

RECORDS OF THE AUCKLAND MUSEUM

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Paenga Hira
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War Memorial
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Collection of books, pamphlets and serials donated by James Tannock Mackelvie, held at Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira

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INTRODUCTION

Research initiated in 2019 to understand the scope of the book and pamphlet collection donated by James Tannock Mackelvie was triggered by the number of volumes uniformly bound and stamped with his name. No other collection of books donated to the Auckland Museum Library over the more than 150-year history has been custom bound in this way. It was then established that all the published books and pamphlets donated by Mackelvie held at the Museum are part of the Museum's collections and not held in trust for the Mackelvie Society. This note will enable an understanding of how this was determined.

A project is currently under way on an audit of all identifiable volumes donated by Mackelvie still held in the Heritage Publications collection of the Documentary Heritage Collections at Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum (the Museum), and to ensure these volumes are fully catalogued and explicitly identified as part of the Mackelvie Book and Pamphlet Collection. Further research using the Mackelvie Archive (NZMS 195-222) held in the Sir George Grey Special Collections at Auckland Libraries is the next step to completely understand the size and scope of Auckland Museum's Mackelvie book donations.

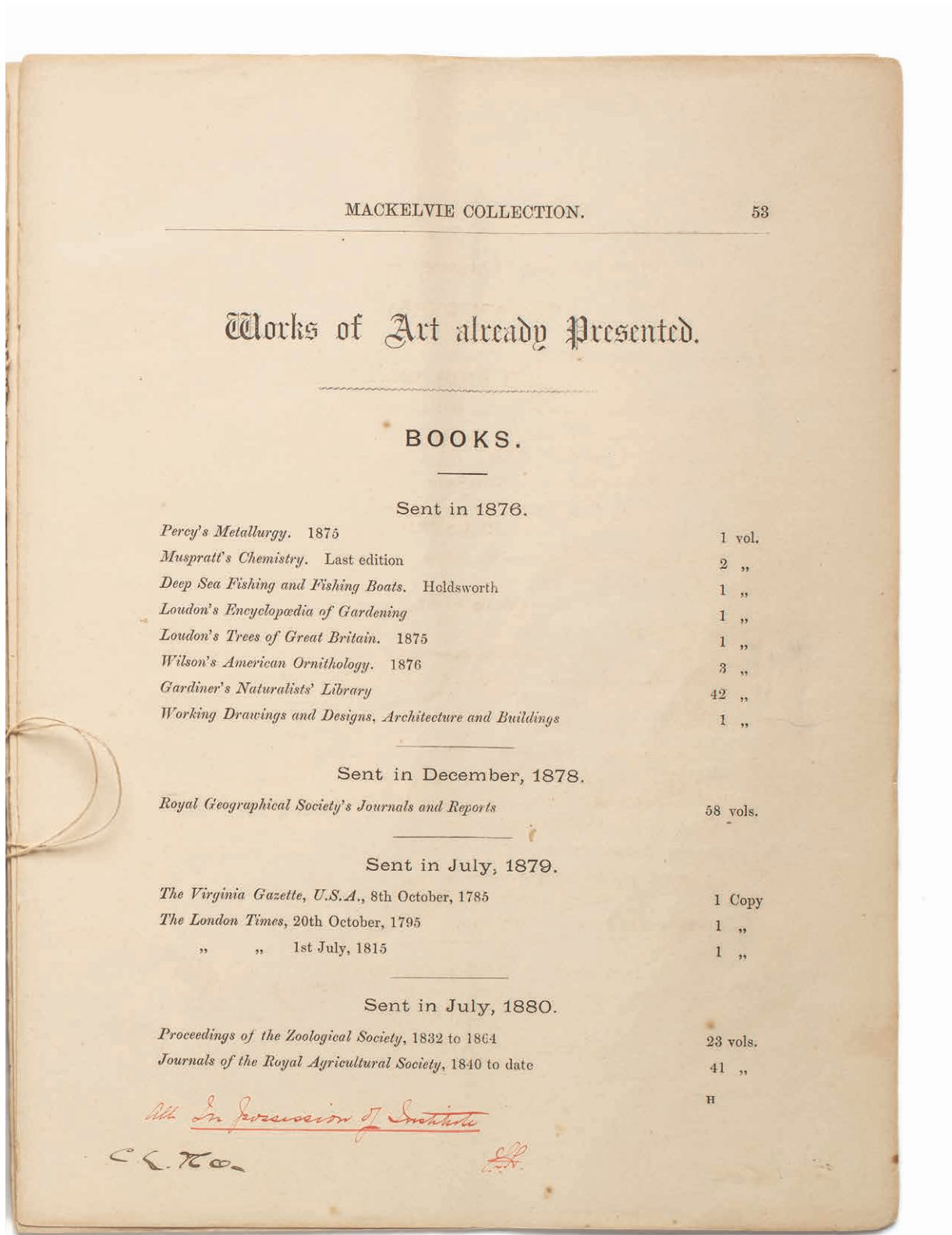
BACKGROUND

From the very inception of the Museum in 1852, there was the intent to have a library (Park 1998: 14). Various reports in newspapers of the time including the *New Zealander* (26 October 1853 and 7 January 1854), confirm the desire to build a collection of scientific volumes and include donations such as those left to the colony by Sir Everard Home. A report in the *New Zealander* (17 January 1857) discusses the desire to establish an institute of practical science where research, preferably of particular relevance to Auckland, is undertaken, papers read before peers and published in volumes of transactions for the benefit of all. Mention is made of the Museum and how well aligned it was to an institute of science. However, this institute wasn't established until, as the *Daily Southern Cross* (7 November 1867) reported, the Auckland Philosophical Society was established on the 6th of November that year under the auspices of the New Zealand Society and incorporated as a branch of the New Zealand Institute. The institute

was to house a museum, laboratory, and library. By March of the following year the organization was named the Auckland Institute (*Daily Southern Cross*, 11 March 1868), and by 1869 responsibility for the Museum had been passed to the Auckland Institute (*Daily Southern Cross*, 29 January 1869). Annual reports of the Institute from the beginning list purchases and donations to the library, with subscriptions of learned journals highlighted at the start of each published report.

James Tannock Mackelvie was born in Ardrossan, Scotland in 1824 and arrived in New Zealand in 1865, returning to England in 1871. Though in Auckland for a mere six years whilst a partner of Mackelvie, Brown, Campbell, and Co., he was active in the community, an early member of the Auckland Institute and Auckland Acclimatisation Society. Through his investment in gold mines he amassed a considerable fortune, which he expended indulging his interest in and passion for arts and culture. Dying in London in 1885 at the relatively young age of 61, Mackelvie never married, nor had children. In his will he bequeathed to the people of Auckland a collection of fine and applied arts and illustrated and rare books, to be managed by a trust in his name. Although it took some years for the terms of his will to be upheld, these collections are now housed at the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki (fine arts), Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira (applied arts) and Auckland Libraries (books) (McKay 2018: 17). The collection is celebrated on the website of the Mackelvie Society, a recently formed arm of the long-standing Mackelvie Trust (Mackelvie Society website).

The Museum holds several copies of the *Catalogue of the Mackelvie Collection* published in 1885 (N5297 CAT). Prepared by Mackelvie prior to his death, in the main the catalogue lists the wide range of material, including books, making up the Mackelvie Trust Collection (McKay 2018: 18). One of the copies held in the Museum archive is marked denoting which items went to each institution and shows that all the books went either to the Art Gallery, ELAM School or the Public Library. The last pages (53–60) list some items previously donated, and the books and serials are clearly marked as in possession of the Institute (Fig. 1). Thus, any titles Mackelvie donated to the Auckland Museum prior to his death are by default those donated directly to the Institute as noted in the Museum archives and acknowledged publicly via newspaper reports of the time.



Works of Art already Presented.

BOOKS.

Sent in 1876.

<i>Percy's Metallurgy.</i> 1875	1 vol.
<i>Muspratt's Chemistry.</i> Last edition	2 "
<i>Deep Sea Fishing and Fishing Boats.</i> Holdsworth	1 "
<i>Loudon's Encyclopaedia of Gardening</i>	1 "
<i>Loudon's Trees of Great Britain.</i> 1875	1 "
<i>Wilson's American Ornithology.</i> 1876	3 "
<i>Gardiner's Naturalists' Library</i>	42 "
<i>Working Drawings and Designs. Architecture and Buildings</i>	1 "

Sent in December, 1878.

<i>Royal Geographical Society's Journals and Reports</i>	58 vols.
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Sent in July, 1879.

<i>The Virginia Gazette, U.S.A.,</i> 8th October, 1785	1 Copy
<i>The London Times,</i> 20th October, 1795	1 "
" " 1st July, 1815	1 "

Sent in July, 1880.

<i>Proceedings of the Zoological Society,</i> 1832 to 1864	23 vols.
<i>Journals of the Royal Agricultural Society,</i> 1840 to date	41 "
	H

All in possession of Institute

C.L. 760

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Figure 1. Catalogue of the Mackelvie Collection, page 53.

DONATIONS TO THE MUSEUM AND THE AUCKLAND INSTITUTE LIBRARY

Mackelvie was a generous benefactor during his time in Auckland in that he was donating to the Auckland Museum prior to the bequest that forms the Mackelvie Trust Collection. The very first donation to the then Auckland Museum in 1865, within six months of Mackelvie's arrival in Auckland, was a mix of objects ranging from a Russian charm to an African leg ornament, a portion of the Red Sea telegraph cable and 113 coins (*Daily Southern Cross*, 14 December 1865). The first donation specifically to the recently renamed Auckland Institute Library, reported in the first Annual Report of the Auckland Museum (1868), was a set of photographs featuring machinery used to lay the transatlantic cable. In the Annual Report of the Auckland Institute 1876–1877, thanks are given to Mr. J.T. Mackelvie for a donation of 52 volumes of scientific works. Over the next eight years until his death in 1885, many books and journals were sent from London for the Auckland Institute Library. The collection donated to the original Auckland Museum and its successors by Mackelvie was not treated as a separate entity but rather was subsumed into the wider collecting areas of the institution. Consequently, this has impacted visibility to the wider Auckland community as items donated by Mackelvie. Donations to the Museum were often poorly documented prior to the start of the 20th century and it is only through Museum archives, correspondence and reports of the Institute that the history of Mackelvie's donations can be reconstructed.

Mackelvie, from his arrival in Auckland, involved himself in societies for the betterment of Aucklanders. He was a founding member of the Auckland Philosophical Society which became the Auckland Institute in 1868, and by 1881, as noted on the cover of the Annual Report of 1880–1881, the Auckland Institute and Museum. It is not clear if Mackelvie was a member of the Institute the entire time he was in Auckland, but his name appears on the earliest member lists in the Museum archive from 1871 to 1873 (MUS-1995-8) by which time he had returned to London. His support for the Auckland Institute is demonstrated from his first donation in 1865, after which Mackelvie donated a range of scientific and technical publications to support the research of Institute members in the development of extractive industries, agriculture, natural sciences, ethnology and archaeology. A letter (18 May 1881) to Thomas Cheeseman, the Museum's long-serving Curator, also emphasized the importance Mackelvie placed on the Institute and Museum having a comprehensive collection of all publications documenting knowledge and history of New Zealand. 'I remember you agreed with me as to the importance of this Collection and my idea is to make it as perfect as I can.'

A letter to Cheeseman from the previous year (6 September 1880) showcases a collector's awareness of the potential future value of the volumes. 'I have long thought that there will be a time, and not by any means far distant, when all the books on the early history of New Zealand will be considered valuable...'

On the 2 December 1878, Mackelvie wrote to Cheeseman regarding the donation of a complete series of the *Journal of the Royal Geographic Society of London*. This donation was acknowledged in the first Auckland Institute meeting of 1879. Mackelvie was also thanked for the donation of 150 West African artefacts and '...three magnificent volumes of Gray's Book on Birds; and several volumes of the *Conchologia Iconica*, a work that has just been published...' (*Auckland Star*, 3 June 1879). By 1880, Mackelvie had sent 23 volumes of *Proceedings Zoological Society of London* from 1832 to 1864 inclusive, and 41 volumes of the *Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England* from its commencement in 1840 to date. He specifically wrote of having the volumes bound in London, in recognition of the limited resources of Auckland Institute.

The *New Zealand Herald* (16 November 1880) reported on the Institute's November meeting, when Mackelvie was thanked for a further donation and emphasis placed on the benefit of the material to the city.

This is the third donation of books made by Mr. Mackelvie, in addition to numerous donations to the Museum. The Chairman said these books had arrived in the harbour but had not yet been placed in the library. These books were of great value—of the greatest value to persons engaged in agriculture. He held in his hand an index of the subjects treated, all of which were of the highest importance. These books were brought out free of cost by the New Zealand Shipping Company. This was not the first time the New Zealand Shipping Company had performed similar acts of kindness. He thought that a special vote of thanks was due to Mr. Mackelvie.

It would appear up until this time that Mackelvie was purchasing material directly himself, largely through John Wheldon, Natural History and General bookseller, based in Lincoln's Inn Fields, London. By 1881 he was using an agent, E.A. Petherick, to purchase on his behalf. Petherick worked closely with John Ramage & Co., Publishers, Wholesale Booksellers & Bookbinders, Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row, London.

Many of the volumes are still in bindings made to Mackelvie's specifications by London bookbinders John Ramage & Company; with maroon and blue marbled boards and endpapers, calf spines with gilt lettering for the title and a donor statement at the base of each spine, highlighting the donation to the Institute by J.T. Mackelvie (Figs 2 and 3). While many of the Mackelvie volumes are recognisable from the bindings, others lack the marbled boards but include a donor plate. Some volumes have had to be rebound due to their constant use, however a combination of accession numbers and library ownership stamps with the documentation strongly suggests their relationship to Mackelvie.

The binding undertaken in London makes many of the volumes donated by Mackelvie instantly recognisable and creates a visual sense of "collection" and relationship to Mackelvie, however that binding process will have

removed information on previous provenance and any interesting ownership history, particularly of the 17th and 18th century books. Heritage collections in libraries and museums value the books they hold as objects for the stories they tell about previous ownership and their material construct as well as the content.

All the while Mackelvie was also shipping other objects and artefacts such as those from the Swiss lake dwellings and articles of African cloth for the Institute’s collection. His letters to Cheeseman indicate the complexity of collecting for an institution on the far side of the world when the only means to communicate was a letter, sent by sea, that could take many weeks or months for return correspondence. He requested that Cheeseman send him a marked-up list and further requested confirmation from Cheeseman as to which titles about New Zealand were already held in the Institute Library.

I may tell you that up to now my Agent has procured for me 71 volumes referring to the History of New Zealand but there are many more required before I will be satisfied – by the way, it has occurred to me that you might have let me know what books you already possess on this subject, when I declared to you my intention of going into this matter as I may be taking much unnecessary trouble & spending more money than I need to. (18 May 1881)



Figure 2. Binding of the journal of the Royal Geographic Society of London. G7 JOU.



Figure 3. Donor plate in the journal of the Royal Geographic Society of London.

On the 16th of June 1881 Mackelvie wrote to Cheeseman with a list of the 70 titles he had purchased to date for the Museum, including several bound volumes of pamphlets. The *New Zealand Herald* (14 July 1881) reported on the donation:

As our readers are aware Mr. J. T. Mackelvie has on frequent occasions done good service to the Auckland Institute by supplying its library with sets of books which could only be completed in England. Recent advices from London state that he is at present engaged in trying to make a complete collection of all the books that have been published on New Zealand. This is a task that will take a long time to complete even partially. But we understand that the latest information on the subject showed that he had gathered together between seventy and eighty old books on the colony. If Mr. Mackelvie is even moderately successful in this task, he will have accomplished a work which will be of the greatest possible use when the history of the colonisation of New Zealand comes to be written. It is needless to state that the collection, when completed, is intended for the library of the Auckland Institute.

By September Mackelvie had purchased more titles, bringing the number to approximately 110. He had also organised the rebinding in preparation for shipping as his agent had run out of space to store the books. Included were the three titles officially documenting Captain James Cook's voyages, key titles to any collection on the European exploration of New Zealand and the Pacific. The books were duly dispatched in October.

The number of books written about New Zealand are legend, and many of them, besides their historic value, have high literary merit. Yet of these books we have almost none. Mr. J. T. Mackelvie, with wise forethought, has determined that the books written about this colony shall be preserved. It was easier to make a collection in London than anywhere else, but if the task had been neglected for long these books would have perished. By the ship '*Roman Empire*', which sailed on October 12, about 150 volumes are expected, all of books devoted to New Zealand. This will, in after times, be Auckland's most cherished possession. They should be kept solely for reference. *New Zealand Herald* 19 January 1882

The *New Zealand Herald* article of 10 February 1882 (Fig. 4) listed the titles of books; 78 works consisting of 104 volumes, observing that some of the books were rare and must have cost considerable sums. Whilst primarily focusing on New Zealand publications, Mackelvie was also sending volumes on a wide range of subjects, though these are not always given the same trademark binding Mackelvie ensured of the New Zealand-related books. Newspapers, and the Annual Reports of the Auckland Institute and Museum often did not give these books the same detailed reporting, making it impossible to identify all titles donated.

The first consignment of the books on New Zealand purchased for the Auckland Museum by Mr. J. T. Mackelvie was unpacked yesterday. It will be seen from the list which we publish that it comprises some rare works, which must have cost considerable sums, as well as much trouble in finding where they were available. There are seventy-eight works, consisting of 104 volumes. The following is a list:—

Harris's Collection of Voyages (2 vols.), Owen's Extinct Birds of New Zealand (2 vols.), Bree's Illustrations of New Zealand, Sir G. Grey's Poems and Traditions of the Maoris, Swainson's New Zealand, Meade's Ride in New Zealand, Breton's Excursions in New South Wales, &c., Munday's Our Antipodes (3 vols.), Wilke's United States Exploring Expedition (5 vols.) Reid's Australian Goldfields, Nicholas' Voyage to New Zealand, Criuse's Ten Months in New Zealand, Hunt's Twenty-five Years in New Zealand, Our Race and Its Origin (Rev. R. Taylor), Wilson's Story of Te Waharoa, Savage's New Zealand, Maning's War in the North, Pamphlets on New Zealand, Field's New South Wales, Taylor's Past and Present of New Zealand, Polack's New Zealand (2 vols.), Wakefield's Adventures in New Zealand (2 vols.), Terry's New Zealand, Forster's Voyages with Cook (3 vols.), Collins' New South Wales, &c. (2 vols.), Journal of Civilisation, Parkinson's Voyages, Cook's Voyages (4 vols.), Colonial Pamphlets, Earle's New Zealand, Johnstone's Maoria, The New Zealand Land Question, Ewes' Australia and New Zealand, Power's Sketches in New Zealand, Williams' Missionary Enterprise, Reminiscences of a Veteran (3 vols.), Shortland's Southern New Zealand, Young's Southern World, Swainson's New Zealand and the War, Thomson's Story of New Zealand (2 vols.), Hursthouse's New Zealand, Jameson's New Zealand, Puseley's Australia and New Zealand, Lang's New Zealand in 1839, Debates on New Zealand in the House of Commons, Grayling's War in Taranaki, Simmonds' Old England and New Zealand, Brodie's Past and Present of New Zealand, Firth's Conference with the King Natives, Yates' New Zealand, Cholmondeley's New Zealand, Adams' Spring in the Canterbury Settlement, Brown's New Zealand, Wade's Journey Through New Zealand, Maning's Old New Zealand, Marshall's Visits to New Zealand, Williams' New Zealand Dictionary, Selwyn's Letters from New Zealand, The Southern Cross and the Southern Crown, Reports of the New Zealand Company, Shortland's New Zealand Traditions, Rowe's Australian Group, Handbook for New Zealand, Ellis' Polynesian Researches (5 vols.), Fox's Six Colonies of New Zealand, Russell's Polynesia, The New Zealanders, The British Colonisation of New Zealand, New Zealand and the Cape of Good Hope, McKillop's Twelve Months in New Zealand, Reports of Missions, Local Government in New Zealand, Heywood's Travels in Australia and New Zealand, Auckland the Capital of New Zealand, Kennedy's New Zealand, Polack's Manners and Customs of the New Zealanders (2 vols.), Hursthouse's New Plymouth, Angas' Savage Life in New Zealand (2 vols.).

Figure 4. *New Zealand Herald*, Volume XIX, Issue 6313, 10 February 1882, Page 5 listing the titles of donated books.

A letter to Cheeseman in November 1881 revealed that Mackelvie had started working with Mr E.A. Petherick, a well-known agent specialising in locating and purchasing books relating to Australia and New Zealand. Petherick had supplied '63 volumes & 20 to 30 pamphlets – many very scarce and these are now in the hands of the binder for binding (crest as usual) & repairs & they will go out to you in the spring along with the two first volumes of the Challenger Expedition & Darwin's Earthworms & some other books.'

A letter of August 1882 mentions another delivery on its way on the ship *Loch Fleet* which was reported in the *New Zealand Herald* (20 November 1882). The numerous reports itemising every title can be seen as a reflection of the importance of the donations to the Institute.

A memo held in the Museum archives (MUS-1995-38-86) dated 18th October 1883 lists 45 volumes on New Zealand and several other titles on their way on the ship *Opawa*. A note regarding the *Opawa* delivery was published in the *New Zealand Herald* (2 February 1884).

BOOKS ON NEW ZEALAND FROM MR. MACKELVIE.

We have already noticed that Mr. Mackelvie had sent, by the ship *Opawa*, another consignment of books to augment the collection he formerly sent on New Zealand. The volumes have now been unpacked, and they are certainly a most valuable addition to what may be called our national library. Amongst the collection are six volumes of the Challenger's Expedition, in continuation of those which we have already received from the same gentleman. We may mention that each of these volumes is published at £2 10s. A number of the volumes consist of pamphlets, some old and some new, on the subject of New Zealand, but all are valuable for preservation. There are in all 14 volumes on colonial history.

Mackelvie was ambitious in his intent to acquire NZ books, and to Cheeseman (31st October 1883) he wrote of the involvement of E.A. Petherick.

You will also find a copy of the York Gate Library [catalogue, still held], as it is called, being the Collection of S.W. Silver Esq. (York Gate being where he lives) on early voyages and discovery and tracing all colonial history. This has been presented to me by my friend Mr Petherick, the compiler who managed to obtain most of the works for Mr Silver and has also got for me most of my later acquisitions on Colonial History & I may have mentioned that his name having become known as a buyer of such works, he has had sent to him & has purchased many duplicates and is prepared to take in hand the collection of any similar parcels for other places in New Zealand or elsewhere that may desire it.

We can see that Mackelvie is utilising every avenue to ensure a comprehensive collection is sourced and gifted

to the Auckland Museum and Institute Library. The above letter is the last held in the Museum archives which refers directly to collecting books for the Institute.

A further report in the *New Zealand Herald* (26 February 1884) regarding the donation of 45 books on New Zealand was followed by another in August of that year acknowledging a further gift (*New Zealand Herald*, 18 August 1884). What wasn't reported but is apparent from allusions in his letters to Cheeseman, was that Mackelvie's health was poor.

The *Auckland Star* published an obituary on the 23rd of July 1885 lamenting his death and acknowledged the bequest of what was to be called the Mackelvie Collection to Auckland in Mackelvie's Will. The report of the Institute meeting of the 27th of July 1885 in the following day's *New Zealand Herald*, records an eloquent acknowledgement from the Chair recognising the significant impact on the fledgling Auckland Institute and Museum Library of James Tannock Mackelvie's generosity.

The Late J. T. Mackelvie, Esq.—The Chairman said: Before commencing our usual business this evening I desire to say a few words expressing our deep regret at the loss we have sustained in the death of Mr. J. Tannock Mackelvie. For many years past—without exception—it has been the pleasant duty of my predecessors in the Presidential chair to gratefully acknowledge the receipt of some kind and valued gift to the Institute or, on behalf of the citizens of Auckland, as custodians, of some art treasure or object of beauty forwarded by Mr. Mackelvie. His name is familiar to you all. The objects he has so carefully collected are of the greatest value. Such gifts—such forethought must endear his name to us and keep his memory ever with us. So far as this Institute is concerned these gifts arrived when we were unendowed and unable to obtain such treasures other than by donation. Fortunately, we have a had kind friend who aided us when most required, to erect this building, furnish it, and by their generosity to place within it many of the treasures we see. With institutions as with men, the assistance which comes in adversity is ever the most fondly remembered, and we ever cling to the memory of the hand which in our infancy aided our infant steps. Some of these kind benefactors have left at for ever, but the names of Edmonston, Costley, and Mackelvie will not be forgotten, long after we in turn have passed away, the memory of these kindly deeds will endure.

CONCLUSION

Research to date, utilising correspondence, and detailed lists in both the Annual Reports and reporting in the *New Zealand Herald* and *Auckland Star*, shows between 300 – 400 volumes, with significant focus on New Zealand history, Pacific exploration, natural sciences, and a range of learned journals were donated by Mackelvie. Mackelvie's intent was clear, he wished the people of

Auckland to have access to a collection that reflected the published history of New Zealand and provided a rich research resource for scientific, ethnographic, archaeological and agricultural endeavour. The books, pamphlets and journals were contributed to a core collection at the Auckland Institute Library and well able to provide that resource. Having the books on New Zealand uniformly bound and with clear acknowledgement of his donation strongly suggests he wished his name and generosity to endure. In that Mackelvie was successful, with the binding triggering the research of this note.

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