



Rev Peter Milne (Snr)

The Rev Peter Milne was born at Stains, Aberdeen on the 17th May 1834. A Licentiate of the Free Church of Scotland, he was ordained as a Missionary to the New Hebrides under the Presbyterian Synod of Otago & Southland at Edinburgh on the 26th November 1868. Marrying Mary Jane Veitch in the same year, they departed for the Islands in 1869 via Dunedin, settling on Nguna Island in 1870. Numerous difficulties presented themselves, including learning the local language, limiting the strong influence of the old heathen ways of spirit worship, limiting the influence of unscrupulous European traders, translating religious books into the native language, and educating his people. The first Christian Baptism was performed in 1880 and after subsequent rapid progress in evangelization, the Island was nominally Christian by 1896. Rev Milne encouraged the production of Arrowroot as a means of paying for the printing of religious books in native language as a means of more effectively spreading the Gospel. After the death of his wife in 1908, he continued to live on Nguna with his son the Rev William Milne. His life was entirely dedicated to the Christian cause which he actively promoted up until his death. He died at Nguna on the 24th November 1924 aged 90, being buried in the Nguna Christian Cemetery.



Mrs Mary Jane Milne

Mary Jane Veitch was born at Edinburgh on the 8th June 1849 and married the Rev Peter Milne (Snr), a Minister of the Free Church of Scotland on the 18th December 1868. With her husband being appointed as a Missionary to Nguna in the New Hebrides under the Presbyterian Synod of Otago & Southland, they departed for the Islands in 1869. She ably supported her Husband over many difficult years and took upon herself her own share of the Mission work with the native people which included teaching them sewing and singing. But she found the isolation on the islands, the necessity of sending her children away to New Zealand for schooling, and the loss of her first born son very hard to bear. After selflessly serving on Nguna Island with her husband for 37 years, she returned to Dunedin in October 1906 to 'gather together her family', also with the fervent - but vain - hope that her husband would retire from his life's work and join her. Suffering from the effects of a malarial illness which she had contracted in the Islands, she died suddenly at Dunedin on the 26th February 1908 after a short illness. "God had spared her to see great days, from the one native at the Lord's Table in 1875 to the 600 not long before she left...". She was buried in the Northern Cemetery, Dunedin; her husband being buried on Nguna.