

N.Z. Mourns Death of 96-Year-Old Archbishop

A portrait of the late Archbishop Redwood, taken a short time ago by S. P. Andrew, of Wellington. The picture shows the late Archbishop in his full episcopal robes.



ROMAN CATHOLICS—and thousands of other denominations, too—are mourning the death of Archbishop Redwood, which took place in Wellington a few days ago. The Archbishop was, without a doubt, the world's most remarkable clergyman. He was born in Staffordshire in 1839 and, 96 years later, he was still carrying on his work as head of the Roman Catholic Church in New Zealand.

Radio listeners became acquainted with the Archbishop when he made several broadcasts last February in celebration of his diamond jubilee as a bishop. At that time, nearly 12 months ago, church dignitaries from all parts of the South Seas assembled to do honour to one of the finest churchmen New Zealand has known. We quote here from an article which appeared in the "Radio Record" at the time of the jubilee, an article touching on the late Archbishop's life:—

His Grace was three years old when his people decided to try their fortune in the newly-discovered New Zealand. They set sail in the *George Fyfe*, and were five months at sea, for the old ship could do no more than seven knots in the most favourable breeze. The Wellington of those days was just a collection of huts with the seas washing the land which to-day is Lambton Quay. But the Redwood family did not stay in Wellington. It pushed on to Nelson, the actual destination of the *George Fyfe*, where the archbishop-to-be was given into the care of the reverend Father Garin. Asked whether Father Garin had been his inspiration in deciding to enter the Church, his Grace replied: "My inspiration came from God, and the parents I was blessed with. How could it have been otherwise? We lived in those early days a long way out from Nelson, without a priest within miles of the place; but when I told him of my decision, Father Garin, who was a very saintly man, approved, and gave me every assistance. I attended his school, then considered to be the best in New Zealand, and he taught me Latin and French. Father Garin could not speak English when he came to Nelson. He had come out from France under the authority of Bishop Pompallier, though not of his society, and in the '30's had worked among the Maoris in the North Island, and learned their language; but it was not until after he arrived in Nelson that he learned English from the soldiers and others there."

Francis Redwood proved such an able scholar that Father Garin prevailed upon his parents to give him a better education than was obtainable in the young colony at that time. And so, as a lad of 15, he set off for France in the brig *Mountain Maid*, transshipping at Sydney at the beginning of 1855 to the *Lady Anne*, which arrived at Gravesend in May. For some years he studied in France in the Department of the Loire, and then continued his studies for ten years in Ireland. He was a conscientious student, and so surpassed his fellow students in the subjects which he undertook that he soon commanded the respect of both pupils and masters. He was ordained priest in the early 'sixties, and made his religious profession in the Society of Mary in 1864.

In 1874 Dr. Redwood was called to the Episcopate and consecrated by his Eminence the late Cardinal Manning in London. In the same year he was appointed Titular Bishop of Wellington, in the land of his adoption. Thirteen years later he was created Archbishop by Papal Brief, and this became Metropolitan of New Zealand. When Dr. Redwood was appointed to the charge of the Wellington Diocese it extended from Wairoa and New Plymouth in the north to the Waitaki River in the south, which meant that it included all the present diocese of Christchurch. In all this immense district at that time there were 31 priests, two of whom were invalids, and including two who were resting in Sydney.

In a special message given to the "Radio Record" for the people of the Dominion at the time of his jubilee, the late archbishop said: "May a bountiful Creator bless abundantly both them and their land—my beautiful adopted country—for ever more." This message, we are sure, is as fervently Archbishop Redwood's wish in death as it was in life.