ARTICLE

Pharmacy and migration: James Butler Swann (1834-1901) and his three sons in New Zealand, Fiji and Samoa 1862-1936

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Abstract

From the 1850s onwards, substantial numbers of pharmacists left Britain in search of adventure and fortune. One such was James Butler Swann; in 1862 he uprooted his family from a settled life in Leicestershire to join a new Anglican community in New Zealand. After five years the family migrated again to Fiji, attracted by the greater prospects of cotton cultivation; but the project failed and Swann bought a pharmacy. Over the following years his first son established a pharmacy on a neighbouring island, his second son established one in Samoa, and his third son took over his father's business on Fiji. This article describes the rapidly shifting social, economic and political background against which British migrant pharmacists established businesses overseas at this time.

Introduction

One of the consequences of the rapid expansion of the British Empire during the second half of the nineteenth century was an increase in the numbers of Britons travelling overseas to run the empire and to serve the needs of the ex-patriots and others who did so. The growth of empire also promoted in at least some of the population the desire to travel, the lure of excitement and adventure, and the prospect of making their fortunes. But people also migrated for more patriotic or altruistic reasons, to serve their country, to work as missionaries, or to be part of shared religious communities. All migrants had to weigh up the 'pull' as well as the 'push' factors before settling on such momentous decisions as where to migrate to and when.[1]

The expansion of empire created a growing demand for medical services, and migration embraced a great many health care practitioners, including doctors, nurses, and chemists and druggists.[2] With the growth of expatriate communities around the world, the demand for medicines of all kinds vastly expanded, although in most places it was also largely unregulated until such time as state intervention was deemed necessary. The opportunities for the sale of medicines, whether counter prescribed or proprietary, were huge, and along with the sale of a wide range of other commodities, many pharmacists saw great opportunities not only for adventure but also for personal enrichment.[3]

Young British pharmacists were clearly caught up in a national mood that encouraged travel abroad, valued overseas experience, and promoted the opportunities for enrichment. With the start of the British Raj in India in 1857 a substantial number headed east, particularly after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which reduced the journey time to three weeks.[4] Some continued eastwards to Singapore[5] and Hong Kong,[6] with some making it as far as China.[7] But many of these individuals made regular return trips to Great Britain, and eventually returned there having made their fortunes.

In addition, substantial numbers migrated to British Dominions including Canada,[8] Australia[9] and New Zealand,[10] whilst others headed to South Africa[11] and to other parts of Africa. Such migrants were much more likely to become permanent citizens of the colony or territory than those who went to India or south east Asia. Still others ventured only as far as Mediterranean islands such as Malta and Cyprus, or spent only their winters overseas, such as those wintering on the French Riviera.[12]

In Britain itself, pharmacy was undergoing profound change during this time.[13] The Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain had been founded in 1841; a register of pharmaceutical chemists was established in 1852, and in 1868 a separate register was created for chemists and druggists who had passed the Minor examination. These rapid changes in the status and qualifications of pharmacists roughly coincided with the rapid expansion of the British Empire.

Those who left Britain were usually young single men in search of adventure and fortune. But there were exceptions who made remarkable journeys with young families; and only a small proportion of these migrated a second or even third time. They included James Butler Swann, who took his family from a settled and prosperous village life in Leicestershire to a remote area of New Zealand. Along with three of his sons, Swann came to have an important role in shaping pharmacy in both Fiji and Samoa. But what motivated such long-distance migration? What caused the family to migrate a second time? And how did they fare once they arrived at their destinations? This article explores the reasons for the choices they made, and retraces their journeys and lives in the South Pacific.

The father: James Butler Swann (1834-1901)

James Butler Swann was born on 18 February 1834 in the village of Carlton-le-Moorland in Lincolnshire, England, to a prosperous local family. His father, who was born on 1 October 1798 and also christened James Butler Swann, seems to have been a man of independ-

Figure 1. *James Butler Swann (1834-1901). (Source: Chemist and Druggist. 7 September 1901: 59; 405).*

ent means. His grandfather, John Swann, who had been born in Brant Broughton in Lincolnshire in 1752, was the vicar in Carlton-le-Moorland, a few miles north of Brant Broughton. John Swann and his wife had seven children, the second of whom was John Butler Swann. John Swann died on 19 January 1827 in Brant Broughton aged 75, before James Butler Swann junior, his grandson, was born.[14]

Local records indicate that at the age of 57, in 1855, James Butler Swann senior was a well-established local land and property owner. The Record of Persons Entitled to Vote at an Election in the Parish of Carlton-le-Moorland indicates that his 'place of abode' was Heapham, a village in the West Lindsey district of Lincolnshire, England, five miles south-east from Gainsborough. The 'nature of his qualification' to vote was his 'ownership of freehold and copyhold houses and land'; his tenants were listed as 'William Theaker and others'. But in 1858, at the age of 60, he sold his properties to the Willoughby family, headed by the Lords Middleton of Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire, and Middleton Hall, Warwickshire. He died on 4 April 1875 aged 76.[15]

James Butler Swann senior and his wife, Anne Clover (born 3 December 1811), had ten children, and James Butler Swann junior was their eldest son.[16] After serving his apprenticeship in Lincolnshire, probably with a local pharmaceutical chemist, he qualified as a chemist and druggist around 1855 at the age of 21, having completed a five-year apprenticeship. He then went into business locally 'on his own account',[17] moving to Bourne in Lincolnshire, about 30 miles south of Carlton-le-Moorland. There he remained for the next seven years, where he was described as a 'prosperous chemist'.[18]

At the age of 22 James Butler Swann married Margaret White from Stamford in the south of Lincolnshire, on 22 June 1856. The couple had eight children: the first was Arthur James Swann (born 7 July 1857); he was closely followed by William John Swann (born 3 January 1859), and then by Mary Angela Swann (born 25 January 1860), in Bourne. A third son, Joseph Ignatius Swann (born 12 February 1861) did not survive early childhood. The couple went on to have four more children after migration; two sons in New Zealand and two daughters in Fiji.[19]

Table 1. *The household of James Butler Swann in 1861 (Source: 1861 Census for England)*

Residing at 29 West Street, Corby, Bourne, Lincs:	Position	Age	Occupation
James B. Swann	head	27	chemist & druggist
Margaret Swann	wife	26	
Arthur Swann	son	3	scholar
William Swann	son	2	
Mary Swann	daughter	1	
Joseph Swann	son	2m	
Robert Kidd	apprentice	15	druggist
Henry Swann	visitor	16	
Esther Paling	servant	17	house servant
Rachel Ellis	servant	13	nurse maid

The call of New Zealand: The Canterbury Association

By 1861 James Butler Swann thus had what appeared to be a settled and comfortable life; he and his wife employed two servants, and he had a young apprentice druggist who lived with them (Table 1). Yet in 1862, with a wife and three young children to support, he set off with his family to Christchurch in the South Island of New Zealand to start a new life. Exactly what prompted them to make such a momentous move is not entirely clear, although tales about the prospects for the new colony in New Zealand were circulating in Great Britain at the time.

Britain had annexed New Zealand following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi on 6 February 1840.[20] In the late 1830s the early British colonists were pressuring the Crown to establish a colony in New Zealand, and at the same time a number of Maori leaders were petitioning the British for protection against French forces.[21] The first organised group of immigrants arrived in early 1840, and within a few months a thousand people had arrived, forming a settlement that was to become Wellington, at the southern tip of the North Island.[22]

Over the next eleven years, between 1840 and 1851, ships continued to bring settlers to the new country, with new settlements being established at Auckland, New Plymouth and Wanganui in the North Island, and Nelson, Dunedin and Christchurch on the South Island. Christchurch was the main city in the Canterbury region. In 1852 a New Zealand Constitution Act established six provincial governments with settler assemblies; three were on the North Island and three on the South Island; these were at Canterbury, Nelson and Otogo.[23]

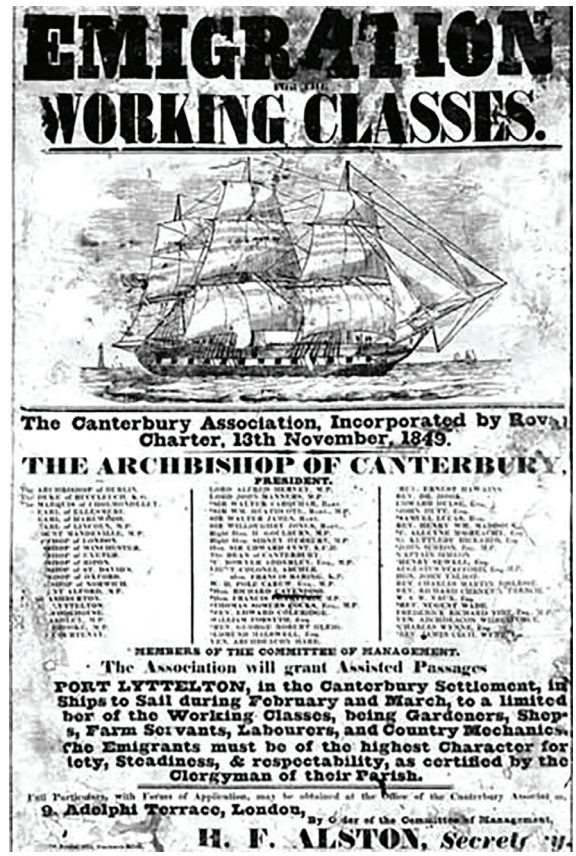
The Swann family were drawn to a small community called Kaiapoi located about 17 kilometres north of central Christchurch, and close to the mouth of the Waimakariri River. Close ties existed between the Church of England, this part of New Zealand, and eastern England. Christchurch and Lyttleton in the region of Canterbury had been founded by Anglican settlers of the Canterbury Association twelve years earlier, in 1850.[24] Twelve shiploads of settlers were planned, and the first four ships departed in September 1850. There were 773 colonists, ranging from aristocrats and Oxford graduates, to barbers and bricklayers, and shopkeepers and shepherds. After the farewell banquet to these 'Canterbury Pilgrims,' as they became known, a reporter from *The Times* wrote that 'a slice of England, cut from top to bottom, was despatched to the Antipodes'.[25]

The Association had been founded in London in March 1848, and was incorporated by Royal Charter in November 1849. The prime movers were Edward Gibbon Wakefield (1796-1862) and John Robert Godley (1814-1861). Wakefield was heavily involved in the New Zealand Company, which had already established four colonies in New Zealand. He approached Godley to help him establish a colony sponsored by the Church of England.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, John Sumner, was the President of the Association's Management Committee, which also included several other bishops and clergy, as well as members of the peerage and Members of Parliament. At their first meeting on 27 March 1848 they decided that the settlement should be called Canterbury – after the Archbishop of Canterbury – and the seat of the settlement should be called Christchurch, after the Oxford College at which Godley had studied.

The Canterbury Association implemented the systematic colonisation ideas of Edward Wakefield. Sheep farming on Canterbury Plains, and later wheat, became economic mainstays, and Christchurch and Canterbury Province prospered.[26] The Association reflected Godley's ecclesiastical and political influence, and he – like Wakefield – distinguished sharply between colonisation and mere emigration. Canterbury was to have settlers of wealth and position, as well as assisted migrants, a balance of the sexes, and churches and schools from the outset. Its purpose was to plant overseas a society which would carry on the values of an England increasingly threatened by industrialisation and revolution at home. The prospect of a new life and greater prosperity in a Church of England community in New Zealand was clearly very attractive to James Butler Swann and his family.

The Association's plan was to purchase 300,000 acres of land for settlement by members of the Church of England, selected from all ranks of society and supported by religious and educational endowments.[27] One of the


EMIGRATION
WORKING CLASSES.

The Canterbury Association, Incorporated by Roy[al] Charter, 13th November, 1849.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,
PRESIDENT.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT.

The Association will grant Assisted Passages
PORT LYTTELTON, in the Canterbury Settlement, in Ships to Sail during February and March, to a limited ber of the Working Classes, being Gardeners, Shop-s, Farm Servants, Labourers, and Country Mechanics. The Emigrants must be of the highest Character for iety, Steadiness, & respectability, as certified by the Clergyman of their Parish.

Full Particulars, with Forms of Application, may be obtained at the Office of the Canterbury Associa[tion], 9, Adolphi Terrace, London, By Order of the Committee of Management,
H. F. ALSTON, Secret[ary].

Figure 2. *Emigration for the Working Classes, 1862. (Source: http://gallery.archives.govt.nz/v/christchurch/Early+ships/images/19XX_2_952_Emigration+poster.jpg.html. Accessed 28 July 2019)*

founding members of the Canterbury Association, who attended its first meeting, was Sir Charles Bowyer Adderley, the first Baron Norton. He was born in 1814 at Knighton House in Leicestershire, and, like Godley, attended Christ Church Oxford. Sir Charles bought a number of plots of land in New Zealand, including 100 acres in Christchurch town, and – more significantly – 150 acres at Kaiapoi. For this purchase Godley was his agent.[28]

The journey to New Zealand

Cash-strapped provincial councils on New Zealand's South Island worked very hard to recruit migrants in the 1850s and 1860s, but only Canterbury and Otago succeeded.[29] In the mid-nineteenth century the Kaiapoi area became a centre for the rapidly expanding wool export business. To encourage settlement in New Zealand the Government provided funding for an assisted passenger scheme (Figure 2). The Canterbury Association would 'grant assisted passages to a limited number of the working classes,' including shepherds, farm servants and labourers. Applicants 'must be of highest character' and 'certified by the clergyman of their Parish'.

James Butler Swann and his family travelled under this scheme on board the migrant ship *Queen of the Mersey.* This was an American ship that had been built in 1860 for Mr. H. Melvain, of Newcastle. In 1862 she was chartered for two voyages to New Zealand. On 3 July 1862 she sailed from London for Lyttelton, a port on the north shore of Lyttelton Harbour close to Christchurch, on the eastern coast of the South Island. Due to its establishment as a landing point for Christchurch-bound seafarers, Lyttelton was regarded as the 'Gateway to Canterbury' for colonial settlers.[30]

On that journey the *Queen of the Mersey* carried with her 349 Government immigrants under Captain Aitkin; the passengers listed included James Butler Swann (29), Margaret Swann (28), Arthur Swann (5), William Swann (3) and Mary Swann (2).[31] James Butler Swann was listed as a 'farm labourer' from Lincolnshire. This may have been because Swann registered as such under the assisted passenger scheme, although it was a not infrequent mis-recording of pharmacist ('farm assist').

It was a long and eventful journey round the southern tip of Africa. Ten deaths occurred – mostly children from measles – although this was rather less than some emigrant ships. On some ships burials at sea almost became routine.[32] During the passage a serious mutiny took place among some of the crew, who attempted to broach cargo and get at the spirits. After the men had been placed in irons Captain Aitkin was violently assaulted and struck by one of the sailors. On arrival five of the men were arrested and sentenced to a term of imprisonment.[33]

Arrival in Kaiapoi

The *Queen of the Mersey* arrived at Lyttelton on 19 October 1862, having made the passage in 108 days.[34] It is likely that the family would have been well prepared about what to expect when they arrived. As well as support from the Church of England they would have received much practical help from one or more of the guide books available at the time for intending migrants. These included Cooper's *The New Zealand Settlers' Guide* of 1857; Earp's 1848 *The Emigrants' Guide to New Zealand,* and Earp's *Handbook for intending emigrants to the southern settlements of New Zealand* of 1856. [35]

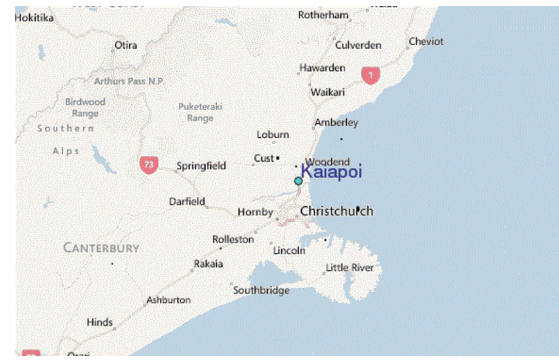


Figure 3. *Location of Kaiapoi, New Zealand. (Source: https://www.weather-forecast.com/locationmaps/Kaiapoi.8.gif. Accessed 28 July 2019)*

The Swann family arrived during the peak of migration to New Zealand. Between 1858 and 1860 20,831 arrived there; between 1861 and 1865 the figure was 93,169 (the family arrived in 1862); and between 1866 and 1870 it reduced again, to 20,536.[36] Overall, New Zealand's European population grew from 5,000 in 1841 to well over 600,000 in 1891.[37] The number settled in the Canterbury region were just 3,273 in 1851, but it had increased to 16,090 in 1861 and to 46,934 in 1871.[38]

The family appear to have proceeded immediately to Kaiapoi (Figure 3) and James Butler Swann wasted no time in setting up in business as a chemist and cordial-manufacturer.[39] An immigrant pharmacist would have needed to have both considerable capital and to take everything he would need for his business with him. Coombes has suggested that this would include all his stock, plants and fittings:

> Bottles, corks, boxes, wrapping and note paper, labels, account forms, scales, glass measures, pill machines, plaster irons, marble slabs for preparing ointment, shop fittings, leaves, roots, rhizomes, plus household and personal needs, all had to be assembled and carefully packed for a journey of over 12,000 miles by sailing ship.[40]

Swann no doubt expected to be serving the needs of a prosperous and expanding community.[41] The most lucrative businesses in the area in the 1860s and 1870s were the raising of livestock and expanding its financing.[42] During the 1860s the colony's two main activities were wool and goldmining, although for a while supplying the British troops was a rewarding activity. Between 1861 and 1870 the number of sheep rose three and a half times, with wool exports expanding five times. In Canterbury the political and economic influence of those who owned or leased sheep farms, although probably numbering fewer than 1,000, was unrivalled. Initially, sheep farming provided seasonal jobs in wool stores, with money coming into the local economy. Flax was also an important commodity locally. It had been an important product since Cook and Banks pointed out that its fibre was useful for the making of ropes and cordage.[43] The value of flax exports reached a peak in 1831, after which it declined sharply, showing some recovery in 1834, 1836 and 1839.[44] By the 1860s it was processed commercially in only a few local communities; but in Kaiapoi a flax mill was opened in 1866, although it was soon converted for the processing of wool.[45]

The family stayed in the area for five years, until the summer of 1867. James and his wife Margaret had two more sons whilst in New Zealand: Frederick Swann, who was born in Kaiapoi on 10 October 1864, and Herbert Charles Swann, born on 14 May 1867 in Christchurch.[46]

Pharmacy practice in Kaiapoi

Swann's pharmacy business is likely to have been the only one in the town. According to his granddaughter's biographer the business thrived.[47] But Swann was by no means the first pharmacist to arrive in the Canterbury region. That honour fell to Arthur Bayfield, who had arrived aboard the *SS Randolph* in December 1850 with the first pilgrims to Canterbury, along with 'a young wife, one son and sufficient stock to open a pharmacy'.[48] He established a business in Canterbury Street, Lyttelton, and took an active part in community service. Like Swann ten years later, isolation probably limited his contact with other pharmacists, as neither of their names appear in official pharmacy records at the time. But Bayfield became an active volunteer fireman, a vestryman of the Anglican Church, a member of the Colonists' Society, and sub-postmaster to Lyttelton.[49] Retail pharmacy for pioneer migrants was a very diverse activity. A wide range of non-pharmacy products was usually necessary for survival. Different pharmacies advertised 'paints, oils, white lead, pickles, stationery, spices and curry powder, as well as tonics, blood purifiers, mixtures and packaged pills as treatment for ailments ranging from corns to dandruff'.[50] Remedies were often quoted to be to 'our own formula'. Patent medicines had to be imported and were sold at low profit margins, and pharmacists prepared, packed and promoted their own proprietaries wherever possible.

With medical doctors, dentists, opticians and veterinarians all being far fewer in number than chemists and druggists, these early pharmacists had to turn their hands to many other skills. These often included extracting teeth and sight testing, as well as providing care and treatment to cows, horses, pigs, poultry and sheep. The rising number of settlers needed roads, railways, houses and work, and labourers, craftsmen and tradesmen followed the road and rail construction. As small towns developed pharmacists moved in to serve them. The hours were long and the facilities few, but – it is claimed – the pioneer pharmacists rarely failed to get required medicines in emergencies.[51] During the 1860s and 1870s pharmacy businesses in New Zealand slowly became more secure. Shop fittings and appearance improved, and pharmacists increasingly made use of imported fittings, carboys and shop bottles. The services on offer gradually became more professional. But initially there was no professional authority regulating the practice of pharmacy. Not until 1878 did 27 chemists (nearly all those then in Canterbury) meet to agree to form a Pharmaceutical Society of New Zealand.[52] But James Butler Swann had left New Zealand for Fiji 13 years earlier, in 1867.

Tensions in New Zealand 1862-1867

What it was that finally persuaded Swann to uproot his family for a second time is not entirely clear. As with the initial move, it was most probably a combination of 'pull' and 'push' factors, both economic and political. In a small town so far from the main town of Christchurch the business may not have been as successful as he had hoped. Politically there were still rumblings from arguments over the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, which had provided only a short-term peace. Tensions grew over disputed land purchases, resulting in a series of conflicts between the British settlers of New Zealand and various Maori opponents. These continued for over 27 years, and were known as the New Zealand or Maori Wars.[53]

Although the wars were initially localized conflicts, they escalated dramatically from 1860 as the government became convinced that it was facing united Maori resistance to further land sales and a refusal to acknowledge Crown sovereignty. The colonial government summoned thousands of British troops to mount major campaigns to overpower the Maori

King, and to acquire farming and residential land for British settlers. At the peak of hostilities in the 1860s, 18,000 British troops battled about 4,000 Maori warriors in what became a gross imbalance of manpower and weaponry.[54]

Swann and his family would have been only too aware of these worrying developments. A telegraph cable was laid between the North and South Islands in 1866.[55] They would have become increasingly concerned for their own safety and security, especially when all but one regiment of imperial troops were withdrawn from New Zealand in 1865-66.[56] They would also have received news from across the South Pacific area, which was developing rapidly, particularly on the islands of Fiji, Samoa and Tonga.

The prospects offered by Fiji as an emerging colony, particularly with the rapid development of cotton plantations, and the opportunity to make substantial profits for those who got in at the beginning, must have been very strong pull factors for James Butler Swann. For he was to be caught up in the 'Fiji cotton boom' of the 1860s.[57] The family arrived there in 1867.

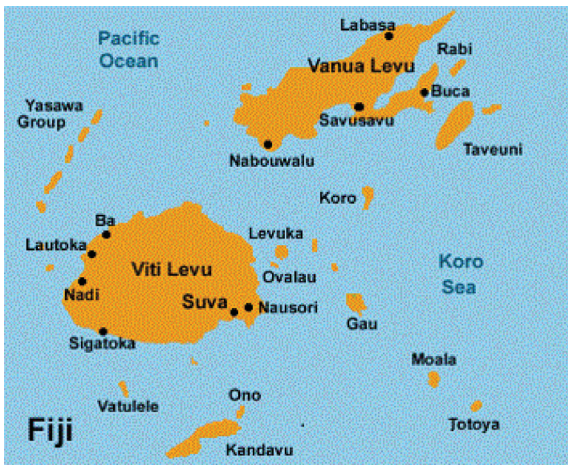


Figure 4. *Map of Fiji. (Source: http://pergoladach.co/fiji-islands-map. Accessed 28 July 2019)*

The lure of Fiji

By the 1860s Europeans were to be found on most of the major island groups in the South Pacific. The French were already established in New Caledonia and Tahiti and the Germans in Samoa. It is thought that the first white people to land on Fijian soil were the crew of the schooner *Argo*, which had been shipwrecked off Oneata in Lau at the south west corner of the Fijian islands in 1800. Thereafter a steady stream of merchant ships from Sydney Harbour began to arrive, attracted by the newly discovered sandalwood at Bua Bay on Vanua Levu.[58]

In 1835 two missionaries from the Wesleyan London Missionary Society arrived on Lakeba in Lau and established the first mission in Fiji. Other missionaries followed, setting up a base around Levuka, originally a whaling settlement where European merchants had established a small trading outpost. Levuka is located on the eastern coast of the lush volcanic island of Ovalau, a smaller island to the east of one of the two larger islands, Viti Levu, and is separated from it by a 20 kilometre-wide channel. (Figure 4).

It was a challenging place. In 1840 Charles Wilkes had led a US expedition that produced the first complete chart of the Fijian Islands. He signed a treaty with the local chief, Cakabau, in which the local people were paid for the protection of foreign ships and the supply of provisions.[59] But relations deteriorated, and in 1841 Levuka was razed by fires, which the settlers suspected Cakabau of instigating. In 1849 the home of the US consul was destroyed by fire, and the locals helped themselves to his possessions. The consul held Cakabau responsible and sent him a substantial damages bill. The dispute was to have major repercussions for the future of Fiji.

Disruption to supplies of American cotton during the Civil War between 1861 and 1865 resulted in high cotton prices in Europe, and encouraged its production in many other parts of the world, including some of the South Pacific islands, and Fiji in particular. The promise of cheap land, cheap labour and large profits from growing tropical products drew many Europeans to the Fiji group of islands, where they would be less shackled by constraints imposed by government, law and taxation.

Swann would have heard about the opportunities in Fiji whilst in New Zealand. Enthusiastic but exaggerated reports appeared in both the Australian and New Zealand press about the opportunities available, and they also appeared in various promotional publications. Typical was an editorial which appeared in *The Herald of Melbourne* in 1868:

> To the small capitalists, the men prepared to encounter danger and privation, Fiji presents a brilliant future. Hundreds of young men in Europe and in this community are now eagerly looking for some such opening as Victoria and the neighbouring colonies presented twenty years ago.

Whilst the possible benefits were played up – with claims such as that the planter could expect returns within two years – the difficulties were played down. Thus, in a pamphlet authored by 'Ceres' in 1869 the labour problem was passed over with the assertion that

'labourers could easily be imported from the adjacent islands to the Fiji group under three-year contracts'. Likewise, the difficulty of obtaining land from Fijian land owners was played down.

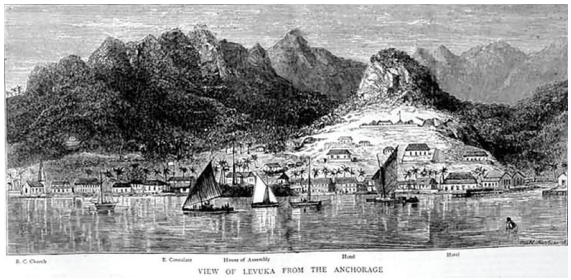


Figure 5. *View of Levuka, Fiji, 1870s. (Source: https://levuka.wordpress.com. Accessed 28 July 2019)*

The move to Fiji

James Butler Swann was clearly persuaded by the slick advertising, and as a result the enlarged Swann family took the momentous decision to move again, to make a second migratory move northwards. They arrived in Fiji on 4 July 1867 on board the schooner *William and Mary*.[60] They sailed into Levuka on Ovalau island, which was then the capital of Fiji (Figure 5). From there they crossed the short channel to the main island of Viti Levu, where James Butler Swann became a cotton-planter. He 'experimented' with cotton planting at Naikorokora on the banks of the River Rewa.[61]

It seems that the Swann family was among the earlier group of settlers, with the rush slowing building from the early 1860s. One witness recorded that 'every week parties of ten or twenty were arriving from the Australian colonies in search of sheep lands or from New Zealand in search of any place where they could escape the ravages of the Maori war'.[62]

This witness noted that in 1864 there were about 300 Europeans in the group, but by 1867 there were 411 British, 38 Americans, and 43 other Europeans, mainly Germans, making a total of 492, plus a half-caste population of 339. By the following year, 1868, the total number of Europeans had almost doubled to 862, a figure made up of 583 men, 93 women and 186 children, but did not include 386 half-castes. The majority of the newcomers were 'British settlers and their families from New Zealand'.[63] This number almost certainly included Swann, his wife, four sons and a daughter.

By 1869 cotton had become the almost exclusive crop produced in Fiji. But it is clear that Swann's venture as a cotton planter was not a success. The promises of cheap land, cheap labour and large profits were illusory. The difficulties entailed in buying sufficient good quality land and of obtaining enough reliable labour would have soon eaten through his remaining capital.

Swann soon recognised the reality of the situation in which he had placed his family. Fortunately, he had a back-up plan. Within three years of his arrival in Fiji, in 1870, he bought the old chemist's business of Dr Riley in Levuka.[64] He remained there for the next twenty-four years, and he and his wife had two more children in Fiji; Margaret Teresa Swann was born on 20 March 1872, and Agnes Elanor Swann followed on 7 September 1873.[65]

In Levuka on Ovalau island he slowly built up the business, until 1894, when he had a paralytic seizure. The seizure led to his retirement at the age of 60, which was lived in Fiji, between 1894 and 1901. James Butler Swann died on 19 May 1901 in Levuka, Fiji, at the age of 67 years.[66]

Figure 6. *Arthur James Swann (1857-1926). (Source: https://www.geni.com/people/Arthur/6000000017618349431. Accessed 28 July 2019)*

The first son: Arthur James Swann (1857-1926): A second Fiji pharmacy

James Butler Swann's eldest son, Arthur James Swann, had been born in Bourne, Lincolnshire, on 7 July 1857. He had moved with his family to New Zealand at the age of five, and from New Zealand to Fiji in 1867 at the age of ten. His education began in New Zealand, and he later went to school in Levuka, Fiji and Sydney, Australia, as did his younger brothers.

Arthur James Swann later qualified as a pharmacist; there was no pharmacy college in Fiji, and in New Zealand pharmacy was only formally recognised with the Pharmacy Act in 1880. It seems most likely that Arthur was apprenticed to his own father at the pharmacy at Levuka for four or five years.[67] We know that his young-

er brother William was sent to England to study chemistry, and it seems highly probable that all three older brothers went to study at one of the London crammer schools of pharmacy before taking the Minor examination of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. Arthur James Swann qualified as a chemist and druggist around 1878.

Arthur probably returned initially to his father's shop in Levuka, although within a few short years he moved to Suva on Fiji's main island of Viti Levu. Levuka at that time may not have been large enough to provide a living for two pharmacies, and there is some evidence that Swann was not the only British pharmacist to set up a pharmacy business in Levuka. Thomas Parker was born in Ireland c.1837 and had emigrated first to Melbourne, in Australia on the *Bloomer* in 1854. Thomas appears to have established a business as a chemist and druggist in Queensland in Australia in 1877, before also emigrating again to Fiji. He is recorded as working as a chemist in Levuka in 1873 and 1874.[68] James Butler Swann had opened his pharmacy in Levuka in 1870.

It is however more than likely that Arthur was responding to international political events. For after being held accountable for the impossible debt to the United States in 1849 the local chief appealed to the British consul in Levuka for help, promising the sovereignty of Fiji to Britain along with thousands of acres of land if the debt was paid off. However, cession was initially rejected by Britain in 1862, on the grounds that the chief did not represent all the peoples of Fiji and that the profitability of the colony was not assured. The debt was not paid.

Figure 7. *View of Suva, Fiji, 1880s. (Source: http://www.justpacific.com/fiji/fijiphotos/cards/towns/index.html. Accessed 28 July 2019)*

But the Americans continued to pursue their claim, and in 1867 – the year Swann and his family moved to Fiji – an American warship threatened to bombard Levuka. The chief turned to the newly formed Australian Polynesia Company, which guaranteed payment of the claim in return for land around Suva on Viti Levu island (Figure 7). In 1871, the local king, Cakobau, declared the formation of a government in Levuka. Regulations mainly concerned with the sale of land, alcohol and firearms were laid down, and a poll and land tax was introduced.

These changes were badly received, and riots broke out. Local Fijians, unable to pay the land tax, were coerced into working on the plantations. Within two years, Cakabau had lost the trust of his people, divided the Levuka traders, and run up massive debts. He once again offered to cede Fiji to Britain, and this time it was accepted. On 10 October 1874, in a pompous ceremony in Levuka, Cakobau and the other chiefs signed the deed ceding sovereignty to Britain.

But before long the colonial capital of Levuka began to run out of land to expand. Two Melbourne merchants, Thomson and Renwick, encouraged the government to relocate the capital from Levuka on Ovalau to Suva on Viti Levu with incentives in the form of land grants. The government officially moved to Suva in 1882, when it was a township of about a dozen buildings. By the 1920s it had become a flourishing colonial centre, and it was officially declared a city.

Figure 8. *Suva, Fiji, 1920s. Swann & Co. pharmacy at centre. (Source: Rose Series of De Luxe postcards, Rose Stereographs, Victoria, Australia. Accessed 28 July 2019)*

Arthur James Swann made the move from Levuka on Ovalau to Suva on Viti Levu soon after. He founded his pharmacy there in 1883, and slowly built up the business over the next 43 years, until his death (Figure 8). The business survives to this day as A. J. Swann Pharmacy Ltd, and is located at MH Rodwell Rd Complex Suva, Fiji. Arthur James Swann died on 6 September 1926 in Suva, Fiji, at the age of 69 years.

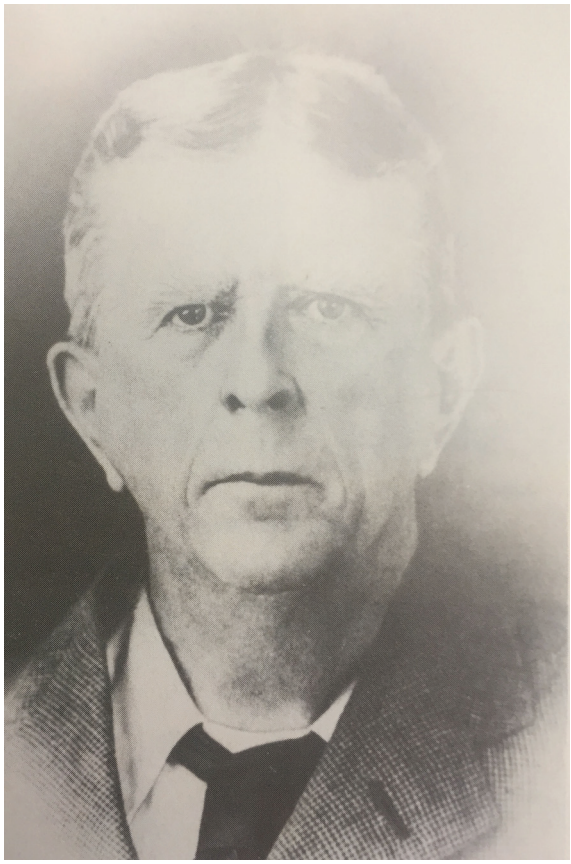


Figure 9. *William John Swann (1859-1936). (Source: Eustis, N. (Note 17) 1979: 48)*

The second son: William John Swann (1859-1936): A new start in Samoa

James Butler Swann's second son, William John Swann, was born on 3 January 1859, in Bourne, Lincolnshire. He was three and a half years old when the family migrated to New Zealand, and only eight when they moved to Fiji. His early education took place in New Zealand and continued in Fiji when the family settled there. We know that, at the age of 17 in 1876, his father sent him to England to study chemistry.[69] It seems likely that he attended one of the colleges of chemistry and pharmacy that had been established in London, probably either John Muter's South London School of Chemistry and Pharmacy (opened in 1872) or George Wills' Westminster College of Chemistry and Pharmacy (opened in 1874).[70]

These colleges offered short cramming courses to prepare candidates for the Minor examination of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. Large numbers of students attended them. Wills published a jubilee souvenir of the College in 1899, in which he states that 'nearly 4,000 chemists and druggists on the Register of the Pharmaceutical Society received their education and passed their examinations from the Westminster College of Chemistry and Pharmacy'.[71]

The names of over 800 of these are listed in the publication, although they do not include the names of any of the Swann brothers. The archives of the Society's own school of pharmacy in Bloomsbury also give no hint of attendance by the Swann Brothers. Wills is however keen to emphasise that his students came from across the world:

> Not all the College men have settled, however, in the British Isles. They are to be found in every part of the Globe, and, as the Irishman said, 'elsewhere'. Mr Wills is now in regular correspondence with old pupils who live in Paris, Gibraltar, Malta, New York, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Gladstone, Brisbane, Tasmania, Natal, Kimberley, Bulawayo, Johannesburg, Cairo, Bangalore and Old Calabar.[72]

According to his daughter, William was an outstanding pupil in his class, but he was apparently tormented by acute homesickness.[73] He was anxious to complete his course as quickly as possible, and to return to his family in Fiji. On his return William worked for some time in the family shop in Levuka. Whilst there he learnt what he could about medicine so as to become familiar with the best possible treatments for many tropical diseases, about which little was known at the time.

Despite his homesickness whilst in England William soon became restless again. He hoped that his new knowledge would provide him with opportunities to explore more of the South Seas. In the mid-1880s his efforts were rewarded when he was offered the post of apothecary on the ship *US Mohican,* an American Navy

Figure 10. *USS Mohican, 1894. (Source: http://www.navsource.org/archives/09/46/46909.htm. Accessed 17 November 2019)*

vessel that weaved a leisurely course through the islands, dropping anchor at the more important trading ports of the South Seas (Figure 10). During this time he acquired great proficiency in dealing with the native peoples of the Pacific.[74]

Figure 11. *Map of Samoa. (Source: https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/396598310905345464. Accessed 28 July 2019)*

Figure 12. *Swann Pharmacy, Apia, Samoa, 1880s. (Source: Eustis, N. (Note 17) 1979: 49)*

Setting up in business in Samoa 1889

After a few years as a ship's apothecary William apparently grew tired of life at sea, and searched South Sea ports for an opportunity to open up his own chemist's shop. He hoped to open a small dispensary far away from any strong competition. As in Fiji, international politics played an important part in his decisions. In the 1870s there had been considerable rivalry between Great Britain, German and the United States as to who should be the ruling power in Samoa (Figure 11).

In 1877 a group of Samoans visited Fiji asking for British protection, but this was refused. In 1878 they went to the United States again requesting protection, but this too was refused. Eventually in 1885 the British High Commissioner proclaimed the Municipality of Apia in western Samoa to be an international settlement. William set up his pharmacy business in Apia at the start of 1889, at the age of 30 (Figure 12).

Within a few weeks of opening, on 15 March 1889, a devastating hurricane swept down on Samoa.[75] This wreaked hovoc on the ships of the three navies sheltering in Apia harbour. The three powers gathered to sign the 1889 Berlin Treaty, which called for an independent Samoa, with an Apia Governing Board in authority in the township area. However, the peace did not last long, and fighting erupted sporadically throughout Samoa.

William was undaunted by the disturbances around him; his business occupied a prominent position in Beach Road. Around this time, the writer Robert Louis Stevenson was sailing his schooner *Equator* through the South Seas in search of a climate suitable for his tubercular condition. In December 1889 the Stevenson family landed in Apia and initially rented a small house. They eventually settled there in September 1890.

Stevenson was always keen to hear of any new drug discoveries that might help his condition, and not surprisingly he became a regular visitor to the Swann pharmacy. Stevenson and Swann soon became close friends. Stevenson built a home on a prominent 150-acre plot, and Swann became a frequent visitor, often treating the family for prevailing tropical complaints.

William's wife and children

With his business flourishing, William found time to look for a wife. He became friendly with a beautiful 20-year old local girl called Pele from Toamua village. Her father was the chief of Toamua village, and her mother was a daughter of a high chief of Apia village. In 1891 William Swann and Pele were married in a Roman Catholic service in Apia conducted by a European priest.[76] Amongst the guests at the wedding was Robert Louis Stevenson.

William and Pele went on to have three daughters and a son. The first was Margaret (Maggie) Swann, born in 1893 at their home above the chemist's shop in Beach Road. She was followed four years later by Agnes (Aggie) Swann, in 1897; by Violet Swann in 1899, and

finally by William (Willie) Swann, born in October 1902. But just three months later, in January 1903, Pele died at the age of 31. She was buried at the Catholic Marist Brothers cemetery at Savalalo in Apia.[77]

The three girls were destined to become famous as the 'Swann bouquet', the toast of Apia town,[78] but by far the most famous was Aggie. Aggie Grey, as she became, founded a hotel in 1933 and hosted many famous actors. The American writer James Michener was a friend, and he is widely believed to have modeled his character Bloody Mary in *Tales of the South Pacific* (1947) on Aggie. The book was subsequently adapted into the Rogers and Hammerstein 1949 film *South Pacific*.[79] Aggie was a pioneering figure of the Samoan hotel industry and appeared on several postage stamps. She became one of Samoa's most well-known figures, and died on 26 June 1988 aged 90.

Pharmacy in Apia, Samoa, 1889 to 1936

William was left to bring up his three daughters on his own. With a young family and a growing business to look after he had little free time. As well as being a pharmacist, he acted as a doctor to the Samoans, and also as a dentist, reportedly extracting teeth with considerable skill.[80]

The South Sea islands again became the stage for international events. In 1899, whilst Britain was engaged in the Boer War, Germany demanded that the 1889 Berlin Treaty be scrapped. As a result, Germany was given the right to annex Western Samoa, and the United States was permitted to control Eastern Samoa. The news reached Apia from Europe in November 1899. The German Empire then made its presence felt, and one of its most important outposts was Apia in Samoa.

The German Era in Samoa lasted from 1899 to 1914. During the early years of the occupation the Swann family business prospered, as more traders brought about a controlled economy previously unknown in Samoa.[81] The Swann pharmacy and home was located next door to the British Club.[82] The International Hotel was situated directly opposite and provided a major boost to business. The hotel advertised saltwater bathing and freshwater showers, and offered billiards, bagatelle, and commodious sample rooms for travellers.[83]

Swann nevertheless soon found himself with stiff competition. With the German occupation a German chemist, G. Sabiel, who was in business nearby in Beach Road, proposed to run Swann out of Apia. He approached the Customs Department for special privileges as a German national. But R.P. Berking, the German-born Collector of Customs from 1905 until 1914, would not agree to Sabiel's proposals, ruling that Swann already had his business established in Samoa 'where everyone has the same rights'.[84]

With the outbreak of war in 1914 the Germans departed and were replaced by New Zealanders. The New Zealand occupation favoured British traders and planters, and Swann secured several lucrative contracts with the army, supplying them with remedies that were unavailable in the troops' dispensaries.[85] Towards the end of 1914 the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, which had long provided the only regular service to Western Samoa, opened a branch in Apia.[86]

A severe earthquake struck Samoa on 26 June 1917, with the first effects felt at 6.23pm.[87] Considerable damage was caused. In its report the *Samoa Times* recorded that:

> Mr Swann the chemist also had considerable losses to report. An inspection of his premises after the dread occurrence revealed the shop floor strewn with broken bottles, powdered drugs, lozenges and liquids, the pungent odour of iodine being particularly noticeable.[88]

After the war William settled into life as the local pharmacist. He remarried another local girl called Fa'afeti from Apia village, and they went on to have two chil-

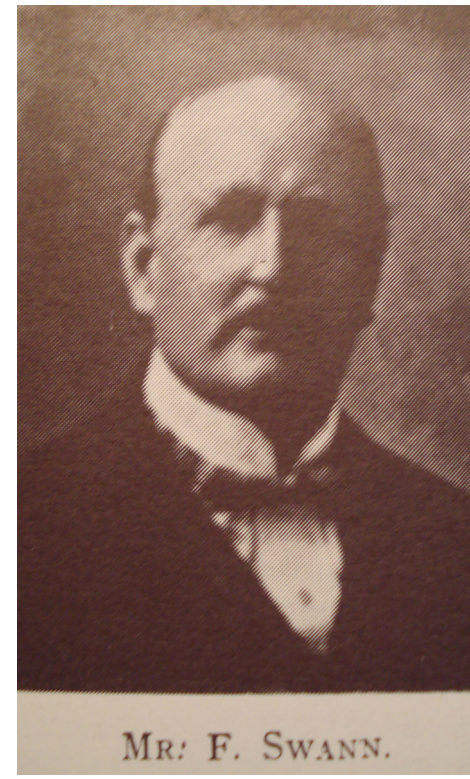


Figure 13. *Frederick Swann (1864-1924). (Source: Cyclopedia of Fiji Illustrated. (Note 59) 1907: 267)*

dren of their own, Fred and Daisy.[89] He twice met English royalty; first in 1880 when he acted as interpreter for the visit to Fiji of the Duke of Clarence and Prince George (later King George V); and again in 1920 when he met the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) during his tour of Western Samoa.[90]

William John Swann died on 20 May 1936 at the Government Hospital in Apia[91] in Samoa at the age of 77.[92] Amongst those present at the funeral were his only remaining brothers and sisters; Herbert Swann of Levuka, Fiji, Mrs H.P. St Julian of Sydney, and Sister Mary Joseph of the Marist Sisters Convent at Levuka.[93]

The third son: Frederick Swann (1864-1924)

James Butler Swann's second youngest son, Frederick, was born in Kaiapoi, near Christchurch on New Zealand's South Island on 10 October 1864. He arrived in Levuka on Fiji with his family on 4 July 1867 aged 2¾. He was educated first by a governess and later at Mr Ewin's School in Levuka (the first public school in Levuka was founded only in 1879). In his early teens he went to Sydney, New South Wales, to continue his education.[94] He attended first Newtown Academy (Mr Sampson's) in Sydney, and then a finishing school, the Fort Street High School in Sydney (Figure 14) which had been established in 1849, before returning to Fiji.

Figure 14. *Fort Street High School, Sydney, 1872. (Source: http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/item/itemDetailPaged.aspx?itemID=479562. Accessed 17 November 2019)*

On his return to Fiji in about 1879, at the age of 15, he entered the business of Messrs W. Kopsen and Co., a firm that had been established in Levuka in 1875 to import and trade in textiles and general merchandise, as an assistant. He stayed there for several months. Around 1880 he entered the Government service as assistant dispenser at Levuka Hospital (Figure 15). After a few months he became dispenser, and remained in service there for five years.

Figure 15. *The Hospital, Levuka, Fiji, 1884. (Source: https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/20766. Accessed 17 November 2019)*

After completing this period of practical training it seems likely that he followed his older brothers, Arthur and William, in travelling to London,[95] attending one of the crammer schools of pharmacy there, and taking the Minor examination of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, for we learn that he passed 'his examination as a pharmaceutical chemist' about 1885.[96] He immediately returned to Fiji, and spent the rest of his life in Levuka.

William started manufacturing aerated water for his father. However, this was clearly not a full-time commitment, since we learn that 'Mr Swann entered the service of Messrs Hedemann and Co., merchants of Levuka, in the year 1892, as an assistant, and has retained that position ever since, and has also carried on the firm's chemist's department for the last six years [since 1901].' He continued in that position at least until 1907, in which year his occupation was described as that of 'a pharmaceutical chemist and aerated water manufacturer'.[97]

It is clear, however, that throughout this period he was closely involved with his father's business, which had been founded in 1870. But in 1894 his father had a paralytic fit and was no longer able to run it, taking retirement at the age of 60. Frederick took over control, and continued to run it until his own death. The family were clearly well-connected in Fiji, and in 1886, at the age of 22, William married Mary Agnes, the third daughter of the late Sir Charles St Julian, who had been the first Chief Justice in Fiji from 1872 until his death in 1874. Between 1887 and 1907 the couple had eight

children: one son died, but three sons and four daughters survived into adulthood.

William Swann died in Levuka in Fiji on 28 September 1924, shortly before his sixtieth birthday.

Conclusion

When James Butler Swann set off with his family from a small village in Lincolnshire for a new life in New Zealand in 1862, he could scarcely have imagined where his family might end up. This article has sought to explain what led an ordinary English family to uproot themselves, and to start a new life on the other side of the world. It has illustrated how the move was facilitated by networks established through the Anglican church, and how the initial prospect of joining a new and expanding Anglican community offered a promising business opportunity for a young pharmacist. Economic circumstances back home may also have also have played a part.

The family's second migration to Fiji in 1867 was undoubtedly motivated by the prospect of greater financial rewards from cotton cultivation, coupled with concerns over both financial viability and personal safety in New Zealand. Although this venture ultimately failed, Swann was able to fall back on his qualification as a pharmaceutical chemist. The trade was obviously sufficiently robust to persuade three of his sons to follow in his footsteps. His first son set up in business on a neighbouring island; the second established a new business in Samoa; and the third eventually took over his father's original business on Fiji.

This family's story vividly illustrates the exhilarating mix of opportunities, threats and international political events that characterised the second half of the nineteenth century at a time of colonial expansion, increasing commerce and mass cultivation. A complex and dynamic pattern of social, political and economic factors help to explain the decisions people made and their enthusiasm for overseas ventures with all their risks. Swann's story highlights the significance of networks, of links forged through the church, through social connections and through occupation.

There were clearly great financial opportunities created both by growing migrant populations (as in New Zealand) and the exploitation of land for profitable crops (such as cotton in Fiji). But long journeys by sea carried their own risks, and the Swann family did well to avoid them. More significantly, however, treaties between British governments and local chiefs were often fragile, as in both New Zealand and Fiji, and new immigrants bore the brunt of the resulting consequences.

The challenges faced by the family were those encountered by all immigrant communities; they included the need to be self-sufficient, to be able to adapt rapidly to changing circumstances, and to know when the time has come to move on to new prospects and away from danger. Swann needed to be able to respond quickly to changes in both the demand for and supply of pharmaceutical services and commodities, skills that also needed to be learnt by his three sons.

The Swanns were a pharmaceutical family, with three of the sons – Arthur James, William John, and Frederick – becoming pharmacists and practising in the South Pacific region. This description of their lives and practices vividly illustrates both the opportunities and challenges of pharmacy practice during this period. However, James Butler Swann and his family were not unusual in choosing to emigrate; large numbers of British pharmacists were tempted by the lure of adventure, riches and a new life overseas; but they were exceptional in the distances travelled, and in the family spreading out over such a huge geographical area.

That James Butler Swann felt able to take the risks he did tells us much not only about his character but also that of his wife and children. His grand-daughter's biographer described the family as 'venturesome pioneers' who 'were fully aware of the trials and tribulations that awaited them, especially in the more primitive of the under-developed colonies'.[98] The family did indeed survive the trials and tribulations of migration, and through them British pharmacy established a lasting presence in the South Pacific.

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73. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 14.

74. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 15.

75. Chambers, JH. (Note 23) 2003: 117.

76. Pele had attended the Catholic Mission School in Apia and was described as 'very religious' Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 25. Roman Catholic missionaries ran schools on both Samoa and Fiji. A Roman Catholic cathedral – the Immaculate Conception of Mary Cathedral – had been dedicated in Apia on 31 December 1867.

77. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 42.

78. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 27.

79. Alailima, F. *Aggie Grey: A Samoan Saga.* Honolulu, USA: Mutual Publishing Company, 1988.

80. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 42.

81. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 40.

82. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 57.

83. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 47.

84. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 29.

85. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 54.

86. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 53.

87. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 55.

88. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 56.

89. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 54.

90. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 87.

91. Obituary. Pioneer in Samoa: Death of Mr W. J. Swann. *Auckland Star,* June 1936. LXVII (138); 12.

92. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 87.

93. William's sister became Sister Mary Joseph of the Marist Sisters Convent in Levuka, Fiji, founded in 1892. For the activities of the Catholic Church in Fiji see Roman Catholic Mission, Fiji: *Correspondence with Government and Others – Native Affairs 1883-1924.* Microfilm Copy PMB 459. Pacific Manuscripts Bureau. Canberra: The Australian National Library, 1972.

94. Allen, PS. (Note 61) 1907: 267.

95. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 16.

96 Allen, PS. (Note 61) 1907: 267.

97. Allen, PS. (Note 61) 1907: 267.

98. Eustis, N. (Note 18) 1979: 14.