

It is such a missed opportunity for scholars and leading publishers to be producing books of this kind. Harper's hope that the book 'encourages a greater understanding of what New Zealand soldiers endured on Gallipoli and a more complete recognition of their place in the nation's history' (p.xi) is remarkable and slightly disingenuous. Never in the history of New Zealand's commemorations of Anzac Day, for example, has there been such blanket media coverage of soldiers' experiences. Add to this the work of family historians, museums, artists and schools who organize trips to Gallipoli – not to mention the programme of publishing and exhibitions that will threaten to overwhelm us as centennial commemorations approach – and one wonders where Harper and AUP have been.

- 1 Charles Bean, evidence to Standing Committee on Public Works (1926-28), *Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, vol.IV*, Canberra, p.6.

Raupatu: The Confiscation of Maori Land

edited by Richard Boast and Richard S. Hill. Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2009; ix, 299pp. ISBN 9780864736123

Reviewed by Buddy Mikaere; Ngati Pukenga/Ngati Ranginui

There are sometimes two approaches to writing history. Some history needs to be written for archival reasons, recording and commenting in the worthy pursuit of keeping the record straight. Other history is written to provide an insightful analysis of past events to help explain the shape of the contemporary world and society. *Raupatu: the Confiscation of Maori Land*, a collection of essays examining aspects of the confiscation of Maori land in the nineteenth century, mainly follows the first approach tempered with a splash of the second.

Edited by two of the enduring warhorses of the Treaty claims era, Richard Boast and Richard Hill, this essay collection brings together the thoughts of an interesting group of essayists who have worked hand in glove to provide commentaries on the broad area of Maori history, Maori raupatu grievances and the complex relationships of these two elements with the Treaty, Treaty jurisprudence and, to a lesser extent, the impact on these of the several changes of government that have taken place over the past 35 years.

Of course, the raupatu issue is much older than the latter part of the twentieth century and the decade since, but a serious examination of the subject of raupatu only happened with the advent of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 and the extension of its investigations back to 1840, courtesy of the 1985 Treaty of Waitangi Act amendment. The fact that a quasi judicial body more akin to a Commission of Inquiry had been established, and which had the ability to take a fresh look at all Maori grievances, including raupatu

related injustices, was viewed by many Maori as a positive development. So too was the lack of political expediency in addressing the first tentative Tribunal reports with their recommendations – changes in government did not necessarily check the momentum of the Tribunal's work.

But the confiscation of Maori land from the 1860s was always viewed as being *the* Maori grievance. However as the Tribunal investigations got underway it became obvious that while the raupatu retained its profile as the face of Maori grievance, research revealed questionable land sale and purchase activities in other areas had been of a scale that, in quantitative terms, relegated the raupatu land confiscations to a lower rung on the grievance ladder.

For example, the gigantic land acquisition of most of the South Island through the Kemp Deed of 1848 and the land purchase activities of Donald McLean in the Wairarapa and Hawke's Bay in the late 1840s and early 1850s had seen enormous areas of land pass permanently out of Maori ownership. Hidden away in the minutiae of documentation these massive 'land grabs' had flown under the radar probably because a number of Maori chiefs had been complicit in their construction. But, because of their emotional impact, the raupatu claims retained the pre-eminent place in the Maori lexicon of loss.

Following the completion of the major Ngai Tahu claim investigations, in the early 1990s the Waitangi Tribunal turned its attention to hearing the raupatu claims, beginning with the largest of them, Taranaki. Interestingly there was no investigation of the Waikato confiscations by the Tribunal, Tainui having made it clear to the Tribunal that it did not want an investigation, instead chartering a train to bring an *ope* of senior Tainui figures to Wellington to pressure the Crown/Government into direct negotiation and which was agreed.

The overall raupatu investigation could have stopped there because as these essays amply demonstrate, the intent of the raupatu legislation – the 1863 New Zealand Settlements Act – its application and the outcome were the same whether it was Taranaki or Waikato land involved.

The Crown did not, in the end, seriously challenge the findings of the Waitangi Tribunal in Taranaki, despite the fact that the Tribunal's Taranaki report provoked mild outrage amongst Jewish groups in particular when it described what had happened to Taranaki Maori in the 1860s as being akin to the holocaust. A former Minister of Internal Affairs, Waitangi Tribunal member and sometime historian, Dr Michael Bassett, went a little further when he told a TVNZ Assignment programme that the Tribunal's 1996 report on the Taranaki Raupatu was 'extravagantly written' and contained 'tendentious words' with its use of the term 'holocaust'.

We can only assume that despite the similarities between the two raupatu cases, Waikato and Taranaki, the pursuit of the Taranaki raupatu investigation by the Tribunal was because it served the iwi desire for a release – having their day in Court through the public venting of a handed-down grievance.

Do Maori still feel the raupatu grievance? The late Judith Binney's essay seems to indicate this is the case for Tuhoe, and continuing events serve only to add to the grievance play list, in this case the ill-conceived Urewera terrorist raids of 2007.

In comparison is Waikato-Tainui, where the raupatu claim is regarded by the government, in particular, as being resolved; raupatu receives little ongoing comment from Tainui leadership. But its 'presence' can be discerned as an unstated guiding principle. For example, the organization which guided Tainui affairs for decades – the Tainui Maori Trust Board – has been replaced by the Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Land Trust.

Alan Ward's contribution reflects his many years at the vanguard of Treaty claims research and analysis. He poses a pertinent question – what if. What if particular officials had chosen a different path, would the outcome have been different? The answer is yes and no. Yes, we might have not had the raupatu, but no, the outcome – loss of the land – would have been the same. The experience of land loss is an element common to *all* colonized indigenous people. As the Ngai Tahu and Kahungunu experience with nineteenth-century land sales has shown, other ways of separating Maori from their land would have been found.

The unfortunate truth is that there are unlikely to be accolades for *Raupatu* except perhaps from those who have a particular bent for historical detail. The reason for that is because the natural 'audience' for this work – as demonstrated by Waikato-Tainui – has moved on. The reservoirs of outrage have been largely emptied.

For many Maori, the raupatu grievances they have held close for generations have been roundly proven, and the anecdotal evidence is that right now there is little if any Maori interest in the raupatu mechanics. The historian's scholarly work of putting the explanatory flesh on the raupatu skeleton has become a means to an end as shown by the swift transition right across the Treaty claims board from investigation to negotiation.

Raupatu is fated to become a New Zealand HIST101 required reading text in much the same way that the essays of *Conflict and Compromise* (edited by Hugh Kawharu) served a similar purpose in the 1980s. Unless there are some dramatic changes to the way New Zealand history is taught at secondary school level in particular, the tragedy is that future generations of Maori will likely have a surface understanding at best of the entire

raupatu history and will not know or care, satisfied instead by the populist and simplistic view that ‘we got ripped off by Pakeha’.

Like sunflowers following the passage of the solar disc across the sky, Maori faces are expectantly turned towards settlement.

Making Sheep Country: Mt Peel Station and the Transformation of the Tussock Lands

by Robert Peden. Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2011
xi, 280pp. ISBN 9781869404857

Reviewed by Brad Patterson

For many years, most recently amidst controversy over high country tenure reviews, the pastoralists of the South Island’s tussock grasslands have received a bad press. It has been alleged that they misread their environment from the outset, that their often poor management of the grasslands led to degradation, indiscriminate burning of the indigenous vegetation and overgrazing with sheep, reducing the ground cover to such an extent that it facilitated invasion by rabbits. The result was destruction of the grasslands, at least in the form encountered by the first Europeans, consequent erosion, and the proliferation of scree slopes and near dustbowl areas – some claim a form of ecological catastrophe. Moreover, beyond attributing this landscape change to ignorance, an inability to interpret and adjust to the encountered landscapes, there has been a tendency to excoriate the pastoralists as the ‘wool kings’, individuals who employed their land monopoly to found a wealthy social and political elite, caring little about the environmental costs. In a long overdue review of the hard evidence, Robert Peden sets out to assess the validity of these interpretations.

The book’s title suggests its principal focus is Mt Peel station, a South Canterbury property high in the Rangitata River valley, about 60km from Timaru, the nearest town. Established in 1856 by relatively well-heeled young Englishmen J.B. Acland and C.G. Tripp, it at one time encompassed nearly 300,000 acres. Despite undergoing a number of reshapings in the subsequent 150 years, the residual remains in the hands of the Acland family. Yet the book’s title is a little misleading. This is no insular account of the triumphs and tribulations of a single run, nor is it a hagiographical recounting of the fortunes of the occupying family. Rather Mt Peel is advanced as a continuing reference point for much wider discussions, a yardstick for evaluating the experiences of other pastoral properties from Marlborough to Southland. What is made very clear is that there was no single South Island tussock grassland environment, instead an infinite variety, from coast and plain to