

No known copy? T. S. Grace's suppressed circular, W264

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Some sixteen years ago, while scanning a file of the *Southern Cross*, a reference was noted to an inquiry by the Auckland Provincial Council about the issue of a circular by T. S. Grace and John Telford warning Maori owners, chiefly in the Waikato, against selling land to the Pakeha. More recently, when checking notebooks for untranscribed material, the significance of the entry was apparent.¹

Most unusually the item itself had not been identified by Bishop H. W. Williams in his *Bibliography of Printed Maori* . . . (1924), his listing (W264) being merely a transcription of the entry given by J. D. Davis over 40 years earlier, i.e. 'Tract in Maori, by C. M. Clergyman, and a Catechist; published against the selling of land to Europeans'. Davis had been in New Zealand only for the six years before his death and the posthumous publication of his bibliography. Like Telford who was, in fact, merely the translator, he died of tuberculosis at a comparatively early age, but he must have obtained the basis of his entry from an informed source. Wells, in his *History of Taranaki*, refers to it in the Davis form but must have seen at least a translation for he cites the reference (No. 6, i.e. I Kings 21:2-3) to Naboth's vineyard in a Biblical text; and A. J. Harrop came across the Wynyard despatch to the Colonial Office about it in the 209 series, even quoting from it at some length but, as will be seen, the somewhat hasty letter did not name the individuals thought to be responsible.²

The Bishop's father, William Leonard Williams, and grandfather, William Williams, differed strongly from Grace on aspects of Maori-European relations and certainly would have known of the furore caused by the distribution of the circular, probably in August 1854. Grace had been in Auckland for some months after a two year spell of duty at the Turanga Mission station, Poverty Bay, until the return from England of W. L. Williams. His innovations in running the station as well as his views on missionary land purchases annoyed the family, and the delays in taking up his new appointment at Taupo obliged him to wait around in Auckland until Mrs Grace's latest pregnancy had run its course and his lengthy argument with the local Central Committee of the Church Missionary Society about the terms of his occupancy had been