National Museum of Australia

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'The way to a man's heart is through his stomach'—food as an assimilation strategy: re-writing the menu at Mapoon mission

Abstract:

In 1891, the Presbyterian Church established a mission station on the western side of Cape York Peninsula. They named the station Mapoon. Over the next 72 years, hundreds of children of mixed descent and Aboriginal families came to the mission by force or by choice. One of the reasons Aboriginal people chose to come to Mapoon was the decreasing availability of bush food and the conflict with pastoralists when they tried to hunt, gather and fish on their country.

This paper will examine how the first missionaries at Mapoon used food as an assimilation strategy. Through the distribution of rations, the establishment of gardens maintained by Aboriginal people, and the introduction of set meal times, they radically altered the traditional Aboriginal diet and way of life. Food was the fuel that made the Mapoon mission run. It provided work for the Aboriginal 'inmates' and the missionaries sold surplus crops, cattle and seafoods to raise funds for the mission. One of the other ways the Presbyterian Church supported the Mapoon mission was through the sale of its ever-popular Women's Missionary Union cookery book. A poem on the title page encouraged cooks 'as they work its dainties up, [to] remember far Mapoon'. Christianising and 'civilising' Aboriginal people involved curtailing their mobility, revolutionising their diet and teaching them European ways to produce, prepare, distribute and consume food. This paper will examine how the early Mapoon missionaries re-wrote the menu for Aboriginal people in an attempt to try and save their souls.

Biographical note:

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Keywords:

Missions – Aborigines – Mapoon – assimilation – cookbooks – Presbyterian

Introduction

In 1894 the Queensland Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union (PWMU) published a cookery book to raise funds for the Queensland Presbyterian missions (*W.M.U. Cookery Book* 7th ed: preface). The first Presbyterian mission to the Aborigines of Queensland was established at Mapoon, on the western side of Cape York Peninsula, in November 1891. Food was central to the operation and success of the mission.

Food is a basic human need. Our practices around food—its production, distribution, sale or exchange, preparation and consumption—are often culturally specific and help to differentiate one group from another. Food rituals and diet are traditions that migrants cling to and try to retain as a marker of their identity when they move to a new country. Conversely, incorporating the food habits of the new country is a sign of cultural transition.

This paper will argue that the first missionaries at Mapoon consciously used food as a 'civilising' and Christianising strategy. By attempting to change the way Aboriginal people acquired, shared and prepared food, and the types of foods they ate, the missionaries were attempting to undermine Aboriginal kinship networks, cultural food practices and, ultimately, the Aboriginal way of life. They sought to replace Aboriginal ways of hunting, gathering, sharing and eating with European ways of gardening, preparing, cooking and storing. Food in the form of rations was given as a reward for behaviours which the missionaries wanted to encourage, such as attending church and school, and as payment for manual labour. Aboriginal people, particularly the adults living near the mission, initially resisted the pressure to clear the land and grow food. However, the dwindling supply of bush foods, and a desire to be near their children who were housed in mission dormitories, saw them become reluctant gardeners. The foods the missionaries introduced—flour, sugar, oats, maize, salt, rice and tea—were high in carbohydrates and/or addictive. Bush foods were gradually phased out. They literally re-wrote the menu. The missionaries deliberately used food to encourage assimilation, and the PWMU supported this strategy through the sale of their cookbooks, their financial and philosophical support for the mission and their care for the wives of the missionaries.

While there are written primary sources available that document the church and government's position on food and the operation of the Mapoon mission, there are very few primary sources that provide an Indigenous perspective. An oral history recorded with an Aboriginal woman who lived at Mapoon in the 1930s and 1940s is the only source I have been able to find. To supplement her voice, I have also used oral histories conducted with Aboriginal people who grew up at the same time on other Presbyterian missions in Far North Queensland.

Background: Establishing the Mapoon mission

In November 1891, the Foreign Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Churches of Australia and Tasmania established a mission station on the mouth of the Batavia River on the western side of Cape York Peninsula.[1] They named the mission Mapoon, which means sandhill. An area of 100 square miles had been set aside for the mission

by the Queensland Government (Hey 1931: 9). Sir Samuel Griffith's government provided £500 for the construction of the Mapoon mission, a sizeable sum given that only £2,500 was allocated to provide rations and blankets to all the Aboriginal people in Queensland in 1886 (Kidd 1997: 38). However, the government expected the mission to become self-supporting within the first few years. The Queensland Government saw the mission as a way of easing their conscience for 'the ill-treatment we have given him [Aboriginal people] in the past' (Davey c.1901: 5).

Fig. 1. Cape York peninsula showing location of the Mapoon mission (Keast 1981, map).

A site in the north west of the state was chosen for several reasons. Firstly, Aboriginal people were more numerous in this region than in other parts of the state where the devastating impacts of colonisation had already been felt.[2] The mission was a way to 'save the remnant of the race' which, according to Presbyterian minister Robert Steele in 1886, was 'rapidly fading away before advancing civilisation' (Wharton 2000: 8). Any Aboriginal agency in resisting the European invasion was dismissed (Loos 1982). Secondly, the Mapoon site was chosen as it had been the main recruiting ground for Aborigines to work in the bêche-de-mer (sometimes known as trepang)

and pearl shell industries in the Torres Strait.[3] There were around 500 boats with a combined crew of 3000 men working in these marine industries in the early 1900s. Aboriginal men were enticed onto the boats with bribes of flour and tobacco. The usual wages were clothing, food and ten shillings a month. However, rates of syphilis and leprosy were known to be high amongst men who worked on these luggers and some captains were cruel and unscrupulous (Ward 1908: 130).[4] William Saville-Kent, then Queensland Commissioner of Fisheries, supported the establishment of a mission station to help protect the local Aboriginal people from the excesses of the fishing industry (QVPLA 1890: 732).

The Presbyterian Church regarded the mission as an act of Christian charity. Rev Hey, one of the original Mapoon missionaries believed that due to their racial inferiority, susceptibility to disease and the 'deprivations to which civilisation has subjected them … their extinction is inevitable … [But] through missionary work … extermination of this people may proceed more slowly, but not on that account less surely' (*The Austral Star* 7 July 1900: 6). The missionary narrative was one of rescue, redemption and salvation—from the ravages of selfish settlers, the immorality and inhumanity of the pearling and trepang industries and the fires of hell for heathens.

Fig. 2. Aboriginal people at the Mapoon mission. Rev and Mrs Ward are standing in the centre, 1892 (John Oxley Library (JOL), negative no. 78768).

Two Moravian missionaries, Rev. J.G. (James Gibson) Ward and Rev J.N. (Johann Nikolaus) Hey were selected to establish the mission. Ward spoke English and had worked as a church minister in Northern Ireland. Hey spoke very little English and was only ordained in February 1891, but was selected for his practical skills in farming and carpentry. (Ganter *Hey* 2009: 7) They were called 'to pioneer the gospel amongst wild and murderous savages, to plant a garden of the Lord in the desert …' (McDermant & McIlwraith 1942: 11) Reverends Hey and Ward travelled from England with Mrs Ward in June 1891 and stopped in at Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Thursday Island en route to Mapoon. While in these places they met with members of the Presbyterian Church and generated support for their forthcoming work. In Brisbane, this was the catalyst for the establishment of the Presbyterian

Women's Missionary Union. On 10 June 1892, 'in a comfortable drawing room, far from the privations, discomforts and loneliness of a distant mission field' an 'assembly of [about 60] ladies' resolved 'to aid (1) Aborigines Mission at Batavia River, (2) The Kanaka Mission' (McDermant & McIlwraith 1942: 7; Pigram 1994: 2).

Mrs Ward must have made quite an impression on the women who formed the PWMU. At their first conference in 1911, they described her arrival at Mapoon in 1891:

> picture a cultured lady from a charge in Ireland amid such surroundings with the additional discomfort of no milk, no eggs, no butter, the food awful, supplies often pillaged, and the missionaries in the deplorable process of becoming acclimatised (R216/198: 3).

In addition to the distress caused by an alien climate and environment, the PWMU were aware of the stress created by different foods and the therapeutic value of being able to cook. In reality, within the first year there were chickens and cows on Mapoon providing eggs, milk and butter. However, it would seem from Mrs Ward's own description of her first impressions on arriving at Mapoon that she needed more than the comfort of being able to eat familiar foods to relieve her misery:

> There were about 80 women and girls sitting in a semi-circle most of them quite without clothing, others with a dirty piece of calico tied around their loins … I can not tell you how miserable I felt. I would have given anything to be in Europe again. I felt I had no love for these people and I could never work amongst them. For long I could not bear the idea of having any of them in the house to help me (Davey c.1901: 11).

Background: The *Women's Missionary Union Cookery Book*

> **M**ay those who buy this little Book
> Find its contents a boon;
> **A**nd, as they work its dainties up,
> Remember far Mapoon!
> **P**revent, as much as in them lies,
> The dying out too soon
> **O**f Queensland's Aborigines—
> By helping on Mapoon!
> **O**ur duty stares us in the face—
> Our hearts should beat in tune;
> **N**or mar by want of harmony
> The Mission at Mapoon!
> A.S.L. (1908) [5]

This jaunty little acrostic was on the title page of the early editions of the *Women's Missionary Union* (WMU) *Cookery Book*. The cookbook was first published in Brisbane in 1894 and sold 'in aid of the Queensland Presbyterian Missions'.[6] It was re-printed in twenty-two editions up until 1981 and revised by PWMU groups in other states.[7] It was a hugely popular, ground-breaking book. Over 225,000 copies were printed and sold. The preface to the 1915 edition claims that it was such a useful

kitchen aid that it was the preferred gift of 'discerning women' to new brides. Sarah Black (2010: 6) believes it is the first in a new genre of community-compiled cookbooks in Australia.

The cookbook was the Queensland PWMU's most lucrative fundraising initiative. The first edition, published in 1894, sold for 1 shilling. By the time the 22nd edition was published in 1981, it was retailing at $4.75. This final edition can still be purchased today for $5. From 1894-1900 the cookbook raised about £1,500. The profits from the sale of the final 22nd edition (principal and accumulated interest) in 1991 were $17,616.15 (Pigram 1994: 4, 68).

The philanthropic motives of the women who rallied together to produce the WMU Cookery Book also inspired them to sell lace, necklaces, fans and baskets made by the girls on Presbyterian missions to their friends and family. Indeed, it could be seen as an outcome of the cookbook, as the funds raised through the cookbook, supported the mission, which trained the girls in fancywork. In 1922 they made £40-16-9 after expenses, such as cotton and payment to the makers (ML MSS 1893/11). In 1915, Clara Ward (daughter of the missionaries) wrote that 'from our d'oyley money, a school clock has been purchased' (R216/194).

Fig. 3. Mapoon girls showing their fancywork, 1916 (*The Queenslander*, 16 December 1916: 22)

Members of the PWMU also sold their own craft and sewing products and established a birthday fund in 1911, whereby members would make a donation to the mission fund on their birthday. Between 1911 and 1925, £1,258 was raised by members giving about 1 shilling on their birthday (Pigram 1994: 15). PWMU branches throughout Queensland also sent gift boxes each Christmas with clothes, books, food and other gifts. In the 1890s and early 20th century, most clothes were hand-made and not mass produced. There was not a surplus of second hand clothing such as there is today. To help the missionaries clothe the Aborigines, the PWMU branches purchased or solicited donations of material and sewed the clothes themselves. In their first year of operation, they sent a box with 'clothes for the blacks, books for the missionaries … in all 214 garments have been sent' (WMU Annual Report 1892-3). It is possible to imagine the well-heeled women of Queensland gathering in church halls around the

state to pack boxes to send to the missions. The number of boxes sent increased gradually over the years, with 137 boxes dispatched in 1939. The Christmas boxes continued to be sent until 1972 (Pigram 1994: 40). Providing Aboriginal people with clothing and requiring them to wear it when they were on the mission station was another way of encouraging Aboriginal people to adopt European practices.

Fig. 4. Presbyterian women packing Christmas boxes to send to the missions, c.1936 (Presbyterian Church Archives)

The women of the PWMU were practical people and used the funds raised through various means to aid the missions in practical ways. In 1901 they had raised sufficient funds to purchase a 10-ton lugger to aid communication, transport and the shipment of food between the Presbyterian mission stations on the west coast of Cape York and Thursday Island.[8] These forward-thinking women also contributed £30-£50 annually to the lugger's upkeep. The lugger was named the 'J.G.Ward' in honour of one of the first Mapoon missionaries who died of fever in 1895 (Bardon 1949: 101).[9] They also purchased wire gauze for the windows and doors of mission houses at Mapoon to keep flying insects out of the houses and away from food. In 1925 the PWMU bought a house on Thursday Island as a place of retreat and rest for the missionaries and their wives (Pigram 1994: 4). Ever mindful of the uncomfortable and primitive conditions under which the missionaries toiled, they presented Rev and Mrs Hey with a hooded sulky in 1916 to commemorate 25 years of service at Mapoon (McDermant & McIlwraith 1942: 12).[10] Rev Hey did not want the group to go to this expense, but since the President insisted, he decided to use it for an ambulance to transport patients from the outstations to the main mission house (R216/191). Most of these purchases were to make the lives of the missionaries, not the Aborigines, more comfortable.

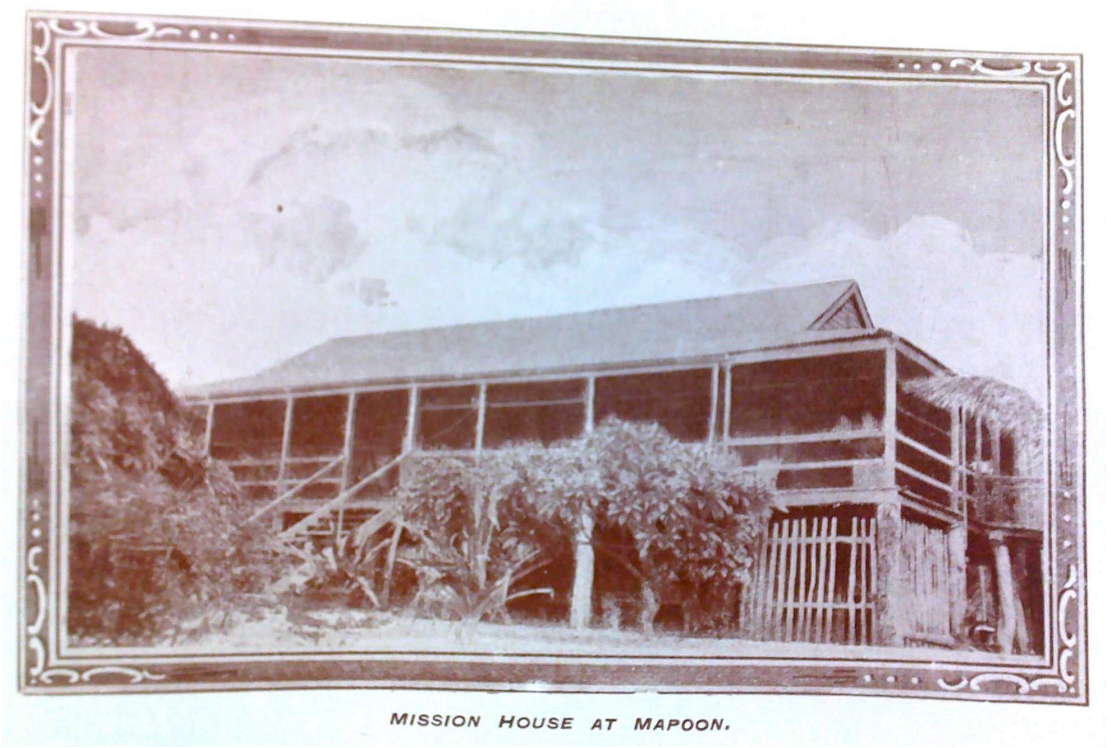

Fig. 5. Mission House at Mapoon, c.1908 (Paton, 1911: 10)

The Wards and Heys recognised that the women of the Queensland PWMU were some of their strongest supporters and maintained regular contact with them. The correspondence between Rev Hey and the secretary of the PWMU was regular and extensive. They wrote letters of several pages in length at least two or three times per year, which is considerable given Mapoon was often isolated during 'the wet' and mail had to travel via ship (see R216). Whenever the Heys or Mrs Ward travelled south on furlough (which the PWMU helped to fund biennially), they met with the PWMU to report on their work (Annual Report WMU 1897-98). The spiritual, financial and practical support of the Queensland PWMU for the Mapoon mission was integral to its establishment and continuation and sustained the missionaries during hard times.

Copies of the first edition of the Queensland WMU cookery book were presented to the missionaries' wives Mrs Ward and Mrs Hey in 1894 (Annual Report WMU 1894). It is probable that they used this cookbook to teach the Aboriginal girls of Mapoon how to cook European foods. Aboriginal girls were required to help in the kitchen of the mission house and were trained to work as domestic servants and run their own homes according to western practices. Gradually, girls spent more time learning European food preparation methods than those of their own culture. Foodways are cultural practices but they are also a way of expressing power and domination.

Food: Aboriginal diet and food practices prior to the arrival of the Mapoon missionaries

Aboriginal people lived on an extensive range of bush and marine foods before the coming of the missionaries. In 1901, anthropologist and 'Northern Protector of Aboriginals, Queensland', Walter E. Roth listed over 240 different edible plants (bulbs, fruits, seeds, roots) collected and prepared, usually by women (Roth 1901: 9-20). In addition to this rich variety of vegetarian food, women also collected shell-fish. Roth noted the shell middens, which were some 30 feet high, between the junction of the Hey and Embley Rivers, on the western side of Cape York Peninsula. The height of the middens indicated that they had been formed over successive generations and that shellfish were plentiful (Roth 1901: 7). Men hunted emu, kangaroo, opossum, and fish almost anytime of the year and birds, crocodile, turtle and turtle-eggs whenever they could be found. Roth discussed cannibalism, noting how rare it was, and provided no evidence of it occurring on western Cape York (Roth, 1901: 30).

In 1896 Archibald Meston toured Queensland to inquire into the condition of the 'Aboriginals' and reported that the tribes 'from Albatross Bay [near Weipa] south to the Mitchell River, or even to the mouth of the Gilbert [near Karumba]':

> are in a perfectly wild state; active, strong, healthy men and women with abundance of food. The inland tribes call them 'mangrove people', as they live chiefly in the solitudes of vast belts of tall mangroves along the creeks and rivers of the west coast. Their food is principally oysters, crabs, mussels, stinging rays, porpoises, dugong, and many kinds of fish. There are also fruits, yams, nuts, grass seeds, mangrove shoots, eggs of birds and crocodiles, besides bustards, emu, pigeons, wallabies, kangaroos, iguana, snakes, phalangers, bandicoots, &c., &c., in the open forest country, and lily roots and game in the swamps (1896: 3).

While this stretch of coastline is just south of Mapoon, the geography of the Mapoon area is very similar and Meston's description of the abundant food sources would apply. Peter Sutton and Athol Chase's research supports this contention:

> the northern coastline of Australia … provided opportunities for resources exploitation which can hardly be exceeded elsewhere on the Australian continent … the plethora of natural resources sustained a fairly constant hunting and gathering mode of existence (1981: 1820).

The abundance of food allowed Aboriginal people to live in small kin groups of 10-50 people. They did not need to travel vast distances to find food, making their lifestyle one of foraging rather than nomadic. While the seasonal variations in food stuffs were dramatic, the potential stress of the dry season was ameliorated by the annual migration of water birds following the wet, the prolific quantities of fish which were trapped as the water drained from the freshwater channels and the fruiting of trees and shrubs along the coastal dune thickets and riverine forests (Chase & Sutton 1981: 1846).

When he visited the Mapoon mission station in 1896, Meston noted the 'large freshwater swamps covered with lilies and full of wildfowl' within walking distance

of the station (1896: 5). Doreen Cockatoo (2000: 2-3) recalls that her parents collected 'panger' (the roots of waterlilies) and 'they smash it up and make damper out of it and we had to eat that. Waterlily from the river, and then they go on a search for wallabies and iguanas and … they cooked it under the ground and we ate that.' They also collected honey from native bees, which were known as sugar bag.

This Aboriginal diet consisted mainly of lean meat, edible plants and a range of seafood. Some starches were found in roots and some fats in animals, particularly lizards and dugong. There is a notable absence of simple carbohydrates. In contrast, the food rations provided by the missionaries are high in carbohydrates but contain very few vitamins and minerals. Aboriginal people around the Mapoon mission probably found these rations addictive. While Rev Hey never gave out tobacco, believing it to be an evil, addictive vice, he unwittingly fostered other addictions through the distribution of flour, sugar and tea (Roth 1901: 31). Hey reported that when Aboriginal men asked to leave the mission for a few days, they would come back sooner than expected saying 'Me no like bush food' proving that they had 'lost taste for snakes and iguanas'. Hey believed that the 'better' food available at the mission station, the training provided to the Aborigines on the mission and allowing them the freedom to come and go were the main factors in 'counteracting the nomadic instinct' (*The Austral Star* 1 September 1897: 4). Rations were originally intended to supplement bush foods but gradually they began to supplant them (Brock 2008: 19).

The PWMU inadvertently encouraged these addictions through the provision of their cookery book to Mrs Ward and Mrs Hey where the majority of recipes were for sweet treats. Colin Bannerman (2006: 8) has analysed the '900 good and tried' recipes in the New South Wales and Victorian versions of this cookbook to reveal the predominance of recipes for sweet foods. In the 1896 edition, 70% of recipes contained a sweetener (such as sugar) but by 1979 this had reduced to 53%. It is tempting to draw a link between the PWMU cookery book, the radical changes in the diet of Aboriginal people at the Mapoon mission (and other missions throughout Australia), and the high incidence of type-2 diabetes in Aboriginal people today (Lee Willis-Ardler 2007).

Food as an assimilation strategy at the Mapoon mission

Food was used in four ways to encourage Aboriginal people at the Mapoon mission to assimilate to a European way of life. Aboriginal people were expected to adhere to the food distribution, production and consumption practices ordained by the missionaries and to eat the types of foods they prescribed. Rev Hey recognised that he needed to minister to the bodies as well as the souls of his flock and that Jesus fed the people as well as teaching them (*The Austral Star* 5 August 1899: 7). In this way, Hey integrated his decisions around food at Mapoon mission into his theological framework.

Firstly, food, particularly in the form of rations, was used at the Mapoon mission as a reward for good behaviour and a form of currency. Aboriginal people who attended church were rewarded with a ration of flour after the service (Davey c.1901: 12). They were paid in rations for their work in the gardens, and Aboriginal children who came to school received food. How much easier would it have been for Aboriginal

people to satisfy their hunger by collecting rations of flour, oats, sugar and rice than by hunting, gathering and preparing bush foods? No wonder William Parry-Okeden, Commissioner of Police, said after he visited Mapoon in 1895, 'I saw over three hundred blacks [sic] at work in the field, and sixty-seven young people were in school … two days before I visited them, I am told, five hundred were in church' (Davey c.1901: 22).

Rev Hey, imbued with the protestant work ethic, declared 'that if any would not work, neither should he eat'. This rule was only relaxed for the sick and the aged (*The Austral Star* 5 August 1899: 8). Hey did not agree with the government's initiative of giving Aboriginal adults a blanket for free on the Queen's birthday or clothing for free at Christmas time (Davey c.1901: 23). Instead, he wanted to teach Aboriginal people the value of material possessions and said they must 'bring in a bag of oysters or crabs or a fish' or food they have grown in exchange for their ration of clothing. When Hey was criticised for this practice, he defended himself by saying that the food was for the children living in the mission dormitories and 'we do not benefit in any way' (ML MSS 1893/14 and MS3211). Missionaries from other denominations working in other parts of Australia also encouraged Aboriginal people to exchange goods for rations, in an attempt not to encourage dependency or parasitism (to use their terminology) (Brock 2008: 19).

Another reason Rev Hey needed Aboriginal people to pay with food was because the government rations were insufficient to feed all the people on the mission. There were many mouths to feed—in 1896 Meston reported that there were up to 300 Aborigines on the mission and in 1907 Hey reported that there were 425 Aboriginal people living there (Meston 1896: 5, ML MSS 1893/11). About one eighth of these would have been children living in dormitories. In 1901 Mapoon was designated a reformatory school, with Rev Hey as the Honorary Superintendent under the *Industrial and Reformatories Schools Act 1865* (*The Austral Star* 4 April 1903: 4). The Mapoon mission received a government grant of £150/year but it was insufficient to feed all the 'mission inmates'. In his annual report of 1897, Hey stated that he spent £222 8s 10d on rations (*The Austral Star* 2 August 1897: 4) and in 1908 that £80 worth of home grown food was consumed (ML MSS 1893/11). The rations usually consisted of rice, flour, oats, tobacco, sugar and tea. In 1913, when the Mapoon mission was under scrutiny from the Chief Protector of Aboriginals, Richard B. Howard, Rev Hey defended the way he distributed food to the people on the mission stating: 'we do our best with the limited means at our disposal and use a great deal of home produce, feeding besides our young people only such who are not able to provide for themselves (R216/200).

The chronic under-funding of Aboriginal missions has been well documented by Ros Kidd. She sees a causal relationship between their financial starvation and the establishment of the dormitory system. Rev Richter, the first missionary in charge of Aurukun mission, which was established by the Presbyterian Church in 1905 openly admitted that he did not have enough food to feed the people on the mission: 'I can only feed fifty or sixty people half a day, or twenty-five people daily…These daily rations would suffice for about forty children if I keep no men at the station working, but … without men I have no children' (Kidd 1997: 62).[11] In order to keep the adults

at the mission (who were needed to farm the land and run the cattle), Richter established a dormitory for the children. Keeping Aboriginal children on the mission in dormitories meant their parents would stay close by and they could be enticed to work on the mission for their food (Kidd 1997: 60-62). Thus the distribution by the missionaries of food rations, or the lack of them, profoundly changed the traditional Aboriginal way of life.

Knowing that the rations were inadequate, and that the government expected every mission station to raise 'the principle part of its own food supplies' and to become self-sustaining (Meston 1896: 12), Rev Hey invested the majority of his time in the early years in trying to grow food. Within the first week of his arrival at Mapoon on 28 November 1891, he started clearing land and cultivating gardens. He encouraged the local Aboriginal people from the Tjungundji language group to work for the mission and learn European food growing methods. He paid them with food rations that were new to their diet. Thus, Hey not only re-wrote the menu, he also re-arranged the way the foods on their menu were sourced. Hunting and gathering were discouraged and clearing and cultivating were taught. Hey established a training farm for boys 15 miles south of Mapoon on the banks of the Batavia River. Boys who had finished school were sent to this farm to learn agricultural techniques from a Samoan man appointed by Hey to run the farm (Hey 1931: 13). Girls were employed in watering, gardening, weeding, caring for domestic livestock (chickens, goats, pigs, cows) and preparing and cooking food. There was no time and few opportunities to learn which bush foods were safe to eat, or how to prepare certain foods to remove their toxins. The distribution of rations on the mission and the need to produce additional food disrupted the gendered nature of Aboriginal food production (Brock 2008: 22).

Hey asserted his role as a teacher of the 'natives' despite his lack of knowledge of the local climate and soils and his initial failures. According to Arthur Ward, (Rev Ward's brother):

> nearly everything they sowed at first perished, and knowing they were expected to make agriculture pay, they were sometimes almost in despair. They carried earth in bags from the neighbouring swamp, and made a sheltered seed-bed under the [mission] house. Watering had to be done regularly, but even that did not save the seeds in the open … The first fruit of their labours was a cucumber, which they pronounced delicious (Ward 1908: 77).

When Walter Roth visited Mapoon in 1903 in his capacity as Northern Protector of Aborigines, he was impressed with the way Hey was using the land to feed the mission 'inmates' and encouraging Aboriginal people to be industrious. He reported that:

> Facing the whole front of the village street there is an avenue of cocoanut palms, two of which are assigned to every cottage. Attached to these thirty-one cottages are their own gardens, in which are here and there to be seen growing cocoanuts, paw paws, sweet potatoes, rosellas, watermelons, pumpkins, beans, even bananas and pineapples (Roth 1903: 22).

If all of these crops had produced fruit, it would have been an abundant harvest indeed. However, Roth's (1903: 22) next sentence reveals that the Aboriginal people did not always embrace the practice of cultivating plants: 'Unfortunately the owners [of the cottages and gardens] are not, as a rule, too keen on keeping them well watered.' *The Daily Mail* described the Aboriginal apprentice gardeners as 'plodders with plots' (26 May 1911). Hey was more disdainful in his assessment: 'the full-blooded Aboriginal [sic] does not take kindly to the land in fact he is not fond of work of any kind and requires a great deal of encouragement' (ML MSS 1893/11). Hey discovered that Aboriginal men resisted the idea of gardening and watering, which they considered to be women's work (Ganter *Mapoon* 2009: 7). Aboriginal people were reticent to give up the traditional hunting and gathering practices that had served them well for so long. They employed a 'weapon of the weak'—stalling, lingering and foot-dragging with the assigned work (Scott 1985: xvii).

While a pair of cocoanut palms might have been allocated to each cottage, their fruit was not necessarily owned by the cottage inhabitants as Roth (1903: 22) reports: 'the total supply of cocoanut is, however, even at present, sufficient to supply all the children once a week with sufficient rations'.

The children were also taught to garden as this helped in the daily running of the mission and assisted their assimilation into white society. Hey (1907 ML MSS 1893/11) reports:

> the girls are trained in simple cooking and gardening so as to fit them for the position they will occupy when they grow up—as most, if not all, of the half-caste [sic] children will eventually amalgamate with the general public in the north, [and] such training can not fail to make them a valuable asset to the State.

In publicity brochure titled 'A Visit to Mapoon', Hey (1923: 10) writes that the boys are kept busy with weeding, watering the garden, sweeping the dormitories and milking the cows. He delights that they could even distinguish the footmarks of individual cows in the sand. Photographs from the missions show girls working industriously in the gardens carrying water, weeding, and planting. Doreen Cockatoo (2000: 11) was sent to Mornington Island mission (also run by the Presbyterian Board of Missions) in 1934 when she was about 6 years old. She recalls: 'you don't stay in school long, they take you out to work in the garden, farms … go out about twelve o'clock and work'. This is corroborated by Mr W.S. Park who visited Mapoon in 1907 and noted that the boys and girls spent two hours at their lessons in the morning and the afternoon and the rest of the day was spent working on the mission (*The Messenger* 3 August 1907).

Fig. 6. Watering the crops on Mornington Island mission, about 1937 (JOL, negative no. 93589)

Watering the gardens during the dry season (June to early December) was a problem for the missionaries. At Mapoon they constructed an elevated water wheel from local timbers to pump and distribute water. While Aboriginal people had worked with the seasons, collecting and hunting foods that were provided by nature during the wet and the dry, the missionaries sought control over their environment.

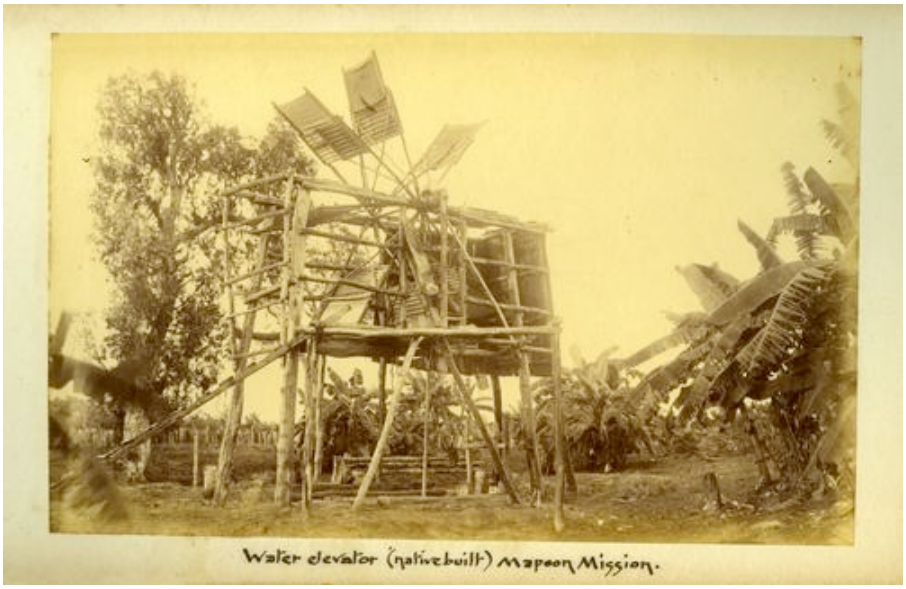

Fig. 7. Water pump at the Mapoon Mission, 1899 (Photograph by Henry William Mobsby, JOL Image no. APA-050-0001-0004)

Historian Tim Rowse (1998: 3, 4) argues that rationing was such a fundamental instrument of colonial government in Australia that it was almost ubiquitous. It was practised by missionaries, miners, government administrators (such as police) and pastoralists alike. Rowse (1998: 5) argues that it was not a good way of assimilating Aboriginal people to the Australian or European way of life as it 'brought donors and

receivers into close and even habitual contact without requiring their mutual understanding'. It set up a system of dependency which became normative, where Aboriginal people would turn up at a pre-arranged time and place to receive rations which they could then use as they wished. 'Rationing allowed cultural difference between donor and receiver to persist, delaying, limiting and even thwarting the acculturation of Indigenous Australians to the colonisers' ways' (Rowse 1998: 207). While this may be true for central Australia, the geographic focus of Rowse's study, I argue that the way Rev Hey distributed rations at Mapoon did encourage assimilation. By using rations as payment for work done to benefit the mission or to reward good behaviour such as attending church or school, Hey encouraged Aboriginal people to adopt European practices and learn European food cultivation methods.

Although Rev Hey was adamant that Aboriginal people would not receive rations for nothing, he still created a relationship characterised by dependency. The system of distributing rations as a form of payment continues today although the rations take the form of minimal wages provided to Aboriginal people living on former missions and reserves who work under the CDEP (Community Development Employment Projects) Program. While the official CDEP policy emphasises skills training, pathways to mainstream employment and 'work readiness', the vast majority of CDEP employees (prior to reforms introduced from 1 July 2009) have not gained other employment (FaHCSIA 2008). Rationing created a system of dependency that persists in another form today.

A second way that Rev Hey used food as a method of assimilation was to strongly encourage Aboriginal adults to reside as couples in detached houses with their own garden plot. This was seen by the missionaries as a more morally acceptable way to live than living in camp as a community (*The Austral Star* 3 September 1898: 5). Rev Hey (1908, ML MSS 1893/11) likened 'the tribal system' to 'socialism' and did not regard this positively. In 1908 he established a model farm, four miles from the Mapoon mission with 'native cottages' built by the Aboriginal people with timber and corrugated iron. Older Aboriginal people, including the parents of children who lived in the mission dormitories, lived in the cottages (Hey 1910, ML/MSS 1893/11). The temperatures in the corrugated iron cottages must have been unbearable in the tropical heat.

Fig. 8. One of the 'native cottages' for couples at Mapoon mission, 1916
(Photograph by Thomas J McMahon, JOL, Negative number: 58440).

When Reverend Richter visited Mapoon in April 1910, he noted that there were 15 couples living in 'married quarters'. They could sell their garden produce to the missionaries or forward it to Thursday Island via boat in exchange for money, flour and/or clothing (*The Daily Mail* 26 May 1911). They could also employ other Aboriginal people to work for them and pay them in kind (Paton 1911: 21). Thomas McMahon (*The Queenslander* 16 December 1916: 23) reported glowingly:

> These self-supporting Mapoon settlements show European houses, gardens, and fences, with well ploughed areas of cereals and foods, tilled with European implements, every owner a planter of cocoanuts and bananas, and every housewife devoting her spare time to poultry raising and making pocket money from her sales.

By encouraging this 'European' way of life, the missionaries hoped the Aboriginal people would aspire to earn money, own and care for individual property and leave behind their tribal, socialist ways. These model farms were encouraged, even though Rev Hey knew from bitter experience that the soil was next to useless and trying to cultivate crops in the tropics could be back-breaking and heart-breaking work. While they encouraged the Aboriginal people to work for themselves, the missionaries were not impressed when the Aboriginal people complained about the low wages they received when they were told to work at the 'chief station' or mission compound. Aboriginal autonomy was only encouraged to the degree that it did not impinge on the plans of the missionaries (ML MSS 1893/11).

The approaches of Aboriginal people and the missionaries to getting food were fundamentally different. Aboriginal people gathered, hunted and harvested what the land and sea naturally provided. They then prepared, cooked, shared and ate these

foods either at their campsite or where it was caught within the next 24 to 48 hours (Brock 2008: 20). Food was not stored for long periods (Roth 1901: 7). The missionaries, and indeed most European settlers, sought to tame and control the land and work it to grow non-Indigenous foods. They encouraged Aboriginal people to adopt this attitude to the land. In 1916, Rev Hey (R216/194 p.4) wrote to the PWMU to thank them for the Christmas boxes and ask them to send gardening tools 'so that the natives can help themselves by subduing the forces of nature for their use by making the land bring forth all that they need'. Ironically, the land already provided all that the Aboriginal people needed, just not the type of foods with which the missionaries were familiar.

A third way that food was used to encourage assimilation to European ways was the pattern of its consumption. Europeans use meal and tea breaks to segment the day. The idea of having three meals a day at set times of the day is foreign to Aboriginal people. Traditionally, the main meal of the day is eaten at sundown in the camp. Otherwise, they tend to eat when they are hungry and when food is available (Roth 1901: 1397). Rev Hey introduced a system of bells at Mapoon and set eating times. He states: 'there are no less than four bells at Mapoon, rung for different purposes.' The breakfast bell, which the children know means ''better hurry or we will have to put a coin in the mission box for being late' ' (Hey *A Visit to Mapoon* 1923: 10). Rule 15 from the Australian Board of Missions rulebook stated: 'all meals to be taken at the proper time. Latecomers to go without, unless with a reasonable excuse for being late' (MS3211). Bells were rung to mark the commencement of meal times. Children living in the dormitories learned to gather for meals, at set times of the day, and to be punctual or pay a price.

Fig. 9. Mapoon children line up to receive their meal, 1935 (JOL: Negative number 72531)

A fourth way that food was an agent for assimilation was in the type of food consumed. Food was used as a marker of class or social status at the Mapoon mission.

While there were Aboriginal protocols governing who could eat what according to an individual's age, sex and status, Aboriginal people on the mission were expected to disregard their own food conventions and eat what they were given by the missionaries (Brock 2008: 24).

Food grown by Aboriginal people on the mission was not necessarily consumed by them. Doreen Cockatoo (2000: 11, 24) remembers working in the gardens on Mornington Island mission (also run by the Presbyterian church) where they would 'grow a lot of vegetables, cabbage, pumpkin, potatoes, paw paws, lemons, oranges, all these sort of fruit … you don't eat these, the missionaries have it, they eat all the vegetables, we just live on soup. You know, like sometimes they just boil up potatoes and pumpkins and put them in the oven and we eat these food in the oven … and they cooked for our breakfast oatmeal, porridge, it was that for breakfast.'

'Florrie' who grew up at Mapoon but was sent to work as a domestic servant in Townsville told Mrs Howard (wife of the Chief Protector) that they were fed 'rice and when there is a bullock killed, they get meat, sometimes cocoanuts, cassava and porridge and milk' (R216/194: 4). The Queensland Home Secretary reported in 1911 that the diet of Aborigines living on the mission 'is a generous one, and consists of maize meal porridge for breakfast, boiled or roasted yam, sweet potato, cassava, or pumpkin for dinner, with frequently a little meat, and fish, of which there are plenty in the bay. For tea they have damper and tea, with jam at least once a week, and as a great treat, rice on Sunday' (*The Daily Mail* 25 May 1911). When Mrs Beeston, a Protectoress from the Aborigines Department visited Mapoon in 1913, she asked the children 'why do you not get eggs for breakfast?' (R216/200). This question would have been better directed to the wives of the missionaries since they controlled the distribution of food. Perhaps the eggs were being used to 'work up' cakes and similar 'dainties' in the *WMU Cookery Book*.

Fig. 10. Girls carrying laundry through the Mapoon mission fowl yard, 1911 (JOL, negative no. 190548).

Special food was prepared to mark special occasions, such as the opening of the new church at the mission outstation: 'a table was spread with all sorts of good things such as fowl and scones for the missionaries, while men and women, boys and girls feasted on cassava cakes' (ML MSS 1893/11). Rev Hey (R216/200) defended his practice of providing simple foods as he believed 'it would be detrimental to bring up our girls on puddings and expensive European food stuffs which they could not continue in their own homes.' There was no point causing Aboriginal people to crave luxuries which were beyond their station in life. This would only make their transition from the dormitories to the role of domestic servant in a colonial household or wife living on the Mapoon outstation more difficult (Mf 171, 1910). Aboriginal girls might have been taught how to make puddings and cakes (perhaps from the *WMU Cookery Book*) but they were not encouraged to eat them. Food was a way of delineating class.

Food and mercantile evangelism

Tim Rowse (1998: 89) has coined the phrase 'mercantile evangelism' to describe the practice of missionaries selling goods produced or captured (eg. dingo scalps) by Aboriginal people to benefit the mission. Rev Hey invested heavily in mercantile evangelism. His main goods were foods that the Aboriginal people helped to produce. When Hey first arrived at Mapoon, he had intended to convert the land into flourishing fields that could be harvested to feed the missionaries, the Aboriginal people and, through the sale of produce grown, support the mission. In reality. he found what Archibald Meston described as: 'nothing but worthless, sandy country … there is certainly not an acre of soil fit for anything within five miles of the Mission Station … it is not even a healthy situation'. Meston acknowledged that Hey 'has done his best with the ungenerous soil, but his efforts deserved a far more liberal reward. Papaws and grenadillas [sic—a type of passionfruit] bear fairly well, and one or two good crops of sweet potatoes have been obtained from most unpromising situations'. Hey was certainly enterprising as he made mounds in part of the tea-tree swamp and planted bananas on top. Meston (1896: 5) noted that 'they were growing and bearing better than could be expected in such a locality.'

The missionaries' efforts to establish gardens were so pitiful, that in July 1892 John Douglas, the Queensland Government's representative on Thursday Island who was a keen supporter of the mission, took Rev Ward south to the Coen River to see if there was a better place to establish the mission. This proved to be a fruitless expedition as they only found 'flat country, swamped in the rainy season, and not drying up in time for use before the hot, dry weather sets in' (Ward 1908: 91). Arthur Ward believes that it was on one of these exploratory expeditions that his brother caught the fever from which he died three years later in 1895. Meston (1896: 5) attributes Ward's death to 'the poisonous gases from the foul vegetable stuff rotting under the surface', which were released when the missionaries attempted to cultivate the low lying areas around the mission. In their efforts to feed themselves, the missionaries were inadvertently killing themselves.

After the death of Rev James Ward, Rev Hey was thrust prematurely into a position of leadership. He persisted with his farming efforts but gradually began to realise that

they would never generate sufficient income to top up the government grant and sustain the mission. He raised £40 through the sale of station produce in 1908 but doesn't detail his freight costs. In 1922, Rev J.R.B. Love (the missionary who took over from Rev Hey in 1919) sold 1500 cocoanuts for £12-9-4 but paid £7 to freight them to Brisbane (ML MSS 1893/11). In 1897 Rev Hey changed tack, declaring: 'my mission is not to soils, it is to men' (*The Austral Star* 1 October 1897: 4). He noticed the emergence of pastoral stations and began to understand that the land was better suited to raising cattle than crops.

Fig. 11. Surplus crops grown at the Mapoon mission, cocoanuts on the left and pumpkins on the right. The cart probably contains bags of flour or rice which were imported by the missionaries (JOL R216 A17/1/5).

Rev Hey was keen to start a herd of cattle on the Mapoon mission for several reasons. Firstly, they were a source of food, especially in lean times and for special occasions. For example, in 1896, after the service to commemorate the opening of the Ward Memorial church, there was 'the usual distribution of flour, after which they all settled down to feast upon a fine large bullock that the missionaries had had killed on the previous day' (Davey c.1901: 20). Secondly, in good times, surplus stock could be sold to support the mission. In 1911, Hey (MS3211) remarked 'when at the end of the year I find I have a debit, I can sell a few, for they are always fat!' Rev J.R.B. Love continued this practice, selling nine cattle in 1922 for £45 (ML MSS1893/11). Thirdly, caring for a herd of cattle created employment for men on the mission, and a way of training adolescent boys to join the cattle industry as stockmen. It also provided them with an alternative source of employment to the pearling and bêche-de-mer industries (May 1994: 136). Fourthly, it encouraged Aboriginal people to make the transition from hunter to herder, from killing to raising cattle for food (Brock 2008: 21). Despite these sensible reasons, Rev Hey failed to convince the Presbyterian church of the wisdom of raising a herd. Never one to be easily deterred, Hey purchased a few cattle from his own savings.[12] With careful management from skilled Aboriginal stockmen, by 1918 the number of cattle on the Mapoon mission had

expanded to 180 and became the basis of the Aurukun Mission herd (QVPLA 1919-20: 546). However, the pay that missionaries could offer Aboriginal stockmen, while more than what a mission school teacher would earn, was three to four times less than what a stockman could earn on a commercial cattle station in north Queensland (May 1994: 143).

Harvesting the sea proved the most profitable industry for Mapoon. By 1907, the mission had six large canoes and cutters which they used to catch fish and bêche-de-mer. Men from the mission were employed on the boats as captain and crew. Because they were not at the mercy of commercial fishing boat captains and they were based at Mapoon, this was considered a less exploitative and more congenial form of employment than allowing Aboriginal men to work on the commercial luggers that plied the coast (ML MSS 1893/11). The mission lugger, the 'J.G. Ward' took the bêche-de-mer catch to Thursday Island for sale where it could fetch £30/ton. This was a much more lucrative export than cocoanuts or cattle and raised £393-1-2 'on behalf of the natives' in 1922 (ML MSS 1893/11). Fishing, turtle and trepang were now the main source of income for the mission (Ganter *Mapoon* 2009: 16). As previously mentioned, funds raised by the PWMU, primarily from their cookery book, were used to purchase and maintain the 'J.G.Ward' lugger which was valued at £120 in 1910 (ML MSS 1893/11).

Livestock were both a source of food and income. Chickens, cattle, pigs, goats and horses were kept on the mission with variable success. Cows were killed by ticks, chickens were eaten by snakes and dingoes attacked the goats. It is possible to imagine the sense of fear and then despair that would have been felt by the person who killed the carpet snake in the hen-house and then discovered it had nine small chicks in its stomach (Ward 1908: 89, 179). But eggs, butter and milk were essential for making the majority of the recipes in the *WMU cookery book* and were a staple of the missionaries' diet.

In essence, food was the fuel that made the mission run. It provided Aboriginal people with work; either as gardeners, stockmen, fishermen, cooks, milkers of cows or keepers of chickens, goats and pigs. The raw produce was sold to markets in Thursday Island and Brisbane and the profits were used to sustain the mission. Aboriginal people were paid for their work with imported food rations that could not be grown on the mission. In addition to rations, their diet was made up of food they had grown, reared or caught in the sea. Engaging Aboriginal people in food production provided the missionaries with a stable population for on-site evangelism (Brock 2008: 23). Food was the currency that supported the mission through mercantile evangelism. The one exception to this was the fancywork and weaving produced by the women and girls, and which was sold by members of the PWMU to raise funds for the mission (see page 6).

Food and ecological changes

As discussed above, the western coast of Cape York peninsula provided an abundance of food to Aboriginal people. Even during 'mission time', they continued to harvest the sea to supplement their diet. Ruth Wallace-Hennings (1999: 24) remembers eating

fish that they would catch and scale themselves.[13] Doreen Cockatoo (2000: 24) recalls: 'They [also] fed us on turtle, dugong, fish, crab, oyster, all these things, we ate them'. However, Aboriginal practises of terrestrial hunting and gathering could not continue in the same way due to the radical changes to the environment brought about by missionaries and pastoralists. The introduction of livestock meant that native fauna were competing for food with introduced animals. Cattle, sheep, goats and pigs have hard hooves which destabilise the shallow root systems of ground covers and exacerbate the erosion of sandy, coastal soils. The 'fragile native grass ecologies were quickly destroyed by the sheer numbers of cattle', which had a negative impact on kangaroo habitats. As early as 1865, Walter Hill, curator of the Botanic Gardens in Brisbane began introducing 'the most useful kinds of grasses' from India and South America to replenish the overstocked runs (Langton 2010: 9). Clearing and fencing land to plant crops upset the ecology of the region and displaced the native birds that pollinated the fruit trees. While there is evidence that Aboriginal adults at the Mornington Island mission were allowed to collect bush foods on Sundays—'berries, blackberries, woolangoo, plums'—their children were expected to work in the garden (Cockatoo 2000: 13, 23). Environmental changes brought about by the missionaries also resulted in cultural changes as Aboriginal children learnt to grow food the European way and did not learn where to find bush foods and what was safe to eat. In this way, cultural knowledge was lost to the next generation.

Dr Walter Roth, an anthropologist who was appointed Northern Protector of the Aborigines from 1898-1904, and then chief protector for all of Queensland from 1904-1906, strongly supported the right of Aboriginal people to hunt for food. He (1903: 24) appreciated that the land was their provider:

> The principle must be rigidly instilled that the Aboriginals [sic] have as much right to exist as the Europeans, and certainly a greater right, not only to collect the native fruits, but also to hunt and dispose of the game upon which they had been vitally dependent from time immemorial. Were … all available country leased or licensed [to white settlers] we should have a condition of affairs represented by general starvation of all the Aboriginals and their concurrent expulsion from the State.

The opportunities for Aboriginal people in western Cape York to assert this right were diminishing in 1903 (when Roth made this statement) and were almost non-existent 20 years later due to the environmental changes brought by missions and pastoralists and the requirement that 'half-caste' children live on missions or reserves. Even Rev Hey (ML MSS 1893/11, 1933) acknowledged that continuing the traditions of the past was impossible for Aboriginal people as:

> the white settler makes road, and cuts down trees etc. Thus many of the most sacred places are destroyed, continuity with the past becomes impossible, and the natives naturally lose their desire to live because there is nothing left to live for. It is therefore the duty of the church to give them a new objective in life.

Rev Hey believed this 'new objective' should be a belief in God's grace and a desire to work to support themselves.

Conclusion

Food was central to the operation of the Mapoon mission and the lives of the Aboriginal 'inmates'. Rev Hey, one of the founding missionaries who served at Mapoon for twenty-eight years, used food in the form of rations to reward Aboriginal people for attending church and school and working for the mission. He used food to teach Aboriginal people industriousness and respect for the blessing of work (Rowse 1998: 80). Rations as a form of payment for work done was replaced with cash after the introduction of award wages (Rowse 1998: 9). Thus the idea of paid work was introduced through the rationing system which the missionaries at Mapoon instigated. The distribution of food rations by the missionaries created a system of dependency that continues today through the CDEP program and welfare payments.

Food was used as an assimilation strategy in other ways at Mapoon. Rev Hey strongly encouraged Aboriginal adults to live as couples in separate houses with their own fenced garden plot in a native village. They were taught to grow their own food, sell the surplus and employ workers, who could be paid with food. Their children lived in dormitories close to mission headquarters where they learnt to garden, cook, sew, clean, and care for domestic livestock (chicken, goats, pigs and cows). Aboriginal people at Mapoon were also required to pay for their annual blanket and clothing ration with food they had grown or caught in the sea. Through food, Aboriginal people were transitioning to the normative culture of the colonisers.

Aboriginal people at Mapoon learnt to grow foods using European agricultural methods rather than practicing and teaching their own hunting and gathering skills. They were reluctant gardeners and displayed their reticence to learn by 'foot-dragging' and 'go slow' tactics, which have been described as 'weapons of the weak'. Even if they had been permitted to forage for food, the gardening practices introduced by Hey and the spread of the pastoral industry radically altered the ecology of the region, making it less worthwhile for Aboriginal people to pursue their traditional terrestrial hunting and gathering. (The one exception to this was seafoods as Aboriginal people, mainly males, were still permitted to harvest marine resources for sale and consumption.)

Food was a means of altering the Aboriginal family and kinship structure. The missionaries distributed rations in different quantities to those they thought deserved them, making it difficult for Aboriginal people to maintain their traditional practice of sharing and cultural reciprocity. Food consumption was also the reason for the ringing of bells at the mission—to signal meal times—a concept that was foreign to pre-contact Aboriginal life. The type of food consumed also signified one's status and was a way for the missionaries to convey their superiority. Aboriginal girls may have been taught how to 'work up dainties' from the WMU Cookery Book but they were not allowed to eat them. Food is about culture, but it is also about power. The type of rations provided to Aboriginal people, such as flour, sugar and tea, were high in simple carbohydrates and addictive. They dramatically altered the traditional Aboriginal diet and bound Aboriginal people to the mission through their stomachs.

Food was the fuel that made Mapoon mission run. Rev Hey and subsequent missionaries engaged in mercantile evangelism—they sought to raise funds for the mission through the sale of mission produce, cattle and bêche-de-mer. The Queensland PWMU also raised funds for the mission and supported the missionaries through the sale of their ever-popular *WMU Cookery Book*.

Rev Hey believed his role was to 'train them [Aboriginal people] to be able to develop the land, subdue the forces of nature and earn their own living, thus enjoying the blessings of the Gospel and the fruit of their own labour.' Hey (1931: 29) believed that 'if left alone, without protection and training, they are doomed to a life of vice and disease.' Hey's narrative of rescue, redemption and reward was communicated through food.

Endnotes

[1] It is interesting to note that it was the *foreign* mission committee that established the mission, probably because the Aborigines were regarded as foreigners in their own country. The Batavia River is now called the Wenlock River.

[2] The impacts of colonisation, such as disease, depletion of traditional food sources and the killing of Aborigines was discussed in the contemporary press – see the editorial 'The way we civilise' in *The Queenslander* 1 May 1880.

[3] There was a labour shortage in this industry after the passage of the *Pacific Island Labourers Act Amendment Act 1885* preventing the use of labourers from Papua New Guinea and surrounding islands after 1890.

[4] Arthur Ward wrote this book using his brother's diary as his main source.

[5]This little ditty was probably written by Mrs A.S. Lang who attended the inaugural meeting of the Queensland PWMU in Brisbane in 1892.

[6] Mapoon was the first Presbyterian mission established on the east coast of Cape York in 1891. Other missions were established by the Presbyterian Church at Weipa in 1898, Aurukun on the Archer River in 1904 and Mornington Island in the Gulf of Carpentaria in 1914.

[7] It is very easy to confuse the *Queensland Women's Missionary Union Cookery Book* with its inter-state counterparts. The Queensland cookbook always had in the title 'W.M.U. cookery book', whereas the spin-offs published in New South Wales (from 1895), and Victoria always had P.W.M.U. in the title.

[8] The Annual Report of the Women's Missionary Union, 1892-3 states that the group held a 'Sale of Work' to form 'the nucleus of a fund for the purchase of a lugger for the Batavia River Mission Station', Presbyterian Church Archives, Brisbane.

[9] In 1946 the PWMU replaced this lugger with another, named the 'Janet Thomson' in honour of the President of the PWMU who served in that role from 1926-1945.

[10] Minnie (Mary-Anne) Hey was Mrs Ward's sister. She married Rev Hey on Thursday Island on 5 December 1892. Nikolaus and Minnie Hey served at Mapoon until 1919, when Rev Hey retired due to 'indifferent health'. They had four children who were educated in Sydney.

[11] When Rev J.R.B. Love took over from Rev Hey as the chief missionary at Mapoon in 1919, he had an annual grant of £500 but still found it insufficient to pay a school teacher (£100) and feed the people, see MS 3211.

[12] Regina Ganter (*Mapoon* 2009: 5) states that Mr Embley of the neighbouring Batavia Downs pastoral lease donated a small herd of cattle to the mission and that this was the beginning of the Mapoon herd.

[13] Ruth Wallace-Hennings lived on the Mapoon mission from 1934 when she was about 18 months old.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Dianne Parker, Archivist for the Queensland Presbyterian Synod, in researching this paper.