

**Collectors, That Happy Band of Patriots:
Sir George Grey, Dr T. M. Hocken
and Frank Wild Reed**

*Foxcroft Lecture on Bibliography
and Book History for 2015*

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FOREWORD

Donald Kerr's Foxcroft Lecture was organized, most conveniently, for Melbourne's Rare Book Week late in July 2015. It was a welcome opportunity to hear the foremost historian of collecting in New Zealand and to learn, in summary, about the work he has done during the last quarter of a century on three outstanding individuals. Although Grey, Reed and Hocken have to be considered in their various ways germane to Kerr's functions at the Auckland City Library and the University of Otago Library, it should be stressed that the research and writing fell for a major part outside his normal duties. Rare-book librarianship is an exacting profession and its practitioners do not always have the chance, outside exhibition catalogues, of passing on their often immense accumulated knowledge to the world at large. Donald Kerr is one of the exceptions, and his enrichment of our understanding of bibliophilic passions in Britain's settler colonies in the South Seas rightly called for his election a few years ago to the office of President of the Bibliographical Society of Australia and New Zealand.

It would be impertinent to restate here why Grey, Reed and Hocken were important for their adopted country, not least in arranging for their very substantial libraries to pass into public hands. However, it is appropriate—at a time when collecting is being studied with much greater intensity—to reflect for a moment on the significance of these three New Zealand cases.

The first point to make is that genuine bibliophilia, as distinct from the posturing of rich people advised to stay within some arbitrarily defined canon, is always personal and even idiosyncratic because it takes its lead from carefully nurtured curiosity and from lively passions. It is true that Grey's wealth and the exceptional opportunities offered by a peripatetic vice-regal and political career enabled him to follow a nineteenth-century bent towards medieval manuscripts and incunabula. None of this explains the strength of his interest in philology and in the languages of the many peoples amongst whom he had resided. Hocken, the exact contemporary of David Scott Mitchell, had fewer resources than his Australian counterpart or Grey or Alexander Turnbull, but he was effectively the first in the field of building up a systematic collection of material relating to a British possession in the Pacific. As for Reed his achievement in creating a comprehensive accumulation on one author from a base in provincial New Zealand has to be seen as staggering. Determination, even in a world without e-mail, can overcome all sorts of obstacles for a person of relatively modest means. The notion of focusing on one or more seventeenth-century English writers seemed to the

late John Emmerson no longer possible round 1970. Things are perhaps different in France. Alongside Reed's Alexandre Dumas the successful efforts Christopher Brennan made at the turn of the twentieth century to assemble an archive of Stéphane Mallarmé also belong to another time. Yet, for minor figures of the period before 1800 on the other side of the Channel one can still hope to have impressive holdings. None of this takes away, of course, from Reed's mastery.

Collecting in New Zealand assumed links and contacts elsewhere, and especially in the Northern Hemisphere. A second feature of Donald Kerr's exposition is that this situation is kept in mind. In particular the Australian connection is never lost from sight. For Hocken especially there were, in addition to his correspondence with Mitchell himself, sources of supply across the Tasman. It is not widely noticed that the Hocken Library holds a remarkable group of Van Diemen's Land newspapers from the 1840s some of which are now unavailable in Hobart. As a bibliographer as well as a collector Hocken was aware of the importance of context, in this instance the British and French exploration of and incursion into the Pacific Ocean and its surrounds.

Context in the widest sense provides a third theme for reflection. Australians and New Zealanders have perforce to take notice of the civilizations, not exclusively Anglophone, from which they stem and of which they continue to be part, in defiance of the location fallacy that wants everything to be new when it is done away from an original site. It is not necessary to repeat here what I have been saying and writing for decades on this topic, beyond recalling Thérèse Radic's striking dictum: "What was theirs is ours, because we were once them". We are used, in the course of research, to travelling back to the sources on the other side of the Equator and to trying to keep in touch with what is being thought and done over there. On the other hand, alas, it is rare for Europeans and North Americans to pay genuine attention to phenomena and experiences in these outlying parts of their cultural and linguistic sphere.

A strictly relevant example will illustrate the point. The 2014 volume of the *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* (issued in late 2015) was a centenary celebration of A. N. L. Munby and of his work on bibliophiles. *Great Collectors and Their Grand Designs*, edited by Peter Murray Jones and Liam Sims, includes an article by Ed Potten entitled "The rest of the iceberg: Reassessing private book ownership in the nineteenth century" (pp. 125–149). The substance of the text consists in studies of two very different private libraries in nineteenth-century Britain, those of the Marquess of Blandford (1766–1840), celebrated as the winner of the bidding duel at the 1812 Roxburghe sale for the Valdarfer Boccaccio, and of a relatively obscure Derbyshire clergyman, Joseph Nodder

(1789–1878), whose modest 359 titles were carefully listed in a probate inventory. In some prefatory remarks Potten deplores the disproportionate attention given to great collectors as opposed to the multitude of ordinary owners of books. He claims, after perusing the last decade’s “peer reviewed articles”, that little has been done and then asserts:

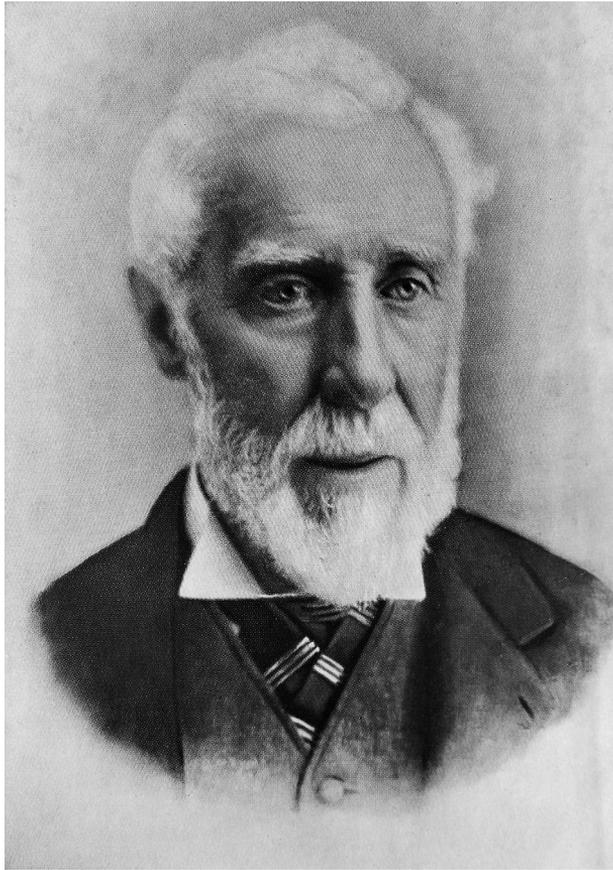
Anyone embarking on a PhD on the development of the private library in the nineteenth century would have a refreshingly short reading list. (p. 126)

This may be true, as far as England or the United Kingdom are concerned, but it ignores not only research on Continental Europe, a useful source of matter for comparison methodological and otherwise, but also the rest of the English-speaking world.

Readers of Donald Kerr and of other students of New Zealand collectors in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, not to mention anyone familiar with Charles Stitz’s continuing series on *Australian Book Collectors*, will know that in this part of the Anglosphere there is a considerable body of material on scores of individuals whose lives were shared between Great Britain and the Australian colonies. Any separation is inevitably artificial, and even someone like D. S. Mitchell, who never left New South Wales, can legitimately be seen as an heir to, and participant in, English traditions, which were then by no means insular. In short, the PhD reading list needs to be a good deal longer and to recognize that, just as part of the documentation for William Story, who died in Melbourne in 1870, lies in the Munby Collection in Cambridge, so too we can discover in Thomas Scott’s remnants held in the State Library of Victoria marked copies of rare catalogues that illustrate how book buying was being done in Britain round 1850.

Ed Potten is right: a great amount remains to be pursued. None the less we can look to models like those provided by Donald Kerr for inspiration in future labours.

Wallace Kirsop
February, 2016



Sir George Grey (1812–1898). Photograph by J. H. Hanna. Private collection.

BEFORE I begin I would like to thank the Foxcroft Lecture committee for asking me to deliver this talk tonight. I feel very humbled and see it as an extreme honour, especially to be following such luminaries as book historians David Pearson and Nicolas Barker. And if individuals can be named, I would like to personally thank Des Cowley and Professor Wallace Kirsop for facilitating this visit.

N N N

Libraries, perhaps more than any other room in the house, express the personality of their owners. Just as the contents of a medicine cabinet can tell a person's life story with uncanny accuracy, so the books people read say as much about their tastes, interests and preferences as a psychological profile. As A. L. Rowse, the historian, once said, "You can read a person by the books he reads."¹

This lecture will highlight some of the interests and obsessions of three important New Zealand-based book collectors—Governor Sir George Grey, Dr T. M. Hocken and Frank Wild Reed. The libraries of all three men were very personal accumulations, and quite naturally they reflected diversity. Grey's collection encompassed everything from medieval manuscripts to Maori-language materials, Hocken confined himself to New Zealand material, and Reed focused on a single French author. What they had in common, however, was a concern for the proper housing of their books and manuscripts. Those of you gathered here today will recognize that a library room is a special place, a comfort zone, an escape hatch, a retreat, a place for reading, for writing, for contemplation and for regeneration—for soaking up the thoughts, ideas and spirits of the company surrounding you on the shelves. As James Billington, the retiring librarian at the Library of Congress has written, "Libraries are our base camps."

Grey, Hocken and Reed each made provision for their libraries to move from private to public ownership after their deaths so that they would be available for the enjoyment of future readers. What follows can only be an overview of their collections, but I hope it will provide you with a few stepping stones towards that most interesting diversion called New Zealand book history.

N N N

¹ Quoted in Estelle Ellis, Caroline Seebohm and Christopher Simon Sykes, *At Home with Books: How Booklovers Live with and Care for Their Libraries*, New York, Carol Southern Books, 1995, p. 3.

Sir George Grey (1812–1898)

On 21 October 1861, Sir George Grey arrived back in New Zealand to begin his second stint as Governor. That day he penned a letter that gifted his first library to Cape Town. Eventually unpacked, this first collection included 117 medieval manuscripts, 119 incunabula, works such as Edmund Spenser's *Colin Clouts* (1595), Shakespeare's First and Second Folios, Robert Herrick's *Hesperides* (1648), an unrivalled collection of indigenous African language materials, natural history and travel works, and standard nineteenth-century sets of Scott, Dickens and Southey. The entire Cape collection numbered some 5,200 items.

Almost a year later, Grey purchased Kawau, an island of about 5,000 acres in area, in the Hauraki Gulf, four miles from the mainland and twenty-eight miles from the city of Auckland. It cost him £3,700.² Between November 1862 and 1888 this was his home.³ And it was here that he built up his second collection, one which has been described by Christopher de Hamel as "the world's most remote library".⁴

A private island reminds one of William Cowper's words: "I am monarch of all I survey,/ My right there is none to dispute."⁵ With ownership come power, relative freedom and isolation. It affords a place to retreat and withdraw as one desires. When he was a boy, Grey used to visit his childhood friend Elizabeth Barrett (later Browning) at Hope End, a ten-minute walk over a grassy knoll from his uncle's home near Old Colwall, Herefordshire.⁶ Indeed, Grey's familiarity with Hope End cannot be dismissed when considering his own achievements on Kawau. Hope End consisted of some 475 acres of farmland, woodland and parkland, with deer roaming among rare trees; peacocks on the terrace; cascades, ponds and grottoes among stretching lawns; and walled gardens of vegetables

² "Purchase of Kawau Island from M. Buckland by Sir G. Grey", GNZ MSS 70(1), Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland City Library.

³ James Anthony Froude, *Oceana, or England and her Colonies*, London, Longman, Green, 1886, p. 271.

⁴ Christopher de Hamel, in Margaret M. Manion, Vera F. Vines and Christopher de Hamel, *Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in New Zealand Collections*, Melbourne, Thames & Hudson, 1989, p. 41.

⁵ "Verses, supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk, during his solitary abode in the island of Juan Fernandez (1782)", in *The Poems of William Cowper*, ed. John D. Baird and Charles Ryskamp, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1980, pp. 403–404.

⁶ See James Collier, *Sir George Grey, Governor, High Commissioner, and Premier: An Historical Biography*, Christchurch, Whitcombe & Tombs, 1909, p. 179.

and fruits. Only the neo-Turkish minarets that attracted lightning in summer thunderstorms were missing from Kawau.⁷

Although not initially a permanent resident, Grey's impact on the island was immediate. In early July 1863 he wrote to his brother-in-law, Ormus Biddulph: "You have no idea what a beautiful place I am making of Kawau: all who see it declare it to be one of the most beautiful things in the world."⁸ And yet, in a statement tinged with sadness, he added, "To me it is somewhat of an amusement collecting so many strange animals, birds, & plants in one spot. But I do not think I shall ever again really enjoy anything."⁹

Over time Grey rebuilt what is now Mansion House and created an island paradise by importing animals such as peacocks, kookaburras, emus and zebras, and planting such exotics as Brazilian palms, jacarandas, silver firs from Table Mountain, bamboos and bougainvillea. He even considered introducing Tibetan goats and badgers.

Not every introduction was a success. The wallabies thrived to the extent that they became pests, as did the opossums, fallow deer, monkeys and kangaroos. The latter were either sent to zoos or shot. The zebras were harnessed to a carriage that took the less energetic visitors to lookout points, but even they succumbed to conditions on Kawau. One broke its neck, the other its back.

Between 1865 and 1868, Grey had major alterations done to the property, and a garden was developed. It was rumoured to have taken a considerable part of his personal fortune. Against this pattern of activity in his "little paradise", he continued to collect books.¹⁰

On 18 June 1867, Grey was fired as Governor. Retirement meant that he could now give Kawau his full attention.¹¹ The island retreat came into its own—a place of rest away from the hurly-burly world of politics. The first task was to accommodate the growing number of books. In July Grey arranged for Thomas Osborne, his factotum at Kawau, to construct bookcases for the library.

Unfortunately there are no plans extant to give a firm idea of where the library was situated in the house, but some surviving records provide glimpses.

⁷ See *The Barretts at Hope End: The Early Diary of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, ed. Elizabeth Berridge, London, John Murray, 1974, pp. 1–3.

⁸ Grey to Ormus Biddulph, 4 July 1863, letter 9, NZ MS 737, Sir George Grey Special Collections.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Constance Frederica Gordon Cumming to Grey, [17 April 1877], GL: G23(1), Sir George Grey Special Collections.

¹¹ Grey to Ormus Biddulph, 8 October 1867, letter 25, NZ MS 737, Sir George Grey Special Collections.

In 1867 a visitor described the interior of Mansion House. The walls and the ceilings were finished in polished plain and mottled kauri. Maori carvings in large quantities were placed in the entrance hall, and among the oil paintings there was the library, which “contained [a] large and valuable collection of works”, although, according to the visitor, “much was lying in heaps upon the floor.”¹²

On 9 September 1868, Grey left the island to travel to England. After buying art works and more books and manuscripts, visiting friends and family, and making an unsuccessful bid for parliamentary life, he returned to New Zealand. By late October 1870 he was back on Kawau.

Of this latter period we do have a few accounts of Grey on the island, and more importantly for our purposes, some brief descriptions of his library. Two visitors of note were James Grattan Grey, who wrote *His Island Home* (1879), and James Froude, author of *Oceana, or England and her Colonies* (1886). Both men were particularly good at evoking a picture of Grey surrounded by his animals, plants, art works and books. Indeed, their portraits of the patriarch at home are very similar. Grattan Grey wrote:

Sir George Grey showed us over his residence, which is a truly beautiful mansion, built of permanent materials, the rooms large, lofty, and cheerful, admirably furnished, and the walls hung with paintings of great antiquity and value.¹³

Froude recalled:

He, after welcoming us to his dominions, led us over his residence and through the gardens in the sinking twilight, and perhaps found an innocent pleasure in our astonishment. Everything we saw was his own creation, conceived by himself, and executed under his own eye by his own feudatories. Passing through the hall we entered a spacious and fine drawing-room, panelled and vaulted with Kauri pine.¹⁴

The two men passed personal judgement on the former governor as well. To Grattan Grey he was “an extensively read man, well versed in every department of literature. His knowledge of men and books is not of that superficial kind that begets pedantry, but is deep, penetrating and reliable.”¹⁵ Importantly, he was

¹² “A trip to the Kawau”, *Daily Southern Cross*, 1 January 1867, p. 5.

¹³ James Grattan Grey, *His Island Home*, Wellington, New Zealand Times Newspaper Co., 1879, p. 4.

¹⁴ Froude, *Oceana*, p. 264.

¹⁵ Grattan Grey, *His Island Home*, p. 4.

an enthusiast, and full of anecdote on almost every subject.¹⁶ To Froude he was simply “the most interesting person or thing which New Zealand contained.”¹⁷

Some of the books in the library were specifically noted. Grattan Grey was shown “the handiwork of the monks done centuries ago” and remarked on the brilliancy of the illumination and the artistic illustrations.¹⁸ The item that evoked this response was certainly the Besançon *Missale*, which Grey had acquired from the bookseller Boone in 1863. On placing books back on the shelves, Grattan Grey acknowledged the pleasure gained from examining “one of the very first books issued from Caxton’s printing press” and the thought that he could “trace the improvements made in printing [...] at various dates from the discovery of the art down to the present day.”¹⁹ The Caxtons he handled were undoubtedly Higden’s *Polychronicon* (1482) and Virgil’s *Aeneid* (1490), items that Grey had purchased while in Cape Town.²⁰

Grattan Grey was equally impressed with the variety of literature present, and noted, in particular, the foreign-language and philological books, in which “the linguist will find [...] ample materials wherewith to while away the time.”²¹ A favourite showpiece was a group of manuscripts of the Cromwellian period, letters written by Sir Philip Meadows, Richard Cromwell, the English parliamentarian politician John Thurloe, and the poet John Milton. On further perusing the shelves he wrote:

Before leaving the library I ran my eye casually along the shelves containing hundreds of volumes of general modern literature, and I pulled out a book which appeared to be most expensively and elaborately bound. It was entitled “The Early Years of the Prince Consort,” and on opening it, I discovered that the volume had been presented to Sir George Grey by her Most Gracious Majesty Victoria [...].²²

He then aptly summed up his experience of Kawau as follows:

A visitor to the Kawau could spend quite a month in the library, and by the end

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 4–5.

¹⁷ Froude, *Oceana*, p. 208.

¹⁸ Grattan Grey, *His Island Home*, p. 5.

¹⁹ Loc. cit.

²⁰ De Ricci, *Census* (1909), *Polychronicon*, no. 5, p. 60; Virgil, no. 96, p. 100.

²¹ Grattan Grey, *His Island Home*, p. 5.

²² Loc. cit.

of that time he would find that he had not exhausted all the objects of interest and curiosity which it contains [...].²³

James Froude was just as expansive about what he had been shown in the library:

In the evening [Grey] showed us some of his treasures. Literary treasures were produced chiefly [...] There were old illuminated missals; an old French MS. of the fourteenth century, [...] old Saints' lives; a black-letter Latin life of the Swedish St. Bridget [...] a precious MS. of the four Gospels [...] the Commonwealth manuscripts, modern translations of the Bible, etc [...].²⁴

and his description extended to artefacts and nineteenth-century periodicals:

At one end stood Sir George's desk, with a large Bible on it, from which he read daily prayers to his household. Like Charles Gordon, he is old-fashioned in these matters, and though he knows all that is going on in the world—criticism, philosophy, modern science, and the rest of it—he believes in the way of his fathers. Some good oil pictures hung on the walls, excellent old engravings, with Maori axes, Caffre shields and assegais, all prettily arranged. Book-cases and cabinets with locked doors contained the more precious curiosities. On the table lay *Quarterlies*, *Edinburghs*, magazines, weeklies—the floating literature of London, only a month or two behindhand. Every important movement in domestic, foreign, or colonial politics could be studied as exhaustively at Kawau as in the reading room at the Athenaeum.²⁵

The image of Grey reading the Bible is particularly apt. He was a religious man who throughout his life found comfort in the Scriptures. Froude may have exaggerated the daily reading of prayers but they were certainly weekly events. Grey's strong belief in Christianity and his interest in languages and philology expressed itself in his collecting of Bibles and Scriptures, and not only in English. He believed that visitors to the collection in the Public Library in Auckland should be able to read the good word in their own tongue. As a consequence, he amassed Bibles and Scriptures in some 160 languages, including Welsh, Mohawk, Dakota, Malagasy, Icelandic, Gaelic, Tongan, Yoruba, and of course Maori.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6.

²⁴ Froude, *Oceana*, p. 265.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

Other visitors captured life on Kawau at this time too. Grey's kinsman, William Grey, later Earl of Stamford, left a succinct impression of a day on the island in early 1887:

Lovely scenery and climate—the latter just now at perfection. Life at Kawau.—6.45: Cup of tea. Exercise on a beautiful breezy promontory hard by; wooded sides, grassy top with scattered trees. A little theological reading. Godet on Romans at present, minute and valuable. 9 a.m.: Breakfast. Walk about the grounds with Sir George Grey. A little reading and writing, study of N.Z. political history. 1 p.m.: Dinner. Walk and talk with Sir George. 5 p.m.: Cup of tea. A little more reading and walking. 7: Tea. Walk up and down the jetty with Sir George. Somewhat profound discussions. 9.30: Bedfordshire.²⁶

In 1882, without any legalese and with little ceremony, Grey sent a telegram to a colleague announcing that he would gift his second library to the citizens of Auckland. On 26 March 1887 he was present to give an address and open the new Auckland Public Library. The Auckland Grey Collection consists of some 15,000 works including 27 medieval manuscripts, 36 incunabula, high spot items such as the First, Second, and Fourth Folios of Shakespeare's works, William Blake's *America* (1793) and *Europe* (1794), John Lewin's rare *Birds of New South Wales* (1813), and a large number of Maori-language manuscripts. This collection is very similar in make-up to that which he gave to Cape Town in 1861.

Before I leave Sir George I will relate two anecdotes that tease out just some of the material in his library.

Malagasy language materials

In 1995 I was fortunate to travel to Cape Town to physically examine every book and manuscript Grey had owned in his first library. Working in the "Grey" Room at the National Library of South Africa, I was joined one day by two researchers: Dr Carol Steyn, a musicologist from Pretoria, who has subsequently compiled the catalogue of Grey's 117 medieval manuscripts at the Cape, and Mims Turley, librarian at the Bible Society in Cape Town. It was deemed a busy day. Mims Turley was there searching for Malagasy language materials that had been collected by Grey about 1859/1860. Her specific aim was to find the first specimens of printing, in particular a half-sheet of Genesis 1.23 printed by the Scottish missionary James Cameron (1799–1875) in Antananarivo, Madagascar,

²⁶ Lady Elizabeth Grey, *William, Earl of Stamford, 1850–1910*, London, Christophers, [1937], p. 3.

about 1827 or 1828. When the sheet came off the press, Cameron had called it “a very perfect blur”. Turley couldn’t find the “blur”, nor the other items listed in the old South African Library catalogue. I vaguely remembered there were early Malagasy bibles in Auckland and promised to send her information on them when I returned. This I did and more. Back in Auckland I found 41 Malagasy language books and manuscripts, including a printed half-sheet of the *Decalogue*, Exodus XX, which must have been printed about the same time as the missing “blur”. It is now one of the earliest known examples of printing in Madagascar; a real treasure. And why couldn’t Turley find these items at the Cape? In 1870 Grey had sought permission from the Trustees of the South African Library to remove the Malagasy language materials and take them to Auckland. As an amateur philologist, he felt that like should be with like. Indeed, he wrote on his copy of his Malagasy catalogue: “None of these left at the Cape. This [Malagasy] being one of the Oceanic language they are all brought to New Zealand.” Malagasy is an Oceanic language with links to the Malayo-Polynesian group, and these items now sit with Grey’s other extensive language materials in Auckland. I might add that they occasionally get used too. In 2002, just after I left Auckland, a researcher flew from Baltimore to consult these exceedingly scarce and unique documents.

Charles Babbage’s brain

Sir George Grey’s correspondence is extensive: 600 New Zealand and 800 “overseas” correspondents, totalling some 3,500 letters. His correspondents read like a muster roll of eminent Victorians: Thomas Carlyle, Lady Franklin, William and Joseph Hooker, Florence Nightingale, Charles Darwin, David Livingstone, Richard Owen, Sir Charles Lyell, and Charles Babbage. The last mentioned, as you probably know, spent much of his life constructing machines capable of performing arithmetical and algebraic calculations; that is, computers. As a young man, Grey knew Babbage, and from existing letters he obviously enjoyed the company of this supposedly cantankerous individual. In fact, Grey named an island in Western Australia after him. When I was in the United Kingdom furthering my research on Grey, I called in at the Royal College of Surgeons in London. Grey had sent hundreds of mineral and zoological specimens from Australia, Mauritius and St Helena, and these had passed into the capable hands of Richard Owen, then Hunterian Professor at the College. After delving into the Owen and John Gould manuscripts at the College library, I went into the museum next door to see the documentation on Grey’s donations. I remember telling my story to Elizabeth Allen, the then curator, and in an effort to contextualize Grey and his activities

I mentioned that he had known and corresponded with Owen, Lyell, Babbage, etc. Well, it was like striking a raw nerve. At the mention of the last-named I suddenly heard the curator exclaim “Babbage! Babbage!” and in one quick move she stood up, swivelled around and pointed to what was the mezzanine floor: “His brain’s up there!” After recovering from this surprise outburst I walked past the eight-foot high skeleton of Charles Byrne, the “Irish Giant”, past numerous bottled specimens of strange and slimy things, past bones of sharks, tigers and emus, and up the stairs where at D685 I came to Babbage’s brain. This experience didn’t add anything to my work on Grey, of course, but it made me fully aware of what has been collected and thus saved, and how enthusiastic curators are when it comes to certain items under their care. Auckland holds the correspondence between Babbage and Grey.

Dr T. M. Hocken (1836–1910)

Dr Thomas Morland Hocken stands as New Zealand’s third most important book collector, after Grey and Alexander H. Turnbull. For some forty-eight years Dr Hocken lived and worked in Dunedin. When he died in 1910, his large collection of books, manuscripts, maps and photographs was gifted to the Dominion, with custodial care entrusted to the Otago University Museum. It is a premier “New Zealand” collection, with materials relating to: Captain Cook and the early voyages to New Zealand, the Reverend Samuel Marsden and the early missionaries in New Zealand, Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the New Zealand Company, and documents on Maori and early settlement, especially to the South Island. Australia is not forgotten. Hocken regarded Australia’s early history as a crucial link to New Zealand’s own early development and, to him, the inclusion of such material was vital to any understanding of the antipodean colonies, the colonists, and their experiences.

Atahapara

Dr Hocken married in July 1867, and after a chimney fire in his rented dwelling he decided to secure his own home. He leased a large section of land and commissioned his friend Henry Frederick Hardy to design and build a house.²⁷

²⁷ For information on Hardy see *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, vol. 4: *Otago & Southland*, Wellington, Cyclopedia Co., 1905, pp. 383–384; Michael Findlay, “Hardy”, in *Southern People: A Dictionary of Otago Southland Biography*, ed. Jane Thomson, Dunedin, Longacre Press in association with Dunedin City Council, 1998, pp. 211–212; Hardwicke Knight and Niel Wales, *Buildings of*



Dr T. M. Hocken (1836–1910). Pictorial Collections S14-346, Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago.

It was a sound strategy. It helped consolidate Hocken's growing social and professional status, and the property was positioned close to the centre of business and social activities in the town. As a collector who obviously cared about the materials he was amassing, it also afforded him the opportunity to house his collection of books and paintings, which had perhaps become too much for his rented quarters. Hocken was also an enthusiastic botanist and the move allowed for a garden and greenhouse, stocked full of plants both imported and native to the country. And then, like most couples, there was the thought of children. Sadly, with this first marriage this was not to be.

The commanding position of the Hockens's house offered an attractive vista of the harbour and beautiful dawn mornings. Captivated by this scene, it is no wonder Hocken called his house "Atahapara", which in Maori means "time of the dawn". Extant photographs show various aspects of the large home. A wooden paling fence and a double swing iron gate on Moray Place opened onto a wide path leading up to a small porch and the front door. The house was of two storeys. On the right side of the house along the path there was the patients' side door, providing the entrance to Hocken's consulting room. At the back were sheds and stables, the latter housing the ponies the family owned. The greenhouse was next to the stables. Being a double-gabled house, there were rooms out the back that were no doubt allocated to maids and servants. A photograph of Hocken at the back of the house shows a cement path, boxed flowers hanging over a window sill, and a tidy garden area.

In his *Medical Practice in Otago and Southland in the Early Days* (1922), Dr Robert Fulton offers a brief glimpse of the outside of *Atahapara*: "his curious little glass windowed side entrance for patients [...] his stable at the back [...] and in the garden a little greenhouse, a cherry tree, a very old pear tree with fruit in later years [...] a karaka, a kowhai [...] and a cabbage tree".²⁸ Fulton also highlighted a lighter side of Hocken: "The doctor enjoyed entertaining (conversation, a round of cards, and wine or coffee), and he was fond of humorous stories." He had a great store of "side-splitting yarns" gained from his experiences in the field. Fulton also wrote: "An hour with Dr Hocken when in a reminiscent mood was worth more than a seven shilling novel."²⁹

A recently discovered interior plan of the house details alterations done

Dunedin: an illustrated architectural guide to New Zealand's Victorian City, Dunedin, John McIndoe, 1988, pp. 12–118 (113).

²⁸ Robert Fulton, *Medical Practice in Otago and Southland in the Early Days*, Dunedin, Otago Daily Times and Witness Newspapers, 1922, p. 243.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

in 1920.³⁰ The alterations were minor, with a total cost of just £70. Given this, it is safe to assume that the interior structure had remained close to the original as occupied by the Hockens. One of the front rooms off the hallway is a large room registered as a “Reading Room”, which may have been a formal lounge in Hocken’s day. Next to it is the “Library”, which, given the fact that Hocken had fixed shelves built to house his collection, was certainly retained for that purpose. The library and reading room shared a double-backed fireplace. *Atahapara* was demolished in 1922, making way for a Returned Services Association hostel.

There are a few descriptions of the interior that enhance these bald plans. Mary Isabella Lee, mother of the politician John A. Lee, was employed as a seamstress for the Hockens. Her journal description is tantalizingly brief:

They had a lovely home—all the Door frames of drawing & Dineing rooms & The Drs Surgery & the Bannisters & Newel Posts—were all Maori Carveing & the Dr had a Small room of his own full of Maori Carveings—they are In the Museum now (the Hocken Wing) [...].

Mrs Lee also commented briefly on Hocken: “he was a funny little chap”.³¹

Another brief description was offered by the American novelist Mark Twain during his world tour in 1895. On 6 November, the satirist was in Dunedin and was entertained by Hocken at his home. While much of Twain’s attention was on a fossilized caterpillar, which he proclaimed a “ghastly curiosity”, he did make comment on the interior of the house. He noted a large number of books, but was in fact more interested in the wall-hangings and in making comparisons between the Aborigines of Australia and the Maori:

To the residence of Dr. Hockin [sic]. He has a fine collection of books relating to New Zealand; and his house is a museum of Maori art and antiquities. He has pictures and prints in color of many native chiefs of the past—some of them of note in history. There is nothing of the savage in the faces; nothing could be finer than these men’s features, nothing more intellectual than these faces, nothing more masculine, nothing nobler than their aspect. The aboriginals of Australia and Tasmania looked the savage, but these chiefs looked like Roman patricians.

³⁰ Dunedin City Council Building Permit 3357, 1916; 469 Moray Place, Dunedin City Council Archives. Rate Book Vol. 83a 1920–1922, Block XV, section 6. No. 163 Drainage Plan, Dunedin City Council Archives.

³¹ Mary Isabella Lee, *The Not So Poor: An Autobiography*, ed. Annabel Cooper, Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1992, pp. 87–88.

The tattooing in these portraits ought to suggest the savage, of course, but it does not. The designs are so flowing and graceful and beautiful that they are a most satisfactory decoration. It takes but fifteen minutes to get reconciled to the tattooing, and but fifteen more to perceive that it is just the thing. After that, the undecorated European face is unpleasant and ignoble.³²

A photograph taken in 1893 by Bessie, Hocken's second wife, shows the 57-year-old Hocken in his library, sitting at a table and surrounded by his books, poised to examine a botanical specimen with his microscope. Behind him there are striped curtains to protect the books from sun and dust, and the table has a carpet covering. The photograph certainly confirms the orderly nature of the books in his library.³³

In 1884 the Hobart-based James Backhouse Walker compiled an eleven-page publication on books relating to Tasmania and sent it to Hocken in May 1889. By the time the gift arrived, Hocken was well into compiling his own "bibliography". Competition can be healthy, and Walker's sentiments surely spurred Hocken on. He wrote:

I am glad to comply with your request, and send you a copy of my list of Tasmanian books. It was compiled for a History of Tasmania published here a year or two ago. You will see at a glance that it does not profess to completeness, but I hope some day to be able to produce a more respectable Bibliography of our island.

The historian ended his letter with: "It will give me great pleasure to hear from you at any time you feel inclined to write, especially on subjects connected with Australian or New Zealand bibliography or history."³⁴

In March 1898, Walker visited *Atahapara* and left an excellent personal account of his night with the Hockens. Full of New Zealand references, it reveals a pleasant domestic scene, including Hocken's wife Bessie's hint to her husband not to brag about books he did not own:

³² Mark Twain, *Following the Equator: A Journey around the World*, Hopewell, NJ, Ecco Press, 2 vols, 1992–1993, vol. 1, chap. XXX, pp. 246–248. Twain was in Dunedin from 6 to 8 November 1895.

³³ "Dr Hocken in His Library", Album 43, Pictorial Collections, Hocken Collections, University of Otago Library.

³⁴ Letter from James Backhouse Walker to T. M. Hocken, 28 May 1889, tipped into *List of Books Relating to Tasmania*, Launceston, 1884 [Hocken Library Pamphlets, Hocken Collections, vol. 63, no. 9].

6th March: Back to Hotel, changed & to Dr Hocken's for dinner. Very little round man with grey hair. Mrs Hocken very charming. Daughter nice girl but shy. Sat over wine talking about Hot Lakes & what to see, the Dr having been there several times. Also abt Hone Heke war & comp'd a/cs of Toby Philpots death & Okiwai pah, [...] Then to his study & joined Mrs H. He showed me 4 drawings by Sergt Williams of Hone Heke—the attack on Ruapekapeka pah. Talk abt books & compare notes. Mrs H's signs not to speak of books he hadn't got. He shewed me Hobson's Spectator as bribe for NZ Festival lithograph. Talk about Frank Pogson. Mrs H. retired. The Dr finally showed us his splendid collection of Maori relics &c. We left at midnight. To Hotel, packed & to bed abt 7.³⁵

In January 1908, Annie Trimble, the second wife of W. Heywood Trimble, the first Hocken Librarian, carried out an interview with Hocken that was eventually printed in the *Evening Star*.³⁶ This chatty piece offers another glimpse of the layout of the house and some of the highlights of the collection. Trimble was shown into a large room whose walls were covered with books from floor to ceiling. This was the library. Instead of a conventional mantel over the fireplace there was a large carving, the gable end of a Maori house. She spied one cabinet dedicated to part of Hocken's collection of early printed books in Maori, which included one of his copies of Thomas Kendall and Samuel Lee's *A Grammar and Vocabulary of the Language of New Zealand* (1820). There was shelving allocated to large folios such as Cook's navigational charts and maps. After being shown numerous treasures, which included Samuel Marsden's letters and journals and Sir William Fox's journal, Trimble noted: "[T]he papers were all very beautifully mounted and arranged, and were bound in rich and durable bindings." Various cupboards and "dim recesses" held charts and plans of *pahs* (Maori settlements), including sketches by Charles Heaphy, one of Hocken's correspondents. The passage leading to and from this room was covered in pictures. Trimble was obviously taken with this section as she asked if she could return at another time to view them.

On 19 March 1897, Hocken announced in the *Otago Daily Times* his intention to gift his entire collection to the Dominion, under the stewardship of the Otago University Museum.³⁷ A Deed of Gift was signed on 2 September

³⁵ "Walker's Trip through New Zealand 25 February to 24 March 1898", John Backhouse Walker Papers, W9/C3/38, University of Tasmania Library.

³⁶ Annie Trimble, "A collector's sacrifice: an interview with Dr Hocken", *The Evening Star* [Dunedin], 1 February 1908, p. 2.

³⁷ "Observance of Anniversary Day", *Otago Daily Times*, 19 March 1897, p. 3.

1897. In order to get some comfort from such a step, Hocken discussed his decision with other notable collectors: the Wellington-based merchant Alexander Turnbull, the lawyer William Downie Stewart, the principal librarian of the then Public Library of Sydney, Mr Henry Anderson,³⁸ and the Sydney bibliophile David Scott Mitchell. In March 1898, Hocken admitted to Mitchell:

When making my offer to the public I said that it was dependent on their housing and making provision for the due care of my collection. But so far I have been much disappointed, as with the exception of a little stir and few laudatory letters at first, nothing effective has been done. I thus begin to feel not only somewhat chagrined but also inclined to withdraw from my position, and to leave my library in the safekeeping of some trustee until in the fullness of time proper provision is made.³⁹

Mitchell replied:

Dr Hocken, Dear Sir,

It seems to me that you are entirely right in taking all possible precautions for the future care & preservation of your library, which I have always understood to be the finest & completist in existence in all matters relating to New Zealand. Such a collection, could probably never be got together again, & should be scrupulously cared for.⁴⁰

Mitchell then listed his own donor conditions, and ended with:

It is a matter of interest to all book-lovers that such a library as yours should not be left to the tender mercies of those who might not know its value. Should you visit Sydney I shall be glad to shew you anything I have. With kind regards & faithfully yours, D. S. Mitchell.

In early 1899, Hocken received a visit from George Robertson, the Sydney bookseller. Not only did they talk books and the importance of newspapers, but Robertson proved a valuable go-between. After Robertson left, Hocken wrote

³⁸ See letter from Henry Anderson to T. M. Hocken, 25 March 1899, Hocken Collections, MS-451/7.

³⁹ T. M. Hocken to David Scott Mitchell, 8 March 1898, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, ML A1461, 130–31. Cited in Eileen Chanin, *Book Life: The Life and Times of David Scott Mitchell*, Melbourne, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2011, p. 281.

⁴⁰ D. S. Mitchell to T. M. Hocken, 8 April 1899, Hocken Collections, F&J vol. 5, no. 165.

to him asking if he could pass on to Henry Anderson his enquiry about the gift conditions laid down by David Scott Mitchell. Anderson replied directly on 25 March 1899, calling Mitchell's library a "noble gift". Anderson tabulated the donor conditions laid down, which were similar to those Hocken had received from Mitchell some days before.

When Hocken offered his collection to the Dominion in 1897, questions were asked in the press about the need for a special building to house it. Although Dunedin's townsfolk knew that Hocken was a book collector and a recognized authority on New Zealand's early history, very few were privy to the full extent of his library. Hocken suggested that some intelligent men should be invited to examine it to ascertain its scope and value, but only one person took up the offer: Robert McNab, author of *Murihiku and the Southern Islands* (1907) and *Historical Records of New Zealand* (1908). As a collector of New Zealand materials himself, McNab certainly knew the value and scarcity of what he was looking at. Hyperbolic but fair, his opinion was made public in the pages of the *Evening Star*:

The mere mention that there are 3,000 to 4,000 books conveys no idea of the value even of that one department. Their value lies in the fact that they all relate to the colony of New Zealand, and, taken together, constitute the largest and most complete collection in the world.⁴¹

Then McNab struck at the heart and reality of the game—the chase:

All printed books have originally many copies, and it may be argued that it only requires industry and a big purse to duplicate the collection. That is not so. My own personal experiences justifies me in saying that the demand for these old works about the colony is so great that no length of life, no industry, and no purse could to-day enter into the market and duplicate the collection. The day of these things is past.

McNab also noted Hocken's predilection for annotating his books, adding "special information about them of an extremely interesting and valuable kind". Rather than castigate the collector for defiling his books, McNab saw real value in these notes, claiming that in time they would be appreciated. He then turned his attention to Hocken's newspapers. Because of their ephemeral nature, he knew

⁴¹ "The Hocken Collection. Our final symposium. What some experts say", *Evening Star*, 11 August 1906, p. 8. The other "experts" in the article are Mr Andrew Hamilton, curator of the Colonial Museum at Wellington, and Mr Justice Chapman of Christchurch.

the reality of their precarious existence: “More numerous in the first instance, a far larger proportion are forthwith destroyed.” He was obviously pleasantly surprised with what he saw: “clean, well-kept, and complete copies of the earliest papers” and “in splendid order”. Although he did not say so, he knew that they were of the highest historical importance. And lastly, he examined the manuscripts, which he knew were also extremely important.

And then McNab touched on future usage of the collection, which he rightly predicted would increase, and in areas and fields that neither he, the donor, or the then citizens could ever imagine:

When this collection is safely housed and open to the public, not only will the inspection of it be a source of pleasure to the citizens, but it will supply valuable information to the student of history. I doubt whether even Dr Hocken realises what use the material will be put to by the student of future years. None of us realise it. We only know the growing demand for the material and the incorrect and misleading history which the want of that material foists upon the community.⁴²

The opening of the “Hocken Wing” at the Otago University Museum and the physical transfer of the collection of 4,300 books, pamphlets, photographs, maps, drawings, paintings and manuscripts took place on 31 March 1910. Sadly, Hocken was too unwell to attend the occasion, and so the donor never saw his collection so housed. Yet he had fulfilled his personal obligations, as he saw them, and understood the significance of such a gift to a nation. It is no wonder that collectors are called patriots.

Frank Wild Reed (1874–1953)

In late 1886, Frank Wild Reed, a young Middlesex lad of twelve, gave some money to a school friend and asked if he could buy him a historical novel he had not read. His friend returned with a 9d Routledge Railway issue of *The Queen’s Necklace*. The author, Alexandre Dumas père, was, as Reed stated, “a new name to me”.⁴³ The novel had a great effect on him:

⁴² McNab donated his own historical library to the state. “[S]ome 4,200 volumes [were gifted] to the Dunedin Public Library to provide the city with a supplement to T. M. Hocken’s collection in the Otago University Museum [...] on condition that the collection was added to, and he subsequently lodged copies of transcriptions and notes for some of his earlier published works. The bulk of his surviving papers is in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington”. J. E. Traue, “McNab, Robert (1864–1917)”, *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, vol. 3, Wellington, Allen & Unwin, 1996.

⁴³ Frank Wild Reed, “The Trail of an Alexandrian”, unpublished autobiography in the Reed Dumas

This book was an absolute revelation to me—an awakening which I fondly compare with Alexandre Dumas' own first acquaintance with Shakespeare upon the stage. Here at last was history in fiction, written as it should be presented, swift, full of action, with brilliant, clever, natural and sweeping dialogue, and also, though I could probably not then have divined it, an impassioned delineation of human nature.⁴⁴

Reed was so captivated by Dumas's ability to present "history in fiction" that he asked his friend to purchase another. The next volume was *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

When Reed left for New Zealand a few months later in early 1887, he was allowed to pack twelve books into his bag. Amongst book gifts and school book prizes, the most treasured was his copy of *The Queen's Necklace*. It was this book that was to form the cornerstone of his Dumas Collection, a collection that is now housed in the Sir George Grey Special Collections of the Auckland City Library.

Reed settled in Whangarei, and for well over sixty years he collected the works of Alexandre Dumas père. Through his contacts with a small number of overseas booksellers, through purchases made from dealer catalogues, and through the generosity of a few friends, he was able to amass one of the world's largest collections of books and manuscripts by and about Dumas. His lifelong efforts in forming this *musée* of Dumas are made more outstanding by the fact that he never left Whangarei, a small provincial town in New Zealand's far north and a place about as far removed from the established book centres of London and Paris as it was possible to be.

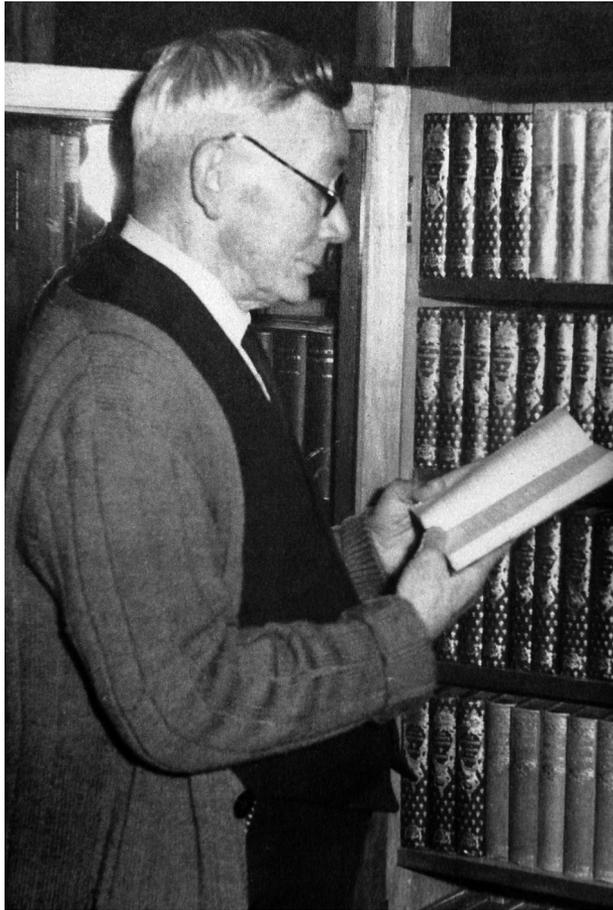
Yet collecting the works of Dumas was not the only activity he indulged in. There was also his extensive translating and bibliographical work, activities that gave an added dimension to his book collecting. It was in the area of bibliography that Reed was able to make his most significant, if not his most tangible, contribution to Dumas studies.

Reed was born on 1 August 1874 in the town of Hayes, thirteen miles west of London, and was brother to Marian, Alexander and Alfred Hamish (AHR).⁴⁵

Collection, Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland City Library, vol. 1, p. 32. The term "Alexandrian" was first coined by Andrew Lang to describe fans and devotees of Alexandre Dumas and his writings. See also Donald Kerr, "Frank Wild Reed: the Antipodean Alexandrian", MA thesis, Department of Librarianship, Victoria University, Wellington, 1992.

⁴⁴ Frank Wild Reed, "Prescription for a collection", *The Colophon*, n.s., vol. 2, 1936, p. 9.

⁴⁵ Alfred Hamish was the head of the publishing firm A. H. Reed. "AHR" was a recognized bibliophile and his collection of Bibles, medieval manuscripts, "association" books, autograph



Frank Wild Reed (1874–1953). Private collection.

Reed's exposure to the printed word came at a very early age. In his unpublished autobiography he wrote: "The first book I ever asked for was a History of England, naturally a child's history, for I was only a few years old but I devoured it eagerly."⁴⁶ Later he revelled in a book on King Arthur, and the works of Sir Walter Scott, Bulwer-Lytton and Harrison Ainsworth. It was the Arthurian work that triggered the following anecdote from Reed on an early reading experience:

One day in the summer, on the lawn at our house, I read aloud some part of King Arthur to my grandmother Wild, who was visiting us. It was a very childish affair, but after a while she suggested that it was not a particularly good book—which is perhaps why it was so attractive; good books do not always appeal to children. Then she went on to say if I would give it up, she would give me a better one instead. I did not wish to do this, very greatly in fact did I wish to retain my own. Still, at the age of eight grandmothers exert a strong influence. Instead of it I was given *A Life of David Livingstone*, which I never read. The effect however was much more than that; it completely put me off all interest in missionary reading and banished any interest I might have felt for Africa.⁴⁷

There were also some frustrations:

On one occasion I was deeply absorbed in a Scotch tale of some baronial period, and had just reached the place where the hero had climbed up the ivy on a castle wall to rescue his lady love, the baron's daughter. As he was preparing to escape with her, into the room burst her brother. Swords were drawn, and a fine combat ensued, the lady shrinking into a corner. The brother was getting the worst of it, and was driven back to the wall; but there he pressed some hidden spring, and a large section of the flooring gave way, carrying with it the hero into the oubliettes below. Then followed the ominous words: "To be continued in our next."... Swiftly I turned over the small heap of magazines; nowhere could I find the next. Downstairs I went, three at a time and burst into the kitchen. "Grandmama, where is the next number to this?"—"Let me see it. Ah! yes, your uncle thought the stories less interesting than before, and he stopped taking the magazine."⁴⁸

letters, and works by Johnson and Dickens form what is now known as the Alfred and Isabel Reed Collection at the Dunedin Public Library.

⁴⁶ "Trail of an Alexandrian", 1, p. 16.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

Such a scenario, serialized, and with all the elements of action, adventure and romance, could tantalize a young reader. It did so with Reed, because sixty years on he still had in his mind “the question of what happened next and how the escape—which would certainly be accomplished—was managed.”⁴⁹

The Reed family were readers, and young Frank was extremely fortunate in that his father owned a small library of 300 or so works by Victorian writers such as Scott, Dickens, Ainsworth, Fenimore Cooper and James Grant. The library also contained illustrated books such as Gustave Doré’s illustrated edition of Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*, and copies of *The Graphic*.

By the age of seven, Reed was such an omnivorous reader that he was limited by his parents to reading twenty-five pages per day. This restriction made him hunt out those books which had the smallest type, particularly the then popular Chandos Classics and Dicks’s sixpenny editions of famous novels. Perhaps it was his voracious appetite for such books that accelerated his short-sightedness, because in 1886 he was diagnosed with myopia. In addition “he had a tendency to become pigeon-breasted, and on medical advice was set to climb the underside of a ladder, hand over hand, several times a day”.⁵⁰

By the time he was twelve, Reed had galloped through most of the historical books in his father’s library.⁵¹ There was only one proviso: he had to seek his father’s permission first. In his memoirs he remembered only one veto on a book he had wanted to peruse: “That was on one story in a book of several Australian tales.”⁵² Quite early on he had a notion of a physical library:

With the aid of a few bricks and some loose boards from the hacks [we] constructed shelves, dividing the room into four [with his siblings] and calling it “our library”. Naturally methodical, I took great pleasure in carefully arranging my portion, and in imagination often thought of myself as being in a proper library.⁵³

and, as related above, it was here that Dumas entered Reed’s life.

⁴⁹ Loc. cit.

⁵⁰ A. H. Reed, *An Autobiography*, Wellington & Auckland, A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1967, p. 25. In a gesture that underlines the closeness of the Reed family, Frank Wild’s younger brothers AHR and Alexander decided to do the exercises as well, in order to save Frank from being singled out. AHR recorded dryly: “Doubtless to my ultimate benefit” (loc cit.).

⁵¹ F. W. Reed, “The Fascination of Alexandre Dumas: The Beginnings of Collecting”, unpublished typescript, Reed Dumas Collection, Auckland City Library, p. 4.

⁵² “Trail of an Alexandrian”, 1, p. 29.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

Life in Whangarei was tough: long hours, isolation, and hard physical work in the gumfields. Any pocket money the boy obtained from selling the gum was spent on books—one or two per year, although through the local public library he was able to read abridged English issues of Dumas's *Ascanio*, *Isabel of Bavaria* and *The Black Tulip*. By the late 1880s he was finding it very difficult to establish not only the order in which the stories should be read—as in the case of the *Valois Trilogy*—but also what exactly Dumas's entire output was. As regards the latter, Reed was left to glean as much as he could from the publishers' advertisement pages in the Dumas books he already owned.

Despite the lack of information and the shortage of extra money, however, Reed persisted, and managed to purchase a number of the more common Dumas titles through the local bookseller. He also, on his own initiative, sent a desiderata list to a few of the Auckland-based booksellers. The forwarding of lists, eventually extending to overseas book dealers, and the purchase of items from dealer catalogues, were to become the prime methods by which Reed acquired his collection.

In late December 1888, Reed, aged fourteen, began his pharmacy apprenticeship. The hours were long and a routine was quickly established: an 8.00 am start and an 8.00 pm finish, Monday to Friday. On Saturday, closing time was extended to 10.00 pm. Holidays, numbering six days annually, were scattered throughout the year. Only "delightful Sunday afternoons" were for "light reading".⁵⁴ As Reed lived at the gumfields at Parahaki, there was the three-and-a-half-mile walk to and from work each day.

During his apprenticeship years, Reed juggled the demands of his chosen profession with his love of books. In between teaching himself the Latin and chemistry necessary for pharmacy, he continued to buy and read works by his favourite authors. It was at this time that he developed a preference to have his own reference books at hand. A collection of his own would not only be of practical use, given the remoteness of Whangarei and its distance from a public library holding such specialized volumes, but would also cater to his lack of gregariousness, something that he openly acknowledged: "I am not the most sociable of individuals, especially with work to do at my books."⁵⁵

By 1895, Reed had bought a house in Norfolk Street, in Whangarei, a twenty-minute walk from the pharmacy.⁵⁶ With his fear of fire he made sure the

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁵⁶ Reed purchased the business outright in 1911. It was a busy practice and Reed maintained that

library space had double-cavity brick walls and a large walk-in safe constructed to house his “treasures”. He called his house “Castelmore”, after the birthplace of the real-life D’Artagnan, Comte d’Artagnan, Charles de Baatz de Castelmore (1611–1673). By this time he had sixteen English translation editions of Dumas.⁵⁷

The year 1902 was the centenary of Alexandre Dumas’s birth. The firm of Methuen announced a plan to publish a complete edition of his romances, each retailing at sixpence. Also that year the firms of Constable and Dent published biographies on Dumas: Arthur Davidson’s *Alexandre Dumas, His Life and Works* and Harry Spurr’s *The Life and Writings of Alexandre Dumas* respectively.

When Reed received the Methuen prospectus, it gave him “one of the big shocks of [...] my literary life”.⁵⁸ It listed many Dumas titles unknown to him. Needless to say, these were all promptly ordered. As each issue arrived, Reed dutifully recorded in notebooks the bibliographical and biographical details in each introduction. One publication was of particular importance. This was the 1903 Methuen issue of *The Three Musketeers*, which contained an introduction by Andrew Lang, himself an admirer of Dumas. Until he obtained the Spurr and Davidson biographies in 1905, it was Lang’s introduction that formed much of what Reed knew of Dumas.

In any form of collecting, a little luck goes a long way. Luck came Reed’s way with the announcement by the publisher Stanley Paul of the publication of Dumas’s *The Prussian Terror* and *The Last King*. On receiving both books, Reed noticed that each introduction was signed by R. S. Garnett. A further breakthrough was Garnett’s letter in the *Times Literary Supplement* of 8 January 1916 which listed his Highgate address. Reed, the “apprentice” at forty-two, wrote to the fifty-year-old Garnett, who replied: “Your letter of 29th March has much interested me, and I thank you for it. Undoubtedly it would have delighted Dumas to learn that two ardent admirers of his works at opposite ends of the globe had got in touch about him.” He continued: “I shall endeavour to send some Dumas items for your acceptance by an early mail. I feel that any seed will fall on good soil and that in view of the difficulties you must encounter in adding

he never owned a pair of slippers. Always prepared for a call-out, his boots would not be removed until well into the night, and only after a “stint of Dumas” in his library.

⁵⁷ The sixteen titles were: *The Three Musketeers*, *Twenty Years After* and *The Vicomte de Bragelonne* (The D’Artagnan Romance series), *The Queen’s Necklace*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *The Memoirs of a Physician*, *The Forty-Five Guardsmen*, *Two Dianas*, *The Page of the Duke of Savoy*, *Olympe de Clèves*, *The Chevalier de Maison-Rouge*, *Ascanio*, *Sylvandire*, *The Black Tulip*, *The War of Women* and *The Speronare*.

⁵⁸ “The Fascination of Alexandre Dumas”, p. 278.

to your collection in North Auckland, I ought, as I do, to offer to assist you in any way I can.”⁵⁹ This was the first of many letters between these two “Alexandrians”.

Who was R. S. Garnett? Robert Singleton Garnett came from the famed Garnett family: his grandfather, the Rev. Richard Garnett, was Assistant Keeper of Printed Books in the British Museum; his father, Dr Richard Garnett, was superintendent of the Reading Room of the British Museum (1875–84); his brother, Edward Garnett, was author and discoverer of such authors as D. H. Lawrence, Joseph Conrad and Dorothy Richardson; David Garnett, the writer of *Lady into Fox* (1922) and *A Man in the Zoo* (1924), was his nephew; his sister-in-law, Mrs Constance Garnett, was the translator of many Russian works, including those of Dostoievsky and Turgenev. Although a successful lawyer, Garnett’s first love was literature, and he was, when Reed first wrote, the recognized English authority on Alexandre Dumas.

Over the sixteen years of their correspondence, Garnett secured for Reed many important Dumas manuscripts and first editions. The older man’s feelings about his friendship with Reed were obviously strong. Indeed, on his death in 1932 he willed his entire Dumas collection to Reed. This collection numbers some 740 titles, including the two-volume manuscript in Dumas’s hand of “Les Garibaldiens—Révolution de Sicile et de Naples”, Garnett’s own unpublished notebooks on Dumas, pirated Belgian editions of Dumas, and many other treasures.

Garnett was also instrumental in introducing Reed to the world of translation. One July morning in 1917 he wrote to Reed: “I picked up the other day [...] Andrew Lang’s copy of Glinel’s *Alexandre Dumas et Son Œuvre* (Rheims 1884). Only 325 copies were printed and Mr Spurr could not find one. Now I have two! Would you accept my copy?”⁶⁰ Reed accepted Garnett’s offer, and “the best bibliographic work on Dumas in existence” finally reached him in February 1919.⁶¹ Its chief importance lay not only in its bibliographical and biographical content but also in that it forced Reed to learn French. At the age of forty-five he decided to translate it. As he stated: “I could not allow myself to be defeated thus. I put my reading wholly aside for twelve months and devoted my spare hours

⁵⁹ Garnett to Reed, 13 May 1916, volume 1 of the Dumas Correspondence of R. S. Garnett and F. W. Reed, Reed Dumas Collection. The correspondence comprises some 330 letters bound in five volumes.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 20 October 1917.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

to rendering this book into English.”⁶² After just over a year and an average of sixteen hours a week the job was done.

The significance of this translation cannot be underestimated. It gave Reed access to Dumas’s mother tongue and, with further translation work, a greater familiarity with things French. The act of translation certainly strengthened his purpose and direction. As he stated: “Hitherto I had no emphatic determination as to work to be undertaken; from now on I had, if I may be permitted to say so, my life’s work stretching clearly ahead [and with] the finishing of *Glinel* I had largely mapped out my future intentions.”⁶³

After completing the *Glinel* translation, Reed was caught. The itch for translating got so under his skin that he devoted the next thirty-four years to the task. His translations of plays, poems, miscellaneous pieces, travel works and reviews by and about the French Romancer exceed 20,000 typescript pages and are now housed in the Reed Dumas Collection in the Sir George Grey Special Collections at the Auckland City Library. In total they represent countless hours of dedicated and disciplined work. Two examples must suffice here.

Dumas wrote seventy-two dramas, many of which signalled the beginning of the Romantic period in France. *Charles VII chez ses Grands Vassaux* (1831) was the first dramatic work that Reed attempted. It was chosen for three reasons: the play was set in a historical period that Reed was unfamiliar with, it had been horribly abridged by earlier English translations (abridgement was something that Reed hated!), and he “had no intention of letting the newly-acquired facility [of translation] rust”.⁶⁴

The completion of *Charles VII* set up a routine that Reed would continue for most of his life. Each year he would take two weeks off from work and translate two, if not three, of Dumas’s plays. It was in this way that he translated all of the known dramatic works: sixty-six of them contained in the standard Calmann Lévy edition, one published but not included in that edition, and five that were unpublished. All of the typing up was done outside business hours, and as each play had two colours—red for characters and stage directions, black for speaking parts—the setting involved passing the paper through the carriage twice. After each typing, every good copy was bound up in red buckram, given a decorative hand-drawn title-page by his brother AHR, and either reserved for the Auckland

⁶² “Prescription for a collection”, p. 15.

⁶³ “Trail of an Alexandrian”, I, p. 171.

⁶⁴ F. W. Reed, “Collecting Dumas as a fascinating hobby”, in his “Dumas Miscellanea”, vol. 13, p. 380. The “Dumas Miscellanea” is a collection of large typescript volumes containing articles about Dumas and lectures and translations by Reed. Reed Dumas Collection.

City Library Collection or posted off to one of Reed's fellow "Alexandrians". The number of volumes totalled twenty-three, and exceeded some 8,100 typescript leaves.

The second example involves those few works written by Dumas about New Zealand. On 28 September 1925 Reed finished translating the first four volumes of *The Journal of Madame Giovanni*, a narrative of the travels of a Frenchwoman to New Zealand, Australia, the Pacific Islands, California and Mexico, between 1843 and 1853. The French text was edited by Dumas, and first appeared serially in *Le Siècle* in 1855; it was then published in book form by Lebègue in Brussels in the same year. The first published English translation, for which Reed supplied a foreword, was by Liveright in New York in 1943. In 1926 Reed completed his translation of Dumas's edited version of *Les Baleiniers (The Whalers)*, the journal of Dr Félix Maynard, a surgeon who served on whaling ships in and around New Zealand waters during 1837–1838 and 1845–1846. It was published by Hutchinson in 1937 and remains the only English translation available. The final New Zealand item was Dumas's *Le Capitaine Marion*, an account of the murder of Captain Marion du Fresne at the Bay of Islands in 1772. After much prodding by Denis Glover of Caxton Press, this small but interesting item was published in a limited edition of 150 copies in 1949.

Wilmarth Lewis, the American collector of the works of Horace Walpole, painted an ideal situation for the collector: "Logically, I suppose, when you begin to collect an author you should arm yourself with a bibliography of his work, including all books and articles about him, and run them down, one by one."⁶⁵ For many years a bibliographical list relating to Dumas was simply not available. Then, about 1917, the answer, for Reed, became obvious. He wrote: "I started months ago to draw up a brief indication of the class of each work which appeared in English with the editions which had appeared either out of print or current."⁶⁶ It was not easy, but with method, perseverance, and a love of detail, Reed succeeded. After three earlier bibliographical attempts, with constant updating and numerous revisions, his *Bibliography of Alexandre Dumas Père* was published in London by Neuhuys in 1933. As a pioneer study and the first that approached anything like a definitive bibliography, it was and still is an incredible achievement.

Fortunately, Reed was never one to tackle things half-heartedly. After the publication of his *Bibliography* he completed, in addition to some minor

⁶⁵ Wilmarth Lewis, *Collector's Progress*, London, Constable, 1952, p. 39.

⁶⁶ Reed to Garnett, January 1918, Dumas Correspondence, vol. 1.

bibliographical articles, a further eight typescript volumes, each one dealing with a particular bibliographical problem relating to Dumas. These remain unpublished.

Time and space prevent a full discussion of Reed's bibliographical discoveries, but one, perhaps the most important, should be mentioned. In his close reading of Dumas's *Les Trois Mousquetaires*, Reed ascertained that there were three distinct texts: one, the serial issue in the newspaper; two, a modified text made for the original French issue in volumes; and three, a text constructed from the other two for the first illustrated edition. His discovery of these variants was first published in 1938 in *The Colophon* under the title "Dumas revises *The Three Musketeers*".

Significantly, Reed was recognized for his efforts. In 1927 he was honoured by the French Government with the title of "Officier d'Académie", and then in 1934, just after the publication of his *Bibliography*, the French Government decorated him with the higher title of "Palme d'Officier de l'Instruction Publique". In May 1947, a French diplomat named M. Mégret visited Whangarei and the Reed Dumas collection. He stated: "It is moving for a Frenchman to stand here with the ghost of Dumas and speak with a man who knows so much more about the great novelist than any other living Frenchman."⁶⁷

A Deed of Gift was signed in 1928, and through Reed's close friendship with the then Auckland Librarian John Barr, he was able to retain his library until his death. It was, after all, a working library. Conditions of the Deed included that the collection could not be added to, or broken up, or moved. In August 1953, three months after Reed's death, the Reed Dumas Collection was unpacked in the old Public Library. In all, the collection amounted to 3,350 volumes, including some 2,000 sheets of original holographs by Dumas, 329 first Belgian, 166 first French and 370 first English editions of his works, 51 typescript volumes of Reed's translations, letters, portraits, other Dumas-related material, and the Garnett Collection. It is said to be the largest collection of Dumas outside Paris.

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Dr Eric McCormick, New Zealand's most respected cultural historian and himself a former Hocken Librarian, once wrote that "for such a small country, the number of private collectors in New Zealand was surprisingly large".⁶⁸ Jim

⁶⁷ Quoted in "Trail of an Alexandrian", 2, p. 108.

⁶⁸ Eric H. McCormick *The Fascinating Folly: Dr Hocken and His Fellow Collectors*, Dunedin, University of Otago Press, 1961, p. 8.

Traue, former Turnbull Librarian, reiterated McCormick's thoughts in his 1991 paper when he wrote: "We in New Zealand owe an inestimable debt to the private book collectors of the past [...] whose collecting has enriched our public institutions either directly through bequest, gift or sale; or indirectly by contributing to the pool of books available in New Zealand."⁶⁹ Traue lists some twenty-nine collectors, including Sir George Grey, Alexander Turnbull, Henry and Fred Shaw, A. H. Reed, Frank Reed, Robert McNab, and of course Hocken.

Book collecting is a highly individualistic activity, but it appeals to people from very diverse backgrounds. George Washington, Cardinal Richelieu, Queen Isabella of Spain, Madame de Pompadour and J. P. Morgan were collectors whose interests were as various as their personalities and careers. We can slot in here the three that I have mentioned tonight: Sir George Grey, Dr Hocken, and Frank Reed. In book collecting there is endless variety, and although we will not see the likes of collectors like Grey again, we will certainly meet those dedicated to one or two authors, or specific histories and themes, like Dr Hocken and Frank Reed.

William E. Gladstone claimed there were six qualifications for a collector: "appetite, leisure, wealth, knowledge, discrimination, and perseverance".⁷⁰ Of these six, Gladstone claimed for himself the first and last. In the Antipodes, one could add coping with the problem of distance, which before the joys (and frustrations) of abebooks, bookfinder and vialibri, was a matter of letter writing, letter writing, and more letter writing. Even then there was no guarantee of securing the desired item. Some collectors of course impose their own rules. Years ago I met a chap who collected the works of G. K. Chesterton. I discussed with him the joys of travelling overseas, which to me at least offered golden opportunities to visit bookshops looking for books desired; this was in pre-internet days. He didn't entertain this at all. He admitted that all his Chesterton collecting was done locally, confining it strictly to what he could find in New Zealand. With such a limitation, I often wondered how large the collection became.

And with the mention of the word "large" there is, of course, Australia, which forms an integral and important component of the antipodean book collecting tradition. Your collecting tradition is longer, starting in the 1830s, and is much more extensive. Indeed, one need only peruse the hundreds of entries in

⁶⁹ J. E. Traue, " 'For the ultimate good of the nation': the contribution of New Zealand's first book collectors", in his *Committed to Print: Selected Essays in Praise of the Common Culture of the Book*, Wellington, Victoria University Press, 1991, p. 28.

⁷⁰ Cited in Gladstone's letter to Bernard Quaritch, 9 September 1896, in Quaritch's *Contributions towards a Dictionary of English Book Collectors*, Part VIII, London, Bernard Quaritch, 1892-1898; reprint New York, Burt Franklin, 1968.

Charles Stitz's marvellous *Australian Book Collectors* volumes to gain a full picture of the bibliophilic richness within this country: George Allen's working Toxeth Park Library, Daniel Henry Deniehy's "two and half tons of books", Alfred Lee's 3,300 volumes famously bought by David Scott Mitchell, Ronald E. Graham's science fiction collection, George McArthur's library of more than 2,000 rare books, and Philip Whelan's Australian author collection, to name just a few.⁷¹

I am glad to say that the three collections amassed by Grey, Hocken and Reed are now in the public domain, kept alongside other collections that are accessible to all. And despite the reluctance of some institutions to take in collections—for whatever reasons—it is pleasing to hear that many still are. To do so is vital for the well-being of cultural and intellectual growth. We must continue to strive for the increased and continued interconnectivity between collectors and institutions that house such collections. As a professional in the book business I will certainly continue to fight the good fight.

⁷¹ *Australian Book Collectors: Some Noted Australian Book Collectors & Collections of the Nineteenth & Twentieth Centuries*, edited by Charles Stitz, vol. I, Bendigo, Bread Street Press in association with Australian Book Auction Records, 2010; vols II & III, [Melbourne], Books of Kells; Green Olive Press, 2013.

