

## 7. Expansion of the Protectorate 1898–1900

In the early colonial period, economic and social disparities became apparent even if colonial rule brought some measure of peace and security to troubled areas. The 'lack of economic and educational opportunities, the alien and sometimes repressive nature of British administration and the failure of both government, and the Melanesian Mission, as the dominant mission of the area, despite taxes and church collections, to give them [the people] in return the means of achieving the economic, political and social equality with Europeans which they had been encouraged to expect' served to accentuate social inequality and island based disparities (Hilliard 1974: 114). This constant theme was to run right through Solomon Islander social, economic and political life into the contemporary period. The traders and missionaries were powerful agents for change in pre-colonial life in the Solomon Islands. But most of all it was the influence of large-scale labour migrations to the plantations of Queensland, Fiji and Samoa that generated, in the minds of Malaitans in particular, ideas of difference, disparity and discord. It was capitalism that created rich and poor Solomon Islanders.

In the meantime, the southern islands of Rennell, Bellona, Sikiana the Santa Cruz group and Reef Islands and Tikopia were proclaimed part of the Solomon Islands protectorate in 1898 and 1899 (1 J. Soc. Comp. Legis. Ns 475 1899; Woodford papers PMB 1290 Items 8/19/1; Woodford to O'Brien 17 & 18 June 1898 WPHC 4/IV 233/1898). The British flag was hoisted on the various islands by the HMS *Goldfinch* and the HMS *Mohawk* from the Royal Navy Australia Station (*The Sydney Morning Herald* 5 September 1898: 6; *The Australian Town and Country Journal* 8 October 1898: 30–31 shows photographs of the ceremony on Tikopia). When the HMS *Mohawk* was proclaiming Utupua as part of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate a young boy sought protection saying that he was being held there after a raid on a visiting cutter in which three traders were killed and the cutter burnt. The sailors from the *Mohawk* found the bodies of three white men in the bush and, in retaliation, torched a village (*The Australian Town and Country Journal* 9 July 1898: 7). Behind the pomp and circumstance of the proclamation of the protectorate, the ineffective and unsatisfactory process of 'Commodore Justice' continued. This southern expansion incorporated all the islands south to the New Hebrides—all far beyond the reach of the one man in Tulagi.

In 1899, following on from the tortuous negotiations over Samoa, the northern Solomon Islands of Choiseul, Isabel, the Shortland Islands, Fauro and Ontong Java (Leueneuwa) became part of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate

(Woodford papers PMB 1290 Items 8/19/2 & 8/19/3). With this proclamation in October 1900 Woodford finally had all 'those splendid islands' under his administration (*The Advertiser* 26 October 1900; *The Sydney Daily Telegraph* 26 October 1900; *The Manawatu [New Zealand] Herald* 21 November 1899: 2). The proclamation that the islands were now British was also announced in the Sydney press in an article by Walter Henry Lucas from Burns Philp illustrated with a photomontage of 12 images, 11 by Lucas and one of the ship's company raising of the British flag taken by or belonging to Woodford. The article states: 'In August last year Mr Charles M. Woodford, Resident Commissioner of the Western Pacific [sic] was commissioned by the Home Government to take formal possession of the new territory [the northern Solomon Islands]. In company with Mr A. Mahaffy, Deputy Commissioner, he proceeded in HMS "Torch" to Lord Howe Island, and there read the proclamation of annexation to the natives assembled, hoisted the British flag, the ship simultaneously fired a salute of 21 guns, and then three cheers were given for the Queen' (*The Sydney Mail & New South Wales Advertiser* 3 November 1900: 1040 and 1051). Lucas also used this montage of his photographs and the associated article to promote the work of Burns Philp, the advantages of a steamer connection between Sydney and the islands and the benefits of the extension of the annexation over the former German territory. No doubt Lucas also wrote the final section that stated: 'It is of vital importance that these islands should eventually come under the control of the Commonwealth, and every advantage now gained by another nation in the Western Pacific is a menace to the future welfare of Australia'.

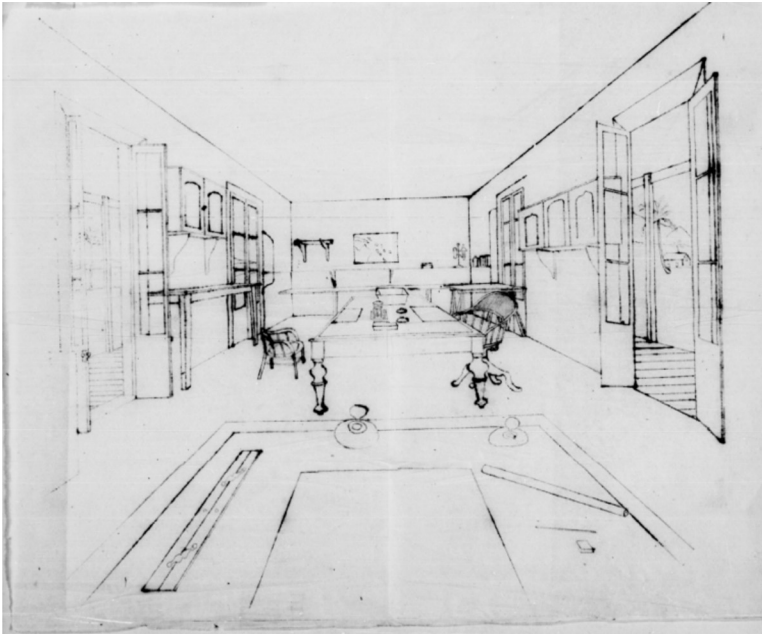
## Arthur William Mahaffy

Smallpox in German New Guinea was introduced to the region by Malay plantation labourers from the Straits Settlements and spread quickly among the local people on the mainland and then across to New Britain. The Sacred Heart Mission priests condemned the *Neu-Guinea Compagnie* administration for their inability to stop the spread of the disease. When it spread to the Raluana Mission near Herbertshöhe (Kokopo) where the Wesleyan mission had established a base it made news in Australia (*The Sydney Morning Herald* 22 February 1897: 5). The introduction of quarantine regulations in the Solomon Islands meant that trading vessels from Sydney could not enter the protectorate from the German territory but the northern Solomons was open and unprotected. Woodford was located in the central Solomons and the attack on Jean Pratt at Simbo illustrated the inability of the one-man administration with only a whaleboat to respond to crises without assistance. Mahaffy, appointed as Deputy Commissioner, arrived in the islands in January 1898 and spent the first year at Tulagi and in travelling around the region (Woodford to O'Brien 30 January 1898 WPHC 4/IV 85/1898).



**Figure 30. Government Residency, 1909.**

Source: PMB Photo 56–12; see also National Archives of Australia NAA: R32, Sundry 1/12, 1909.



**Figure 31. Sketch of Woodford's office on Tulagi.**

Source: Woodford papers PMB 1290 Item 11/4.



**Figure 32. Tulagi waterfront.**

Source: Noel Butlin Archives Centre, The Australian National University, CSR Collection, N115-513-4.

He was an unusual man for policing work in such an out-of-the-way place as the Solomon Islands. The son of John Pentland Mahaffy, Provost of Trinity College Dublin, a well-known teacher of Oscar Wilde (Foster 1893: 397), Mahaffy was a very different character to Woodford although they appear to have worked well together. He had been educated at Marlborough and graduated as a classics scholar from Magdalen College, Oxford and then studied briefly at Trinity College, Dublin. He then joined the Royal Munster Fusiliers as a 2nd Lieutenant (O'Brien 2011). Prior to his appointment to the Solomon Islands, where he served from 1898 to 1904, he spent two years as District Officer in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands (1896–1898).

Woodford and Mahaffy began to recruit police from Malaita, Savo and from Isabel. They did not recruit from Nggela. It is assumed that he felt the people there were too much under the influence of the Melanesian Mission which had established a large training school and small bush hospital at Siota at the end of the Mboli Passage. However, the decision may have been largely personal. Woodford and Welchman had a disagreement over treatment of a young Roviana man who passed on an epidemic of dysentery that killed a number of students at St Luke's College (Hilliard 1978: 131). As a result, Welchman closed his small hospital and gave Woodford a dressing down that caused some bitterness between the two men (Wilson 1935). Mahaffy's reports to Woodford were detailed and descriptive although he only wrote one published piece on the Solomon Islands (Mahaffy 1902). However, before this he was to be Woodford's chief assistant based in Gizo with the primary task of suppressing head hunting in New Georgia and neighbouring islands (Scarr 1967a: 267, Golden 1993: 236–237). He would serve under Woodford for only six years.





**Figure 33. 'Solomon Islands'.**

Source: *The Sydney Mail*, 3 November 1900.

In the Solomon Islands the process of pacification began with retribution meted out to villagers during the annual visits of the Royal Navy men-of-war but local people had learnt to deal with this by retreating inland away from the coast and the shipping channels. 'Commodore Justice' as an exercise in power, had little real impact on local people. Much coastal property was destroyed but few people were killed in these actions. It was apparent that this official 'act of war' was both unsatisfactory in practice and improper in itself. But this was a point of view more frequently promoted by Royal Navy officers than by the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific (Scarr 1967a: 73). This type of pacification was enforced when European interests, trade or mission, were threatened. The Royal Navy took little active interest in the internal conflicts between warring groups. As most plantation development was now set to take place on the

accessible coastal regions of Guadalcanal and New Georgia it was there that police action was concentrated. The presence of district magistrates supported by police changed the face of justice (Bennett 1987: 106–107).

Woodford and Mahaffy could not rely on the annual visits of the Royal Navy to take them around the islands. In 1899 a second grant-in-aid of £2,500 allowed the administration to build a second station at Gizo and buy the ketch-rigged yacht the *Lahloo* but the problems of using a sailing vessel in a region known for its gales and long periods of calm hot weather soon became apparent (O'Brien to Colonial Office 9 January 1900 CO 225 59 5939). The Gizo station was finished in January 1900 although clearing the site and cutting timber for buildings took time (Great Britain. House of Commons. Parliamentary Papers 1901: 13–15; O'Brien to Colonial Office 21 April CO 225 57 14091 and Treasury to Colonial Office 22 February 1899 CO225 57 4609). Mahaffy's salary was £400 a year. A further £400 was allocated for wages and allowances for extra police needed to maintain law and order in the northern sector of the protectorate (O'Brien to Colonial Office 20 April 1899 CO225 57 14089 and 30 September 1899 CO225 57 32175). The Solomon Islands, with a population of 60 whites in 1900 and with an uncounted but overestimated number of 150,000 local people, was a poor sister to more established tropical colonies like Fiji, Samoa, New Hebrides and Queensland. In economic terms, British New Guinea, undergoing an internal struggle for power following the departure of Sir William MacGregor, fared little better (Gibbney 1966; O'Brien 2009). To create an environment conducive to investment and economic development, the western islands had first to be pacified.

Mahaffy and his canoe-borne police force were quick to respond to incidents in the New Georgia area and '[s]o effective was this mobile force that by 1900 they had stopped head hunting from Roviana, Simbo and Mbilua and enforced peace among adjacent peoples' (Bennett 1987: 107). Mahaffy's long and detailed reports on his actions against head hunters in the western islands are included, with copies in Woodford's handwriting, in the archive of the Western Pacific High Commission (WPHC 4/IV 295/1898). They are sober reading. Not only for the details of head hunting activities but also for the direct and often ruthless means used by Mahaffy and his police in suppression of the activity. Much of the content of the reports was repeated in submissions to the High Commission and to the Colonial Office as part of the concerted efforts to secure funds for a steam launch for use by policing patrols (O'Brien to Colonial Office enclosing despatch by Woodford dated 27 August 1898 and report by Mahaffy dated 1 August 1898 CO225 55 25981).

By 1902 the Roviana and Marovo Lagoons, and the islands of Simbo, Valla Lavella and Ranongga had been largely pacified and so, after three years in the New Georgia district, Mahaffy requested six months leave. In September 1902

he also published his only examination of Solomon Islander life and culture in *The Empire Review* (Mahaffy 1902; Woodford papers PMB 1290 Item 7/18). Mahaffy continued to call the islanders ‘treacherous’, ‘blood-thirsty’, ‘primitive savages, cannibals and head-hunters’, although he did give them some credit for the ‘black race make long journeys, as far as two hundred miles, in their great war canoes, which hold from twenty to thirty men, and are probably the most splendid purely native-built vessels in the world’ (Mahaffy 1902: 192). Mahaffy advocated the importation of Chinese or Indian labourers for he considered the local labour force was unable to meet the demands of the assumed prosperous plantation economy then being established in the islands. His position on Christian conversion was conservative and presumably followed the official line. Mahaffy gave support to the Melanesian Mission approach of education first and conversion to follow. He did not consider the evangelical churches’ position that faith and conversion should precede education as an effective solution for ‘really primitive savages I believe that religion must follow, and follow slowly, the education of the people to a state of mind in which the truths of Christianity can be understood’ (Mahaffy 1902: 195).

It is unlikely that Mahaffy’s article would have made much of a splash in London. *The Empire Review* was a rather dreary magazine devoted to Imperialism and the promotion of the British Empire. Correspondents tended to be titled conservatives, many of them colleagues or friends of the editor Clement (late Sir Clement) Kinloch-Cooke. In Australia it was considered pompous and scathingly described as a monthly magazine ‘founded to foster unity and provide a platform for the discussion of Imperial matters’, but that ‘most of the contributors are bigwigs with handles to their names, who have nothing particular to say and say it in ponderous platitudes’ (*The Advertiser* [Adelaide] 16 March 1901: 8). After describing the islands in general and their poor climate for white men, Mahaffy wrote that the people ‘have been known as the most treacherous and blood-thirsty savages in the Pacific; their ancient custom of head hunting has disposed of a large number of traders’, without mentioning that head hunting had disposed of an even greater number of islanders as well.

Mahaffy noted that the war canoe he had confiscated from Kolokongo (Kolikongo or Kalikoqu) on Nusa Roviana in 1900, and used successfully in policing raids, could cover 12 miles in two hours with a crew of about 16 men (*The Morning Bulletin* [Rockhampton] 22 February 1900: 5, 3 March 1900: 6). The raid of Kalikoqu was undertaken on 21 January 1900 (WPHC 4/IV 56/1900). Mahaffy, Woodford and the police in two whaleboats left Hathorn Sound under cover of darkness. After stopping at Frank Wickham’s trading station on Hombupeka they raided Kalikoqu village on the lagoon side of Nusa Roviana. Here they found the canoe that had been used in the Bugotu attack and confiscated it. The police were again permitted to remove any valuables they found. Following

this raid Mahaffy and the police paddled back to Gizo in four hours (Woodford to O'Brien 22 January 1900 WPHC 4/IV 58/1900). Generally, *tomoko* carried a crew of between 15 and 20 men although some special ones were larger (see photograph McMahon 1918: 157). Mahaffy's canoe was 48 feet in length and once covered 90 miles in 24 hours with only two breaks (Mahaffy 1902: 192). This *tomoko* was then decorated by the police with white cockatoo feathers on the bow and stern, and blue and white calico was hung on decorated cross bars. Also on board the canoe was Mahaffy's dog Jack and when on policing patrols a flag with 'P.O. Jack' [Police Officer Jack] was flown (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 17 April 1901). Graham Officer, when visiting Mahaffy in 1901, wrote: 'A native of Rubiana [Roviana] told me that these "extra" decorations were not usual because the rain & spray from the waves destroyed the appearance of the feathers' (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Box 4332/5). It was undoubtedly a local showpiece. The *Queenslander* (5 January 1907: 25) ran a full illustrated page of scenes from the western Solomon Islands that included images of Thomas Edge-Partington, Arthur Mahaffy and his dog Jack under the headline "'Repatriating" in the Solomons'. It was a report on the final repatriation of labourers from Queensland cane fields. The illustrations were a little out-of-date as Mahaffy was in Fiji by that date.

Mahaffy was not impressed with the use of the 'grotesque and hideous Pigeon-English' but no doubt he used the language for Gizo station had been built up by 1902 into a base for the District Magistrate and about 30 policemen (Woodford to O'Brien 14 January 1900 WPHC 4/IV 56/1900). Local people from other islands then began moving there to be close to a police centre, a trading post and other services. Most likely many of these people were from the groups of original owners who had been chased away during head hunting raids. Mahaffy acknowledged that 'head hunting has been largely diminished, if unfortunately, not quite stamped out' (Mahaffy 1902: 193). Certainly, the police actions were effective at the end of the intensive head hunting period. Schneider (1996: 109) notes: 'I regard the end of headhunting as the result of economic and cultural factors, in which Europeans and New Georgians played their different parts as agents of change. The coercive means used by the British Administration in the suppression of headhunting activities were not decisive factors'. Men did not give up head hunting until traditional enemies on Choiseul and Isabel began to retaliate against raids by New Georgians. Then within the lagoonal areas around New Georgia, and between groups in the offshore islands, like Vella Lavella and Simbo, internal conflict led to a spiral of violence in which people preyed on each other. The island of Tetepare off New Georgia was almost depopulated by the mid-1800s by raids from Marovo, Roviana and Rendova warriors, sorcery attacks and epidemics and the remaining people sought shelter in other communities on the mainland nearby (Hviding 1996: 109). Gizo people had likewise abandoned the island around 1830–1840 and the small island of



Mbava, off Vella Lavella, was deserted in the 1850s because the people were too few and too vulnerable to resist attack (Nagaoka 2011: 301). The loss of warriors who could not be replaced was also taken as a failure of spiritual support and a loss of *mana*—the loss of efficacy, success or potency. The link between politics and religion was broken and head hunting as an activity, and the power of the chiefs, declined (Schneider 1996: 116). Christianity undermined the power of the pagan chiefs and priests and broke down the traditional cycles of agriculture, feasting, prestation and warfare. The period of unrest and warfare prior to 1901 is known as *taem befo Lotu* (the time before Christianity) and the time after 1902, *taem bihaen Lotu* (the time after the coming of Christianity) (Wright 2005: 273fn). The year 1902 is a crucial date in the history of the western Solomons for many reasons.

Mahaffy trained his police recruits in military fashion—using his British Army experience—and selected men from islands like Malaita, Savo and Isabel that had felt the impact of head hunting. In this way they ‘relished the opportunity to avenge their own people with Government approval and support’ (Golden 1993: 236). At the turn of the 20th century, while newspapers in Australia continued to report attacks on white residents in the islands, the reports began to focus more on policing actions that suppressed raiding. The *Bathurst Free Press and Mining Journal* (14 February 1900: 2), a newspaper no doubt read by the family of Woodford’s wife, reported: ‘Head-hunting is still the favourite occupation of the Solomon Islander’. The paper reported that the ‘abominable business is being put down by the Resident Commissioner, Mr Woodford, with a firm hand, and I [G. J. Wilson, a trader] venture to say that by the end of the year head hunting will be less congenial pastime with the Solomon Islander than it has been for so many years past’. Woodford, it reported, was ‘the right man in the right place’. It was reported that during a raid by Roviana people on Isabel a number of young boys and a missionary catechist had been murdered and in retaliation Woodford and the police raided villages in Roviana where a senior chief and his son were killed. The major factor in controlling rival killings was the physical presence of police at Gizo and the rapidity of their response (*The Advertiser* [Adelaide] 14 February 1900: 6; *The Morning Bulletin* [Rockhampton] 22 February 1900: 5). This rapid response by Mahaffy and the police was a fundamental part of the pacification campaign. Jackson (1978: 133) interviewed Pula, Hiqava’s daughter, who confirmed that her father had ceased to raid because Mahaffy and his team, using a confiscated war canoe, could live off the land, chase the *tomokos* into the shallow waters and respond quickly to incidents. But there were also changes to the social order and the spiritual world that altered people’s perceptions. The impact of Christianity was profound as were the effects of epidemics that caused loss of life among the older generation.

The moral world was changing. It was only then after 'the backbone not only of the chiefs, but also of native culture and tradition had been broken' that people submitted to the orders of the government (Thurnwald 1936: 352).

## The final ascent of Mount Lammas

Before the islands were pacified Woodford had one last goal—the ascent of Mount Lammas on Guadalcanal. There is little in the annual report to indicate just why Woodford undertook an ascent of the interior range on Guadalcanal apart from it being a long cherished ambition (Woodford 1888a, 1889, 1890b and 1890c). It was the sort of ambition held by a naturalist. Guppy had been thwarted by malaria before he reached Guadalcanal. The possible montane flora and fauna that had not been collected before would make made another 'splash' at the National History Museum and at Kew Gardens. All Woodford's previous attempts, and those of the disastrous Austrian attempt of 1896, had commenced from the northern coast and across the Guadalcanal plains using the main river systems. This time the party wisely left from the Weather Coast in November 1898 (Woodford to O'Brien 30 November 1898 WPHC 4/IV 15/1899). Woodford was accompanied by Oscar Svensen, two white crewmen from Svensen's boat the *Sikiana*, two policemen, five Malaitans who worked for Svensen at Marau, Pauro, a local chief, and one other local man. Woodford had some advantages being the Resident Commissioner and familiar with the area instead of being an independent naturalist whose travels were subject to irregular shipping and the goodwill of the local people. Starting from Wanderer Bay the men headed up Cape Hunter (Vaghato) and then followed the Itina River, the largest catchment area on the south coast. Climbing through areas of moss and fern they came to the Churimelanga River that flows from Mt Popomanaseu.

From Popomanaseu, Woodford collected seed and orchids he sent to the Botanic Gardens in Sydney and collected orchids for display at Tulagi (Woodford papers PMB 1290 Items 2/108 and 4/16). He reported on the presence of wild dogs and native rats in the mountains and was obviously pleased to be back working with natural history for a brief period. They then found that they were climbing a mountain he called Balumanau (Mt Makarakomburu, 7,422 feet or 2,262 metres) from which, above 6,000 feet, they could see over the ranges as far north and north-west as the Russell Islands (Pavuvu and Mbanika) and Savo. From that point they would also have been able to see the Nggela Islands and possibly as far as northern Malaita. At the point where the party rested the peak of Mt Popomanaseu was to the east and more than 300 feet higher. After one week they returned to Wanderer Bay. Woodford reported that Mt Lammas, sighted and named by Captains Denham and Shortland, was known locally as Mt Tatuve (Great Britain. Parliamentary Papers 1899: 18–30). The peak

he called Lammas is in fact known as Mt Togatogha, one of the highest peaks in Guadalcanal (6,791 feet or 2,070 metres), and it is the Lion's Head, a much lower mountain, that is known locally as Mt Tatuve (4,931 feet or 1,503 metres). The long and comprehensive report of the expedition concluded with a letter to the Admiralty correcting map coordinates.

The climb appears not to have been widely reported (*The Mercury* [Hobart] 28 December 1898; *The Scotsman* 9 November 1899: 6). It was not until 1965 that further scientific research on the mountain areas of the high islands in the region was undertaken. Between July and December 1965, a group of 10 botanists and zoologists from the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand went to the Solomon Islands on what was called the 'largest and logistically most complex biological expedition' mounted by the Royal Society in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Hemmen 2010). The aim of Royal Society Expedition to the British Solomon Islands Protectorate was to concentrate on limited areas of the unknown mountainous interiors and to collect specimens at various altitudinal variations. A small party climbed Popomanaseu and collected seed-plants from above 1,300 metres (4,265 feet). These were then identified at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. Among the many species collected were rare montane orchids. Woodford, Svensen and their party collected flora and fauna samples from higher altitudes: among them rare orchids and *Araucaria* species (Corner 1969b). The finding of the Royal Society expedition was that there were significant botanical and zoological differences between the flora and fauna of the mountainous regions of the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu further south (Hemman 2010: S92).

## 'The true conception of our Empire'

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century British colonialism was at its apogee. It was the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Joseph Chamberlain, who laid out the formal basis for British colonialism in a short, but important, speech given to the annual dinner of the Royal Colonial Institute in London in March 1897 (Chamberlain 1897: 228–239; *The Nelson Evening Mail* 31 (78), 2 April 1897: 3; Bennett 1962: 317–320; Bell 2007). Chamberlain made the Colonial Office one of the most powerful institutions in the British government and there was no greater champion of this Imperial expansionism than Chamberlain. The British, he stated, had a national mission to be 'a great governing race'. He spoke of the three chapters in colonial development: the first was when colonies were valued for their direct profit to Britain; the second was when dependencies were thought to be expendable and made to separate from the Mother Country; and the third, the 'true conception of our Empire', was when a sense of possession gave way to a sense of obligation. That obligation came with responsibilities,

or as Chamberlain famously expressed it: 'You cannot have omelettes without breaking eggs; you cannot destroy the practices of barbarism, of slavery, of superstition ... without the use of force'. Thus, pacification was justified, for 'when these [colonial] conquests have been made there has been bloodshed, there has been loss of life among the native populations, loss of still more precious lives among those who have been sent out to bring them into order and peaceable habits'. While Chamberlain was speaking specifically about West and East Africa he could just as well have been describing pacification in the Solomon Islands or British New Guinea. The speech was greeted with enthusiasm by many papers of the day (see for example *The Queenslander* 10 April 1897: 772).

## Journalists and public opinion

After years of negative publicity that focussed on fatal accidents or the latest murder the administration needed some good news stories. These would be provided by Ernest Favenc, a popular journalist and historian of that period who contributed to the Sydney newspapers, notably the *Evening News* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. After an early career as an explorer in northern Australia he became a writer of local histories. In 1901 he made a circuit tour of the Solomon Islands on the *Titus* in which he visited all the main islands of the group. While the articles, titled 'To the Happy and the Unhappy Isles', were written in Favenc's melodramatic and florid style they provide a useful look at the developments that had taken place in the establishment years of the Protectorate (Favenc and Taylor 1997). His first point of contact with the Solomons was Svensen's trading station at Marau Sound that he called 'only a copra-house on the shore of Guadalcanar' and he soon tired of the coconut trees which he found boring and monotonous. As he had only just touched the shores of the islands he was not off to a good start. At Rua Sura Island off Aola he noted the development of the Marist Mission station and the small school that had been established there in 1899. He described a second trading station there, presumably a reference to Mbara Island. By then Gavutu was a prosperous trading station and coaling base for Royal Navy steamers.

Tulagi, Favenc noted, was the headquarters of the Resident Commissioner who joined the voyage. The *Titus* then hoisted the British Ensign with R. C. (Resident Commissioner) emblazoned upon it. The journey took Favenc to Savo, Marovo Lagoon and through Roviana Lagoon without incident. The area was so quiet that a prospective copper mine was being established on Rendova Island, pearling was showing signs of profitability and an unnamed entomologist who wished to search for insects in the jungles of New Georgia Island was set down at Roviana. The Shortland Islands had been handed over to the British Protectorate and



plantations were operating on Poporang and Faisi Islands as well as at Siniasoro Bay on Fauro where he noted there 'is one of the oldest stations in this group, and a great deal of land has been cleared and planted with coconut trees' (*The Sydney Morning Herald* 11 June 1901: 8). The plantation at Siniasoro Bay was the home of John Champion Macdonald and his wife Melinda who had earlier contributed a collection of natural history specimens to the Australian Museum.

Favenc then paid a visit to Vella Lavella, notorious, he said, as 'the headquarters of the head-hunters who have nearly depopulated Choiseul Island', although he appeared disappointed that things were so quiet on shore. Much to Favenc's dismay the Roviana Lagoon had been pacified by mid-1901. The articles were now designed to be read by prospective settlers and planters rather than by people scandalised by the exploits of head hunters. Reflecting on the opinions of those settlers, Favenc made critical comments about the process of leasing land when he said: 'At present the control [of land in the Solomon Islands] is not altogether satisfactory. The Resident Commissioner is responsible to the High Commissioner at Fiji. More power should be invested in the Resident Commissioner, especially with regard to the granting of leases of land ... the local Commissioner, who practically knows all about it, there seems no reason why this application should not be dealt with on the spot' (*The Sydney Morning Herald* 4 July 1901: 9). Now the allocation of land for plantation development and not pacification would be the most contentious issue between the administration, the planters and the local people.

## Graham Officer from the Museum of Victoria

The Solomon Islands had been attracting the attention of journalists for some time but now it became the turn of artefact collectors. Graham Officer, a curator at the Museum of Victoria and a geologist by training, made an eight-month tour of the islands collecting 'curios' for the museum. Officer collected over 700 objects for the Museum of Victoria and also made a collection of butterflies, snakes, lizards and other natural history specimens including a number of large frogs. Baldwin Spencer, the Director of the Museum of Victoria, gave Officer £150 (about £12,000 in current values) to purchase artefacts and specimens. In addition to this, Officer took with him to the islands a well-documented list of trade goods that he purchased for £21/15/- (about £1,840) in Melbourne. The list provides an excellent example of the type of goods traded and their economic value at that time. He took 100 pounds (45 kg) weight of tobacco, one gross (144) of clay pipes, 2 gross boxes of matches, two dozen knives, one box of  $\frac{3}{4}$  axes, 2 dozen small zinc mirrors, 2 gross of Jew's Harps, 120 yards of calico, one dozen shirts, two dozen undershirts (singlets), 20 handkerchiefs, and 4 pieces (about 60 yards each) of Turkey Red calico (Officer 1901–MS 9321). Considering

the return steamer fare to the islands was £25 (£2,000 in current values) the money given to Officer to purchase objects was substantial (Vanderwal 2001: 109–110). On his return to Australia in August 1901 the press reporting on Officer's visit described the Solomon Islands as 'a happy hunting ground for the museum collector for most of the islanders are savage, nearly all of them cannibals and many of them insatiable head-hunters' (*The Register* [Adelaide] 5 September 1901: 6; *The Mercury* [Hobart] 2 October 1901: 6).

Officer was an elected member of the Royal Society of Victoria and a science graduate from the University of Melbourne. He had published a number of papers on the glacial geology of the Bacchus Marsh region in Victoria and on the geology of Lake St Clair in Tasmania but it is not clear why a geologist was sent to collect ethnological artefacts (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Box 4332/6). It was certainly life-changing. He noted in his manuscript on canoe manufacture: 'I spent 6 months in the group through the kindness & courtesy of Mr Woodford Commissioner, & Mr Mahaffy, Deputy Commissioner, I was enabled to enjoy experiences which seldom fall to the lot of the visitor' (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Box 4332/5).

Officer left Australia on the SS *Ysabel* on 1 January 1901, the day of Federation, and arrived in the Solomons in mid-January having been to Port Vila and New Caledonia. His primary goal was the New Georgia area but bad weather during the wet season forced the vessel to avoid Simbo and the Shortland Islands and to take protection at Roviana. Here Officer described the large canoe houses and grave shrines of the local people whom he referred to, in the common language of that time, as 'niggers' (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 25 January). The *Ysabel* returned to Gavutu where Officer was surprised to find a splendid harbour with good wharves, store sheds and a fine house on the island. His first meeting with Woodford was cordial although he was disappointed to find his plans had to be changed: 'Mr Woodford came on board. Found Mahaffy had not arrived ... Woodford asked me to his residency on Tulagi next day. Says I will do no good at Gizo & Govt Yacht "Lalu" [*Lahloo*] is laid up having lost all her sails in a recent gale ... I am in a bit of a hole' (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 27 January). Like Woodford on his expeditions between 1886 and 1889, Officer was to find transport between the various islands his greatest hindrance. Inexplicably, he chose to go to the tropics at the very worst time of year: the wet season. Officer was impressed with the site of the residency on Tulagi and wrote in his diary: 'House on top of a knoll sev[eral]. hundred ft. above sea built as usual on piles 8 ft. high. Garden laid out—A most beautiful spot'. The residency garden contained a large range of both ornamental and commercial and must have been both extensive and impressive (Bennett 2000a: 386; Great Britain. House of Commons. Parliamentary Papers 1899a).

Woodford recommended that Officer visit Aola and start by making a collection of natural history objects for the museum. Officer's description of Woodford is well considered: 'Wdffd [Woodford] is a lithe thin man with finely cut features, slight moustache, firmly compressed rather thin lips, short incisive way of speaking, very uncommunicative but a man who is I think "not of words but of actions"', was very kind to me & I feel confidence in his advice—'. On Woodford's recommendation Officer went to Lungga where Oscar Svensen owned a plantation of about 15,000 acres, then to the Catholic mission on Rua Sura under the management of Father Chatelet and two sisters from the Third Order of Mary. Finally, he moved in to Svensen's house at the Aola plantation and almost immediately he was supplied with insects, butterflies, snakes, and some cuscus. To Officer's dismay he was only supplied with these objects and he had difficulty in explaining that he was keen to collect artefacts as well. His local assistant was Pengoa, a man recommended by Woodford, whom Officer said 'seems [a] decent nigger'. It was obvious that the local people thought another white man, seeking the inedible and the no longer useful, was collecting insects and animals, especially if he came with a recommendation from the Resident Commissioner.

For most of early February, Officer's diary documents his tentative natural history collecting. But he soon found his specimens were eaten by rats and his cardboard boxes became mouldy in the rainy weather. Finally he sought out Woodford on Tulagi and received some immediate advice about collecting zoological specimens in the tropics. All February was spent at Aola and eventually Officer did collect some cultural artefacts from the region as well. In fact his diary of 16 March reports that he had collected over 30 stone axes from the Aola region alone. Eventually the *Titus* arrived off the coast. On board was Albert Meek collecting birds for Lord Lionel Rothschild's collection at Tring Park in Hertfordshire and three men—Johnson, Hardy and Martel—sent by Norman Wheatley to prospect for copper at Rendova Island (see Richards 2012: 154, 158). These were the prospectors referred to by Favenc. It would appear that Favenc, Meek, Officer and the prospectors were all aboard the *Titus* for the trip to New Georgia. As both Officer and Meek were collecting natural history specimens at Aola either man may have been the entomologist referred to by Favenc.

At Gizo, Officer caught up with Mahaffy who 'came off [in his canoe] with a crew of fine stalwart boys with lavalava and red turbans looking very picturesque' (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 1 April). His impression of Gizo was even more effusive than his description of Tulagi. He wrote in his diary: 'This is the most picturesque spot I've seen yet in the Solomons. The view from the verandah [of Mahaffy's house] is exquisite. House situated on a steep knoll with gaol & boys' quarters surrounded by palisade & entrenchments in front'. Mahaffy was

well protected against attack from any war party and it appears that the threat of attack was ever present. Local information concerned the exploits of Peter Edmund Pratt who was expelled from the Protectorate and fined £100 for trading guns and ammunitions to the locals and bound over with a surety of another £100 for good behaviour. Pratt did not leave the Protectorate impoverished. The sale of his property and ship to Norman Wheatley netted him £1,000, but he left his wife and children destitute. Woodford's comment was: 'The Protectorate is to be congratulated upon being at last rid of this most undesirable resident' (Woodford to O'Brien 7 April 1901. WPHC 4/IV 74/1901). Pratt may have been an unsavoury character but he had survived, even prospered, in an unstable environment for more than 16 years.

When Graham Officer arrived at Gizo, Mahaffy had just returned from policing work at Simbo. Officer then sailed with Mahaffy in his confiscated *tomoko* to Roviana to 'see what we can get in the way of native gear'. To bargain for artefacts Officer took along his trade box full of tobacco, calico and other items that he had listed in his notebook. The sight of the *tomoko* was not welcome. Peace was still only fragile. When they entered the Roviana Lagoon many of the villagers along the shore bolted into the bush but Mahaffy had the canoe pull into Sisiata where they met with Hiqava. Officer wrote: 'He seemed a decent old chap [and] was very friendly' (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 17 April). When Hiqava died on 12 August 1906 during an influenza epidemic his obituary was published in *Man* (Edge-Partington 1907) and in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (13 September 1906: 6). He was called '[o]ne of the most determined head-hunters' whose prestige was dealt a great blow by the attack of the *Royalist* in 1891 but he was also known to be a 'friend to the white man, especially to traders'. Hiqava was a shrewd manipulator of traders, planters and then the missionaries and had made himself and his community wealthy by encouraging them to concentrate their efforts into the Munda area. Hiqava and Gemu, another chief, removed their skull shrine from Sisiata and took it to Kundu Hite Island in nearby Vonavona Lagoon (see photograph Aswani 2008: 184). There it was safe from souvenir collectors and well away from the Methodists (Schneider 1996: 52 appendix V; Wright 2005; Waite 2000: 126 see figures 1–4).

On this trip Officer bought a small canoe, newly made, that he said was beautifully made and inlaid with shell, for 10 feet of calico, 100 sticks of tobacco and a large knife. He appears to have sold this canoe to Martel, one of the three prospectors sent to Rendova (Richards 2012: 154, 158 and 161). The prospectors on Rendova were finding their expedition a waste of time. As a geologist Officer commented ruefully: 'A little geolog[ical] knowledge w[oul]d help these prospectors greatly' (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 23 April). The new canoe sold to Martel may have been one taken from a police raid on Honiavasa in March 1901. Mahaffy's report states that it was paddled back to Gizo by a crew of eight men and so it



would have been only half the size of a large *tomoko* (Mahaffy to Woodford 11 March 1901 WPHC 4/IV 156/1901). On Gizo, Mahaffy's police and canoe men were touching up Mahaffy's canoe and this gave Officer a chance to describe the process of making the charcoal and breadfruit paste used to blacken the hulls of *tomoko*. The canoe was made watertight with a caulking made from fruit of the *tita* tree (*Parinarium laurinum* syn. *Parinari glaberrima*) crushed with a stone (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 29 April). Officer's archive also contains a long handwritten and unpublished paper on the manufacture and use of canoes in the Solomon Islands (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Box 4332/5).

Officer certainly experienced excitement during his brief stay in New Georgia. Accompanied by Mahaffy he travelled in the confiscated police *tomoko* to Kolombangara where they planned to climb to the crater of the volcano, a height of about 6,000 feet. Woodford and a party of 14 local men had managed to climb to 3,000 feet, half way to the top in 1900 but this time Mahaffy, Officer and 14 men estimated that they had made it to about 5,000 feet. The final section to the peak was considered too steep and difficult (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 3–7 May; *Wanganui Herald* 19 September 1901). In late May, the *Lahloo* arrived but it was not there to cruise the islands. Mahaffy was planning another raid on villages on Ranongga where the men had recently returned from Choiseul with nine heads. The Ranongga men had allies in the war party with men from Vella Lavella who had already been disciplined for their part in the exercise. Officer joined the raid and on 10 June the party of 18 police and boat crew, Mahaffy and others left Gizo for 'KumbuKotta' (Kumbokota: Pienuna) at the north-western end of Ranongga (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 11 June). They approached the village in two boats early in the morning but found that all the people had fled to the bush, having been warned in advance, leaving behind some large and some small canoes. Mahaffy had the boats broken up. Further along the coast they came to another larger village where they found two large *tomoko* on the beach. Officer took an ornamented head from a skull shire even though Mahaffy was much against it. This ornamented skull is now housed in Museum Victoria. Inland from the villages the gardens were damaged, coconut trees cut down and fruit trees cut and burnt. Later in July at Gizo, when he was packing to leave the region, Officer was approached by a man called Panangatta who requested the return of the skull from Kumbokota that he said belonged to his father, once the most powerful chief on Ranongga. Officer refused the request and packed the head into a box that he hid in Mahaffy's house and later shipped to Melbourne (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 30 July; Vanderwal 2001: 110).

Officer obtained a large canoe from Mahaffy and later transported it to the Museum of Victoria. Rhys Richards (2012: 207–211) has traced the provenance of the canoe to Kumbokota where the canoe's name was *Mbatu-mbatu* (Head of the head or the pinnacle of success or sacredness). It was made by a renowned

carver named Bilikei. The canoe measures 43'7" in length, 3'6" in the beam, has a bow height of 8'5" and a stern height of 10'5". It supported a crew of 18 men although it could carry 24 (Richards 2012: 212). This canoe, housed in Museum Victoria, is older than the one housed in the British Museum that was originally commissioned by Ralph Brodhurst-Hill around 1910 (West 1992: 277–278). Brodhurst-Hill was then stationed at Gizo and, being interested in the war canoes, had one made for him by Jiosi Angele from Vella Lavella. The canoe, some 11.3 metres in length with 11 ribs cut from a single piece of wood, may have been originally called *Lotu* (Christianity). William Lever paid £75 for the canoe and it was shipped to the Lady Lever Gallery at Port Sunlight in 1913. It has recently undergone 3D digital scanning and documentation and virtual restoration (Hess *et al.* 2009).

Following the raid on Ranongga, Officer made visits to Simbo and to the Shortland Islands where he stayed with the Atkinson family at Awa, the small island off Fauro, where they had a trading station and coconut plantation. By early August 1901, Officer was ready to leave the Solomons and had his large canoe taken off to the *Titus* but first the stern terminal piece had to be removed (Vanderwal 2001: 110). The pieces have since been joined back together. The *Titus* called in again at the Shortland Islands and Officer described the approach to Macdonald's plantation at Siniasoro Bay in some detail. Entrance Bay (Haliuna) was a '[n]arrow entrance into a good harbour surrounded by high hills. Very hot. Went ashore & found an extensive settlement in among fine coconut trees ... There are very few natives in Fauro altho' a large island. Disease (venereal) killed them off years ago' (Officer 1901– MS 9321 Diary 4 August). After a final meeting with Woodford on board the steamer, and a short stop at Marau where he met Oscar Svensen, Officer departed the islands on 13 August.

The *Australian Town and Country Journal* (7 September 1901: 38) published an illustrated description of a war canoe that Officer had obtained for the museum collection. The article reported: 'The Government have [sic] now prohibited their manufacture, and wherever they are found they are confiscated'. Head hunting was being suppressed by the destruction of war canoes and local people were buying whaleboats imported from Sydney. These whaleboats were now the government approved sea transport. Reporting on Officer's successful trip to the Solomon Islands The *Mercury* [Hobart] (2 October 1901: 6) noted that a large feast was being prepared in Roviana Lagoon at the time of the tour of the group and local informants had stated that it was 'to celebrate the "giving up" of head hunting in Rubiana [Roviana] Lagoon'. Arthur Mahaffy too was interviewed by the *Sydney Morning Herald* (24 December 1901: 6) on a trip to Australia and he took pains to report on the current stability of the islands, the economic prospects of the proposed plantation economy and the availability of local men

for employment once the Queensland labour trade had ended. The newspapers in Australia were now turning their attention to the bright economic future that had been brought about by *Pax Britannica*.

Your new-caught, sullen peoples,

Half-devil and half-child

Rudyard Kipling published his poem *The White Man's Burden* in 1899 in response to the occupation of the Philippines by the United States. It is emblematic both of European racism of the era and Imperialist aspiration to secure the dominance of the vast unsettled world. At a time of active evangelical Christianity and expanding colonial boundaries, the poem was a great success. It typified two characteristics of the supposed savage man: he was both half-devil and half-child. It was assumed that all native societies lived in a state of constant warfare—head hunting, raiding, tribal fighting—and these were seen as the sole objects of indigenous men's lives. The half-devil and half-child had to be pacified, controlled and contained. The pacification process had a threefold purpose. It was not only justified in bringing peace for political control, it paved the way for economic development, and it was seen as essential for the expansion of Christianity in the islands. Peace made the half-devil safe, and Christianity made the half-child a member of the church brotherhood. Peace and Christianity combined to make the half-devil/half-child a useful worker in the economic development of the islands. If the pacification process had three purposes, it also had three goals and they were political, religious and commercial. But the three modes of colonialism were different.

First, the islands had to be contained. Catholic mission expansion on Guadalcanal had been hindered by raids on missions and in October 1900 it was reported that a priest had been burnt to death by a raiding party led by Sulukavo a 'warrior, cum bounty hunter or *malaghai*' (Bennett 1987: 108–109; *Sydney Daily Telegraph* 26 October 1900; *The Advertiser* [Adelaide] 26 October 1900). As a *malaghai* Sulukavo was paid by other Big-men to kill those accused of breaking social mores but he had been operating unchecked since the 1880s. In retaliation for the attack on the mission, Woodford and a party of 15 men, mostly from Savo, raided the deserted village of Tasule, inland from Marovovo on the north-west coast of Guadalcanal, and burnt down several houses. Attacks on missions on the north-west coast ceased. Later Sulukavo sold the area called Lavuro, near Marovovo, to a consortium based in Brisbane for a substantial price of '£20, 2,000 porpoise teeth, 200 dog teeth, 1 case of tobacco, 1 case of pipes, 2 gross of matches, 1 piece of calico, 2 knives, and 2 axes' (Bennett 1987: 117, 140–141). The Catholic mission at Visale on the tip of Guadalcanal then developed in peace. The Melanesian Mission built a hospital on 500 acres of land at Hautabu near Marovovo in 1911 and a theological college at Marovovo in 1916 (Boutillier

1974: 21, 52). However, the proximity of the Anglicans and the Catholics made the western end of Guadalcanal a 'scene of intense religious rivalry as each mission raced the other to secure the allegiance of confused and uncommitted villagers' (Hilliard 1978: 139).

The pacification process in the western islands continued for some time. Following first contact, the speed by which pacification occurred surprised government officials and other commentators. It was not a sign of passive acceptance of imposed codes of law and behaviour. Most Melanesian societies impacted by punitive campaigns were quick to realise the overwhelming coercive power of European police and government and saw pacification as a pragmatic step in the desire to acquire new economic, social and religious benefits. The causes and consequences of pacification are unique to every situation and culture. Coastal areas, like the Guadalcanal plains and the New Georgia Islands, were pacified more quickly than mountainous regions. Lands seen as more economically significant were subject to intensive pacification actions while isolated areas where access was difficult were ignored. Acceptance of an imposed peace not only meant access to new economic, social and religious benefits but it also permitted people to move out of chiefly control over resource use towards individual ownership of resources and their use. Local people came to realise that '[b]ecause pacification represents a politically and economically dominant power's determination to deepen the linkages with an encapsulated society, failure to achieve immediate success is merely a tactical setback. The means used to achieve pacification may change, attempts to enforce peace may lapse temporarily, the attitudes of the people being pacified may alter greatly; but eventually pacification will be complete' (Rodman 1983: 22). This was especially true in the Solomon Islands. Even after the process of pacification was completed in the New Georgia area it continued in Malaita. There it was achieved, after much bloodshed, following the Bell massacre of 1927. In the pacified areas, the new structures of law, government and church entered customary exchange and spiritual systems and were rapidly indigenised.



This text taken from *The Naturalist and His 'Beautiful Islands': Charles Morris Woodford in the Western Pacific*, by David Russell Lawrence, published 2014 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.