

RANGAHAUA WHANUI DISTRICT 11A

WAIRARAPA

PAUL GOLDSMITH

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WORKING PAPER: FIRST RELEASE

WAITANGI TRIBUNAL
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FOREWORD

The research report that follows is one of a series of historical surveys commissioned by the Waitangi Tribunal as part of its Rangahaua Whanui programme. In its present form, it has the status of a working paper: first release. It is published now so that claimants and other interested parties can be aware of its contents and, should they so wish, comment on them and add further information and insights. The publication of the report is also an invitation to claimants and historians to enter into dialogue with the author. The Tribunal knows from experience that such a dialogue will enhance the value of the report when it is published in its final form. The views contained in the report are those of the author and are not those of the Waitangi Tribunal, which will receive the final version as evidence in its hearings of claims.

Other district reports have been, or will be, published in this series, which, when complete, will provide a national theme of loss of land and other resources by Maori since 1840. Each survey has been written in the light of the objectives of the Rangahaua Whanui project, as set out in a practice note by Chief Judge E T J Durie in September 1993. The text of that practice note is included as an appendix (app 1) to this report.

I must emphasise that Rangahaua Whanui district surveys are intended to be one contribution only to the local and national issues, which are invariably complex and capable of being interpreted from more than one point of view. They have been written largely from published and printed sources and from archival materials, which were predominantly written in English by Pakeha. They make no claim to reflect Maori interpretations: that is the prerogative of kaumatua and claimant historians. This survey is to be seen as a first attempt to provide a context within which particular claims may be located and developed.

The Tribunal would welcome responses to this report, and comments should be addressed to:

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THE AUTHOR

My name is Paul Goldsmith. I completed a BA and an MA in history at the University of Auckland in 1992 and 1995 respectively. As part of my MA degree, I wrote a thesis entitled 'Aspects of the Life of William Colenso'. This explored the missionary career of William Colenso and the observations he made of Maori throughout his life in New Zealand. The topic allowed me to focus, in some depth, on Maori–Pakeha relations from the 1830s through to the 1880s and on the region of Wairarapa and Hawke's Bay, where Colenso resided. I have presented papers at two academic conferences on aspects of the thesis and have had an article, 'Medicine, Death and the Gospel in Wairarapa and Hawke's Bay, 1845 to 1853', accepted for publication this year in the *New Zealand Journal of History*.

I have been working as a contract research officer at the Waitangi Tribunal since March 1995. While employed there, I have done a little work on the trials of the murderers of Volkner and Fulloon, have offered the Taranaki Tribunal assistance in report writing and have worked on this Rangahaua Whanui district report.

February 1996

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AJHR	<i>Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives</i>
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library
GBPP	<i>Great Britain Parliamentary Papers</i>
ch	chapter
doc	document
fn	footnote
MB	minute book
NA	National Archives
NZJH	<i>New Zealand Journal of History</i>
NZPD	<i>New Zealand Parliamentary Debates</i>
p	page
ROD	record of documents
s	section (of an Act)
sec	section (of this report, or of an article, book, etc)
sess	session

INTRODUCTION

The history of land alienation in Wairarapa is not punctuated by any spectacular focal point for grievance like those areas in which large tracts of land were confiscated. All of the land was paid for in some way. Yet, the end result for Maori by the end of the nineteenth century was landlessness and social and economic marginalisation on a scale comparable to, if not more severe than, some of those areas affected by confiscation. Aside from an area in the north of the region, the Seventy Mile Bush, most of the land was alienated through Crown purchases during the 1850s. The bulk of the Seventy Mile Bush was purchased in the early 1870s. By the 1880s, Maori of the area were left with an ever-diminishing rump.

For the purposes of this study, 'Wairarapa' refers to the area of land on the east coast of the North Island of New Zealand south of the Hawke's Bay province and lying east of the Rimutaka and Tararua Ranges. Its southern limit is Te Matakitaki a Kupe (Cape Palliser). Its northern limit is a line leading inland from the coast at the mouth of the Waimata River, just south of Te Poroporo (Cape Turnagain), extending to the Manawatu River at its southern reach before entering the gorge. This is an area of about two million acres.¹ It is unlikely that the described region formed a distinct unit in Maori times. The mountains in the east and coast in the south are clear-cut, but the exact northern line was merely the result of colonial administration boundary drawing. There was also considerable movement through the Manawatu gorge, which lay at the extreme north-west corner of the district.

1. The total area of Wairarapa has been reported at various sizes. A digitised computer estimate of the area gives 2,072,400 acres. The main area of uncertainty in that figure is where the line is drawn along the Rimutaka and Tararua Ranges. That uncertainty introduces a possible error rate of plus or minus 5 percent. Joy Hippolite ('Wairoa ki Wairarapa: An Overview Commissioned by the Waitangi Tribunal', report commissioned by the Waitangi Tribunal, 1991, p 2), and the Crown Congress Joint Working Party ('Historical Report on the Ngati Kahungunu Rohe', 1993, p 149), have taken McLean's 1852 estimate of approximately three million acres (AJHR, 1862, C-1/11). Yet, there McLean was referring to the area 'south of Hawke's Bay', an area which he estimated had a population of 3000. That population figure is far more than the amount regarded at the time as accurate for Wairarapa – about 780. W Searancke ('Report on the Wairarapa Lands', AJHR, 1860, C-3, p 4) considered the Wairarapa to contain 1,200,000 acres. He, however, curiously only extended as far north as the Castlepoint block, therefore his estimate is too low.

Introduction

Only an estimate can be made of the Maori population in the area at the time of the first purchases.² Figures were given by various contemporary Europeans, but the area included was never constant, while Maori were fairly migratory and they were not always willing to have their numbers ascertained by colonial officials.³ F D Bell attempted an estimate of the population of the valley (excluding the East Coast and north) in 1847. Captain Smith, a squatter, told him that it did not exceed 300, 'the chiefs' claimed that there were 800 men alone, while Bell's estimate was 400 for men, women, and children.⁴ Later estimates range from 780 in January 1849 by H T Kemp,⁵ about 728 by William Colenso in 1850,⁶ and approximately 740 in the census of 1858.⁷ Given that these estimates did not cover the entire area of our region, and accounting for Maori non-cooperation with census, we could say that about 1850 the population of the district would lie between 750 and 900.

This draft report will begin with a survey of the traditional history of Wairarapa, drawn from a wider traditional history of Wairarapa ki Wairoa, by Helen Walter. The Rangahaua Whanui report for each area has only been intended to provide a brief summary of the relevant traditional Maori history, being based on secondary sources. The rationale for this is that Maori from the area themselves are better qualified to provide this aspect of history. The following four chapters will deal chronologically with the process of land alienation in Wairarapa during the nineteenth century.

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2. See Paul Husbands, 'Maori Population in the Hawke's Bay and Wairarapa, 1820–1991', report commissioned by the Waitangi Tribunal, 1992
 3. H T Kemp noted in 1850 when he attempted to take a census of the area that in the remote and areas not purchased (ie, Wairarapa) a strong disinclination to his taking numbers prevailed: Kemp's 'Return', GBPP, vol 7, sess 1420, p 240.
 4. F D Bell to Wakefield, 23 March 1847, GBPP, vol 8, sess 570, p 56
 5. H T Kemp's 'Return of Population with the Block of Land Proposed to be Sold in the Wairarapa', GBPP, vol 6, sess 1136, p 87. This area included the valley and the coast, but only as far north as Whareama. Kemp made another estimate of 563 in April 1850: Kemp's 'Return', GBPP, vol 7, sess 1420, pp 231ff. This estimate, however, included none of the coastal villages.
 6. P Goldsmith, 'Aspects of the Life of William Colenso', MA thesis, University of Auckland, 1995, p 50 Colenso's figure refers simply to 'the Wairarapa'. (Colenso also compiled a census of his parish for Bishop Selwyn during 1846: see Colenso, *Journal*, 18 April 1846, 18 November 1846, but this researcher has not found his results.)
 7. Husbands, table 2.2 (citing N G Pearce, 'The Size and Location of the Maori Population, 1857–96: A Statistical Study', MA thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1952)