Acknowledgements

There are many people who I need to thank for their help in bringing this book into being. Firstly, I thank the three people who supervised my thesis. My primary supervisor was Helen Gardner, who helped me wrangle my ideas into logical prose. My associate supervisors, Joanna Cruickshank and David Wetherell, also provided thoughtful feedback at crucial moments. All continue to be great sources of support.

I am deeply indebted to the generosity of people in Fiji such as Deaconess Una Matawalu, Tauga Vulaono and Save Nacanaitaba, as well as the families who accommodated Una and me on our fieldwork in the north-west of Viti Levu in 2010. I was greeted warmly by the descendants of Ratu Nacanieli and Apolosi Rawaidranu at various stages of my research and it has been amazing to share our histories.

Scholars from the University of the South Pacific have also welcomed and cared for me during my field work. I note especially Max Quanchi, Morgan Tuimalealifano and Christine Weir. I also want to note the kind guidance and hospitality of Carolyn and Andrew Thornley during my trips to the Mitchell Library in Sydney.

Thank you to willing interviewees, the Reverend Cyril Germon, Wendy and Peceli Ratawa, as well as the descendants of Robert Green and Doug Telfer for lending me material from their archives. I would also like to make special mention of Talatala Josateki Koro, who I interviewed for my thesis and who passed away while I made the final edits for this book. He was an exceptional person and I am blessed to have known him.

I have also been aided immensely by the employees at the various archives I have worked in. Not only have they assisted my research in finding documents, but also in providing biscuits and cups of tea (Monte Carlos at the Uniting Church Archives in Elsternwick hit the spot), conversation and company, and even
thread and needle when I ripped my pants on a filing cabinet in the National Archives of Fiji reading room. Thank you to all of the archivists and librarians at the National Archives of Fiji, Queen’s College Library, Uniting Church Archives in Elsternwick, the St Marks National Theological Centre archives (where the Tippett Collection is housed), the State Library of Victoria, and the Mitchell Library in the State Library of New South Wales. I am also very grateful to Kylie Moloney and Ewan Maidment from the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau for facilitating my access to Methodist records, and thank you to the leaders of the Fijian Methodist Church too.

Thank you also to Tiffany Shellam, Christopher Waters, Sophie Loy-Wilson, Victoria Stead and the other staff at Deakin University, the Australian Catholic University and more recently the Pacific Adventist University with whom I have worked with throughout my years of study. I would like to acknowledge my friends from the Professional Historian’s Association, Way Back When and the Pacific History Association for the moral support and shared passion for the past. These have been some of the more quirky, creative, and unashamedly enthusiastic historians I have ever known.

This book is dedicated to my kind, wise family who constitute the best bunch of fruitcakes I know: to James and Hamish; Mum, Dad and Andy; my brilliant uncles, aunts and cousins. They are always with me, through thick and thin. I’m grateful to all of my great aunts and uncles and all of my grandparents who shared their own stories with me and fostered my interest in the past. This book is particularly for Gran, though, who introduced me to Fiji through her childhood stories, and the generations of our family whose paths I have followed back to Fiji. Were it not for my family, I would not be who I am. While I know that my ancestors’ place in the colonial past is fraught, I do believe we can learn from their stories and those with whom they shared their lives to build histories that can inform the building of better societies today.