PROTECTION OF AUTHOR’S COPYRIGHT

This copy has been supplied by the Library of the University of Otago on the understanding that the following conditions will be observed:

1. To comply with s56 of the Copyright Act 1994 [NZ], this thesis copy must only be used for the purposes of research or private study.

2. The author's permission must be obtained before any material in the thesis is reproduced, unless such reproduction falls within the fair dealing guidelines of the Copyright Act 1994. Due acknowledgement must be made to the author in any citation.

3. No further copies may be made without the permission of the Librarian of the University of Otago.
The Gift of

History Department

HT Cur
CURRE
3 0020 50033051 1
H. E. GUDGEON:

HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANNEXATION OF

THE COCK ISLANDS

E. R. CURRIE
HISTORY IV
1963
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>THE APPOINTMENT OF GUDGEON</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>CONSOLIDATION OF POWER</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>RELATIONS WITH THE ARIKIS</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>ANNEXATION PURSUED</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>SEDDON TO THE RESCUE</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>THE SEPTEMBER PETITION</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. INTRODUCTION

In 1888, after years of agitation for Britain to assume greater responsibility over island groups close to New Zealand shores, the colony's hopes were partially rewarded by the establishment of a Protectorate over the Cook Islands. This move was greeted with enthusiasm by the more gullible as a recognition of New Zealand's destiny in Pacific affairs, for besides the fear of international rivalry, the efforts of successive politicians had emphasized the notion that New Zealand should be the centre of an Island Empire.

Prior to this concession to colonial Imperialism, the Cooks had more or less played second fiddle to the main demand for Samoa. In terms of security, trade and prestige, Samoa was viewed by New Zealanders as the El Dorado of the Pacific. But New Zealand's aspirations were doomed to failure from the outset, because of Britain's preoccupation with the need to consolidate in Europe and the consequent determination not to offend the powerful German interests in Samoa. On the other hand, the Cook Islands were in no way bonded and New Zealand enjoyed an obvious monopoly of trade with the group. Such factors were sufficient justification for a Protectorate, but a minor controversy arose over whether New Zealand should be permitted
to appoint, as well as pay a consul for the group. A
stalemate was ended by the arrival in London of a strongly-
worded petition—forwarded by the Governor of New Zealand—
from Makea, Queen of Rarotonga, praying for British
intervention, as it was feared that France was about to
annex the Islands. Her reminder that the Cook Islanders
were a branch of the New Zealand Maoris and that English
missionaries had civilized her people, dispelled all final
doubts and the Protectorate was proclaimed. Finally, it
was agreed that New Zealand should appoint as well as pay
the British Resident, and Frederick Joseph Moss became the
first New Zealander to participate in the direct administra-
tion of island affairs.

Moss was handicapped from the beginning by official
wrangling. Although he was New Zealand’s representative
and was paid by the colony, he was officially the British
Resident in a British Protectorate, which lay within the
jurisdiction of the High Commission for the Western Pacific.
Such a system of divided responsibility did not facilitate
competent administration. No one was more conscious of this
fact than Richard John Seddon, a most outspoken Imperialist, who

1. Ross, A., New Zealand Aspirations in the Pacific in the
   Nineteenth Century. Jervois to Krutsford, 21 May 1888
   (as in 209/249 No. 44).

and

Fieldhouse, D. K., British Colonial Policy in Relation
   to New Zealand 1871-1902. Makea to Jervois (as in
   209/249).
was primarily concerned with Samoa, but took a paternal interest in any island group that might possibly be included in his ideal of an Island Federation. Thus, when in 1893, the Western Pacific Order in Council extended the jurisdiction of the High Commission to the Cook Islands' Federation, the New Zealand Governor, Glasgow, incurred Seddon's wrath when he advised the Secretary of State that the Premier and his ministers agreed that the best solution would be for the Resident to be solely responsible to the High Commissioner. Seddon insisted that his views had been misinterpreted. It was true that he was dissatisfied with the existing arrangements, but he preferred annexation of the Cook Islands to New Zealand to a continuance of the pre-1893 system, though he would support the Protectorate as long as there was no liaison between the Resident and the High Commissioner. But if Britain took complete control of the Islands, New Zealand would refuse to pay the Resident's salary. Here, Seddon held a trump, for the Colonial Office was chary of asking the British Treasury for funds. Chamberlain though that "the best way would be to get rid of

the responsibility altogether by annexing to New Zealand", his one reservation being that the Cook Islanders concurred.\(^4\)

Glasgow put paid to any such consideration, by privately urging that the existing arrangements be maintained. The Governor was opposed to the imperialistic ambitions of Seddon and feared the adverse effects on the Cook Island Maoris should New Zealand be permitted to take exclusive control. He deprecated "any suggestion being made to my ministers that any application to annex the Cook Islands would receive favourable consideration".\(^5\) It was almost entirely due to Glasgow's influence, and to a lesser extent, the influence of his successor, Ranfurly, that annexation was postponed until 1901.\(^6\)

In the meantime, Moss had little real power, and in his latter years as Resident, he became embroiled in local disputes. What little authority he had was severely undermined by the accumulation of ill-feeling on the part of the Maoris and foreign residents. His troubles came to a head when he was advised to secure the passage of a Federal High Court Bill, to overcome the deficiencies of the local supreme

---


Court. In the absence of any other qualified European, Moss was instructed to nominate himself to the post of Chief Justice. Unfortunately for the Resident, agitators convinced the Maoris that he was attempting to secure supreme powers for his own use, and Moss's refusal to allow the Arikis - or hereditary chiefs - time to deliberate over the provisions of the proposed bill, led to a controversy of considerable proportions. The Chief Justice of New Zealand, Sir James Prendergast, was sent to investigate the issues at stake. Prendergast advised the recall of Moss and the immediate passage of the High Court Bill, and also stated that if efficient administration was to be secured, Britain might have to annex the Islands and strengthen the Resident's executive powers.7

At this stage the Colonial Office favoured annexation, not only for the sake of maintaining order, but also because it appeared that if the Arikis retained their nucleus of authority the economic and social progress of the Maoris would continue to be retarded. But there was a dilemma to be faced. The Chiefs were not likely to welcome annexation

for some time, and there was no guarantee that a new
Resident would be able to overcome the difficulties that
had beset Moss.

The new Governor, Ranfurly, was more lenient in his
attitude towards the Arikis, and suggested that self-
government be given another chance, but that the High Court
Bill should be passed and the new Resident should be
appointed Deputy Commissioner of the High Commissioner's
Court. The Colonial Office concurred with these suggestions
for the only alternatives, - the renunciation of the
Protectorate, or direct coercion of the chiefs and
Europeans, - were unacceptable.

Seddon bemoaned his lack of control over the Resident,
but "toed the line" when the Colonial Office threatened to
renounce the Protectorate. Seddon was confidentially
promised however, that the islands would be annexed to New
Zealand as soon as the Arikis should agree. 8

8. Gilson, R. P., opcit p. 71 Ranfurly to Chamberlain,
   (confid.) 23 June 1998 (as in 209/258).
II. THE APPOINTMENT OF GUDGEON

Ranfurly suggested that the new Resident should be "specially selected for his strength of character and ability, and having a thorough knowledge of dealing with Native Races". In view of the Maoris' dislike of annexation, "it should be the new Resident's duty to educate them up to it". Chamberlain and Seddon were in full agreement, and there can be no doubt that Seddon's choice of Walter Edward Gudgeon, satisfied all the immediate requirements.

Besides having served with distinction in the Maori Wars, Gudgeon at various times had been Resident Magistrate at Gisborne, Acting under-Secretary for Defence, Commissioner of Police, and prior to his appointment as Resident, a judge of the Native Land Court. These posts had brought him into close contact with the New Zealand Maoris. Above all, he was blessed with supreme self-confidence. He never even contemplated failure. Nevertheless, such assurance was anything but a handicap in view of the suspicion and intrigue that awaited him in Rarotonga. It is the intention of this essay to show that an arrangement existed between Gudgeon

---

1. Fieldhouse *Omit* Ranfurly to Chamberlain, 7 February 1898. Secret (as in CO 209/258).

and Seddon whereby all obstacles were to be removed to ensure that the Cook Islands would be annexed to New Zealand. The Resident was to persuade the Arikis to petition for annexation to the colony; the Premier was to do all within his power to arouse and maintain interest in New Zealand.

Gudgeon's application to duty can be gauged by the fact that on being informed of his new position, he at once applied himself to a study pertaining to the British connection with the Cook Islands from its inception. To ensure that he should begin with every possible advantage, the judicial commissioner from Fiji settled all outstanding cases involving British subjects in Rarotonga. Moreover, Ranfurly would have followed Seddon's suggestion that he introduce Gudgeon to the Maoris, had he not been required to attend to the business of Parliament. Ranfurly even considered postponing Gudgeon's departure until the current session finished, but decided that any delay would add to the difficulties of the group. Thus, it was arranged for Captain Browne of H.M.S. Tauranga to read the Proclamation with "full honours" and deliver a message from the Governor introducing Gudgeon to the Cook Islanders.


4. Ibid.
Gudgeon was disappointed that Ranfurly was unable to make the voyage, as "the Maori may always be influenced by the presence of anyone holding the high position of Governor of a British Colony, since he is bound to accept the fact as a compliment to himself". Therefore, in order to demonstrate the Governor's personal interest in the welfare of the group, Gudgeon asked Ranfurly to make an official visit at the first available opportunity.

III. CONSOLIDATION OF POWER

Gudgeon, promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, arrived at Tarotonga on 10 September 1898. The Akis were understandably impressed by the stern admonition read by Browne, which censured them for their ill-treatment of Moss and ordered that the High Court Bill was to be passed without delay. The Akis protested to Ranfurly - with some justification - that Moss had been responsible for the trouble caused over the High Court Bill, though their dispatch is more significant perhaps, for its comments on Gudgeon. Makea assured Ranfurly that they were pleased to accept Gudgeon as their friend, and thanked the Governor for sending "so great a man as he", adding that they would support the Resident in carrying out "good laws". The carefully planned installation had succeeded in establishing Gudgeon's 'mana'.

This auspicious reception augured well for Gudgeon whose first reports were full of confidence. He assured Ranfurly that the High Court Bill would be passed at the next meeting of the local parliament, and did not anticipate any difficulty in dealing with the people of the group. He

also mentioned that he could communicate with the Maoris,² a fact that was acknowledged by Ranfurly as "a matter of the first importance"³.

A new High Court Bill was passed on 28 September 1898⁴. After the Maoris had "prayed" Gudgeon to accept the post of Chief Justice, and Ranfurly had given his approval, Gudgeon reluctantly complied. This reluctance must surely have been the result of the decision that the Government could not afford to send out another qualified man, and Gudgeon was forced to accept the position, without pay. He certainly could not object on the ground of inexperience. In fact, the position was to prove to be an asset. There was no provision for an appeal from a decision of the High Court which meant that the powers of Chief Justice were indeed considerable.

Shortly after, he was appointed a Deputy Commissioner, which meant that he could try civil cases in the name of the High Commission, and criminal cases in which the maximum penalty was seven years' imprisonment. And in 1899, the Western Pacific Order in Council (1893) was amended to permit the Resident of the Cook Islands to be appointed a

---

4. *A-I 1899 A-3*, p. 11-12, For details of High Court Bill.
Judicial Commissioner. In short, Gudgeon was authorized to hear all criminal cases under Federal law as Chief Justice of the High Court; he could sit as Judicial Commissioner under the Western Pacific regulations; and could refer to himself as Judicial Commissioner, criminal actions brought against Europeans under Federal law.\(^5\) Whereas Moss had been "a man-o'-war without guns" Gudgeon was a floating arsenal.

Systematically, Gudgeon began to curtail the activities of those Europeans misguided enough to challenge his consolidation of authority. The immediate opposition centred round the associates and friends of the late Resident, who were summarily dismissed from the civil service and replaced by Gudgeon's nominees. When Ranfurly honoured his promise to the Resident and made an official visit to the Cook Islands in April 1899, Gudgeon justified his actions against the "undesirable" Europeans, referring to a dossier on the Moss party sent to him by an Auckland detective. In Gudgeon's opinion, Moss had employed "imbecile and incapable men" to carry out his own designs, and the majority of these office-holders had been odious to the Maoris.\(^6\)

---

5. Gilson, _opcit_, pp. 70-71.

Ranfurly was able to judge for himself, as most of his visit was spent in Makea's palace studying petitions from aggrieved Europeans against the natives. He found that "there was nothing of any moment in any of them". More important, was his public denial of the reports of "maliciously deposed persons" that his visit was intended as a preliminary to annexation. Ranfurly had not been fully in favour of annexation, but believing that the Moss Party was responsible for most of the trouble in the group, and shaken in his confidence of the Federal Government's capacity for maintaining order, he subsequently reported to the Colonial Office, that in view of the "European population and its type" annexation would prove the most satisfactory answer to the problem. With the concurrence of Ranfurly to the annexation programme, there was no further serious opposition on behalf of Britain.

But Gudgeon's campaign against the "undesirables" was not without malice. He allowed his new public servants to openly investigate the supposed embezzlement of government funds by Moss's supporters, and the charges were far from being conclusive. Instead, Gudgeon found himself involved

8. New Zealand Herald, 1 May 1899 (hereinafter NZH)
in a further outbreak of factionalism, in which a number of Europeans joined the Moss party in trying to incite Maori opposition to Gudgeon, principally on the ground that he was working against Maori self-government.\(^\text{10}\)

Undaunted, Gudgeon secured the passage of the Offenders' Punishment Act, which empowered the High Court to mete out penalties equal to the New Zealand maximum for offences recognized in the Federation's law. It also provided for the deportation or punishment of foreign vagrants found guilty of spreading "idle or malicious reports with intent to disturb Maori minds or the peace"\(^\text{11}\). Moreover, the Constitution was amended to provide for an all-Maori Parliament. Only Maoris could vote, and no European was eligible for election.\(^\text{12}\)

Within weeks of the application of these acts, Gudgeon reported that although a section of the foreign element remained hostile, the general situation was one of improvement with foreigners leaving the islands "as soon as they commit offences likely to bring them under the jurisdiction of the High Court."\(^\text{13}\)

10. Ibid., p. 157. Correspondence Moss to Ranfurly 1902. (as in CO 209).


Gudgeon felt that he had dispersed with the European danger, and to all practical purposes, this was true. But he was not free from criticism. Moss, safe in New Zealand, complained to Ranfurly and the New Zealand Herald that the "maladministration of justice" in the Cook Islands, had created "a rule of terror"\(^{14}\). Gudgeon characteristically dismissed Moss's protests as "an impertinent and uncalled for interference"\(^{15}\).

It is evident however, that despite Ranfurly's sympathy with Gudgeon's dual responsibility as adviser to the Cook Islands' Government and as Chief Justice, and proof that the Resident's judgements were impartial, steps would have been taken to curb Gudgeon's combination of executive, legislative and judicial powers, had not an opportunity arisen for the annexation of the islands\(^{16}\). Some means of appeal from Gudgeon's High Court decisions was perhaps necessary, though this would have seriously reduced his prestige in the eyes of the Maoris. Fortunately for the Resident, he remained in control, and with his authority established, he could concentrate on moulding the Arikis to his wishes.

\(^{14}\) NZH 8 May 1900.

\(^{15}\) NZH 5 June 1900.

IV. RELATIONS WITH THE ARIKIS

When Gudgeon became Resident, Seddon had been promised that the Cook Islands would be annexed to New Zealand. All that remained was to secure the approval of the Arikis, and there can be little doubt that this was Gudgeon's main task. It should be pointed out however, that at no time in his despatches to Ranfurly, does Gudgeon explicitly refer to attempts made to influence the Arikis. Moreover, there is no record of overtures made to the Maoris on the subject\(^1\). Nevertheless, it is evident that Seddon expected Gudgeon to convince the Arikis that annexation to New Zealand was in their best interests. On one occasion in his private correspondence with Seddon, Gudgeon intimates that he went to the Cook Islands "with the fixed intention of getting this group annexed". He explains that he had been obliged to "work quietly" in order to allay the suspicions of the Mossites, who had made a "bugbear" of annexation, distorting it to the Maoris as a punishment. Thus, he had withheld his "true views" from Moss's friends, "lest they should turn round and warn the Maoris that they were about to lose their 'mana'"\(^2\).

---
2. N.Z. Archives. 60/43. (Confid.) Gudgeon to Seddon, 29 August 1900.
It is little wonder that Gudgeon made a misery of the lives of those who might have retarded annexation.

From the outset, Gudgeon determined to gain the confidence of the Rarotongan Arikis, Makea, her husband Ngamaru, and Tinomana. He found that Makea and Ngamaru were decidedly favourable to annexation, and these two became his principal confidants. It was Makea who warned him that Tinomana was not to be trusted, as her white husband, Salmon, might oppose annexation. Gudgeon decided that another Ariki, Pa, was a "shuffler", for when sounded on annexation, Pa felt that he should consult his people before being committed. But despite these drawbacks, Makea promised him that "when the time comes, there may be opposition, but they must all give in to me as they did over the Protectorate". With such an assurance, Gudgeon had only to bide his time.

Having established his 'mana' in the eyes of the two leading Arikis, Gudgeon had no trouble in securing the passage of bills he proposed. In 1899, he informed Ranfurly that the abolition of the Island Courts had not been opposed by the Maoris, and that the native Parliament had passed so

3. Ibid.
many useful statutes, that he felt no more legislation would be necessary for the next five years. The statutes included the restriction of the sale of liquor to Maoris and Europeans; a new system of audit for government accounts; the elimination of many of the old missionary offences; closer regulations on marriage and divorce; and the reappearance of the London Missionary Society missionary as registrar of vital statistics. The last two, plus Gudgeon's attempt to limit the liquor trade, gained him the strong support of the Mission.

Gudgeon was less optimistic over the trade prospects of the Islands. Shortly after his arrival, he found that not more than one-half of Rarotonga was "beneficially occupied" and a later visit to the outlying islands confirmed his worst fears when he discovered that at least two-thirds of the area of the group was practically unproductive. He attributed this sorry state of affairs, not only to the "easy going" nature of the Maoris, but also to the indifference of foreign settlers to create an incentive by improving their leased land. He even doubted if Europeans were capable of successfully

cultivating tropical islands. Above all, Gudgeon was aware of the jealousy with which the Arikis guarded their land rights, refusing to lease lands that might be profitably developed by competent Maoris and Europeans. Moreover, he desired to make some provision for landless Maoris, but concluded that "...whatever measure of justice the common people may receive, will not come about from their own chiefs: it must be forced from them by pressure from without the island".

Thus, although he believed that the system of land tenure would ultimately have to be reformed, he did not openly attempt to interfere with the hereditary rights of the Arikis, for it was essential that he should continue to retain their cooperation and goodwill. Instead, he exhorted the Maoris to adopt European values, insisting that wealth was 'mana', and that they would never be truly independent until they accepted the white man's view of economic enterprise and self-reliance. It would appear that Gudgeon was well aware of the admiration with which the Maoris regarded the British Empire. This feeling was such

that the Rarotongans envied the 'mana' of the Aitutakians whose island had been annexed in 1888, - for its possible use as a harbour and naval refuelling base. Gudgeon took advantage of such jealousies by extolling the virtues that would eventuate if the Maoris became one with New Zealand.

For example, in 1899, at the prize-giving of the L.M.S. boarding school, Tereora, he compared the school with Te Aute College, pointing out that the New Zealand school had greater advantages, but that the Maoris could learn English, which was "the only means to rise in the world".

However, Gudgeon's dissatisfaction with the Maoris' unwillingness "to take into consideration prospective privations or benefits" continued to pervade his reports on trade conditions. In 1899, he established a Rarotongan Land Board, to survey lands already leased for cash, and to review all new leases before they became valid. These powers did not endanger Maori custom, and it was Gudgeon's hope that the Arikis would prosper and so give a lead to economic development. But the Arikis were quite satisfied with the existing system, and all that Gudgeon achieved was the planting of new crops in place of those that had lost their market value.

V. ANNEXATION PURSUED

With Ranfurly's blessing, any signs of the Arikis' willingness to become part of New Zealand were eagerly encouraged. This is apparent in the response of the Cook Island towards the Boer War efforts of New Zealand, demonstrated by a contribution of £107. 7s. 6d. to the Widows' and Orphans' Patriotic Fund, which prompted Ranfurly to congratulate the Maoris on their "generous loyalty" 1.

In September 1899, Gudgeon reported that some of the Arikis were in favour of ceding the group to Britain. He predicted that petitions would be sent and asked for authority to hoist the Union Jack as each request came in. His despatch was so worded that the Arikis discussion of cession might seem to have been spontaneous. No specific mention was made of future policy, but Gudgeon wrote as if the abolition of the Federal Government was a foregone conclusion 2. Gudgeon's request to hoist the flag was denied, and the only petitions received from the Cook Islands


were from aggrieved Europeans, protesting against the judicial decisions of the Resident. Despite the wishes of Seddon and Ranfurly, these petitions were given a hearing, - a move which only served to anger the Arikis, who felt that New Zealand had listened to "bad and disreputable men". Thus, when Makea and Ngamaru finally expressed an official desire to become "one with the British people", their petition expressly stated that they wished to be annexed to Great Britain, and not to New Zealand. It appeared that Gudgeon had been well amiss in his reckonings. But the Resident pointed out that the feeling against New Zealand was because the petitions of "certain Rarotongan beachcombers" had been treated as genuine, and concluded that "this feeling will die out". There was no cause for alarm. Gudgeon had matters well in hand.

Although he did not mention any personal connection with the request for annexation, it is significant that Gudgeon had sent Ranfurly proposals for British economic policy in the group. The Resident laid particular emphasis on land reform, criticizing the Arikis for their failure to provide

---


4. Ibid.
security of tenure for the commoners. In so doing, he believed that the Arikis were withholding the key to development and there was little he could do, because of his lack of power. Gudgeon said that a strong government, would ensure the rights of families which had worked the land for 500 years; nationalize the land and provide payment of rent in kind to chiefs who could prove that they had a right to such consideration; and pay bonuses for the improvement of land. He certainly had not discussed these proposals with the Arikis, otherwise there is every likelihood that the petition would have been written in even stronger terms against New Zealand.

Ironically enough, Seddon's hopes for the Cook Islands were directly aided by the cession of Samoa to Germany. At last, he was assured of the backing of his fellow New Zealanders, and urged the Colonial Office to take immediate steps in relation to "islands admitted to be British", for "the surrender of Samoa has disheartened the natives in the Islands, disappointed the people of Australasia, and lowered the prestige of Britain in this part of the globe". Therefore he asked that New Zealand's boundaries he extended to

include the Cook Islands, Fiji, Tonga, and the Society Islands. Seddon was confident that the colony would pass the necessary laws for the administration of these Islands, and "as far as practicable" the assistance of the Arikis would be retained and the existing government maintained. Moreover, provision might be made for Maori representation in the New Zealand legislature. Thus, no burdens would be imposed on Britain, and the "civilization of the natives would be duly attended to".

VI. SEDDON TO THE RESCUE

On 16 May 1900, Seddon embarked on a voyage to the South Sea Islands, ostensibly for reasons of health. As the New Zealand Herald reported, "the Premier has lately had three seizures, slight in severity, but ominous in nature". But, with due respect to the Premier's health, this same newspaper later stated that when Seddon left on his visit to the Islands, "...it was currently reported that he was not in quest of health alone.... He had, it was said, a great scheme in his mind, a plan for the federation of the islands of the South Pacific under the aegis of New Zealand. This would console all those who had regretted that we were not to be included in Australian Federation, and make us thankful that we had one far-sighted amongst us looking out for our welfare". There is more than a grain of truth in this statement, for the Arikis' petition arrived in Wellington shortly before Seddon's departure, and the Premier told Ranfurly that he would prefer to visit the Islands and confer with the Maoris, before recommending annexation to Parliament. Obviously Seddon wanted to persuade the Arikis that their interests lay with New Zealand, in order that they might request for annexation to the Colony.

1. NZH, 8 May 1900.
2. Ibid, 16 June 1900.
Tregear's report of the visit clearly indicates - albeit unconsciously - that Seddon concerned himself with "selling" annexation to the Maoris. At Aitutaki, he informed them that photographs of the visit would be circulated throughout the pictorial journals of New Zealand, and that copies would be sent to the islands. Seddon remarked that this would create a "favourable impression" both in the colony and at home. Seddon kept his promise, for some months later, the New Zealand Herald reported that local photographers had been ordered to hastily print some thousands of the photographs taken during his visit.

Considerable pains were taken to alleviate the distrust of the Arikis over the question of the European petitions. Seddon insisted that they had met with his unyielding displeasure, and that they had finally been admitted to the wastepaper bucket. Moreover, he was informed that many of the European residents, - including those who had petitioned the New Zealand parliament, - were preparing to present a petition to him, asking for New Zealand control over the group. Consequently, he told Makea that he had not come to interfere


4. NZH 17 September 1900.
with the "internal arrangements" of the chiefs, nor with their "constitutional problem". Such a petition would have to be considered firstly by Makea and the Arikis, who should send it to the Governor of New Zealand. Seddon assured the Arikis that if they did desire a change, he would do nothing to weaken their authority, but he definitely would not act as a vehicle for the Europeans.

Several proposals, aimed at accelerating the progress of the Islands, were laid before the Arikis. Amongst other things, Seddon suggested a postal conversion, a Government schooner, improved harbours, the replacement of the Chilean dollar, and a better system of steam communication with Auckland. All the proposals, in one way or another, involved the support of New Zealand. The Premier added that the suggestions were made on his own initiative, but predicted that his colleagues would agree to any reasonable offer made by the Arikis, and that he would do his utmost to solicit the aid of his Parliament.

It is reasonable to assume however, that the proposals originated with Gudgeon. Earlier in 1900, he had mentioned

---

5. Tregear, _Docit_, pp. 432-433.
that the firm, Donald and Edenborough intended to use an oil-engine schooner in the inter-island trade. This would be used against the interests of the Cook Islanders, and Gudgeon suggested that the traders and Maoris combine to purchase a schooner of their own, which would make occasional trips to New Zealand. The Resident had also pointed out the difficulties involved in the use of Chilean currency.

Furthermore, during his stay at Rarotonga, Seddon wrote a series of despatches to Gudgeon, in reference to the proposed reforms, at one point stating, "I hope you do not consider I am unduly trespassing, but my desire is to do all I can to assist the trade of the Islands and the Islanders themselves."

Seddon also stressed the necessity for social reforms, including more efficient control of the liquor trade; more stringent laws to restrict the immigration of Orientals; higher educational standards; and improvements in public health. All the proposals were reiterated in a subsequent speech to the people, but no mention was made of annexation. Such matters were for the Arikis only.

All of Seddon's proposals were favourably received though

8. N.Z. Archives. 60/40. Seddon to Gudgeon, 8 June 1900.
it is doubtful whether or not they were completely understood. In thanking Seddon, Ngamaru confessed that their greatest desire was for Gudgeon to explain matters to them later on. At every available moment, Seddon had made a point of extolling Gudgeon's virtues, and praised the Arikis for their continued support of "one who will do what he believes to be for your good and the good of your people." Thus, Seddon could leave the Islands, confident that Gudgeon would complete the indoctrination.

There is a certain element of irony in the fact that the sanction Seddon had long awaited arrived in Wellington a few days after he left for the Islands. Ranfurly had hastily made out a commission empowering the Premier to negotiate the actual terms of cession with the Arikis, but when the schooner bearing this information arrived at Rarotonga, the Tutuakai was about to depart. The commission was sent under cover to Gudgeon, but the Resident had no time for official correspondence, as the schooner also brought the news of the relief of Mafeking, which caused such rejoicing that all else was overlooked. Nevertheless, as Tregear states, "our only

10. Ibid., p. 434.
'King' had Oliver Cromwell like, acted first and anticipated authority following. Red tape and sealing wax has not yet reached the lovely Island of Rarotonga.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, pp. 391-392.
VII. THE SEPTEMBER PETITION

On his return to New Zealand, Seddon made public references to the desirability of a federation of the islands visited, with New Zealand, stating that both the Europeans and the natives would welcome closer bonds with the colony. The press rallied to the cause, but the Otago Daily Times felt that any such project should not be forced upon the natives, even though they probably desired the change that Prendergast had foreseen.

Meanwhile, the Colonial Office informed Ranfurly that Seddon's report on his visit to the Islands would have to be studied before any immediate action could be taken in relation to the telegram of 16 May. In his confidential report to the Governor, Seddon made little direct reference to the proposed administration of the Cook Islands, merely stating that there would be "no difficulty in administration" and complications which he feared would "sooner or later arise" would be avoided. Seddon added if New Zealand was "asked" to assume control, he was confident that such a duty would not be shirked. This addition was putting the 'cart before the

1. Otago Daily Times 20 June 1900 (hereinafter ODT).
2. ODT 9 July 1900.

Encl. Seddon's Memo. (as in CO 209/260)
horse' for the Colonial Office had made it clear that Britain would annex the islands only if New Zealand so desired. Thus, the Imperial authorities refused to be maneuvered into asking a favour of Seddon, and instead, demanded a copy of the terms of cession, asking if New Zealand would guarantee Maori land ownership and representation in the New Zealand Parliament. Seddon at once agreed to the above proposals, and without any further negotiations with the natives, Ranfurly was authorized to annex the Cook Islands and Niue with the proviso that the New Zealand Parliament first passed a joint resolution accepting the responsibility. Only in the case of Niue, was Ranfurly instructed to determine the wishes of the natives.

But for a delay in the straightening out of procedure under the Colonial Boundary's Act, Parliament might have considered the resolution immediately. In the interim, a petition was received from the Arikis, which, for the first time, officially requested that the Cook Islands be annexed as "part and portion" of New Zealand.

It is evident that Gudgeon played a major part in the

---


origination at least of this petition. He had intimated to Seddon that he could not fathom Australia's interference in the affairs of the Cook Islands in view of the preponderance of trade and native sympathies, with New Zealand. To clarify the position he said he would make it "a condition of annexation" that Mangaia would be included in any proposals, and that he intended to "bring about" a meeting of the Arikis for this purpose. But before the meeting took place, he further noted that he would firstly discuss matters with Makea, confidently asserting that "I think all the Arikis will support annexation on the terms I propose". Moreover, if this meeting met with success, Gudgeon hoped Seddon would oppose any delay in annexation for "in all matters Maori, it is better to strike while the iron is hot", and in the event of war with France, Gudgeon concluded that they would "pay dearly for having been hampered by an idiotic British Government".

Thus, Gudgeon's intrigue was rewarded by the resultant petition, though he did not officially take any credit for its formulation. He did state however that "the Matairos and Rangatiras of Rarotonga, have endorsed the action of their

9. MIR 29 June 1900, 14 July 1900. NZH 14 July 1900.
10. N.Z. Archives. 60/43, Gudgeon to Seddon, (confid.) 29 August 1900.
11. Ibid, Gudgeon to Seddon, 4 September 1900.
Arikis, and therefore the inhabitants of this island may be said to be absolutely unanimous in their desire for annexation. The inferior people have not, of course, been asked their opinion on this question; but I am in a position to say that they are more in favour of annexation than any other class, since they hope to benefit by the change.\(^{12}\)

It is beside the point to argue that the commoners should have been sounded on annexation, for the Colonial Office had long accepted the view that the assent of the Arikis was all that was required. But, it is interesting that Gudgeon did not criticize the Arikis' terms of cession which were in direct opposition to his personal views. Moreover, there is no mention of the Maoris having been acquainted with the proposals in relation to land ownership and representation in the New Zealand Parliament. But again, Gudgeon's correspondence with Seddon is indicative of the former's policy, where he admits that he studiously avoided any discussion of post annexation reforms designed to decrease the 'mana' of the Arikis. In particular, he allowed Makea and her colleagues to assume that there would be no change in the system of land-tenure.\(^{13}\)

---


13. Gilson, R. P., "Negotiations leading to British Intervention in Rarotonga; (Cook Islands)" in Historical Studies November 1955, p. 75, Gudgeon to Seddon, 10 August 1900 (as in Seddon Papers Vol. 60).
VIII. CONCLUSION

Perhaps with Gudgeon's advice in mind, Seddon, without notice, presented a draft resolution to both Houses, and the standing orders were waived to enable the motion for the annexation of the Cook Islands to New Zealand, to be carried through at one sitting. The opposition was unprepared, and the resolution was passed\(^1\). In October 1900, Ranfurly addressed a public meeting at Rarotonga, and assured the Arikis that their land rights would be preserved and that the administration and laws would be preserved for the time being. The chiefs informed him that they were unanimously in favour of annexation\(^2\). Finally, on 13 May 1901, an imperial order in council was issued to permit New Zealand's annexation of the group, and on 11 June, the extension of the colony's boundaries was ceremoniously proclaimed in Auckland, in the presence of the visiting Duke of York and two Cook Island Arikis. At long last, the triumph was complete.

A considerable measure of the credit must be attributed to Gudgeon. He had assumed the Residentship in the face of very real problems which might have made a lesser man quail.

---

Granted, his installation had been carefully planned to impress the Maoris, and his accumulation of judicial powers certainly earned the grudging respect of the Europeans. Nevertheless, the ultimate success depended on the way in which Gudgeon supplemented these advantages in his dealings with the Arikis, for after all, his primary task was to persuade them to petition for annexation to New Zealand. It is evident from his correspondence with Seddon that he had been entrusted with this mission, and he applied himself to this end with a vigour that is commendable in itself. Ambitious, persuasive, and confident to a point bordering on egoism, Gudgeon refused to allow anything to hinder the annexation programme.

Perhaps Gudgeon can be criticized for contravening the trust of the Arikis, leading them to believe that their interests would be protected, while all the time he was privately urging that their powers be limited. But Gudgeon had been frustrated at every turn, by the refusal of the Arikis to contemplate what he believed to be the most essential reform, that pertaining to land tenure. New Zealand’s interests were based on trade prospects, and although the Resident’s reports were tinged with optimism, the results never justified his efforts. This led him to conclude that security of land
tenure was the key to progress, which meant that the Arikis would have to relinquish their 'feudal' control over the land. Annexation would provide a greater measure of control over the Arikis, the land would be developed profitably, and trade would increase. Thus, Gudgeon felt justified in tricking the Arikis into petitioning for annexation.

Moreover, it is essential to view his intrigue with Seddon, in the light of contemporary opinion. It is perhaps too easy to sympathize with the Arikis. Certainly, Makea and Ngamaru were maneuvered into petitioning, but they too, carried on their own little intrigue by working against the wishes of their people. They wanted all the material benefits of annexation — British status, and economic and educational assistance, and were astute enough to ensure that the terms of cession were definitely to their advantage, particularly in the provision that the parliament be replaced by a council of Arikis. They did ask for the continued leadership of Gudgeon in the High Court and legislative, but although Gudgeon continued as Resident Commissioner until 1909, his hopes of economic progress never eventuated, mainly because of the refusal of the Hon. C. H. Mills — the Minister in Charge of the Cook and other Islands' administration — to act against the wishes of the Arikis.
Furthermore, it should be remembered that the British authorities agreed that annexation was inevitable and approved of the terms by which it was undertaken. After the cession of Samoa, it was not only essential to Seddon's dreams of an Island Federation that any further delay in annexation should be avoided. Britain was no less anxious to compensate for New Zealand's "legitimate disappointment" by offering some token of appreciation for the colony's aid in the Boer War. Thus, by 1900, all the participants were dissatisfied with the Protectorate, and annexation was accepted unanimously.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

(a) Unpublished

New Zealand National Archives. Correspondence of R. J. Seddon.


(b) Published

Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives of New Zealand
1898 A-3.
1900 A-3.

New Zealand Parliamentary Debates. 1900.

New Zealand Herald. 1900.
Otago Daily Times. 1900.

Tregear, E., The Right Hon. R. J. Seddon's Visit to Tonga, Fiji, Savage Island and the Cook Islands. Government publication 1900. (No author given but Tregear later acknowledged that he was the writer).

SECONDARY SOURCES

(a) Unpublished


(b) Published


PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS


Gilson, R. P., "Negotiations leading to British Intervention in Rarotonga (Cook Islands)" in Historical Studies, November 1955.