

W A R A R Y



FOR THE COLONY OF NEW ZEALAND.
BEING THE
OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE SALVATION ARMY.

Wm. Booth, General,
101, CECIL STREET, S.W. LONDON.

T. H. Howard, Commissioner,
122, STURTON STREET, WELLINGTON.

Vol. VII. No. 265.

CHRISTCHURCH, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1883.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

OFF TO JERUSALEM!

AN ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION.

NOSE-RUBBING EXTRAORDINARY!

A Chief, his Wife, and Five Others Seeking Salvation!

Tamatea's Testimony. The "Tangi." Poling the Rapids. "Kapai kai" 1,000 MAORIS TO BE RESCUED.

BY THE COLONEL.

We reached Akaroa at one o'clock, where we dined. Richard was staid about five, and here we were greeted with a shout from a group of people, who said, "Turn aside from your journey, for the night is coming on," and then they disappeared. This is their custom with people travelling up and down the river. We were glad to accept their hospitality. I was rather disappointed that they did not come down to the landing to meet us, but this is not their custom. However, when we got up to the pah, we found them kind, and took up our quarters in the large wharepuni. When these invite visitors to stay in this way, they supply them with food as long as they remain, so we were soon regaled again with potatoes, white-bait, &c., and after holding a meeting, laid down to rest on the that mats, rejoicing in the love of Christ. Hal-lujah!

The Meeting in the Wharepuni.

Our first meeting was in the Pungine wharepuni, with about forty people sitting on the floor. The Adjutant led off, and with his consent, kept things alive as he goes. The service went well, and although in another tongue, we could see the same power, and get just as much blessing as if it had been in English.

After the Adjutant had read some testimonies which were given by the Sisters. One of them said: "I am glad the Colonel and Maori have found their way up the river to see if the Soldier are true, and to find out just where they are. I am going to talk about my own heart. I am determined to be true to the Salvation Army. Christ came to the poor, and the Salvation Army are along the same, eating with them, etc. Therefore, my heart is rejoicing, because they are

My Elder Brothers.

The Chief said: "I am an old man, and



death is very near. The salvation I've got, I will never give up. Our work is to pray for the Colonel and Maori, that they may be strong in leading us on."

He then followed: "Good evening all my relations. I was a bad man, drinking, smoking, now I have given up all these things. My soul's saved. My heart is washed in the

river, to call the people together for service, which they hold in one corner of the wharepuni.

The Rapids.

We got into these on the second day. They are the most difficult and dangerous parts of the river, and require all the strength of the



men to get the canoe up against the rushing torrent. The Maoris have very suggestive names for some of these; one is called, *horo-horo*, which means,

Beat the Canoe.

Another is *Whakamataku* (frighten!), strange to say, when coming down this rapid, we had canoe for fear, for the stems of our canoe stuck in the mud, and we had scarcely

Jerusalem Sighted.

On the afternoon of the third day, we reached Jerusalem. The people were waiting for us on the bank, and gave us a very hearty welcome. We soon found out that there was to be a

Tangi.



One of the chiefs of the pah had died three months before, and this, being the first time these Maoris had visited the pah since his decease, they at once proceeded to express their grief at his departure. We were taken by surprise, as we had no idea of this going to take place, but here they closed, weeping and mourning. Strong, fine built men, with long hair, and dressed all the way up, and now moved to tears. It is their custom when a man dies for all the people in the pah, first to hold a tangi and mourn for him, and then they send the next to all the pah round, inviting them to come for the same purpose. The body is kept for a week, so as to give full opportunity for all to come that can. When the body is held, the visitors, all in a row facing the people of the pah, the women squatting on the ground in front of the men, and all mourn and cry most piteously for about half-an-hour or more.

The Reception.

Farmer up the pah stood Tamatea, a Maori in a black and white dress, with several Salvationists, and a crowd of others, waiting to give us a great welcome. This they did most enthusiastically, singing, and waving their arms and bodies to the tune. After greeting, we went into the wharepuni, and for over an hour, they gave salutes of welcome outside, several of our party going out to reply. When a Maori speaks he wants about six yards to walk up and down. They are born eloquentists.

One speaker, gear in hand, could not be content with walking, but ran and dived up and down, shouting all the time.

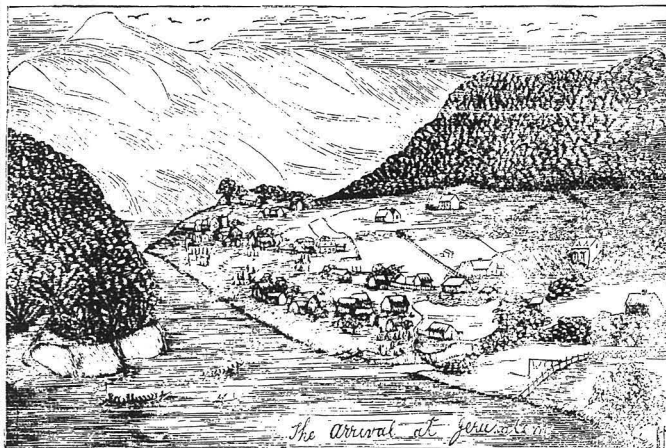
Haere mai, Haere mai, Haere mai!

(Welcome, welcome, welcome!) Here is a strange mixture of Pakeha and Maorian, we thought, as, sitting under the shade of this wharepuni, we watched the proceedings. Here is the English style, eating with iron roof, and there the Maori where built of bamboo and flax. Here children with bare feet are shipping the tops, on the green opposite, and a number of lads in full English dress playing football, while in front of us is a crowd, dressed in mats, blankets, etc., with bare feet, bringing into use one of their nearest customs to

Welcome Salvationists.

Hal-lujah! But a sudden cry arrests us from our deliberations, and instantly the ladies stand in a long row in front of us wharepuni, while the football lads, and every body else is drawn, rush to the scene, and it is a scene in another line across the river, and the incoming company of

Robbing Horses.



The Arrival at Jerusalem.

blood of Jesus. Now then, Soldier, to carry out G. P. H. H. has a name, *horo-horo*, The Salvation Army will be victorious, in winning the world for G. P. H. H. The Maori can do it, and there is no lack of assistance, it is rather on other way. Immediately the opportunity is given, some one takes the floor, and when one is speaking, another stands in readiness to commence. They have not all done when the Adjutant announces that the time is up, and begins to

Introduce the Visitors,

all of whom spoke words of cheer and encouragement to our Maori converts. The wharepuni is the only public hall in a pah, and every pah has one, they are therefore constantly in use for our services, and until we can build barracks, this will be where ever we go. The largest wharepuni at

Koriniti,

being about 50 feet long, by 25 wide. There were several of the Maori's followers in this pah, led on by one of his Staff. They have service ever, morning and evening. This consists of psalm, singing, reading portions of the Bible, and prayers, and like the Maori Maori imitates, the people kneeling and standing alternately. The Maori's visit a hall in the

recovered from the shock when one remarked, "I thought we were going over that time." The water being shallow in these rapids, the cars are laid aside and poles are used instead, as they are more effective. It was very interesting to watch the movements of the men, here riding their poles up in the air, throwing them in the water and then leaning upon them with all their might. The Maori Uranga or steersman, shouting out *ahine*, which means push it along, or *whakamataku*, which means twist it along. And sometimes breaking out in English, with

"Altogether!"

It gave one rather a dizzy feeling, too, surrounded with the angry waters, which every now and again splashed into the canoe and rushed past you with great speed. While above you the beautiful sky is rapidly passing in another direction, and the mountains appear to be travelling in different ways. Altogether, there is a magnificent panorama but nothing is as *oatmeal* as the Maori's.

Awfully Grand!

MAORI SOLDIERS do three things at once—fix bayonets to their rifles, fire a volley, and also blow their rifles parallel.

'Went up Specimen Hill, Big Creek, Fiery Cross ...'

Mother Aubert's year on the road

JESSIE MUNRO

Jessie Munro is a teacher of French, editor and coursewriter at the Correspondence School. A Claude McCarthy Fellowship has enabled her to be based at the Stout Research Centre undertaking full-time research for a biography of Mother Aubert.

Behind 54-year-old Suzanne Aubert as she set out on her 1889 collecting tour lay her childhood in Lyon as Marie Henriette Suzanne Aubert, her eleven years from 1861 in Auckland as Sister Mary Joseph or Meri of the Nazareth Institute for Maori girls, her twelve years in Hawke's Bay as lay missionary and nurse. Before her stretched the long career in social welfare of Mother Aubert, in her time held by the people of Wellington almost as public property, with the value of 'living treasure'. She died in 1926 aged 91 years. The Sisters of Compassion continue her work.

The biography of Mother Aubert is going to be like an iceberg, a visible portion balanced by a submerged mass of mini-biographies. There seemed to be so many people in her life. Despite her religious intensity, spiritual concentration and self-reliance, Suzanne Aubert was a 'people' person and her apostolate, in religious terms, kept widening to include more and more. The diary for her collecting tour of 1889 teemed with references to people, some of whom became significant in her projects while others provided the steady invisible base that supported her and gave her confirmation of the validity of what she did and believed in.

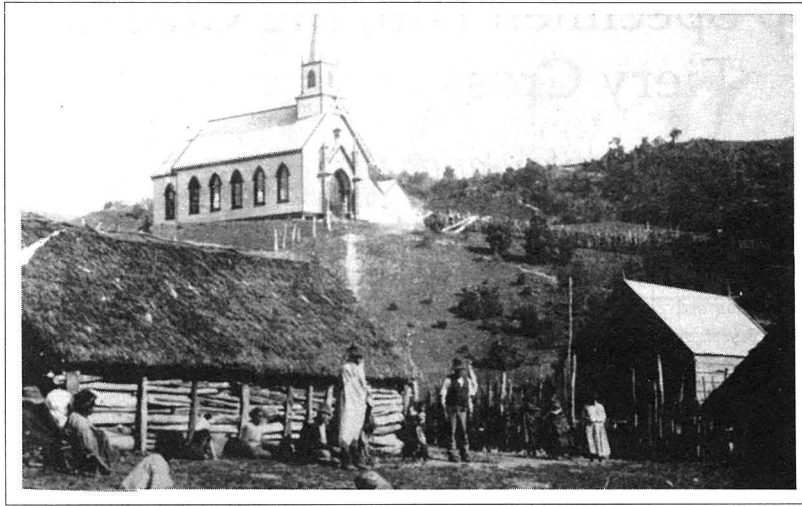
Her collecting tour merits attention in Women's Suffrage Centennial Year – but not for the politics. Suzanne Aubert



Opposite: The War Cry, Nov 9 1889, showing Hiruharama without the Catholic Church (bare area next to twin-gabled presbytery centre pic) at the time the Salvation Army arrived in March 1889. Salvation Army Archives, Wellington

Above: Mother Mary Joseph (Mother Aubert) and Sister Magdalen, photographed in Wellington, mid 1889, during their collecting tour. Home of Compassion Archives, Wellington

was not political although she was adept at managing politicians. In her lifetime the Sisters' names never featured on an electoral roll and to avoid dissension she discouraged discussion about political issues such as the Irish question. Her arena was social welfare and salvation, not social justice. But at the very same period that other women in New Zealand were out and about collecting signatures for change, she was also tramping up and down in the cause of change, not just gathering in money to rebuild a burnt-down church but people as well: Sisters for the order; friends, advisers, helpers; even the first few of the children who widened her work from Maori mission to social welfare. It is almost as if she returned to Jerusalem' in December 1889 with a roadway of names rolled up behind her that would be as significant to her sphere



Left:

The church at Jerusalem which was built in 1885 and burned down in 1888. Marist Archives, Wellington

Opposite:

Four of the original Sisters at the time of the opening of the church, 1885. Mother Mary Joseph on the right, with Sisters Anne, Bridget, Carmel. Home of Compassion Archives, Wellington

of action as the huge suffrage petition would be politically to New Zealand women.

'Women on the climb' was a leitmotif for 1993 celebrations. On her travels, Mother Aubert, a woman on the move, 'went up Specimen Hill, Big Creek, Fiery Cross ...'. It was not just the fact of aspiring to heights or accomplishing through action that was relevant, though. It was how people felt accomplishing together. Mary Varnham wrote in the *Evening Post* of Wednesday, 15 September 1993:

In a joyless grizzle about just about everything to do with suffrage year, even Summits for Suffrage – where women all over the country scaled mountains (or in my case a mildly sloping Wairarapa walking track) – was lambasted as 'superficial, irrelevant and patronising'.

I am deeply mortified to have to admit that at the time I found ambling up Mt Holdsworth with a bunch of women, Maori and pakeha, aged from mid-teens to mid-70s, none of whom I had ever met before, the sort of pleasurable experience loosely described as fun.

'Fun' is a word that Suzanne Aubert did in fact use in her diary, and a pleasurable experience, distinctly rewarding, is the impression she gave as she scrambled probably more than ambled up the steep tracks of West Coast goldmines, with a local woman or her daughter showing the way, women she also had not met before. Here is a three-day sample:

14 October: Collected Nelson Creek and walked to Ngahere, escorted by Miss Toban and Miss O'Brien and Miss Larkin. Very good. Slept at Mrs Killeen's.

15 October: Walked to Maori Gully. Miss McGuire escorted us. Slept at Hinnegan's. Very kind. Mrs gave us her three daughters. Went around with a lantern.

16 October: Mr and Mrs Hinnegan escorted us to Mr Blanchfield's and Miss Blanchfield finished to escort us to Maori Creek. Very steep hills and bad tracks. We slept at Mr North's. Very kind.

Suzanne Aubert 'went up Specimen Hill, Big Creek, Fiery Cross, and Welcome, with Miss Bourke'. The entries docu-

mented people working along together. The collecting for the suffrage petitions happened obviously through cooperation on the part of the 600 WCTU women. What emerges from Mother Aubert's brief entries for each day of the West Coast portion of the collecting tour is also an image of successful organisation and cooperation, some at parish level with lists provided by the priest and through groups like the Holy Family Sodality in Hokitika. It was small-scale and homely, as in these three November days around the mines:

4th November: Drove to Kirwin. Canvassed the Progress. Slept at Mrs Kirwin's. Mrs Costigan comes in the evening and proposes to escort us to Inkerman.

5th November: Left at 6 a.m. with Mrs Lynch [sic]. Mrs Costigan overtook us on the road. Went round the Drake, the Happy Valley and the Scotia and reached Inkerman in the evening. Slept at Mrs Boyle's. All the people very kind. McCullum, 16 children.

6th November: Walked to the Globe. Missed the shift and went to sleep at Mrs Costigan. Had tea at Mrs Kennedy.

(The next day, she walked again the four miles uphill to the Globe, to catch the shift.)

Women and girls were not left anonymous; page after page, she recorded their names, along with what they did. In the male world of the mines of Westland these women seem to come out of the diary pages at ease and at home, sharing their rough landscape and their families with a nimble middle-aged nun questing for a Maori church hundreds of miles away. We get a glimpse of the organisation and perhaps the fun of it. Mrs Costigan called in to the Kirwins' the night before to arrange the next day. Mrs Lynch started off with Mother Aubert and Sister Magdalen early next morning. Mrs Costigan overtook them on the road. Was she on foot panting to catch up, or serenely in a buggy with a fresh batch of scones in a basket beside her? We don't know if Mrs Lynch handed over her companions to Mrs Costigan or if they all carried on together. After a day's collecting the two nuns were passed

on to Mrs Boyle. And so it continued.

More than a century later, the women's organisation pipeline for the West Coast still works, as shown in this excerpt from an article in the July 1993 Women's Refuge newsletter:

When the crisis line rings a shuttle service, not unlike the anti-slavery movement's underground railway, swings into action. The woman is met by one of a network of 25 volunteers who drives her to a pre-arranged point where another driver takes over. On the way they're met by other volunteers with cans of petrol. And so on, till they reach Westport.

The article is headlined *1,000 kms of Support*, somehow bouncing its echo back to the past for the many miles covered by Mother Aubert and the women with her.

The collecting tour of 1889 is equally significant as a microcosm of his career caught at a moment of change, reflecting back elements and characters from her earlier story but more significantly heralding new ventures and many new players. The criterion for allotting someone to a certain period in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* was that of their 'first flourishing'. Margaret Tennant, who wrote the excellent Volume Two entry on Mother Aubert mentioned the question of how to define the 'first flourishing' of a long-term active figure like Suzanne Aubert. She was a knowledgeable botanist so it's an apt metaphor. Rose schedules have four categories of 'flourishing': bud, decorative, exhibition and fully open bloom. Sister Mary Joseph or Meri, who had been so long a lone Maori mission lay Sister, with only a temporary three year appointment since 1886 as Mother Mary Joseph, returned to Jerusalem at the end of 1889, after twelve months on the road, petals three quarters unfurled, definitely 'exhibiting' the characteristics of the woman who was to become the public figure, Mother Aubert. Not that she had changed from the person she always was; it was a stage in her flourishing, and the sphere had widened. By 1890 she was confirmed as Superior; by 1891 the first children and foundlings were arriving, by 1891 the medicines were making her name and face known around New Zealand; by 1892 the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion were formed.

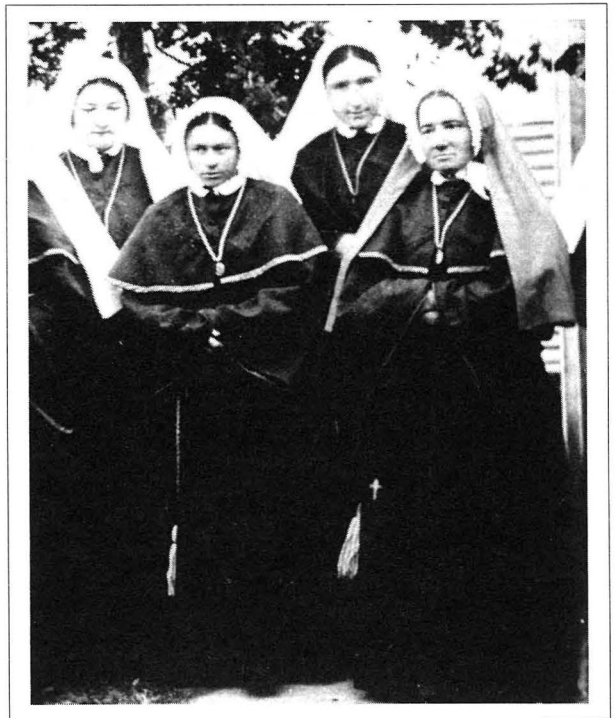
With this 'rolled-up roadway of names', she had set in place – not so much calculatingly, although she had an intuitive sense of strategy, as by mingling and passing among people – an embryo infrastructure out in the lay world, of benefactors and influential advisers, Protestant and Catholic, from the North and the South, as well as a corps of willing and hardworking helpers, men and women, rich and poor. And right through her story from then on, people working with her seemed to pitch in together and even had fun. She usually managed to activate altruism as a pleasurable experience across sections of society. Patrick O'Farrell's book, *Vanished Kingdoms*, which examines the enclosed,

sclerosed mindsets that some churchmen tried to impose on the immigrant Irish Catholics, refers to 'ghettos of uncommunicating minds'.² Suzanne Aubert tended to breach ghetto walls, social and religious, and the collecting tour was an active way of doing this. For one thing, she brought to Hokitika Irish Catholic convent girls an awareness of the Maori mission in the north. One of them later became a Sister of Compassion and she wrote this memory of her first impression:

We children had heard at school that some visiting sisters were expected, whom we called 'The Maori Sisters'. Our Sisters corrected us for saying this, and told us the expected guests were Marist Sisters who worked for the Maoris ... I got a good view of the newcomers, and my first thought was 'They are Maoris, after all! The first one is, and the other is half caste at least'. They were well tanned by the Hawke's Bay sun and wind, as it was only ten days since they had left there. Besides to my mind, Mother Joseph walked like a Maori woman, with a swaying motion, and she had broad shoulders just like one. As I settled this in my own mind, I was overcome with the conviction that God willed me to join them - not at once, but later on.

The two Sisters and Father Martin were laughing as they came in, evidently at something that Mother Joseph was saying, for she entered first, and looking back over her shoulder, she seemed to be making an apt rejoinder, or saying something witty that amused them all. So there was no halo or anything strikingly spiritual about the new arrivals to account for the impression they created in the onlooker.

Two impressions gained by the girl: fun, not doleful,



pious do-goodery; and Maori became less of an alien concept. Removing 'alien' from overlying the reality of difference, whether it was the difference of incurable illness, illegitimate birth, poverty, race or belief was one of the major overall contributions of Suzanne Aubert.

So when did this collecting tour take place exactly? It lasted from late November 1888 through to December 1889, over twelve months on the road at the height of economic depression in New Zealand. And where? Starting at Jerusalem at November shearing time, the tour ranged over Hawke's Bay and its sheep stations in the heat and dust of summer; the West Coast and Christchurch in the damp cool of autumn; two and a half months' traipsing around Wellington and Wanganui in the depths of winter; south again to Nelson-Marlborough and the West Coast in spring. Then back home to Jerusalem.

Who were involved? The main characters were the two Sisters, of course: Mother Mary Joseph, aged 54, little, energetic, square-framed and a good walker; with her, Sister Magdalen, born Violet Savage on the West Coast – a New Zealander, no French accent. Young, serious, tall and willowy, looking good in the French style habit and goffered cap, Sister Magdalen was a fitting advertisement for prospective postulants; she was 'Exhibit A'. Joseph Ward (not the future prime minister but one of Nelson-Marlborough's English Catholic subset and a brother-in-law of Archbishop Redwood) tucked this pen-sketch into his journal:

1889 Sept. 8th Sunday.

Good drop of rain last night. Fine growing morning. To Mass not Benedn. Saw two nuns from near Wanganui 'Jerusalem' up Wanganui River. Church burnt down - a Maori one - They're begging for means to rebuild. Sister Mary Joseph an elderly lady - French - strong short broad; dark brown eyes. Very intelligent look - been for years principally among the Maoris, is skilled in medicines made from herbs. The other young; was at school in Nelson with Edith. Violet Savage. I gave a couple of pounds - sorry I could give no more.

They carried a portmanteau.

4 December 1888. We met Father Patterson on the train [to Palmerston North]. He gave us a most hearty welcome. Took us to his place carrying our portman protesting he was much honoured by doing so.

Inside the portmanteau would be clean caps. She was fussy about these and must have written back to Jerusalem for more as in February Sister Anne postscripted a letter: 'will send the caps by the next boat'. Many diary entries for gale-torn days recorded ironing caps, which was no small job as it required meticulous goffering of the frill. She wore her cap well back from her face; she did not like hidden-away, downcast nuns. Sister Eustace Conaglen still remembers 89-year-old Mother Aubert coming up to her and with her hands framing Sister Eustace's face, pushing back the frills: 'I cannot see your face'. In their portmanteau would also be hussifs for mending as other days are recorded as 'sawing', her little travelling devotional books, of course, and the brochures and lists for

their collection.

Their habits got dusty on the road. Mrs Moroney of the boarding house at Pakipaki told her grandchildren how she once answered the door to a nun dressed all in grey. Then it dawned on her that it was in fact a black habit dredged with grey dust. On her feet were stout boots. While she was in Napier she outfitted herself with a new pair: 'Saturday, 2 February, 1889. Go to Napier to buy shoes'. Arthur Golding, a bootmaker, remembered her: 'She used to wear a black habit and walked everywhere'. In the 1960s, Mrs Sugden of Nelson told Father Mulcahy that she recalled seeing Mother Aubert in 1889 tramping around 'in men's Blucher boots, half way up the calf'. With so much walking, they needed regular attention. Mother Aubert collected all sorts of household hints. This way to weatherproof boots, translated from the French, just might account for her wearing larger men's ones. 'To make shoes impermeable to the cold: All that is required is to wrap the feet in an old newspaper. You will be sure of having warm feet all day. The folds of the paper will not hurt your feet at all. On the contrary, they will be very comfortable'.

You can't be a knight without a horse, but if boats, carts, traps, and the iron horse of the railway can count as trusty steeds, this female knight and squire set off then on their holy quest. On the spiritual level, it was just that for her, a holy quest. In the Directory she wrote for the Sisters, a book of guidance couched in little reflections, there are twenty five entries on the subject of Travel:

19. If we travel in the rain, in the wind, in heat, cold and dust, let us think of Jesus who did the same when He was on earth, and still continues to do so when He goes in Holy Viaticum.

What about supporting actors? There was a cast of thousands: an embittered racist arsonist, grieving and judging Ngati Hau, a whole mob of runholders, a kind-hearted Anglican parson, a disgruntled Napier politician, Wellington merchants, a French consul, a bishop, a string of parish priests, the Salvation Army breaching the walls of Jerusalem in her absence, Sisters and impressionable future postulants, the miners, all the households mentioned and unmentioned, herds of wild bullocks, pens of rams at a ram fair, a runaway horse, two parrots and a pair of geese.

Not least, why was there this collecting tour? Four years previously, in 1885 a Turnbull-designed church, built with dedication by Ngati Hau, was consecrated at Christmas by Bishop Redwood. The first Sisters in New Zealand of the Third Order Regular of Mary were professed, Suzanne Aubert among them. A great feast followed. Long letters back to France described the two-day celebration. On 20 November 1888, this church was a heap of ashes, burnt in broad daylight by a disgruntled shearers' cook, Jimmy McDonald. At the huge tangi, Father Soulas tried to rally the Maori, whose precise sense of justice required the Pakeha to rebuild what the Pakeha had burned. Sister Mary Joseph offered to collect for a new church. Already in 1887, there had been mooted a

collection for a convent for the six sisters; now a collecting tour could cover both. Soulas had her on the road within four days of the fire! There was still no Hatrick's boat service then. So it was down the river by canoe, to Wellington by train for diocesan permission to collect, and on up to Napier.

Did Suzanne Aubert breathe a little sigh of relief to be independently on the road again? Though she had travelled back and forth to Wanganui over the printing of her Maori phrase book and was happy to be in an active mission finally as a 'proper' Marist Sister, she had just spent five and a half years responsible for a fledgling community of young women, supervised closely by zealous Father Soulas, the priest in charge of the Maori mission. This was probably the most control put on her movements and independence since the early 1860s. Back in the 1870s, she had been a lay Sister in Hawke's Bay, affiliated to the Third Order of Mary, and given considerable freedom, respect and care by Father Reignier. In a sense she was 'going home', even if on a visit. Firstly to Pakipaki, where the marae was the centre of the Hawke's Bay Catholic Maori mission: '5 Dec. We were well received at Pakipaki. Slept at Moroney's'. She also spent Christmas there. Familiar scenes, familiar people. Not that this singleminded person relaxed into a round of socialising. 'Sunday, 13 January, 1889. Spent today quietly. Visit a few friends so as to get the talk over not to encroach on work days'.

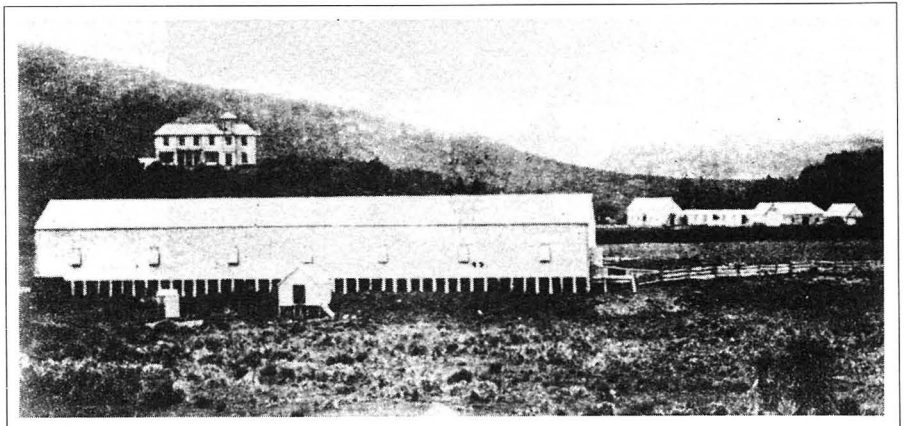
She expected to collect easily in familiar territory. But reality proved a little different. For one thing, Father Reignier had just died, in October, 1888. '6 Dec ... Went to Meanee visited F. Reignier's grave ...'. Hawke's Bay, too, was in the grip of the depression; it was right on Christmas and there were other calls on people's wallets and, as she admitted later: 'Nobody was interested in the Maoris'. She gathered in only £267/12/-, including visits to the wealthy squattocracy. Some of the entries around Napier and Hastings are laconic and breathe a slight air of dejection: 'Tuesday, 15 January, 1889. Visit offices. Do very little. ... Friday, 18 January, 1889. Go through town. Raining. Go up convent. Mend. Saturday, 19th January,

1889. Go to Shamrock. Do nothing. Go to Meanee'. The 'do very little' and 'do nothing' seem to suggest the financial result of the day: 'make very little, make nothing'.

The mention of the hotel introduces an atypical (because she indicated she was usually very courteously treated) but inevitable anecdote. Michael and Mary Brandon recounted to their granddaughter an incident outside a Napier hotel. Sister Mary Joseph had invited men to contribute: 'Three of them did so, and the fourth one spat in her face. She simply wiped her face and said, "Thank you, you have given me something for myself". By this time one of the others had knocked him down'. What she meant in her reply was that the money was going to Jesus and the spit she kept for herself. This piece of oral history is relevant even with hagiographic overtones. Begging was then new to her but became an integral part of the work of the Sisters of Compassion and the begging prams became an icon for the order. New Sisters found it a gruelling experience to have to go through the streets and into hotels.⁴ So in the Directory, their training manual, she wrote a section on Begging. Again, as with travel, the analogies are tightly linked to the figure of Jesus. '6. ... If we meet rebuffs, He met them first, and still meets them. If we are insulted and refused, He was so first, and is so yet'.

She did not get rebuffs just from the odd down and out. When she lived in Hawke's Bay, she had a free railway pass for the private rail-line which she used to take to Pakipaki. Now, in 1889, she tried for another: 'Monday, 28th January, 1889. Visit Ormond. Ask railway pass. Told might as well go to the moon'. Irascible J.D. Ormond M.H.R. may not have been at liberty to give a pass, though Wellington City Council gave her free tram passes, as did Hatrick's on the Wanganui river boats. However, the theme of the redemptory chance granted to the rich and powerful to give became important in her religion. The 1915 Letter to the Novices from Rome said:

On reading the Gospel, one would be led to believe that they [the rich] have a poor chance of salvation. Our Saviour's language in their regard is severe. Let us be their apostles. By begging our bread from them, by carrying to them the wailings



Pourerere Station, home of the Nairn family, who welcomed the two Sisters and remained their benefactors.

of the unfortunate, by recalling with gentle instance [sic] to them the great law of charity and the responsibilities of fortune, let us induce them to give alms to the poor out of their wealth, their intelligence and their heart ... and the good they will do to others will render them better, and put them on the good road, the way of the blessed.

Now, Hannah Ormond, the wife of John Ormond, kept a diary for many years and one 1882 entry foreshadowed Suzanne Aubert's interpretation of the responsibilities of wealth. Hannah was yearning to be charitable, in this case simply sharing meals:

Feb 28 1882

Delightful rain pouring down. Sat down to work. Mr C. came up thro' all the rain. Instead of feeling pleased I could have wished him anywhere else for now guessing at John's ugly looks I see he does not want him to come – At least so I try to interpret looks & movements. Again, checked in my impulse – I think I am doing a good action. I chafe at having so little power to do anything for anybody with all our riches – Glad to have had a chance put before me & already I see it must be stopped somehow.

Ormond's sulking continued through the 1 March entry until:

3 March 1882

At breakfast the storm burst – What I had read as plainly as words could say for days – He won't have him here ... No breath of charity or pity only pure selfishness – & no consideration for my feelings.⁵

The two women set out to walk around the sheep stations anyway and even though the immediate revenues were not great, the results down the years were important. The collecting tour is a case study in public relations. Not only did some of the families of the Hawke's Bay squatter hierarchy become benefactors (for example the Anglican Nairn family who earned the mention in the diary: 'We received the best and

kind reception'), but through wider kinship groups down in Wellington, she had an infrastructure of financial, legal and political influence and advice. The Johnston family, for instance, would figure importantly from here on. Their extended family included Graces, Rollestons, Percevals, Hislops, all of whom linked in to the 'charitable scene'.

André Siegfried in 1904 identified snobbishness in the New Zealand psychology:

Snobbishness, like imperialism, has found at the Antipodes a soil peculiarly favourable to its development.⁶

In the political arena, there is a strong opposition to wealth; in Parliament, wealth is a subject for inflammatory speeches; and yet in every-day life it is given a consideration which would be quite natural anywhere else, but which seems paradoxical in these new democracies.⁷

Siegfried put his finger on the paradox. Yet, because of the principle of egalitarianism in a small society, the rich could not quite ignore the others. The gap was recent. Suzanne Aubert seemed to sense this conscience and kept channels open. She did pay her dues to the 'consideration' that Siegfried spoke of, yet in principle, if not always in practice, she was on her guard with the rich. In the Letter to the Novices she wrote, by then from long experience, on the subject of begging in the houses of the rich:

It is an apostolate which has its good side, but is also fraught with many drawbacks, even dangers, and must be undertaken with the utmost precaution. It occasions much waste of time, it dissipates the heart. We have to wait for the gentleman, compliment the lady, honour both, praise the children, say many useless words in drawing-rooms, to get money. We are exposed to boast of what we are doing, and what we are not doing, to hear words of flattery, apt to swell us, like a frog, with vanity, fill our heads with twaddle and the spirit of the world. Begging from door to door broken food or cast-off clothes is less dangerous.



The coastline at Pourerere Station: 'We walked from Nairn to Hunters, round Blackhead. We had a fearful storm of wind and rain. We lost our way, paddled in the mud across the bullocks.'

Some of her later popularity among the gentry and their town cousins was earned on foot on her collecting tour, even if those who responded to later appeals for the poor were, in 1889, less interested in the Maori mission. Some of the names extracted from her diary entries were: Chambers, Nelson, McCarthy, Tiffen, Coleman, Donnelly, Broughton, Lowry, [McLean or the manager of] Maraekakaho, Walker, Whitmore, Thomas, [Campbell of] Poukawa, Hamlin, Buchanan, Johnston [of Tamumu], Nairn, Hunter, Crosse, Ormond, Harding, Herbert. The list is a 'who's who' of Hawke's Bay runholders. To name these is not to suggest the nonsense that all or even most became supporters, but to give an indication of the terrain covered. It was a dusty, long route that she and Sr Magdalen took, sometimes by cart but often on foot.

Wednesday, 13th February, 1889

We walked from Nairn to Hunters, round Blackhead. We had a fearful storm of wind and rain. We lost our way, paddled in the mud across the bullocks. We met Rev. Simcock [sic] at Hunters. He was very kind.

Thursday, 14 February, 1889. Mr Hunter sent us with his spring cart to Porangahau ...

(This story, fleshed out, along with other episodes from the Tour, went into Suzanne Aubert's repertoire as a raconteur.) Warned by the men not to try their luck again with wild bullocks, the two women would turn back twice later in the tour when cattle barred their track. The friendly evening with Hunter and Rev Simcox was also a case of linking into a kinship group, as Paul Hunter's sister in Wellington, Mrs Moorhouse, would be a supporter in later years.

Now the trip changed direction. They went south. 'Wednesday, 20th February, 1889. We went straight through to Wellington'. From Wellington, they took a boat to Grey-mouth. This was crossing into a brand new diocese, separated from Wellington in 1887, and to collect in it Sister Mary Joseph needed Bishop Grimes's approval. He was at Grey-mouth at the time, so she headed straight there in person. Permission was granted, but subject to not detracting from Father Ginaty's concurrent collecting for the Christchurch Mount Magdala Institute, established for the 'rescue' and rehabilitation of prostitutes.⁸ Both Ginaty and Suzanne Aubert, energetic publicists yet not self-vaunting, would be working in different women's social welfare areas; both insisting on a non-denominational basis, both with support across the denominational lines.⁹ Here they were on the West Coast, and entries record them diplomatically advancing and retreating in parish after parish so as not to cramp each other's style; each parish priest trying to deploy the pair of them as strategically as possible.

But back to the theme of people helping. Through March, April and early May, the West Coast names filed through the diary pages day after day: mine managers and influential later benefactors such as Kennedy, Burke, Whelan; families of future Sisters like the McCormacks (parents of Mother Melchior); Sisters of Mercy; lots and lots of local women - mothers and daughters. But the miners and 'blokes' in gen-

eral were there as well. Suzanne Aubert's gift was that of inclusiveness, not exclusiveness. So the men are right there in the pages too:

9 April

Went down and round Waimangaroa with Mrs Sullivan. We slept at Mrs Frank. We had a grand view of the incline with the trucks going up and down.

10 April

Mrs Sullivan gave us a letter for her mother at Ch-Ch. We went by train to Ngakawao. Took lodgings at Mrs Howard, very kind. Went round a few tents. Mr McKenny partner of Mr Brandon sent for us and volunteered to go round and collect for us. Most kind.

11 April

Very wet day. We stay at Mrs Howard. Mr McKenny goes round for us. I write letters.

This letter, of breezy, reassuring motherliness, went back home from Denniston:

My dear Sister Bridget,

I see by Sister Carmel's letter that while we are hunting for money in the bush of the West Coast you are hunting for tawas at Jerusalem. [They made a type of coffee from dried, roasted tawa berries]. I wish I had as heavy a bag as you have and we would trot away pretty quickly up the Wanganui River. Tho' we do not go fast we go pretty steadily so far. We could have done worst.

You may transplant the cabbages where the carrots, the artichocks or the beets were, or even where the onions were. If we were nearer we would help you with pleasure to eat the melons and vegetables. We see very little of them in our travellings ...

In mid-May, they crossed the Alps.

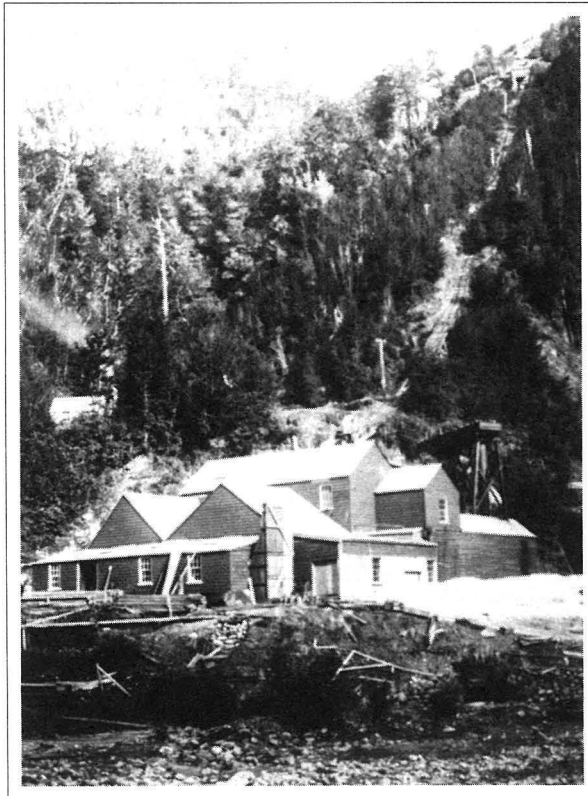
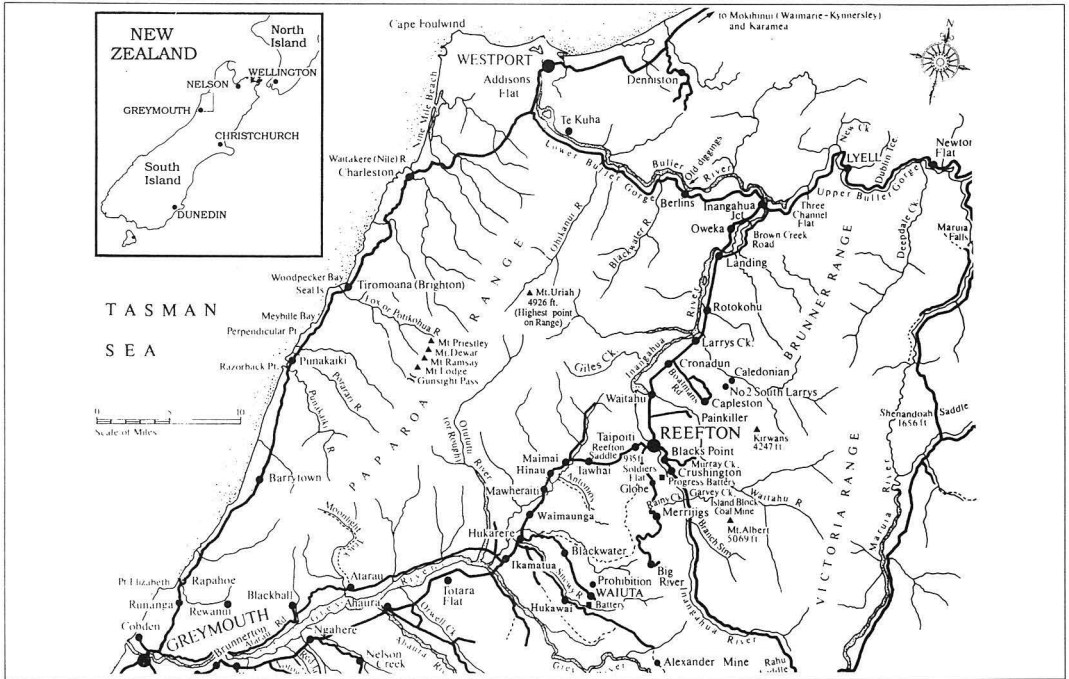
14 May Started for ChCh with woman and parrot. Slept at the Bealey. Beautiful scenery.

15 May Dined at Cassidy. Wild mountains, nice lake - Porter Pass dreadful. Canterbury plains - Slept at Barrett's hotel.

16 May Saw Bishop Grimes, who withdrew leave for collecting.

Back they went by boat, the Penguin, to Wellington, to pass two and a half months in winter tramping the streets of the capital and outlying districts, even up to Kaitoke. So warm and homey had been her experience on the West Coast that the diary entries for Wellington read as spartan in comparison. '4 July [Went about]. Bought a sausage. Lasted 6 meals. We took meanwhile our lunches in Mrs Sharpe's garden'. This is not uncharacteristic of Suzanne Aubert, a chosen withdrawal from possible comforts, a renewal of rigours to restore the balance of asceticism. So many entries of midwinter, minimal outdoor meals suggest Mother Aubert almost welcoming the symbolic 'no room for them in the inn'¹⁰ to balance the emotional cocooning of the warm reception on the West Coast.

Her spirits were not repressed though; her keen humour jotted down what would make for a good anecdote to recount later: '7 August. Went around Newtown ... Parrot in big house saying "dreadful, dreadful" in shaking her head as the Mrs. refused'. Clues also are there for future work. The very same entry continued: 'Saw poor paralysed Italian woman',



Above

A map showing the West Coast goldmines of the Buller and Grey districts. The two women canvassed most of them.

Latham, Darrell, Golden Reefs

Opposite above

A 1905 photo of the Gillin family with seven of their 14 grandchildren.

Ted Matthews, Christchurch

Opposite below

The settlement of Progress Junction at the foot of Globe Hill. '6 Nov. Walked to the Globe. Missed the shift and went to sleep at Mrs Costigan'.

Price Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library

Left

The United Alpine battery on Lyell Creek, early 1890s: 'November 16. Went up to the Alpine with Miss Ryan. Came down the incline being hardly able to walk'.

Tyree Collection, Nelson Provincial Museum



nursed for days a Chinese miner ill in his hut with pneumonia while Patrick kept his fire going day and night.¹² Suzanne Aubert would feel at home in this atmosphere. She held strongly to a concept of the helpful, tolerant, practical pioneer family. It was what she wanted to believe and she somehow made sure she encountered her beliefs.

The tour was drawing to its close: 'Friday November 15. Left for Lyell. Slept at Mr Fennel's. November 16 Went up to the Alpine with Miss Ryan. Came down the incline being hardly able to walk'. Could it possibly be that Mother Aubert was getting tired? On 20 November, they arrived back in Nelson. 'November 21st. We were half dead, and did nothing except going to

which showed her mind filing away the plight of the incurable people she had met. The collecting tour inadvertently was also a reconnoitring trip and she returned to Jerusalem to assess over the next years where she had seen need. She had definitely become aware of the condition of women and children in the 1880s depression and had given a commitment to one desperate Hawke's Bay widow to take some of her children.

And now down south again for springtime, firstly through Marlborough and Nelson, then back to the miners on the West Coast, a replay of the companionship and infectious helpfulness that she had experienced in March, April and May. She listed families offering money, a bed for the night, a meal, a lift, a hand with the collecting; getting children to show the way, arranging the next contact, facilitating:

We slept at Mr North's. Very kind.

17 October. Went around Maori Creek with Miss North. ... Master North drove us to Marsden. Slept at Mrs Russell's. Very kind.

19 October Slept at the convent where we were most welcomed. Saw the Fathers. Very kind. Left for No Town, walked up there. Slept at Mr Gillin. 20 October Very stormy, kept in doors.

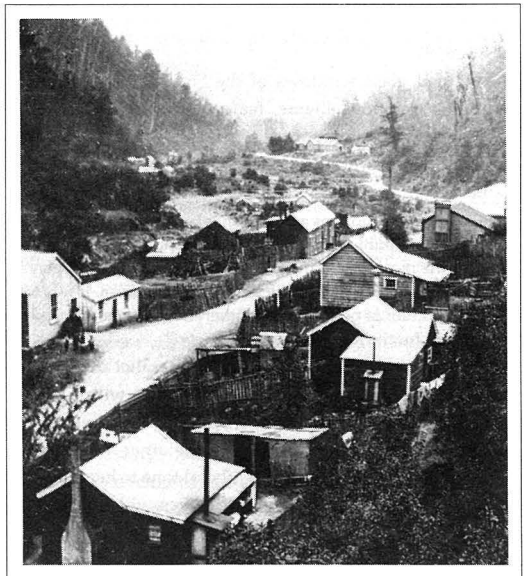
21 October Went up and down hills with Miss Gillin.

22 October Went up to Red Jack with Miss Gillin and Miss Lavery [Devery].

Let's stop and put this family under the microscope for a moment. It is only one of many possible others.¹¹ Patrick Gillin as a 37-year-old successful Otago gold prospector, a Catholic from Belfast, had married in 1868 18-year-old Sarah Devery, born in County Offaly, Ireland. The marriage is said to have been an arranged one, and it worked. There were 15 children born between 1869 and 1894. The family were involved in many business ventures around No Town, Red Jacks and Kamaka and were also known for kindness extended to swagmen and clergymen alike. Once, Sarah Gillin

the Editor of the "Colonist" – he was very kind and gave us a grand "local". Her definition of 'half dead' was more active than others' might be. A full report of over 600 words went into *The Colonist* of Friday, November 22, 1889. Here was Mother Aubert, the strategist, at work. The article emphasised the school in the work of the mission. Now, Nelson was the main centre of the push for secular education in New Zealand, back even in the days of New Munster and Alfred Domett. So she angled the article to get the best reception:

There is no school within 50 miles of Jerusalem, and even now there are 40 boys and one girl being trained as best they may be under disadvantageous circumstances. Sister Mary informs us that the school is conducted on a broad basis, no religious



teaching is imparted during the ordinary school hours ... The school is open to all, free of charge, and has proved of much advantage. It is surely needless to commend the mission of the self-sacrificing Sisters.

More than an inkling of Mother Aubert in full flourish!

Mother Aubert returned to Jerusalem in December, with a total collection of £1007/15/-. And with two young West Coast girls, Katie Hartnett and Annie McQuilkin, who were the first to join the order as a result of her collecting tour. Back in October, she had written to Katie and among more serious matters had posed this question: 'Now I cannot promise you lollies in Jerusalem.

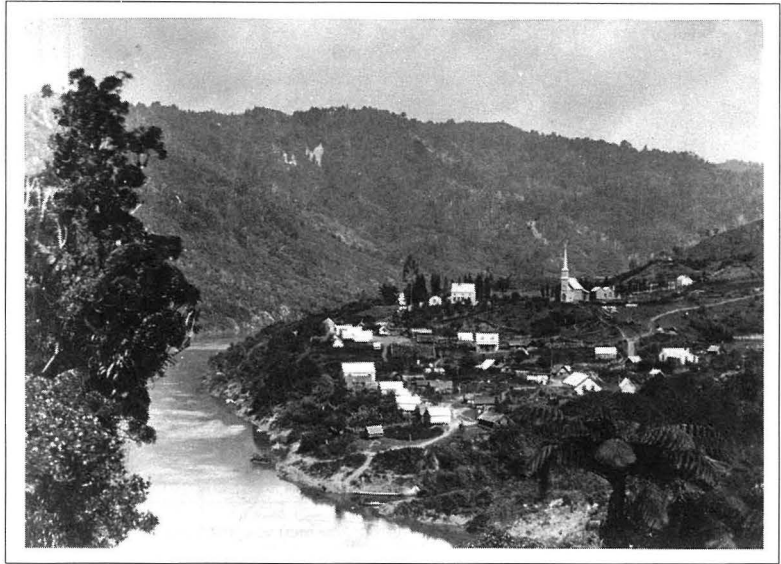
How will potatoes do instead? No lollies, no pudding, no tea. Will not that be dreadful? How can a vocation stand it? I leave you to ponder over such a question and when you write to me again you will tell what you think'. They took up the challenge and she met them at the steamer in Wellington. They reached Jerusalem together on 12 December. Their arrival was symbolic. The search for suitable French nuns, mentioned much earlier in the diary, stopped. Mother Aubert knew now that New Zealand was where she was going to find her most suitable workers and companions. It was her home mission, not a foreign one. She was not looking back; she was looking forward.

POSTSCRIPT

The stained glass windows of the Stout Research Centre, befitting a religious theme, feature the leaded initials of Robert Stout, a contemporary of Suzanne Aubert in the task of moulding a moral framework for the new country. David Hamer wrote about Robert Stout:

He was very cautious as a politician, placing strong emphasis on educating public opinion to accept change; indeed he saw this as the most important role which he himself could play. There was a strong moralising tone to his liberalism. It was to the inculcation of new morality rather than to legislation that he looked for the improvement of society.¹³

Suzanne Aubert's outlook was both parallel and a mirror image. While he was a political freethinker with a strong moralising tone to his liberalism, a man in power able to publicise theories of change; she on the other hand was an apolitical religious with a strong liberal tone to her morality. She too looked to improving people's lives, within the framework of her beliefs. A woman, unable within the church to preach, she publicised and inculcated values through lively human example as the collecting tour so vividly showed.



The new church at Hiruharama (Jerusalem), with the two-storeyed convent to its left, both built with funds from the collecting tour. Home of Compassion Archives, Wellington

FOOTNOTES

- 1 The words Jerusalem and Hiruharama indicate the same settlement.
- 2 To minimise footnotes, quotes from material in the Home of Compassion Archives and the Marist Archives, Wellington have not been acknowledged here in full detail.
- 3 O'Farrell, Patrick, *Vanished Kingdoms, Irish in Australia and New Zealand*, NSWUP, Sydney, 1990, flyleaf.
- 4 Two Sisters and a collecting pram feature in a later Wellington 'spitting' incident witnessed by a member of Hugh Laracy's family. The response was very similar.
- 5 Ormond, Hannah, *Diary 1882*, MS 1741 Acc 79-151/2, Alexander Turnbull Library.
- 6 Siegfried, André, *Democracy in New Zealand*, English translation, London 1914; first published in 1904, p 271
- 7 *Ibid*, p 273
- 8 Jan Robinson in her 1983 University of Canterbury M.A. thesis, 'Of Diverse Persons, Men and Women and Whores: women and crime in nineteenth century Canterbury', and Margaret Tennant in *Paupers and Providers: Charitable Aid in New Zealand*, Wellington, 1989, discuss 'rescue' work among 'fallen women'.
- 9 O'Meehan, Fr M., *Held Firm by Faith, A History of the Diocese of Christchurch 1840-1987*, Christchurch, 1988, pp 151-156. Fr O'Meehan has documented elsewhere that at one stage Ginaty was advertising in the *New Zealand Tablet* for funds for eight different projects.
- 10 Observation of Sister Bernadette Mary Wrack, archivist, Home of Compassion.
- 11 *The Dictionary of New Zealand* database has provided information on several of the Hawke's Bay and West Coast families named in the diary.
- 12 Matthews, E., 'Sarah Mary Gillin of Kamaka' in *Women of Westland and their Families Vol II, 1977*, compiled by the Westland Branch of the National Council of Women, pp 37-40.
- 13 *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, Vol 2, p 487.