

**AUSTRALIAN JOINT COPYING PROJECT**

**SOCIETY OF MARY**

**Records of the Fijian Mission, 1844-1926**

**Reels M425-32**

**Societas Mariae  
Via Alessandro Poeria 63  
00152 Rome  
ITALY**

**National Library of Australia  
State Library of New South Wales**

**Filmed: 1957**

## HISTORICAL NOTE

The idea of a Society of Mary originated with a group of Catholic seminarians at Lyon, France, in 1816. One of the group, Jean-Claude Colin (1790-1875), was subsequently given permission by the Bishop of Belley to form a missionary group to work in the rural districts of the diocese. In 1836 Pope Gregory XVI, who was looking for missionaries for Oceania, approved the formation of a religious institute, the Priests of the Society of Mary, or Marist Fathers. Colin was elected as the first Superior General and held the office until 1854. He was succeeded by Julien Favre (1854-85), Antoine Martin (1886-1905) and Jean-Claude Raffin (1905-22). Lyon was the seat of administration from 1839 until 1925, when it moved to Rome.

The Pope created the Vicariate General of Apostolic of Western Oceania in 1835. It covered a vast area, including New Zealand, Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands, the Gilbert Islands and New Guinea. Jean-Baptiste Pompallier (1802-1871) was appointed the Vicar Apostolic and, together with a group of Marist missionaries, he sailed for the Pacific in 1837. Pompallier made New Zealand the centre of his operations and he was to become the first Bishop of Auckland in 1848. The Marists quickly spread through the western Pacific, reaching Wallis and Futuna Islands in 1837, Tonga in 1842, New Caledonia in 1843, Fiji in 1844 and Samoa in 1845. The large vicariate was soon divided into a number of dioceses and vicariates. The Vicariate of Central Oceania was created in 1842 under Bishop Pierre Bataillon.

The first Marist missionaries in Fiji were Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret and Joseph-François Roulleaux. They first worked at Lakeba in Llau and in 1855 moved to Levuka. Bréhéret became the first Prefect Apostolic of Fiji in 1863. In 1887 the Vicariate Apostolic of Fiji was established and Bishop Julien Vidal (1846-1922) was appointed Vicar Apostolic. He held the office until his death. He was also Prefect Apostolic of the southern Solomon Islands from 1897 to 1903. By the early twentieth century there were 30 priests (Marist Fathers) working in Fiji, together with 11 Little Brothers of Mary (Marist Brothers) in charge of schools and 24 European and 31 Fijian Sisters of the Third Order of Mary.

## SOCIETY OF MARY

The records filmed by the Australian Joint Copying Project consist predominantly of letters written by Marist fathers, brothers and nuns in Fiji and Rotuma in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In addition, there are some journals covering the early years of the Mission and extracts from published works on the history of the Marist missionaries in the Pacific. At the time of filming, the records were evidently in quite a disordered state. The letters of Bishop Vidal formed a discrete group and some of the letters of priests and nuns formed short chronological sequences. In general, however, the letters had not been arranged in any logical way, parts of journals had become separated from each other, and journals, manuscripts and published items were mixed up with letters. Unavoidably, this disorder was perpetuated on the microfilm. In this listing, an effort has been made to show the sequence of documents on each reel.

With occasional exceptions, all the letters and other documents are in French.

### Reel M425

The great bulk of the letters on this reel were written in the years 1889-1915 by Bishop Julien Vidal, the Vicar Apostolic of Fiji from 1887 until 1922. They were mostly written to the Superior-General of the Society of Mary, Antoine Martin and Jean-Claude Raffin, the Procurator of Missions and other priests in Lyon. There are also a few letters written by Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret in Fiji in 1848 and 1870-78.

The order of the letters and other documents is as follows:

Solomon Islands: July 1898 (2 letters)

Suva: Nov. 1898-Jan. 1899 (3 letters)

Solomon Islands: 9 April 1899 (1 letter)

Sydney: June- Nov. 1899 (1 letter)

Suva: May 1902-Jan. 1903 (3 letters)

Sydney: 3 Nov. 1899 (1 letter)

Fiji: Feb. 1889-July 1913 (29 letters)

Addresses on the occasion of Bishop Vidal's 25th anniversary [1912] (typescript, 4pp)

Memorandum, signed by Auguste Villaine, on the early history of the Mission to Fiji, 22 Nov. 1935. (incomplete manuscript, 30pp)

Ovalau: Jan. 1870-May 1871 (2 letters of Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret,)

Levuka: 23 Aug. 1874 (1 letter of Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret)

Ovalau: Jan.-March 1878 (3 letters of Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret)

Suva: Jan. 1903-Feb. 1904 (2 letters)

Melbourne: 8 March 1905 (1 letter)

Fiji: July 1848 (4 letters of Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret)

Suva: April 1905-May 1915 (4 letters)

R.C. Villaine. 'Le Reverend Père J.-B. Bréhéret missionnaire et préfet apostolique de Fiji 1815-1888', n.d. (manuscript, 11pp)

Fiji : Nov. 1894-Jan. 1896 (17 letters)

Apia : Jan.-Feb. 1896 (2 letters)

Sydney : 20 April 1896 (1 letter)

Senlis: Aug.-Oct. 1896 (3 letters)

Villecomtal: 1 Jan. 1897 (1 letter)

Lyon: 29 Jan. 1897 (1 letter)

Albany: 21 April 1897 (1 letter)

Suva: June 1897-Jan. 1898 (7 letters)

Julien Vidal. Letter to Mme de la Rupelle, Suva, 1 March 1898 (typescript copy, 2pp)

Suva: March 1898 (2 letters)

Sydney: 12 April 1898 (1 letter)

Cooktown: May 1898 (2 letters)

Solomon Islands: May-June 1898 (2 letters)

Fiji: June 1890-Nov. 1894 (30 letters)

## **Reel M426**

The reel mostly contains letters written by missionaries in Fiji between 1860 and 1899. The recipients are often not named, but the majority were almost certainly written to Fathers Julien Favre and Antoine Martin, the Superior-Generals of the Society of Mary, and the Procurator of Missions.

The correspondents include Augustin Aubry (Suva, Sydney), E.M. Bertreux (Loreto, Levika), Henri Bousquet, Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret (Levuka), Jean-Baptiste Chevreuil (Rotuma), Alfred Déniau (Verata), Laurent Fauré (Ovalau), Jean-Victor Favier (Rewa), Laurent Favre (Solevu), Hector Jay

(Wairiki), François Leberre (Solevu), André Marion (Rewa), Simon Montmayer (Ovalau), Célestin Picherit (Ba River), Emmanuel Rougier (Levika, Rewa), Fabien Terrien (Wairiki), Victor Thierry (Loreto) and Julien Vidal (Suva, Levuka)

The order of the letters and documents is as follows:

Fiji: 1885-99 (8 letters)

État des recettes et dépenses presumées por l'année

Fiji : 1882-89 (5 letters)

Fiji : 1863-67 (4 letters)

Fiji : 1898-99 (11 letters)

Levuka : 1878-79 (6 letters from Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret)

Fiji: 1860-65 (5 letters)

Fiji : 1891-1905 (10 letters)

Fiji : 1863-69 (15 letters)

Fiji : 1897-99 (14 letters)

## **Reel M427**

Apart from a few incomplete typescripts, the reel contains letters written from missionaries and nuns in Fiji between 1882 and 1917. The recipients are often not named, but they were mostly written to the Superiors-General Antoine Martin and Jean-Claude Raffin, the Procurator of Missions, other fathers at Lyon, and Father Augustin Aubry in Sydney.

The correspondents include Pierre Bourdier (Suva), Henri Bousquet, Joseph Calviac, François Dupont (Levuka), Thomas Fox (Macuata), Alexis Gonnet (Loreto, Levuka), Yves Helliot (Levuka), Gabriel Lahaye, Leon Lejeune (Loreto), Sister Marie Adèle (Wairiki), Sister Marie Agnes (Wairiki), André Marion (Levuka), Jean de Marzan (Lomary), Pierce Michel, Jean Orève (Natovi), Célestin Picherit (Macuata, Suva), Alphonse Roth (Naduri), Emmanuel Rougier (Rewa), Jean-Baptiste Schneider (Solavu), Lucien Soubreyan (Sumi), Fabien Terrien (Wairiki) and Auguste Villaine (Ba River).

The order of the letters and documents is as follows :

Fiji: 1899-1903 (34 letters)

Auguste Villaine. Incomplete typescript dated 12 Sept. 1913, pp 40-51

Unsigned and untitled typescript, pp 9-40

Auguste Villaine. Incomplete letter, undated

Ba River: 25 Feb. 1915 (1 letter)

Fiji: 1915-17 (12 letters)

'Quelques notes sur les stations de la mission Catholique de Fiji 1887-1913', 12 Sept. 1913, pp 1-6.  
(typescript)

Fiji : 1905-6 (17 letters)

Fiji : 1894-95 (3 letters)

Fiji : 1898-1904 (12 letters)

Fiji : 1882-1893 (6 letters)

Fiji : 1905-9 (39 letters)

## **Reel M428**

The reel contains part of the journals of the first two Marist missionaries in Fiji, Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret and Joseph-François Roulleaux, and letters written by missionaries in Fiji, mostly between 1909 and 1914. The recipients are often not identified, but many of the letters were addressed to Father Regis.

The correspondents include Henri Bousquet (Solevu), Joseph Calviac, Benjamin Courrech (Wairiki), François Dupont (Levuka, Suva), Thomas Fox (Suva), Alexis Gonnet (Levuka), J.L. Guinard (Namosi), Yves Helliot (Levuka), Gabriel Lahaye, Leon Lejeune (Faguta), Sister Marie Agnes (Wairiki), Sister Marie Suzanne (Makogai), Jean de Marzan (Nausori), Jean Orève (Suva), Célestin Picherit, Alphonse Roth, Alphonse Soubreyan, Lucien Soubreyan (Matusa, Levuka), Fabien Terrien (Wairiki), Julien Vidal (Suva) and Auguste Villaine.

The order of the letters and documents is as follows :

Extracts from a published book with a reference to Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret (pp 383, 386)

Fiji: 1886 (3 letters)

Fiji: 1909-14 (51 letters)

Journal du Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret, Lakeba, 1851-52

'Journal du P. Bréhéret et Roulleaux de la mission de Notre Dames des Sept Douleurs établie à Lakemba, 1844-47'. (15pp)

Fiji : 1912-13 (43 letters)

## Reel M429

'Journal de la Mission de Notre Dames des Sept Douleurs à Lakemba', 18 Sept. 1844-28 Feb. 1847. (pp 18-148)

'Journal de la Mission de Notre Dames des Sept Douleurs à Lakemba', 16 May 1847-22 Aug. 1850. (pp 1-33)

'Étude sur journal de la Mission de Lakemba (1844-1853)'. (pp 1-20)

Letter from G. Morvan to M. Tardau, 2 Aug. 1879.

'Étude sur journal de la Mission de Lakemba (1844-1853)'. (pp 21-81)

## Reel M430

The reel contains letters from missionaries in Fiji, dating from 1844 to 1897, a journal of the Fijian Mission (1850-52) and other documents and extracts from publications. The letters are addressed to Julien Favre and Antoine Martin, the Superior Generals, François Poupinel, the Assistant Superior General, the Procurator of Missions and other fathers at Lyon and also Bishop Alloys Elloy, the Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania.

The correspondents include Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret (Levuka), Isidore Bochetti (Wairiki), Alfred Déniat (Verata), Pierre Dezest (Rotuma), Jean-Victor Favier (Rewa), Laurent Favre (Solevu), Antoine Grosselin (Levuka), Louis Hurlin, Hector Jay (Wairiki), François Leberre (Rotuma), Victor Lenniger (Levuka), Stanislas Loyer (Rotuma), Charles Mathieu, Simon Montmayer (Ovalu), Joseph-François Roulleaux (Lakeba) and Joseph Trouillet (Rotuma).

The order of the letters and documents is as follows :

Levuka: 1889-97 (17 letters from Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret)

Fiji: 1880 (7 letters)

'Journal de la Mission de Notre Dames de sept Douleurs à Lakemba', Aug. 1850-Oct. 1851 (pp 34-52) and 16 Feb. 1851-Oct. 1852 (pp 1-56)

'Étude sur journal de la Mission de Lakemba (1844-1853)'. (pp 82-96)

'Le P. Roulliaux seul', notes written on verso of a letter, c. 1946. (23pp)

Fiji : 1870-79 (116 letters)

Levuka: 1882-84 (18 letters from Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret)

'Préfecture apostolique de Fiji, lettre du R.P. Bréhéret au T.R.P. Martin', 6 Nov. 1885. (pp 369-77 from an unidentified book)

Fiji : 1886-88 (5 letters of Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret)

Joseph-François Roulleaux. Notice sur L'Archipel Fidji, 1845. (4pp)

Fiji : 1845-48 (6 letters of Joseph-François Roulleaux)

Fiji: 1881-82 (3 letters of Jean-Baptiste Bréhéret)

P. Bréhéret. Mission des îles Viti au Fiji, 28 April 1879. (7pp)

Fiji : 1879 (11 letters)

Chronology of Fiji 1643-1938 (typescript, 4pp, in English)

'Convention entre Jacobao Jui Viti (Roi du Boi) d'une part et au nom de S.M. Empereur des Français M. le Capitaine de Frigate Le Bris Durumain, Commandant la Corvette *La Bayonnaise*, fondé de pouvoir de M. le Gouverneur des establishments français de l'Océanie d'autre part', 7 July 1858. (3pp)

Letter concerning the convention from L. Lejeune (Ovalau), 9 July 1926.

Letter from Father Charles Mathieu to Emperor Napoleon III, n.d. (draft, 12pp)

Tonga: 24 July 1844 (1 letter from Joseph-François Roulleaux)

Lakeba: 12 Nov. 1845 (1 letter (copy) from Joseph-François Roulleaux)

## **Reel M431**

This reel contains letters, including a few reproduced in published works, from missionaries in Fiji, dating from 1881 to 1899. They were written to the Superior General Antoine Martin, François Poupinel, the Assistant Superior General, the Procurator of Missions and other fathers in Lyon, priests in other French cities, and Father Augustin Aubry in Sydney.

The correspondents include Augustin Aubry (Levuka), Isidore Bochetti (Ovalau), Henri Bousquet, Pierre Chaix (Wairiki), Jean-Baptiste Chevreuil (Rotuma), Alfred Déniat, Laurent Fauré (Solevu), Jean-Victor Favier (Rewa), Karl Flaus (Wairiki), Antoine Grosselin (Loreto), Karl Flaus (Wairiki), Joseph-Marie Guitet (Loreto), Hector Jay, Louis Hurlin (Metz, Levuka), Gabriel Lahaye (Sovelu), François Leberre (Solevu), Augustin Lepetit (Wairiki, Suva), Louis-Jean Lezer (Loreto), Stanilas Loyer (Levuka), Sister Marie St Clair (Loreto), Sister Marie Stanilaus (Rewa), André Marion (Levuka), Jean de Marzan (Wairiki), Louis Passant (Rewa), Eugène Rideau (Ba River), Emmanuel Rougier (Rewa), Jean-Baptiste Schneider (Rotuma), Fabien Terrien (Levuka), Victor Thierry (Ba River), François Trillot and Joseph Trouillet (Rotuma).

The order of the letters is as follows:

Wairiki: 12 Nov. 1886 (1 letter from Augustin Lepetit concerning the death of Rev. P. Courveck)

Fiji: 12 Jan. 1887

Wairiki: 12 Jan. 1887 (1 letter from Augustin Lepetit to his parents)

Fiji: 1887 (4 letters)



'Lettre du A. Hurlin au R.P. Assistant pour les Missions', 5 July 1887 (pp 24-31 from an unidentified printed book)

Fiji: 1881-89 (28 letters)

'Lettre du R. Père Deniau, missionnaire apostolique aux Hebrides à Mesdames Poil et Isambert de Bonneval', 21 June 1888. (printed)

Fiji: 1882-83 (7 letters)

Fiji: 5 July 1887 (1 letter)

Nantes: 14 July 1887 (1 letter from Sister Marie St Clair to her parents)

Fiji: 1887 (8 letters)

'Lettres des Soeur Marie Saint Clair, n.d., et P. Hurlin à Mgr Vidal', 29 Oct. 1887 (pp 41-47 from an unidentified printed book)

Fiji : 1887-89 (26 letters)

Fiji : 1883 (3 letters)

'Missions maristes aux Îles Fidji, lettre de Sœur Marie du Sacre-Coeur au R.P.M.', Nov. 1883 (pp 185-91 from an unidentified printed book)

Fiji : 1884-85 (4 letters)

'Prefecture apostolique de Fidji, lettre du P. Grosselin au P. Lenninger', 5 July 1885 (pp 101-8 from an unidentified printed book)

Fiji : 1890-99 (66 letters)

## **Reel M432**

The final reel contains a small number of letters dating from the early years of the Fijian Mission, as well as three letters written in 1897. Most of the letters were written by C. Mathieu (Rewa). The other correspondents include Joseph-François Rouillaux, Jean-Victor Favier (Ovalau), Jean de Marzan (Solevu) and Sister Marie Agnes (Wairiki). The recipients are not named.

The order of the letters is as follows:

Fiji: 1857-58 (2 letters)

Sydney: 6 July 1855 (1 letter)

Rewa: 1851-55 (21 letters)

Fiji: 1850 (3 letters from Joseph-François Roulleaux)

Fiji: 1897 (3 letters)