

The Anglican Historical Society of New Zealand *Te Rōpu Hītori o te Hāhi Mīhinare ki Aotearoa*

Historical Note on the diocese of Melanesia and the Mandated Territory of New Guinea (1885-1949)

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Introductory Explanation

During my research into the priests who served in our New Zealand church across the Pacific, I noticed a few were briefly in **New Britain**, part of Papua New Guinea. I had heard of the work by the Melanesian Mission to the north of the Solomon Islands and knew that not much had come of their diocesan initiative. I knew that during the war the work was almost extinguished and after the war the remnant left our New Zealand church to join the diocese of New Guinea and so became part of the Australian Anglican church. As I like lost causes and stories of the unexpected, I wanted to find out who these priests were and how they got there.

In the independent Anglican province of Papua New Guinea is the diocese of New Guinea Islands. Its few parishes are mostly along the southwestern coast of New Britain. This area for a couple of decades was part of the diocese of Melanesia, and as such, part of the Anglican church of the province of New Zealand.

Immediately after the First World War, the diocese of Melanesia and its New Zealand mother-church cooperated with interests in the Australian Anglican church, and with the English supporters of the Melanesian Mission to extend evangelistic work into Northern Melanesia and across into New Guinea. This work fell formally within the ecclesiastical province of New Zealand. From 1949 it was within the province of Queensland, Australia. From 27 February 1977 the new ecclesiastical province of Papua New Guinea with its five dioceses of Dogura,

Popondota, Aipo Rongo, Port Moresby, and New Guinea Islands was no longer part of the Australian church.

The early story of New Guinea Islands diocese is unusual. By 1920, the diocese of Melanesia had centred its work in the Solomon Islands. To the north of their traditional reach was the territory of German New Guinea, which the League of Nations now handed to Australia to be administered by the federal government as the 'Mandated Territory.' The Roman Catholic and Lutheran and Methodist churches were active there already, but as the British flag went up, surely it was time for the English church to follow the flag. Now, which Anglican church was going to start new work in this newly available mission field?

The leaders of the Anglican church in New Zealand and in Australia, as well as the English executive of the Melanesian Mission agreed: we should do it, we want to do it, and with God's grace we shall do it. The following complex story illustrates, in an often-painful way, the human failures that followed their bright visions for Anglican evangelism in New Britain.

First, how exactly is new work undertaken? Who decides for the Anglican church? Who funds? Who leads it? Who recruits and who appoints staff? Without a coherent responsible authority, answers cannot be found and that was the first big problem. There was no responsible authority.

These groups all had a stake in any decisions: 1) the English Committee of the Melanesian Mission (a cluster of missionary enthusiasts

meeting in London, England); 2) the missionary bishop of Melanesia (who was formally associated with the church of New Zealand, but thousands of kilometres away from New Zealand in the British Solomon Islands); 3) the general synod of the New Zealand province (meeting every three years at various centres throughout the dominion); and 4) the general synod of the Australian church (meeting every five years at various centres across the continent).

For work to begin, each of these groups had to act at one moment or another. The impossible task was to get them all to act as one for New Britain.

Funding was the next intractable problem. New money was needed to start new work. Where from? The Melanesian Mission had some endowments, and the occasional legacy - but was New Britain really an extension of Melanesia and entitled to these funds? New Zealand church people complained regularly of extravagance by the diocese of Melanesia and were not willing to throw more coins into the Western Pacific Ocean. Acknowledging this, the New Zealand general synod tried to rein in financial chaos, and set up a Finance Board for the Melanesian Mission, based in Auckland. The board measured the annual gap between income and expenditure but had no suggestions for New Britain.

Through this decade the New Zealand Board of Missions was shaped to serve the whole range of missionary interests of the New Zealand Anglican church. With the unpredictable surges of voluntary donations, money pushed towards New Britain implied less money for the committed causes. More slices cut from the one cake would mean smaller slices for others. Similarly, the Australian Board of Missions was trying to attract Australian interest and money. Money pushed to the Australian Mandated Territory implied a threat to the finances of their diocese of New Guinea just to the south of the Mandated Territory. In these circumstances big

money was too much to hope for.

So why did the Melanesian diocese continue to be the key driving force for work in the Australian Mandated Territory? The Anglican church of New Zealand had inherited its vast South Pacific responsibility from the roving initiative of the first bishop of New Zealand, George Augustus Selwyn, and from the martyred heroism of his protégé John Coleridge Patteson, the first missionary bishop of Melanesia. These names were regularly invoked but no longer raised much money. Maybe a new generation of valiant heroes would inspire new recruits and generous donations. In fact, their successors were more and more overwhelmed or broken by the demands on their human abilities and frailties.

Meanwhile to the northeast of New Zealand, the church leaders were working out the status of Anglican work in Polynesia. Way back, Bishop Selwyn had sailed around Tonga, Samoa, and Fiji, and shown an interest in future contacts and evangelisation through these Islands. But he was already a latecomer, and Polynesia was being successfully evangelised by others. In Fiji Selwyn's successors maintained pastoral care of the Melanesian migrant labour, overlapping with chaplaincy ministry among white planters and colonial officers, and justifying their existence with new work among the Indian indentured labour. Any decisions about the Mandated Territory and the Western Pacific needed to be gentle with the orphan Polynesia on the other hand.

The church leaders and sympathetic colonial administrators might urge Anglican action in the Mandated Territory, but it was not so easy to follow through. Back at home the mother churches had their own concerns. Here in New Zealand a great deal of energy was absorbed in training clergy, building churches and vicarages, and then trying to raise stipends for their priests. In Australia the sheer size and sparse population required a missionary-style commitment within

the vast spaces of their own borders. The diocese of British New Guinea, in theory their overseas missionary work, dangled on a shoestring of poverty. Charity began at home and ruefully stayed at home.

The 1920 sketch of Anglican life in the Mandated Territory called for huge resources. A new bishopric, a new diocese with staff from England and Australia and New Zealand, a string of stations with new evangelistic work among tribes untouched by Christian churches, with medical work, women's work, and schools. The uncertainties around leadership, funding, and recruiting quickly made the noisy talk subside. But then human disasters shrank the voices to a whisper.

The bishop of Melanesia was willing to do his best to get things going - but after two years of cancer operations in England he never really bounced back to full life. The first bishop appointed from Australia for the Mandated Territory was a personal disaster and was whisked out within a year. Nobody could talk about that. Without credible leadership, staff recruitment was impossible. Funding was unavailable if nobody knew what was going on. Then the next bishop overseeing the Mandated Territory was removed in total disgrace. His sudden evaporation sent dismay through the whole Melanesian mission. Nature took its toll when the new steam vessel, essential for the leadership in maintaining links between the Melanesian mission stations, was sunk on its maiden voyage. Was it time to pull the plug and quietly go home?

A competent military man did pull the mission out of the terrible 1920s and its entail of disasters. Under Bishop Baddeley morale gradually turned around. Despite recurring troubles, the later 1930s show some progress and recovery of initiative. But the world's problems then sank those last chances for the Melanesian diocese in the Mandated Territory.

World War 2 and the Japanese invasion and war in the Coral Sea swept away all that remained.

So, what can be said at the end? From 1920 to 1949 the history of the Mandated Territory and the diocese of Melanesia does offer an example of 'partnership in mission' amongst Anglicans in the Pacific region - England, Australia, the Melanesian Mission, and New Zealand, all playing a part and with enduring persistence learning to cooperate in providing human resources, financial support, and church life.

The initiative was maybe ill-conceived, and it issued in an unusually wide range of human scandals and breakdowns, misfortunes of ill health and tragic death, the loss of church resources by shipwreck and cyclone, the destruction of war. Yet the ordination at the very end of the era of the Revd. Julius Ayong, father of the Most Revd. James Ayong (from 1997 the archbishop of Papua New Guinea) was surely a fulfilment of courage.

The Historical Note - a chronology

(1885) The German imperial power took north-eastern New Guinea and (with the Islands of the Bismarck Archipelago) this region became German New Guinea.

(1887) The British imperial power took the south-eastern portion of mainland New Guinea, under joint Australian and British administration known as British New Guinea.

(1898) British New Guinea, this south-eastern portion of New Guinea island, formed the new missionary diocese of British New Guinea, and part of the church of Australia.

(1902-1906) Administration of British New Guinea, now named Papua, was under the Queensland colonial government.

(1905-1906) Administration of Papua passed to the federal government of Australia; the missionary diocese of British New Guinea continued to be co-terminous with the colonial territory and was now part of the (ecclesiastical)

province of Queensland Australia.

(1914) At the outset of World War 1 German New Guinea was surrendered and became British New Guinea; Gerald SHARP, the bishop of New Guinea (part of the Australian church) made about 11 pastoral visits to the Australian garrison at Rabaul in the early part of the war.

(June 1919) The Australian Board of Missions supported the principle of a new Melanesian diocese centred upon New Britain and its administrative headquarters Rabaul.

(August 1919) The Melanesian Mission staff meeting at Norfolk island gave formal support to the principle of a bishop for the ex-German Northern Solomons.

(September 1919) STEWARD, as bishop of Melanesia, discussed these proposals with the New Zealand church leaders and indicated his willingness to save expense by administering the region himself.

(January 1920) The English Committee of the Melanesian Mission agreed to support a new northern diocese provided it remained within the Melanesian Mission, as part of the church of New Zealand. (This would ensure availability of funds held for the Melanesian Mission.)

(08 Jul 1920) At Church House,, Westminster, and before the beginning of the Lambeth Conference of bishops, a day-conference on 'Pacific Missionary Problems' met under the chairmanship of Churchill JULIUS, bishop of Christchurch and senior bishop of New Zealand: the archbishop of Sydney (WRIGHT), the archbishop of Brisbane (DONALDSON), the archbishop of Melbourne (CLARKE), the bishop of Adelaide (THOMAS), of Auckland (AVERILL, later archbishop of New Zealand), of Ballarat (MAXWELL-GUMBERTON), of Bendigo (BAKER), of Bunbury (WILSON, formerly of Melanesia), of Carpentaria (NEWTON, later of New Guinea), of Gippsland (CRANSWICK, later general secretary Australian Board of Missions), of Goulburn

(RADFORD), of Grafton (COOPER), of New Guinea (SHARP, archbishop of Brisbane 1921), of North Queensland (FEETHAM), of North-West Australia (TROWER), of Kalgoorlie (ELSEY), of Riverina (ANDERSON), of Rochester (HARMER), of Tasmania (HAY), of Willochra (WHITE), and of Waiapu (SEDGWICK); also, MONTGOMERY (once bishop of Tasmania, later SPG secretary, retired 1919), WILLIS (once bishop of Honolulu, later in Tonga, died Nov 1920), TWITCHELL the bishop in Polynesia (resigned Aug 1921): but not the bishop of Melanesia (STEWARD, who did not attend the Lambeth Conference). Present as well were the Revd. A. E. CORNER (1906-1942 general secretary of the English Committee of the Melanesian Mission) and the Revd. H. Howard LEA (member of the Australian Board of Missions, and chair of the Australian Committee for the Melanesian Mission), the Revd. C Coleridge ('Coley', godson of J. C. PATTESON) HARPER (former archdeacon of Rangitikei, Wellington), and Canon W.C. BROWNING (formerly in the diocese Melanesia).

They resolved that the time had come for the formation of a new second diocese of the Melanesian Mission, which would include New Britain, New Ireland, the Bismarck Archipelago and the Solomons north of Ysabel. The foundation, support, and administration were to be primarily the responsibility of the Australian Church, and the Australian Board of Missions was to raise funds and frame plans for the creation of the new diocese. The English Committee of the Melanesian Mission was asked to take a definite part in easing the financial burden by contributing either the Bickersteth bequest or some equally effective assistance (£20,000 had been bequeathed by Miss BICKERSTETH for the benefit of the Melanesian Mission). Excited enthusiasm pressed towards the development of a Western Pacific province of New Guinea, Melanesia, Polynesia, but then most (including the bishop of New Guinea) opposed the proposal. Further discussion made clear that any

Western Pacific province was a long way ahead, and for now these areas were to be associated with the church of a more developed country (New Zealand / Australia) rather than linked only among themselves.

(29 July 1920) The bishops of Christchurch (JULIUS), of Auckland (AVERILL), of Bunbury (Cecil WILSON), of Goulburn (RADFORD), and the Revd. Coley HARPER and the Revd. A. E. CORNER met as a subcommittee for advisory work on constitutional issues around the diocese of Melanesia and the powers of the English Committee. The Melanesian Mission was now seen to include all the island groups from New Guinea to New Caledonia. Financial management of money raised in England would stay with the English Committee. The province of New Zealand through its general synod (meeting triennially) had initial responsibility for any new diocese; second in the process would be the general synod of Australia (meeting every five years). The staff of the Melanesian mission must have an advisory but real voice in the nomination of a bishop for the diocese of Melanesia, whom the bishops of New Zealand formally appoint. The recently formed Joint Board of the Australian and New Zealand Boards of Missions should now have the responsibility for allocation of funds received for the two proposed dioceses, (see Aug 1920 Southern Cross Log)

While the absent bishop of Melanesia STEWARD agreed to the proposals, the staff of the Melanesian mission saw the scheme as totally unreasonable when these areas were being evangelised already by Roman Catholics and Methodists, (see pp. 210-211 Lord of the Southern Isles, Charles Fox)

(17 Dec 1920) After years of argument, the League of Nations mandated the German territories of New Guinea to the administration of the federal government of Australia.

(05 April 1921) The New Zealand Board of Missions executive (including the bishops of the

province of New Zealand) discussed proposals for the episcopal administration of the Western Pacific. STEWARD would have three suffragan bishops under himself as the diocesan bishop of Melanesia based in the Solomon Islands. Suffragans were easier to appoint than a fully independent diocesan bishop, but each would have full responsibility within his own area. The first suffragan would be for Southern Melanesia, including the New Hebrides, the second suffragan for what had been the 'German Solomons, Bougainville, and possibly part of Old Melanesia' (the western districts of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate such as New Georgia, and Choiseul, by then Methodist), the third would be in charge of Tonga and Polynesia. The diocesan ship, MV SOUTHERN CROSS V would visit them all, over eight months a year. STEWARD'S own view was that these could all continue initially as part of the extended diocese of Melanesia and thus part of the province of New Zealand; others however viewed these specific suffragan bishops as nominated and supported by the specific churches of Australia, New Zealand, and of England, (see STEWARD, John Manwaring).

(1921) After discussions of the New Zealand Board of Missions, the Australian Board of Missions, the English Melanesian Committee, and with the agreement of STEWARD, bishop of Melanesia, the Mandated Territory of New Guinea (but at this initial stage not explicitly including the mainland Territory) now formed part of the missionary diocese of Melanesia, in the province of the church of New Zealand.

(1923) As problems around financing arose rather than found a separate diocese of the Mandated Territory, it was thought 'expedient' for work there to be inaugurated by the existing diocese of Melanesia and under the bishop of Melanesia. Saving the reputation of the Australian Board of Missions, STEWARD agreed to undertake personally the supervision of the proposed Australian Anglican mission. But two

years' serious illness in England forbade his doing so.

(1924-1925) The Australian Board of Missions began fund-raising and placed and funded a chaplain (with a motorbicycle). Frederick Richard BISHOP undertook pastoral visits as chaplain to all whites in the Australian Mandated Territory - including New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville and mainland New Guinea, (see Hilliard; BISHOP Frederick Richard)

(06 Feb 1925) With much concern at the recurring gap between income and expenditure (especially with the costs of the MV SOUTHERN CROSS V), the General synod of the New Zealand church set up the Melanesian Mission Finance Board in Auckland to manage the New Zealand resources of the diocese of Melanesia.

(1925) The Australian Board of Missions (and STEWARD) understood that the Territory mandated to Australian administration should also be part of the Australian Anglican church. Until this was possible, Australia would appoint a bishop for this proposed diocese of 'Northern Melanesia', formally an assistant to the bishop of Melanesia. STEWARD trusted that the Australian and English interests, in particular, would find new money and staff as present work in the diocese of Melanesia should not suffer with the redistribution of its resources to the 'Northern' diocese.

(Nov 1925) STEWARD, frail from two years' cancer treatment, encouraged and accompanied by his first new assistant bishop F.M. MOLYNEUX (theoretically appointed for the New Hebrides at the far south of the diocese), made his first pastoral visit to 'raise the flag' at Rabaul, and wrote to the archbishop of Canterbury commending the proposal of an assistant bishopric in the Mandated Territory to work with the native population, and to the Revd. J.S. NEEDHAM, chairman of the Australian Board of Missions, and others in Australia asking for a recommendation of a candidate whom

STEWARD would then nominate to the bishops of New Zealand for their appointment, (see MOLYNEUX, Frederick Merivale)

(02 December 1925 and 03 Dec 1925) a special session of the New Zealand general synod (particularly concerned with the proposal for a Māori bishopric) noted that the diocese of Melanesia was not territorial but consisted of its bishop and those in communion with the bishop - this left more questions open.

The Australian Board of Missions nominated (after other suggested nominations failed) E.N. WILTON to be bishop of 'Northern Melanesia' - the Mandated Territory of New Guinea (including Bougainville, Islands to the north-west off the coast of Papua (Bismarck archipelago), and Rabaul), regions theoretically part of the original diocese of Melanesia but not hitherto visited or evangelised by the Melanesian mission. He was an assistant bishop to STEWARD bishop of Melanesia, based in the Solomon Islands 1,000 km away.

(1927) The SPG received £14,000 from the estate of Archdeacon F.D. PRITT: noting PRITT's generous commitment to Melanesia, the bequest might well go towards the endowment of this new bishopric in the Mandated Territory, to be staffed and supported by the Australian Board of Missions. However, at the wish of Randall DAVIDSON, archbishop of Canterbury, the SPG committee devoted the bequest to the diocese of Bombay. By now it was clear: the financial base was too slight for a See of Northern Melanesia, (see correspondence indexed in (280); see PRITT, Francis Drinkall).

(19 Apr 1928) the 23rd general synod of the province of New Zealand met under Archbishop AVERILL. The president made these points: the Melanesian Mission from the beginning (with G.A. SELWYN bishop of New Zealand, and William TYRRELL, bishop of Newcastle) had been a joint responsibility of both the Australian and the New Zealand church; the missionary diocese had no

defined boundaries and the bishop had a roving commission, but the initial range of the diocese had become circumscribed, first by the various comity agreements whereby other churches and the Anglican church agreed to work only in specified areas. The creation of the diocese of British New Guinea, and more recently of the diocese of Polynesia, had further limited the notional extent of the missionary diocese of Melanesia. Finally, the Northern Solomon Islands under the German emperor had not been open to the Anglican church. So, the first moves towards a new diocese lay with the New Zealand church and its general synod. But so that as soon as possible his See could become part of the Australian church, it was appropriate that the nominated assistant bishop be consecrated in Australia. With a change of a church canon, the primate and three bishops in New Zealand could authorise the consecration outside New Zealand of such an assistant bishop - with immediate effect.

(11 Jun 1928-1929) With a staff of three priests (from Australia: F.R. BISHOP, and V.H.G. SHERWIN; from England: L.E. CARTRIDGE) and one layman, S.G. TITLER, the Australian WILTON as bishop of Northern Melanesia (and assistant to the bishop of Melanesia) began mission work in the 500K stretch of coastline in the Gasmata district on the south-western coast of New Britain. With the general synod's reminder that the diocese of Melanesia (and thus the new bishopric of 'Northern Melanesia') had no boundaries, SHERWIN soon went on to the new goldfields of Morobe. But soon after his arrival Bishop WILTON left in ill-health and disgrace. (For the sequence of events see WILTON, Edward Nowill; CARTRIDGE, Lawrence Edwin; SHERWIN, Vernon Henry Gough)

STEWART found his position impossible and resigned under pressures of frail health and complaints about poor financial management. His successor MOLYNEUX sought a young candidate as his assistant bishop to be based in

the New Hebrides with pastoral charge of his former responsibility of the archdeaconry of Southern Melanesia - the opposite end of the diocese from the Mandated Territory. Despite the collapse of morale and finances with the WILTON debacle, in England CORNER urged that not one but two assistant bishops be found - one for the north as well as one for the archdeaconry of Southern Melanesia.

(Feb 1931) J. H. DICKINSON was appointed as assistant bishop (to MOLYNEUX the bishop of Melanesia) for the New Hebrides in the Southern archdeaconry - and was based mostly in the Solomon Islands. Before the next bishop of Melanesia came, he did ordain clergy. (See DICKINSON, John Hubert)

(Nov 1931) Soon after his second visit to New Britain, MOLYNEUX resigned the See in disgrace. (1933-1939) With repeated debacles in the diocese of Melanesia (including also now the disposal of the MV SOUTHERN CROSS V, and the wrecking of its smaller replacement SOUTHERN CROSS VI), the 'Northern Region' was demoted to an archdeaconry, which the bishop expected to visit annually on MV SOUTHERN CROSS VII - until the outbreak of World War 2.

(see: http://Anglicanhistory.org/oceania/baddeley_report1936.html)

(Jan 1934) W. H. BADDELEY (vice MOLYNEUX) bishop of Melanesia made his first episcopal visitation to the Mandated Territory: chaplaincy ministry was operating at Rabaul, at Wau in the New Guinea goldfields, and missionary ministry along the Arawe coast of New Britain. He appointed Ralph De VOIL the first (and last) archdeacon of Northern Melanesia, (see BADDELEY, Walter Hubert; DE VOIL, Ralph; FITZGERALD, Knightley Purefoy; VOSS, Geoffrey Herbert Donald; WIEDEMANN, William George Glenn)

(1936-1936) Assistant Bishop DICKINSON served as locum tenens at Rabaul, and then as locum tenens at Wau, Morobe province New Guinea -

and went home to England and resigned.

(1936) BADDELEY appealed for funds to back up the initiatives of SHERWIN and to evangelise the KUKU KUKU people in the Mt Hagen area: the response was too slight for him to go ahead and many complications ditched the plans, (see <http://Anglicanhistory.org/aus/png/kukukukul937/>; SHERWIN, Vernon Henry Gough)

(1936) Philip Nigel Warrington STRONG (vice NEWTON) bishop of New Guinea noted that BADDELEY was opposed to the formation at this stage of one new diocese from regions so disparate and distant as mainland New Guinea and New Britain; and wanted the diocese of New Guinea to take over the evangelisation and chaplaincy on mainland New Guinea, and so leave New Guinea Islands to the care of the diocese of Melanesia.

(Jan/Feb 1938) BADDELEY with the Revd. C. E. FOX, and a number of the Melanesian Brothers, visited New Britain. At Kumbun a conference of the white staff (lacking SHERWIN at Morobe) decided to make Kumbun the centre for women's work, with Nursing Sister Amy THOMPSON and Miss N FAGAN; and to set up at Lupun a central school for training New Britain teachers, under the Revd. H. THOMPSON. Households of the Melanesian Brothers were now at Sag Sag, at Au, Meleglo, and Kavele. (see THOMPSON, Harold; FOX, Charles Elliot)

(1938-1939) Negotiations began with STRONG the bishop of New Guinea and the (ecclesiastical) province of Queensland for the transfer of the Mandated Territory to that jurisdiction. STRONG explained to the Queensland provincial synod his unwillingness to take on commitments beyond the prior commitment to Papua, the original diocese of British New Guinea, where the church was underfunded and overstretched. As STRONG lacked resources to do more than maintain white chaplaincy, the diocese of Melanesia was pro tempore to remain responsible for evangelistic ministry on the island of New Britain, based on

the southwestern coast around Arawe, and Sag Sag.

(1939) After protracted discussion the Australian general synod agreed to the transfer of the mainland part of the Mandated Territory to the diocese of New Guinea. New Guinea Islands continued part of the diocese of Melanesia, (see Wetherell)

(1939) The Australian military authorities amalgamated the two territories Papua and the Mandated Territory into the one unified administration of 'Australian New Guinea' - on the restoration of civil administration after the war, this became known as 'Papua-New Guinea.'

The outbreak of World War 2 and the Japanese invasion forbade further decision or action by church or by the Australian colonial power; the diocese of Melanesia was perceived as having abandoned its work in the archdeaconry of Northern Melanesia.

(1943) The remaining clergy of the archdeaconry of Northern Melanesia died tragically at their posts: the Revd. J. F. BARGE was beheaded by the Japanese military; the Revd. B. W. F. MOORE died of privation, (see BARGE, John Frederick; MOORE, Bernard William Farren; VOSS, Geoffrey Herbert Donald)

(1945) BADDELEY (on resigning the see of Melanesia) challenged the Australian Board of Missions to make New Guinea the sole responsibility of the Australian church and create there one new diocese - air links had improved communication between the disparate regions of the Mandated Territory.

In Sydney a conference of Pacific bishops (including the bishops of Melanesia (BADDELEY), of Polynesia (L. S. KEMPTHORNE), of New Guinea (STRONG), and the archbishop of New Zealand (Campbell WEST-WATSON) and Archdeacon A.E. PREBBLE (the New Zealand commissary for the bishop of Melanesia) on diocesan boundaries approved the transfer of all the Australian

Mandated Territory to the diocese of New Guinea. The general synod of the church of Australia agreed to this.

The 30th general synod of New Zealand was informed by Archbishop WEST-WATSON of the transfer of the Mandated Territory from the Melanesian Mission to the diocese of New Guinea and the province of Queensland, (see WEST-WATSON, Campbell)

(Jan 1947) At the conference of Pacific bishops in Honolulu Hawai'i, Bishop STRONG invited the Episcopal church of the USA to undertake this missionary work in mainland New Guinea as a memorial to servicemen lost in the recent war; on their declining, the responsibility finally fell to Australia.

(c1948-1949) The Queensland state government and the Australian federal government ratified the decisions of the diocese of Melanesia and the diocese of New Guinea, (see Wetherell)

(Apr 1949 - May 1949) S. G. CAULTON (vice BADDELEY) the bishop of Melanesia spent seven weeks in New Britain, and ordained two deacons at Kumbun; before departing he met STRONG at Rabaul to coordinate the transfer, (see CAULTON, Sidney Gething; AYONG, Julius; MATAWI, Harold)

(01 Jul 1949) All parts of Papua-New Guinea were finally part of the diocese of New Guinea. The diocese of Melanesia had no further responsibilities in the old Mandated Territory of New Guinea.

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