest movement had some effect on moderating the final deportation, and there was a government-sponsored test case in the High Court, the forced repatriation proceeded.

As of mid-1906, 959 Islanders had been deported from the Mackay district, and more followed over the next two years. The 1906 spread of the islands and island groups involved gives us an idea of the proportions of islands of origin in the overall population. There were no Loyalty Islanders deported, as they all would have been ticket-holders, and, like William Seekis, French citizens.

Table 11.3: Origins of Melanesians to be deported from the Mackay district as of mid-1906.

ORIGIN	**NUMBER**	**ORIGIN**	**NUMBER**
New Hebrides		**Solomon Islands**	
Ambrym	47	Bougainville	1
Aoba	80	Guadalcanal	143
Efate (Sandwich)	4	Malaita	275
Emae (Mai)	4	Ngela	93
Epi	43	Ontong Java	2
Erromango	2	San Christobal (Makira)	14
Futuna	1	Santa Cruz	7
Makura	1	Santa Isabel	17
Malekula	25	Savo	9
Malo	11		**561**
Nguna (Moonah)	2		
Paama	17	**TOTAL**	**959**
Pentecost	26		
Santo	21		
Tanna	16		
Tongoa	8		
	308		
Banks Group			
Gaua (Kacona)	32		
Merlav	3		
Mota Lava (Matlop)	14		
Ureparapara	2		
Vanua Kava	8		
	68		
Torres Group	**22**		
	398		

Source: 1906 Sugar Industry Royal Commission, App. XVII.

By mid-1908, when the deportation was complete, in Australia 1,653 were officially exempt and around another 900 to 1,000 South Sea Islanders illegally avoided deportation. They are the only Australian immigrant ethnic group ever directly targeted for deportation by an Act of Parliament. Given Patricia Mercer's estimate of 2,500 who remained (legally and illegally), and the level of the present-day Australians with South Sea Islander ancestry (40,000, about half with a primary identity as Indigenous Australians), the cruel attempt at mass deportation was a failure. Most of those who stayed were single men who died in the 1920s and 1930s, the final few surviving to grand old ages in the 1950s and 1960s. Among them were the married couples and their families from whom the present-day Islander community is descended. The early twentieth century Islander families were large—averaging four to five children in the first generation born in Australia, and 12 to 14 children in the second Australian-born generation. This soon rebuilt the community.

Recent research by Peter Prince suggests that the 1906 judgement of the High Court test case was wrong in law, particularly through the role of Sir Samuel Griffith, a primary author of the Australian Constitution, the Commonwealth Chief Justice, and former Queensland Chief Justice and Premier. [12] Prince's argument is supported by current Justice James Edelman, who said that Prince 'persuasively argued' that in branding all Australian Islanders as 'aliens', the High Court in the Robtelmes v Brennan case 'implicitly applied criteria based upon racial perceptions'.[13] It is appalling that the High Court still cites this case in judgements, and that the Commonwealth Government has never confronted its disgrace in relation to this 1900s quest to achieve a 'White Australia'.

Bibliography

The bibliographies for all chapters are in a separate file.

Endnotes

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2 Feetham and Rymer 1929, 65.
3 *Mackay Mercury*, 24 November 1906.
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5. QSA, A/38111-2, Mackay Deposition Books, 3, 5, 16, 17 May, 11 June, 2 September 1884, 31 March, 1 April 1885; *Mackay Mercury* 21 May, 4, 14 June 1884, 4 April 1885, 24 April 1890.
6. *Mercury*, 23 January, 4 February, 7 June 1892; QSA EXE/6, Petition from Mackay Residents, 25 May 1892; QSA PRI 2/7, p. 369 and A/18577.
7 QSA EXE 6, 1892/43, Report by Mr Justice Cooper, 9 June 1892.
8 *Ibid*., evidence.
9 *Ibid*., Report by Mr Justice Cooper, 9 June 1892.
10 *Mackay Mercury*, 18 January 1906.
11 He may be Henry Tarinua of Lumbukuti village on Tongoa who was involved in 1910s and later negotiations to seek independence from mission and government control in what became Vanuatu. I am grateful to Chris Ballard for alerting me to this possibility. However, Tongoa was still in Mackay in 1913, which makes the scenario unlikely. Email from Chris Ballard, 20 February 2021.
12 The court case was 'Robtelmes v Brenan (1906) 4 CLR 395'. The references for Peter Prince's publications appear in the bibliography for this chapter.
13 Justice James Edelman in the landmark Aboriginal 'belonging' case, Love & Thoms (2020) 397 ALR 597 at 698–99. Prince's 'Australia's Most Inhumane Mass Deportation' (2018) was cited by Justice Edelman in Chetcuti v Commonwealth of Australia [2021] HCA25 at [63], and also in Edelman 2021.