Tracing Pacific Islands Genealogy from New Zealand
Family Information

What are your parents’ and grandparents’ full names?
What island(s) are you connected with?

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When and why did your family come to New Zealand? How did they come?

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Construct a timeline of your family, showing dates of migration, events on your island, political events, BDMs.
Which island?

Each country in the Pacific Ocean has its own history. You need to find out about your ancestral island(s). If you are of mixed descent, you will need to investigate each place.

Most of the island records available in NZ were written by foreigners, about themselves, for their own use. They do not necessarily contain much about the native people of the island.

Land records usually contain genealogical information. So do anthropological records.
Charts

There are various ways of charting family trees. They can be done on paper or computer. Do not put your tree on the internet to start with, use a family tree programme. Family tree programmes can be downloaded for free, or purchased. You need to fill in the correct full name, and dates of birth, marriage and death for each person. Use an approximate date if the real date is unknown. This is particularly important if names are repeated over generations. Remember that most Polynesians who lived prior to 1800 only had one name.
What is available?

This depends on the island group.

The Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) has filmed many civil registrations, and background books, for the Pacific Islands.

These microfilms are available at Mormon Family History Centres, and at major libraries. Auckland City Library holds many of these microfilms, in the Research Centre. Some can be viewed online.

[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) - the Mormon website, contains a few indices to Pacific records- Samoa, American Samoa, Guam and Micronesia.
Civil Registrations
PAMBU- Pacific Manuscript Bureau

PAMBU is part of the Australian National University in Canberra. They travel the Pacific, filming at risk documents, about anything, and publishing microfilms of these documents. They are financed by various universities and national libraries, who receive copies of the microfilms. The University of Auckland and the National Library of New Zealand in Wellington both hold the microfilms. Other libraries can purchase copies. The catalogue for PAMBU is available online.

http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/pambu/catalogue/
Newspapers

Papers Past - the National Library website- now contains 4 Samoan newspapers, covering the period 1877-1930. The microfilms of these are available at the National Library in Wellington.

The Fiji Times, from 1869, is available on microfilm at Massey University Library, Albany, Auckland and at the National Library, Wellington.

Trove - the Australian National Library website – also contains information about the islands which appeared in Australian newspapers.

The Californian Digital Newspaper Collection and other American newspapers contain information about people who travelled to America.
NZ Government records

- passenger lists,
- immigration records,
- births, deaths, marriages
- school records,
- probates,
- Inquests,
- military.

http://archway.archives.govt.nz/
Records of other Governments

Since gaining independence, island countries have kept their own records, some of which are available on microfilm, usually only to a certain date. Some records are restricted.

For recent records, you will need to contact the government of the country concerned.

Some colonial records are kept in the Archives of the colonial power e.g. Germany, Britain, France, or in the archives of trading or shipping companies.
Samoan Archive (Archives NZ)

German, British, and New Zealand records, made in Western Samoa, brought to New Zealand.
Indexed on Archway.
Other records from Germany are now in Samoa.
Consular records

Overseas consuls in the islands kept records about their citizens. These did not usually include the local islanders. The British Western Pacific High Commission papers, which include Tonga, Pitcairn, the Solomon Islands, Gilbert & Ellice Protectorate, and the New Hebrides, are held in the University of Auckland Library Special Collections.

There are also microfilms of letters to overseas governments from various naval officers of different nationalities concerning their visits to the islands. These are held at Archives NZ in Wellington.
Church records

The Wesleyan Missionary Society, London Missionary Society, Anglican Church, Roman Catholic Church, Church of Latter Day Saints, and other smaller churches have all kept records of their endeavours. Sometimes these include baptisms and marriages. Many of these are available as PAMBU microfilms. When migrants arrived in NZ, they often set up their own branches of NZ church organizations. Records are held by each denomination.
Books & Journals

Many historical and anthropological books and articles have been written about the Pacific area. Search library catalogues. Some are online,

e.g. NZETC; Tidal Pools- http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/
Early NZ books- http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/
Hathitrust- https://www.hathitrust.org/
Google books

or on microfilm,
e.g. Familysearch, PAMBU.
Cemeteries & Memorials

Some cemeteries in the Pacific are listed on the Billion Graves and Find A Grave websites

European Cemetery, Ha’apai, Tonga

Rookwood Cemetery, Sydney, Australia

Cook Islands

WW1 Memorial Board
Online Sources

- Archway; Archives New Zealand; https://archway.archives.govt.nz/
- Californian Digital Newspaper Collection; https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc
- Hawaii Genealogy; http://hawaiigenealogy.com/
- Jane Resture; Oceania; http://janeresture.com/
- Micronesian Seminar; beachcomber index; http://www.micsem.org/pubs/articles/historical/bcomber/index.htm
- Mormon microfilms- check https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/search for list of microfilms
- NZETC; Tidal pools; http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-corpus-pacific.html
- Digitalised texts concerning the Pacific.
- PAMBU; http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/pambu/catalogue/
- Papers Past; https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/ -Samoan newspapers
- Rootsweb Message Boards; Oceania; https://www.ancestry.com/boards/localities.oceania/mb.ashx
  (NB. French Polynesia is listed under France)
Brief Resources list for Samoa & American Samoa

Archives NZ; Samoan Archive

Burials; BillionGraves: https://billiongraves.com/

FindMyPast; British Overseas Births, Deaths, Marriages; Samoa


London Missionary Society microfilms; Auckland University Library, Special Collections

Mormon microfilms; Births, Deaths, Marriages. Probates;
  - Samoa Easy; www.FamilySearch.org

NARA; The National Archives at San Francisco;
https://www.archives.gov/san-francisco

NZETC; Tidal Pools;
http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-corpus-pacific.html

Samoan newspapers; Papers Past

Stewart’s Handbook of the Pacific

The Museum of Samoa; facebook;

Trove; Pacific Islands Monthly https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-310385031

Books
Building the Kingdom in Samoa 1888-2005
Cyclopedia of Samoa 1907
Fitafita mai Samoa; Christine Liava’a
Tamaitai Samoa; Peggy Fairburn- Dunlop
To Walk Under Palm Trees; Tony Brunt

Personal and family websites.

Pacific Islands Interests group newsletter
**Brief Resources list for Tonga**

Burials; Billiongraves; [https://billiongraves.com/](https://billiongraves.com/)

FindMyPast; British Overseas Births, Deaths, Marriages; Tonga


Mormon microfilms;
- Deaths, Vavau and Tonga;
  [https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE9936393](https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE9936393)
  - oral genealogies
  - Cole Jensen collection
  - Royalty

Western Pacific Archive; Auckland University Library Special Collections
BCT; British Consulate, Tonga
- passport applications
- PAMBU microfilms- baptisms, marriages, missionary records (Wesleyan)

NZETC; Tidal Pools;

Papers Pasr

Stewart’s Handbook of the Pacific


**Books**

Cyclopedia of Tonga 1907

Enemy Aliens in Tonga- May 1916; Christine Liava’a

Essays on the History of Tonga; Peter Suren

Germans in Tonga; James Bade

Koe Kau To’a Na’anau Poletau; Christine Liava’a

Tonga Islands; John Martin (William Mariner)

Personal and family websites.

Pacific Islands Interests group newsletter
Brief Resources list for Fiji

Burials; Billiongraves; https://billiongraves.com/

Fiji Museum; facebook: https://www.facebook.com/fijimuseum/

Fiji Times newspaper; National Library, Wellington & Massey University Library, Albany, Auckland

FindMyPast; British Overseas Births, Deaths, Marriages; Fiji


Mormon microfilms;
- births, deaths, marriages (European, General, Indian, Fijian)
- probates, wills

Levuka History and Timeline; https://levuka.wordpress.com/

Papers Pasr

Stewart’s Handbook of the Pacific

Trove;
- Pacific Islands Monthly
- Transactions and Proceedings of the Fiji Society

Books
Adventurous Spirits; John Young
A history of Fiji; R A Derrick
Cyclopedia of Fiji 1907
Handbook of Fiji
Kaivalagi ni Viti 1874-75; Rondo Blue
Levuka Public School Roll
Qaravi na’i tavi; Christine Liava’a

Personal and family websites.

Pacific Islands Interests group newsletter
Brief Resources list for Niue

Archives New Zealand
- military records

Burials; Billiongraves; https://billiongraves.com/


London Missionary Society microfilms; Auckland University Library, Special Collections

Mormon microfilms;
- Births, Deaths, Marriages.
- Census 1971;
- Europeans who immigrated to Niue
- Niue genealogies
- Genealogies of Niuean women

NZETC; Tidal Pools;
http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-corpus-pacific.html

Papers Past

Stewart’s Handbook of the Pacific

Trove; Pacific Islands Monthly https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-310385031

Books
Niue and the Great War; Margaret Pointer
Niue 1774-1974; Margaret Pointer
Tagi tote e loto Haaku; Margaret Pointer
Would a Good Man die?- Dick Scott

Personal and family websites.

Pacific Islands Interests group newsletter
Brief Resources list for the Cook Islands

Archives NZ;
- Cook Islands Gazette,
- Dept of Maori and Island affairs
- Dept of Island Territories
- Military records

Burials; Billiongraves; https://billiongraves.com/

Cook Islands Civil Registration records 1846- 1989
https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/2731435

Cook Islands Library and Museum Society; http://cook-islands-library-museum.org/

FindMyPast; British Overseas Births, Deaths, Marriages; Cook Islands


London Missionary Society microfilms; Auckland University Library, Special Collections

Mormon microfilms;
- land court records
- Cole Jensen collection
- genealogies

NZETC; Tidal Pools; http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-corpus-pacific.html
- missionary records of genealogies (London Missionary Society)
- anthropological writings

Papers Past

Stewart’s Handbook of the Pacific

Trove; Pacific Islands Monthly https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-310385031

Books
Cyclopedia of the Cook Islands- 1907
The Cook Islands 1820-1950; Richard Gilson
Soldiers from the Pacific; Howard Weddell

Personal and family websites.

Pacific Islands Interests group newsletter
Brief Resources list for French Polynesia

ANOM – National Archives of France
- births, deaths, marriages; Austral Islands
  Gambier Islands,
  Marquesas Islands,
  Tuamotu Islands,
  Leeward Islands

Archives of French Polynesia;
- http://www.archives.pf/messager-de-tahiti/ Le Messager de Tahiti newspaper 1852-1883

- http://www.archives.pf/te-vea-no-tahiti/ Te Vea no Tahiti newspaper;

Burials; Billiongraves; https://billiongraves.com/

FindMyPast; British Overseas Births, Deaths, Marriages; Polynesia

Journal of the Société des Océanistes; https://journals.openedition.org/jso/


London Missionary Society microfilms; Auckland University Library, Special Collections

Mormon microfilms; French Polynesia,
- Civil Registration; Civil registration of births, marriages, and deaths for French Polynesia, 1780-1999.

Musée de Tahiti et des îles; http://www.museetahiti.pf/?lang=en

Papers Past

Stewart’s Handbook of the Pacific

Trove; Pacific Islands Monthly https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-310385031

Books
Cyclopedia of Tahiti- 1907
Poilus Tahitiens; J C Shigetomi
Tahitiens : repertoire bio-bibliographique de la Polynésie française / Patrick O'Reilly & Raoul Teissier

Personal and family websites.

Pacific Islands Interests group newsletter
Brief Resources List for Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands

**Pitcairn**
Mormon microfilms;
- Parish registers of Pitcairn Island; online
- Cemetery Inscriptions of Pitcairn Island; online

Billiongraves; Pitcairn Island cemetery

Ebooks;
Mutiny of the Bounty and story of Pitcairn Island, 1790-1894

Pitcairn Island Study Center; https://library.puc.edu/pitcairn/index.shtml

Stewart’s Handbook of the Pacific

Trove; Pacific Islands Monthly https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-310385031

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**Norfolk Island**

FindMyPast; British Overseas Births, Deaths, Marriages; Norfolk Island

NSW Pioneers Index; Parish of Norfolk Island

Billiongraves; Norfolk Island cemetery

Norfolk Island Research and Genealogy Centre;

Trove; Pacific Islands Monthly https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-310385031

Soldiers from the Pacific; Howard Weddell

Stewart’s Handbook of the Pacific

Personal and family websites.

Pacific Islands Interests group newsletter
Online Sources for Pacific Genealogy

- **Archway**: Archives New Zealand; [https://archway.archives.govt.nz/](https://archway.archives.govt.nz/)
- **Californian Digital Newspaper Collection**: [https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc](https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc)
- **Hawaii Genealogy**: [http://hawaiigenealogy.com/](http://hawaiigenealogy.com/)
- **Jane Resture**: Oceania; [http://janeresture.com/](http://janeresture.com/)
- **Micronesian Seminar**: beachcomber index; [http://www.micsem.org/pubs/articles/historical/bcomber/index.htm](http://www.micsem.org/pubs/articles/historical/bcomber/index.htm)
- **Mormon microfilms**: check [https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/search](https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/search) for list of microfilms
- **NZETC**: Tidal pools; [http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-corpus-pacific.html](http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-corpus-pacific.html)
- Digitalised texts concerning the Pacific.
- **Papers Past**: [https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/](https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/) - Samoan newspapers
- **Rootsweb Message Boards**: Oceania; [https://www.ancestry.com/boards/localities.oceania/mb.ashx](https://www.ancestry.com/boards/localities.oceania/mb.ashx)
  - (NB. French Polynesia is listed under France)