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Geoff Park (2006)

Forestry and Timber Trading in the Bay of
Islands, 1769-1840

Introduction to 2013 publication

This previously unpublished paper by the late Geoff Park is a companion piece to *'The Enchanter's Wand': The Transformation of Whenua in pre-1840 Bay of Islands*, published in June 2103 in this series. Produced for the Treaty of Waitangi Research Unit, this paper formed part of an enquiry by the Marsden-funded research programme Te Paeatatu. Researched and written to provide archives-based background information for oral-history based research, it remains in draft form only. But both the Te Paeatatu administration and editors of this series believe it deserves to be made public. The paper is in two parts, 'Kupu Whakataki' and 'The Timber Resource' (page 23), and is followed by a brief Conclusion on page 88. For a fuller account of the genesis and status of this paper, the Introduction to *'The Enchanter's Wand'* should be consulted. The publishers would like to thank the Marsden Fund for its generous support of the late Dr Park's research on this topic.

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Part 1: Kupu Whakataki

The Bay of Islands was the whenua that first came under sustained European influences and became irreversibly changed by them. It is also the whenua in which, on 6 February, 1840, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Treaty of Waitangi, was originally signed; and, in which, two days beforehand, its Second Article guaranteeing rangatira possession' of their resources and taonga was formulated. Bay of Islands chiefs predominated among the rangatira who met at Te Tii prior to debating the treaty with Queen Victoria's envoy, William Hobson, across the estuary at Waitangi on 5 February, and signing it the following afternoon.

On 30 January, the day after Hobson's arrival in the Bay of Islands, he proclaimed himself Lieutenant-Governor, and sent out a letter to local Tai Tokerau chiefs inviting them to the 5 February assembly at Waitangi. No Maori are believed to have visited Hobson on *HMS Herald* in that period, but it has been said that all or any of his European visitors could have influenced the significant changes that were made to the imperial treaty-making knowledge which he had brought to New Zealand.¹ The most significant, it is believed, were made by James Busby, who, after ceasing to be the British Resident on Hobson's proclamation, had offered him all the help he could in drawing up a treaty that rangatira would sign.²

In particular, Busby placed in front of the Second Article, which was about Crown pre-emption in future sales of Maori land, a guarantee to rangatira and their iwi of 'the full, exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates, Forests, Fisheries and other properties'. It was not the first time he had proposed it. Three years before, reporting his 'observations on the state of the country' to the Colonial Secretary, Busby had described Maori of the Bay of Islands and its environs as a people rapidly losing their whenua, but who would need to retain their customary relations with it if they were to survive. Humanity, he said, would require that:

...certain districts should be fixed in perpetuity in the native proprietors, and that it should be enacted that all claims to the possession of such lands by foreigners, howsoever acquired, should be absolutely null and void...

¹ Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, Wellington, 1987, p.39.

² J M R Owens, *The Mediator: A Life of Richard Taylor*, Wellington, 2004.

By 1837, far from 'the strongest hopes' that Busby had held for Maori when he first came to the Bay of Islands in 1833 – 'a people of strong natural endowment...on the very threshold of civilization'³ – he perceived the Bay's once-huge population as collapsing in front of his eyes. This was a consequence of what he called 'every attempt to administer the law of retaliation – the rude justice of nature'. In this way, he said:

...the depopulation of the country [has] been going on, till district after district has become void of its inhabitants, and the population is, even now, but a remnant of what it was in the memory of some European residents'.⁴

This raised, he believed, 'an interesting and important question': 'How far was this depopulation of the country, which has at least been rapid in proportion to the increase of its intercourse with the whites, originated by the latter, and may be justly charged to them?'

In Busby's own opinion 'all the apparent causes which are in operation [were] quite inadequate to account for the rapid disappearance of the people.' But whatever the cause, he considered that the tangata whenua of the Bay of Islands had lost too much with European inhabitation, and that there was a warning in that fact for tangata whenua along coasts that had yet to receive European settlers.

In February 1840 it was the locally crafted text containing Busby's insertion in the Second Article that Hobson then had the missionary, Rev Henry Williams, translate overnight into a document for the assembled rangatira to sign; the text that has created such debate ever since because of its difference from the treaty in English.

The basic treaty-making ideas which Hobson brought to New Zealand are considered to have reflected the treaties that the British Crown had earlier signed with African tribal rulers, and with which his Colonial Office briefing would

³ James Busby to Governor of new South Wales, 16 August 1833, Alexander Turnbull Library [ATL], qMS-0352.

⁴ James Busby to Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, *Great Britain Parliamentary Papers [GBPP]: Colonies, New Zealand, Vol 3, Sessions 1835-42.*

have made him familiar.⁵ He arrived in the Bay of Islands knowing he had to make a treaty with local chiefs whose customary relationships with land and resources he knew virtually nothing about. His Instructions from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Normanby, underlined the importance of the 'free and intelligent consent of the natives expressed according to their established usages'. In matters of land, Hobson was not to purchase from Maori any territory 'the retention of which by them would be essential, or highly conducive to their comfort, safety or subsistence'. Land acquired by the Crown for future settlement was to be confined to such districts as Maori could alienate 'without distress or serious inconvenience to themselves.'⁶

Hobson did not seek direct counsel with tangata whenua to gain this understanding. But he did get advice on rangatiratanga and matters of land from two of the local Europeans he met instead – Busby, and the leader of the Church Missionary Society mission, the Rev. Henry Williams. As Judith Binney has noted, Hobson's Treaty texts 'were shaped at the Bay through the experiences of the older European residents, and most particularly James Busby and the Rev Henry Williams; who did understand what the Maori relationship to their land was'⁷. Moreover, 'if signatures were wanted (and needed) then the Maori relationships to the land and its resources would have to be acknowledged and UPHELD'⁸.

It was as a consequence of these consultations with Busby and Williams, Binney argues, that the choice of the key Maori terms in the Second Article of the Treaty was made:

- *te tino rangatiratanga*, the term most commonly used for the authority of the heads of the identifiable and named hapu, to explain the fullness or essence of their power, and to parallel the English phrase guaranteeing rangatira and their people 'the full, exclusive and undisturbed possession' of their resources

⁵ M P K Sorrenson, 'Treaties in British Colonial Policy: Precedents for Waitangi', in William Renwick (ed.), *Sovereignty & Indigenous Rights: The Treaty of Waitangi in International Contexts*, Wellington, 1991.

⁶ Lord Normanby to William Hobson, 14 August 1839, *GBPP: Colonies, New Zealand*, vol. 3, pp.85-90.

⁷ Judith Binney, 'The Maori and the Signing of the Treaty of Waitangi', in Department of Internal Affairs, *Towards 2000: Seven Leading Historians Examine Significant Aspects of New Zealand History*, 1990, pp. 25-26.

⁸ Judith Binney, May 1999, personal communication.

- *ratou whenua, ratou kainga, ratou taonga katoa*, paralleling in the English text the term 'their Lands and Estates, Forests, Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess'.

The significant differences between the Treaty/Te Tiriti's English and Maori texts has always been of concern. Not least the words 'te tino rangatiratanga', which would have meant far more to Te Taitokerau Maori in 1840 than 'possession'; and 'taonga', which would have meant that the treaty promised the retention of 'anything highly prized'. As a result of the 6 February 1840 signing at Waitangi, the English negotiators thought that the First Article ceded sovereignty, and the Maori signatories thought the Second Article retained for them a wide range of chiefly power.⁹

But as we have noted, the treaty's translation into Maori was not by Maori. Instead, as the Rev. Henry Williams later recollected, 'On the 4th of February, about 4 o'clock p.m, Captain Hobson came to me with the Treaty of Waitangi saying he would meet me in the morning at the House of the British Resident, Mr Busby; when it must be read to the chiefs assembled at 10 o'clock'.¹⁰ With his Maori-speaking son Edward, Williams worked through the night to ensure it was translated. Subsequently, it has often been expressed or implied that their translation of the Treaty into Maori was unfaithful to the English text.¹¹

Hobson's Surveyor-General, Felton Mathew, estimated that about 200 Maori attended the 5 February hui.¹² Many of the assembled rangatira who spoke to the Lieutenant-Governor expressed their opposition to the words he read out in English followed by Henry Williams' article by article Maori translation. The first rangatira to speak, Te Kemara, tohunga of the chief Kawiti, told Hobson, it was his, Te Kemara's, whenua that they stood on, but like the rest of the inheritances of his ancestors, it was 'all gone, stolen, gone with the missionaries'.¹³ He wanted his lands returned and for Hobson to leave, themes that both his brother rangatira Rewa, and Kawiti, reiterated.

Of the chiefs, only Ngati Hao's Tamati Waka Nene made reference to the great transformation their whenua had undergone since Europeans had entered it, and

⁹ Owens, *The Mediator*, p.44.

¹⁰ Quoted in R. M. Ross, 'Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Texts and Translations', *New Zealand Journal of History*, October 1972, p.133.

¹¹ Richard Dawson, 'Waitangi, Translation, and Metaphor', *Sites* (New Series), Vol. 2, No 2, 2005.

¹² Felton Mathew, cited in Owens, *The Mediator*, p.45.

¹³ Te Kemara, quoted in William Colenso, *The Authentic and Genuine History of the Treaty of Waitangi*, Wellington, 1890 pp.17-18.

the irreversibility of the changes. Contemporary accounts, notably William Colenso's, credit Nene's speaking in such terms with swinging the debate in favour of signing.¹⁴ Speaking first to the assembled Maori, while the Rev Henry Williams translated his words for Hobson, he asked:

Me pēhea oti tātou. Kī mai ahau ē ngā rangatira o te Taitokerau. Ko wai tātou? E aha ana tātou?

Say then, o ye chiefs of the tribes of the northern part of New Zealand, what we? How we?¹⁵

Kua ngaro ke inainei te whenua?

Is not the land already gone?

Kua pōkia kētia te katoa o te whenua e te tini o te tangata – te tauhou, e te tauiwi – anō hē karāihe, he otaota, e hora ana kit e uhi i te whenua?

Is it not all covered with men, with strangers, foreigners – even as the grass and the herbage – over whom we have no power?

Castigating those rangatira who had demanded Hobson return to England, and leave their whenua to them, Nene exclaimed:

Mehemea koutou I kōrero pēnā i ngā wā o mua rā I te taenga mai o ngā iwi hokohoko, iwi hoko rama

Had you spoken thus in the old times when the traders and grog-sellers came

Mehemea koutou i pana atu I a rātou, kua kaha koutou ki te kōrero ki te Kāwana, e hoki, nā kua rite kua tika. A kua ki atu tātou katoa: "E hoki"!

Had you turned them away, then you could well say to the Governor, Go back, and it would have been correct, tika, straight. And I would also have said with you, we together one man, one voice: Go back

¹⁴ Colenso, *Authentic and Genuine History*

¹⁵ Campion, Richard, in Richard Hill (ed.), *Waitangi – 'I Was There': A 1986 Docu-drama*, Wellington, 2003; the korero were re-created by Wiremu Parker from Colenso's *Authentic and Genuine History*.

Ā, e hoa mā, nā wai kē ngā taewa e kai nei tātou? Nō wai kē o tātou paraikete...

Ah friends, whose potatoes do we eat? Whose were our blankets...

Then Nene told the chiefs he was going to sign the pukapuka, and turned to Hobson, telling him to sit and to remain. Then he stated his conditions for signing:

Kaua matou e whaka-ponongatia

Do not allow us to become slaves

Tiakina a matou tikanga

Preserve our customs

Kaua o matou whenua e tangohia i a matou

And never permit our lands to be wrested from us

Hobson was observed to lift his hand in agreement.¹⁶

Nothing in the wording of Te Tiriti was changed as a result of the speeches of rangatira. The overnight discussions among Maori involved the Church Missionary Society missionaries, with Williams writing that: 'Many came up to us to speak upon this new state of affairs. We gave them but one version, explaining clause by clause, showing the advantage to them of being taken under the fostering care of the British Government...'¹⁷ The Rev Richard Taylor, to whom Hobson sent the rough draft, 'sat up late copying the treaty on parchment, ready for signing the following day.'¹⁸

While many rangatira had to be 'prevailed upon to assemble' the next day,¹⁹ in the event the great majority of them signed. All the signatories on 6 February were Tai Tokerau chiefs, from the Bay of Islands and the adjoining harbours of

¹⁶ Colenso, *Authentic and Genuine History*.

¹⁷ Hugh Carleton, *The Life of Henry Williams*, vol. 2, Auckland, 1874, p.14.

¹⁸ Owens, *The Mediator*, p.46.

¹⁹ Colenso, *Authentic and Genuine History*.

Hokianga and Whangaruru. But as Colenso's critical eye perceived, 'not many chiefs of first rank had signed'. He concurred with Henry Williams that the 'greater part of them were from the Bay of Islands and its immediate vicinity', as was confirmed by names on the treaty sheet.²⁰ One high-ranking chief, Rewa, had reservations right to the very end, and was only persuaded to sign by the advice of his fellow chiefs and the English missionaries that Maori interests would be best served by agreeing to the treaty.²¹ Two major Bay of Islands chiefs, Kawiti and Pomare, refused to sign,²² Kawiti eventually doing so several months after the event. Two months after the original Waitangi signing, when Hobson took the treaty north for signature, Kaitaia chief Nopera Panakareao warned him of a conspiracy against him led by Kawiti and some of the Ngapuhi chiefs who had not signed.²³

When Maori gathered to discuss 'the spirit of the Treaty' generations after the events of 1840, as at the Orakei Parliament in 1879, the principle most highlighted in the korero was the stipulation 'that we should retain the *mana* of our lands; the *mana* of our forests, fisheries, pipi grounds...' These, it was said, were 'the words that had been overlooked' and for which Maori had 'not received any benefit'.²⁴ Te Hemara Karawai told the Orakei Parliament: 'I saw the making of that treaty, in the days of Busby. When Governor Hobson came there was a great deal of talking', alluding to the fact that the signing had taken place only after great deliberation.²⁵

Although historians have reported that 'sovereignty was the shadow, the land was the substance'²⁶ of the korero at Te Tii and Waitangi, this reflects the words of Nopera in the following year.²⁷ It is not reflected in the written record of the events. Lindsay Buick, reporting in 1907 from oral recollections such as William Colenso's 'authentic and genuine' observations of events at Waitangi, based on his records at the time, had no doubt that:

...the thing which proved the determining influence in the negotiations – more than the inducements offered by the Crown, or the persuasions of the Missionaries – was that the chiefs had acquired a clear grip of the

²⁰ Henry Williams' letter, 13 February, 1840, in *Missionary Register*, London, November, 1840.

²¹ Orange, *Treaty of Waitangi*, p.56.

²² Colenso, *Authentic and Genuine History*, pp. 34-5.

²³ John Johnston, Journal March 17–April 28, 1840, p. 58, Auckland Public Library.

²⁴ Eruena Pairimu, Ngaoho, in 'Paora Tuhaere's Parliament at Orakei', *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives [AJHR]*, G-8, Sess. II, 1879, p.250.

²⁵ Te Hemara Karawai, in 'Paora Tuhaere's Parliament at Orakei', p.247.

²⁶ Lindsay Buick, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, Wellington, 1914, p.228.

²⁷ Ian McL Wards, *The Shadow of the Land*, Wellington, 1968.

primal fact that whatever it took from them, the treaty left them in secure possession of their lands.²⁸

Nonetheless, as Buick himself allowed, there was almost nothing recorded of what was said within Maori circles during 5-6 February, and little of it was conveyed to Hobson. Colenso himself commented on the fact, how, after considerable discussion on land and missionaries:

...a white man came forward, and, addressing his Excellency, said that the Native speeches were not half interpreted by Mr Williams, neither were his Excellency's remarks fully interpreted to the Natives: a Mr Johnson [an old resident (dealer in spirits, &c.) of Kororareka.] was present who could interpret well, &c.²⁹

Hobson asked Johnson to come forward and translate for him, and to tell him what had not been interpreted. However, Johnson resisted, saying that the 'gentlemen of the mission can do it, and should be able to do it very well': but 'let Mr Williams speak out loud' so those at the back of the tent could hear:

...and let all that the Natives say be interpreted to the Governor. They say a great deal about land and missionaries which Mr Williams does not translate to you, Sir', &c

The tangata whenua oral record of the events was famously expressed by Aperahama Taonui a few days later, at the first of Te Tiriti's many subsequent signings, at Mangungu in the Hokianga.

We all tried to find out the reason why the Governor was so anxious to get us to make these marks...and when we met the Governor, the speaker of Maori [the interpreter] told us that if we put our names, or even made any sort of mark on that paper, the Governor would then protect us, and prevent us from being robbed of our cultivated land, and our timber land, and everything else which belonged to us.³⁰

The question to be asked is whether this particular environment of Tai Tokerau's northern harbours, and its tangata whenua's particular experience of the changes that came with Europeans in the years leading up to 1840, were factors in the

²⁸ Buick, *Treaty of Waitangi*, p. 228.

²⁹ Colenso, *Authentic and Genuine History*.

³⁰ F E Maning, *Old New Zealand: A Tale of the Good Old Times*, Christchurch, 1906, pp 223-225.

shaping of the treaty's Second Article and the choice of words in its English text and its translation into Maori.

We have no means of knowing whether, without Busby's additions to the Second Article or Williams' translatory shifts of meaning, the treaty would have been signed.³¹ Judith Binney has argued that these particularities of environment and experience were critical factors. Without them, she suggests, such a Treaty would not have been possible.³² Central to Binney's thesis is the fact that the two men with whom William Hobson worked to shape the treaty's text – Busby and Williams – knew the strong customary, life-sustaining ties between Maori and their land and waterways.

Prior to the entry of European influences, the Bay of Islands landscape was one 'harbouring a huge population' because it contained 'in abundance...the resources most heavily relied upon by Maoris: extensive fertile land for the production of fernroot and cultivated vegetables, forests with berry and bird resources, a large stretch of coast providing shell-fish and a diversity of marine fishing environments.³³ 'The Natives', FitzRoy told the British House of Lords, two years before the treaty, live almost entirely upon the Sea Coast...the part of which is immediately around the Harbours, which is also the Part which will be of most Use to Settlers.³⁴

Moreover, said FitzRoy, 'the Natives cannot in New Zealand retreat inland; if they are driven from the Sea Coast their Subsistence is taken away from them entirely; they have no Means of providing for themselves in the Interior, as has been the Case in all Continents which have been colonized...[A]s they have no wild Animals in the Country, they would have no Means of Subsistence if driven inland, except the Fern Root, which is found throughout the Islands... In all other Countries where the Natives have been displaced from the Coast they have had wild Animals or something to subsist on in the Interior'.

By the time Busby had Hobson insert a clause into the treaty guaranteeing rangatira their customary authority over their whenua, he had been living in Aotearoa for seven years. On his own arrival in the Bay of Islands in 1833, Busby

³¹ Owens, *The Mediator*, p 44.

³² Binney, 'The Maori and the Signing of the Treaty of Waitangi'.

³³ Kathleen Shawcross, 'Maoris of the Bay of Islands, 1769–1840: A Study of Changing Maori Responses to European Contact', MA thesis, University of Auckland, 1967.

³⁴ Robert FitzRoy, evidence of May 21, 1838, in *Report from Select Committee of House of Lords appointed to inquire into the Present State of the Islands of New Zealand, and the Expediency of Regulating the Settlement of British Subjects Therein*, GBPP.

had made told Maori that central to his purpose, as British Resident, was consulting with 'all the Chiefs...about how we can make their country a flourishing country, and their people a rich and wise people, like the people of Great Britain'.

Busby's 1833 *Address to the Chiefs of New Zealand* was prepared in Maori:

Ka mutu te kai i te aruhe, kei te taro anake; ka ngakia katoa tia te wenua, ka kaininga marie tia nga kai. Ka nui hoki te kai, ko reira hoki mahia ai he Muka, he Rakau, he Kai ra nei, hei hokohoko mo te kaupuke. A ka riro mai mo koutou he kakahu me nga mea katoa e pai ai koutou. Makonei ka wai taonga ai koutou.

When wars shall cease among you, then shall your country flourish. Instead of the roots of the fern, you shall eat bread, because the land will be tilled without fear, and its fruits shall be eaten in peace. When there is abundance of bread, men shall labour to produce flax, and timber, and provisions for the ships that come to trade; and the ships that come to trade shall bring clothing, and all the other things which you desire. Thus shall you become rich.³⁵

Three months later, Busby was telling New South Wales' Governor Arthur that:

Of the natives I have the strongest hopes – They are evidently a people of strong natural endowment, and are at this period on the very threshold of civilization...not a few in this neighbourhood have embraced Christianity, and have given evidence by the most striking change in their conduct of the vastness of the change that has taken place...³⁶

History remembers Busby in mixed terms. But it is evident that despite his lack of legal authority or coercive forces as British Resident, he formed a special association with some Bay of Islands chiefs. More generally, he gained standing in Maori eyes as he became increasingly knowledgeable about the intricacies of Maori society and fluent in te reo. In 1835, an Executive Committee of five chiefs was elected with whom he could consult and through whom he would seek to

³⁵ James Busby, 'Address to the Chiefs of New Zealand' [in English and Maori], May 17, 1833, in Appendix II of William Marshall, *A Personal Narrative of Two Visits to New Zealand, in His Majesty's Ship Alligator, AD 1834*, London, 1836.

³⁶ Busby to Governor, NSW, 16 August 1833, ATL

act if necessary.³⁷ The very limited evidence about this committee indicates that it comprised Wharerahi, the eldest brother of Titore, Rewa and Moka of Ngai te Wake, and a signatory with them of the 1831 Petition from the chiefs to King William IV; and Te Kemara, or Kaitieke, of Ngati Kawa, who sold the land at Waitangi to Busby.³⁸ Busby's association with these rangatira would have given him mana in the eyes of Bay of Islands Maori.

Busby's awareness of the significance of rangatiratanga in regard to forests and timber was apparent shortly after his arrival in the Bay of Islands in 1833. Instructed by the Admiralty to assist Captain John Sadler of the British naval supply ship *HMS Buffalo* in 'procuring a supply of Spars for His Majesty's service'³⁹, Busby directed him to the chief Titore, who held authority over Whangaroa forests known to still contain spars of the kind the Bay of Islands no longer did. Busby had learned from the Rev Henry Williams about the situation; as he would tell Sadler, Williams had asserted that 'he has no idea you could purchase a cargo any where else than at Whangaroa'.⁴⁰

It is evident that Sadler depended on Busby as negotiator with rangatira. Once enough Whangaroa trees had been felled to load the *Buffalo*, he contacted Busby, seeking:

...your Assistance to call the Native Chiefs together in a few days and state to them the spars must be brought down to the River ready for floating them to the Tide by the flood, and also to state to them the Payments I will make on delivery – or when the tide flows...⁴¹

'Tetore here is certainly much feared if not respected', Sadler told Busby, with the request: 'May I beg of you to send to Tetore, and request him to come over for the Meeting.'⁴²

Busby replied that 'the authority of the Chiefs is merely seminal and they could not command the assistance of even their own slaves or children against their inclination'. It would therefore be in vain, he told him, to hope that a contract

³⁷ James Busby to Colonial Secretary, New South Wales, 1 July 1837, CO209/2 f.360b, National Archives, London.

³⁸ Evidence from numerous sources is summarised in Roger Philip Wigglesworth, 'The New Zealand Timber and Flax Trade, 1769-1840', PhD History thesis, Massey University, 1981, p. 289.

³⁹ R M Hay to Busby, 2 May 1833; Busby Papers 1, National Archives [NA], Wellington.

⁴⁰ Busby to John Sadler, 14 December 1833, Busby Papers 1, NA.

⁴¹ Sadler to Busby, from *HMS Buffalo*, 11 December 1833, Busby Papers 1, NA.

⁴² *Ibid.*

with the chiefs such as he had proposed, would be completed. He had not sent for Titore, he added, as 'it would give him an importance in his own eyes which would make it more difficult to deal with him'.⁴³

By 1833, the wealth of the Bay of Islands and its rangatira derived more from it being a harbour where ships could refit, from prostitution, and from the supply of pork and potatoes, than from timber. To continue the timber trade that had once prevailed, spars had to be obtained from elsewhere. The sources of the best quality timber was along the east coast from north of the Bay of Islands in Whangaroa and south to Mercury Bay, and along the west coast from Hokianga to Kawhia. The musket taua of the 1820s brought all these places under the nominal control of Ngapuhi rangatira, dominated by Hongi Hika.

After Hongi had been wounded, from 1827 a general decline in Ngapuhi power was evident. Then, after the so-called 'Girls' War' in 1830, Titore emerged as the ariki of Bay of Islands Maori. Titore did not gain Hongi's level of domination, but by 1833 his influence over timber extended well beyond the Bay of Islands and Whangaroa; an influence he exerted by later accompanying Sadler and the *Buffalo* as far south as Mercury Bay.

In 1836 James Busby had arbitrated to settle a dispute involving Titore when he was threatened by Ngati Whatua of Kaipara challenging his authority to give Thomas McDonnell permission to take spar timber from the Wairoa River forests.⁴⁴ By the time of Titore's death the following year, Busby was calling him 'the most influential of the Ngapuhi chiefs in preserving order in the town Kororakia, where the natives and British are mingled in the greatest numbers'.

It was Titore's death that spurred Busby's 1837 report to the Colonial Secretary, with its testimony on the bleak prognosis of Bay of Islands Maori: 'the God of the English is removing the Aboriginal inhabitants to make room for them; and it appears that this impression has produced amongst them a very general recklessness and indifference to life'.⁴⁵ Busby enumerated what he believed

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Eric Ramsden, *Busby of Waitangi: HM's Resident at New Zealand, 1833-40*, Wellington, 1942, pp.134-6

⁴⁵ Busby to Colonial Secretary, New South Wales, June 1837, *GBPP*; similarly, Robert FitzRoy, in evidence to the 1838 House of Lords 'Report on the Present State of the Islands of New Zealand' said in response to a question citing Busby ['In this Way has the Depopulation of the Country been going on, till District after District has become void of its Inhabitants, and the Population is, even now, but a Remnant of what it was in the Memory of some European Residents.'] 'Do you conceive that to be an exaggerated or true Statement of the Condition of the Country?' answered: 'I am not able to say, decidedly; but the

Titore and his fellow Bay of Islands rangatira had lost of their whenua by the winter of 1837:

If I am rightly informed, the whole coast line...including the noble harbour of the Bay of Islands, and extending as far as Wangaroa, forty miles northward of the bay, has, with trivial exceptions, passed from the possession of the natives into that of British subjects...Most of the forests of the interior have changed their ownership; and on the western-coast and extensive territory is also claimed by British subjects.⁴⁶

This echoed the situation described two years prior (the year in which Charles Darwin, called 'the timber of the kauri the most valuable production of the island'⁴⁷) in a petition to King William from settlers concerned about Baron Charles de Thierry's 'threatened usurpation of power over New Zealand':

There is at present a considerable body of his Majesty's subjects established in this island, and...owing to the salubrity of the climate, there is every reason to anticipate a rapidly rising colony of British subjects...There are numbers of landholders, and the Kouri Forests have become, for the most part, the private property of your Majesty's subjects.⁴⁸

In 1831, timber's precedence over flax, pork and potatoes in the chiefs' petition to king William suggests that Bay of Islands rangatira considered their forests to be their main resource in terms of trading with Europeans. It was not to be the case for long, however at least not in the Bay of Islands. 'The Shipping has cut it all down', a traveler wrote of the vanished Bay forests three years later.⁴⁹ Writing home to England the following year, a Waimate 'settler' observed that 'there is no place in the world scarce with such timber for masts for ships and other things as here'.⁵⁰

By the time James Busby sat down with William Hobson and Henry Williams to draft Te Tiriti's Second Article of Te Tiriti, he had seen this situation develop.

general Opinion when I was there was, that the Population was decreasing very fast. The Natives themselves said so: their common Expression was (in their own Language) "the Land is not for us; the Land is for the White Men," alluding to the Depopulation.'

⁴⁶ Busby to Colonial Secretary, NSW, June 1837.

⁴⁷ Charles Darwin, *A Journal of Researches*, London, 1839.

⁴⁸ J S Polack, *New Zealand: Being a Narrative of Travels and Adventures*, London, 1838.

⁴⁹ Edward Markham, *New Zealand or Recollections of it* [1963 edition, Wellington].

⁵⁰ [John Ward], *Information relative to New-Zealand*, London, 1839.

The term '*forests*', like *whenua* and *taonga*, appear in Te Tiriti not least because he understood enough of the Maori relationship with their land and waterways to know that the text had to embrace much more than the land that their villages and cultivations occupied.

Busby knew well that colonial policy in the 1830s considered the native inhabitants of a country to have only a 'qualified dominion over it; a right of occupancy only'. As the Governor of New South Wales later said in the early 1840s, with New Zealand Maori in mind: '

...until they establish among themselves a settled form of government, and subjugate the ground to their own uses, by the cultivation of it, they cannot grant to individuals not of their own tribe any portion of it, for the simple reason that they have not themselves any property in it.

But Busby cautiously hoped that:

When His Majesty's Government becomes aware of these facts it is possible they may consider that the course of events has altered the relation of this country in relation to the rest of the world, as to demand the application of a different principle...leaving the natives in the full possession of their abstract rights...⁵¹

These were precisely the aspects of the treaty to which British authority was soon expressing its implacable opposition. The acknowledgement in the treaty that Captain Hobson gave to 'certain Natives of New Zealand', said the House of Commons Select Committee on New Zealand in 1844, 'of a right poof of property, on the part of the Natives of New Zealand, in wild lands in those Islands, after the sovereignty had been assumed by Her Majesty,' was not essential to the true construction of the treaty. It was, said the Select Committee:

...contrary to all sound principles of colonial policy, and an error which has been productive of very injurious consequences. The title to waste land in those Islands ought to have been considered as vested in the Sovereign, and the ownership to land confined to land actually 'occupied and enjoyed' by them; their ownership, so limited, being strictly respected.⁵²

⁵¹ House of Commons, *Report from Select Committee on New Zealand, GBPP: Reports from Committees*, Vol XIII: New Zealand, 1844.

⁵² *Ibid.*

It was this sense of the treaty, and of what was intended by the choice of the Second Article's words, that led Aperahama Taonui in 1840 to believe that it meant 'the Governor would protect us, and prevent us from being robbed of our cultivated land, and our timber land, and everything else which belonged to us'⁵³; and which led rangatira at the 1879 Orakei Parliament to believe that it had meant they were meant to 'retain the *mana* of our lands; the *mana* of our forests, fisheries, pipi grounds'.⁵⁴

Why, then, is the term 'forests' in the Treaty of Waitangi? What were the forests that led to specific reference being made to them? And is there evidence of which rangatira held them in 'full, exclusive and undisturbed possession' prior to the treaty? These are the questions which this study has addressed.

By the late eighteenth century, when European influences began changing the ecology of the Bay of Islands, several centuries of Maori human settlement had removed much of the original forest cover. European visitors to the Bay between 1800 and 1840 described a landscape evidently once forested, being prevalingly fernland. From the outset of the European interest in the Bay of Islands, the forests with timber of the kind that rangatira could trade for European goods were very limited. To obtain it, ship masters and missionaries alike, were directed to very specific 'Spar districts' such as the Kawa Kawa arm of the Taumarere.

The forests whose timber the chiefs of the Bay of Islands told King William in 1831 was their primary resource were largely confined to these spar districts. They were of two principal kinds, as described by Richard Cruise in 1820:

- The river-flat forests of kahikatea that occurred in the Kawa Kawa arm of the Taumarere: 'growing to an immense height ... in swampy ground...on the banks of rivers, and...easy to procure.'
- The foot-slope forests of kauri with which in Whangaroa 'the banks of the river were found to abound'.⁵⁵

The first forests to interest Europeans, these stands of huge trees on swampy floodplains and foot-slopes close to the water, were also the first to be cut down. Nothing of them exists today, not even remnants in conservation reserves.

⁵³ Maning, *Old New Zealand*, pp.223-225.

⁵⁴ Eruena Pairimu, 'Paora Tuhaere's Parliament', p.250,

⁵⁵ Richard Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, 1820 [Christchurch, 1974, ed.].

Like flax, timber was a highly regarded natural resource, but it was not a major item in the pre-1769 Maori economy. Speaking of kauri, by the time of the Treaty of Waitangi 'a timber...much diminished in quantity, in almost every district', Joel Polack wrote that the value of spar timber trees was a direct consequence of the European demand for them:

The natives have hitherto only made use of those that have bordered the edges of rivers, for the forming of their canoes, having no mechanical knowledge, to remove such solid weights of timber to the water. Thus, the innumerable forests of these trees inland, would not be made use of by natives in their present state, for twenty generations to come. These forests many miles from the coast have been well trodden, but never touched for useful purposes by the hands of man.⁵⁶

For much of the pre-European Maori landscape, ownership of land was highly prescribed. Describing 'the Tenacity with which the natives adhere to their territorial Rights' to the British House of Lords in 1838, Robert FitzRoy cited 'one Anecdote as showing how tenacious they are':

Rats were the only Quadrupeds known in that Country before Dogs and Pigs were carried there; and they were held in such great Esteem as Curiosities, and as game, that the Custom obtained, and has been handed down from one Generation to another, of killing Rats as Game only upon their own Land. Nothing ever induces a New Zealander to kill a Rat on Land not his own; and I was present at a Discussion between Two whole Tribes, when the Question at Issue, no less than Peace or War, depended on the one Tribe having killed Rats upon certain Grounds. In the Discussion the older People pointed out a very defined Line, showing which was their Land, and which was that of the other Tribe; and the disputed Place was decided by the Proof of one Tribe having killed Rats there.

He went on to say:

So very tenacious are they of their Right of killing them, they would not for a Moment, think of claiming the Right unless they were certain that the Land was their own; and I think where the Right of Property is esteemed

⁵⁶ Polack, *New Zealand*, p.388.

so sacred as that the killing of a few Rats should influence the Decision of Two Tribes; it shows that the Natives would not willingly give it up. I have heard it said that there is a great deal of waste Land which anybody may make Use of; but from what I saw myself, I should say that every Acre of Land is owned, and that there is much Tenacity with respect to a particular Boundary.⁵⁷

But there is also evidence that, their productivity notwithstanding, many forests and swamps were only vaguely defined in terms of customary ownership. As one old man in Te Taonui's Popoto hapu on the Waihou in the Hokianga told the missionary John Hobbs in 1827, as spar timber extraction got underway:

Before ships came every place was common. Before ships came the Trees stood as common property. Before ships came, the flax stood and every person took what he would and there was more than an abundance for every one. But now the white people come and pitch upon this place and that place and buy it. But who is to have the payment? It belongs to every body.⁵⁸

However, when the shipping came, the forests with spar timber became the some of the most valuable property a chief could possess. Timber-dealing required all his powers of authority over his people:

When timber is purchased by the Europeans, the proprietor of certain trees or forest land, arranges the price he has to receive in return for a single tree, or a number of trees; providing to deliver the same in the dock or the timber yard of the purchaser, who furnishes the use of blocks, tackles &c required to drag the ponderous loads from the forest to the water. The chief then summons his people to attend him to the forest; a survey is made as to the best method to convey the tree to the water; the nearest path, or that which presents the least obstacles is chosen, and the road cleared of all small wood, and brush...

He continued:

...dragging the (spar) tree through the bush into the water...consumes much time and labour; small round pieces of timber being laid down as

⁵⁷ FitzRo

y, evidence of May 21, 1838, in *Report from Select Committee, GBPP*.

⁵⁸ J Hobbs, 24 December 1827 entry, Journals, August 1827–January 1828, MSS 620, ATL.

'ways' for the spar to glide over...In this manner a raft or single tree is often conveyed so me miles down a river, previous to its being placed in the dock of the purchaser; to perform this, the spar-dealer must follow the advice of Shakespeare to "take at the tide the flood that leads to" the sale of his labour. The tide generally flows five hours at the flood, and seven hours at the ebb. The timber-dealer in conducting his raft down the river in flood (*tai parré*) drops an anchor, (a heavy piece of wood or a bag of stones) at the end of the flood (*tai pákoa*) in deep water, that he may be enabled to pursue his route at the finish of the ebb (*tai timu*).⁵⁹

Some trees required up to three months' continual work to remove them from the forest to the water.⁶⁰ And then, a spar-buyer only made payment once the spars were loaded on to his waiting ship. The process took many people, and took them away from their cultivations. Robert FitzRoy told the House of Lords' 'Inquiry into the State of the Islands of New Zealand' in 1838, 'it is a great Temptation when they are offered Muskets and Powder, and Axes and Tools of various Kinds; and for this Inducement they will leave their Potato Grounds, and go and cut down Timber.'⁶¹

The prospect of converting trees in the forest into muskets and powder is one of the reasons that forests with timber became the resource they did. The power that Bay of Islands rangatira wielded between 1819 and the early 1830s, which re-arranged the tribal power structure throughout the motu, was principally sourced from the trade in timber. As the Bay of Islands missionary Richard Davis complained in 1830:

There are in this country at present a considerable number of Europeans who completely monopolize the Timber trade in the Bay of Islands, by purchasing the Timber from the Natives with Muskets and Powder, cutting it out, and selling it to the Shipping, &c : From those people we are obliged to purchase our timber or go without. If we go into the woods and cut down timber for ourselves, the Natives make us pay very dear for it, which together with the loss of our time for Missionary work, makes the timber thus procured come doubly-dear. The Bay of Islands is but very

⁵⁹ J. S. Polack, *Manners and Customs of the New Zealanders*, London, 1840.

⁶⁰ Polack, *Manners and Customs*.

⁶¹ FitzRoy, *Report from Select Committee of House of Lords, GBPP*.

thinly supplied with timber, this makes the natives very anxious to sell what little Timber they have to the best advantage.⁶²

Joel Polack's description of spar-getting was published the same year the Treaty of Waitangi was signed. Two years prior, he had described the spar timber resource as effectively exhausted: 'Of late years, about the northern part of the country...the spars nearest to the water-side have been expended'.⁶³ He meant, in particular, the Bay of Islands. But even there, in the same 'Spar District' to which the first ships had come – the Kawa Kawa River – a forest with timber for trade continued to be its proprietor chief's most valuable and staunchly owned resource.

The year after the Treaty of Waitangi was signed, Captain James Ross brought his expeditionary ships, *Erebus* and *Terror*, into the Bay of Islands 'for the purpose of obtaining the spars we required to replace those that had been carried away during our run from Sydney'.⁶⁴ They anchored in Taumarere, at the mouth of the Kawa Kawa River. But 'no spars of the size and kind we wanted were to be had near to our anchorage: the demands of the numbers of whalers that in former years used to resort to this port to refit had completely exhausted the forests of the immediate neighbourhood'.

By late 1841, a British ship in Taumarere was a source of disquiet to the river people. 'The natives', Ross wrote, 'were beginning to feel deeply, and to express in terms of severe bitterness, their great disappointment at the effects of the treaty of Waitangi...So strong was the impression upon my mind of the readiness to seize any favourable opportunity of regaining possession of their lands and driving the Europeans out of the country'. He made certain that any men he sent upriver with his lieutenant to obtain spars were 'well armed and prepared to resist any attack which the natives seemed well disposed to make, whenever it could be done with any certainty of success'.

The lieutenant 'found it necessary to proceed to a considerable distance up the river before he could procure any spars.' Awara, the chief from which they were 'obliged to purchase' them 'was quite prepared to resist their being cut down, as in former years, for only a trifling payment. But now:

⁶² Richard Davis to D Coates, Church Missionary Society, London, 1 September, 1830, Richard Davis, 'Letters and Journals', PC-0066, Hocken Library, Dunedin.

⁶³ Polack, *New Zealand*, vol. II, p.388.

⁶⁴ Ross, James C., *A Voyage of Discovery and Research*, London. 1847, p.67.

...muskets, and these only, were required for the trees, and without them we should not have been able to have obtained a single spar, except by force, which in the temper of mind of the “Maories” would have led to serious results.

He continued:

As soon as Awara found his demand for two muskets for the spars was agreed to, he became more civil, – pointing out the best trees, and the most easy way of getting them to the water; for although of course our carpenters were of the party, the chief proved his selection of the trees as they were growing, was invariably better than theirs, after being cut down.⁶⁵

When Awara came to the ships’ anchorage ‘to receive the promised payment’, it was evident that ‘his two muskets meant a double-barrelled gun, which they all seemed most desirous to possess’. The only ones on board, however, belonged to the ships’ officers, ‘who of course were most unwilling to part with them’. But eventually, ‘Awara was at length well satisfied with two rifles and a complete set of lieutenant’s uniform, which he immediately put on, to the amusement of our sailors, and his great delight’.

By the time James Ross wrote up his *Voyage of Discovery and Research*, war had broken out in the Bay of Islands, the battle of Ruapekapeka taken place, and he pondered had happened to the rifles. He had not seen Awara’s name mentioned ‘amongst those who have been engaged in the recent hostile transactions in that neighbourhood, and may therefore hope the rifles have not been employed against our own countrymen, and as from his isolated position it would be his policy to be on good terms with the Europeans, he has more probably acted with our forces against the rebellious Heki’.⁶⁶

Conclusion

It has been argued that the text of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Treaty of Waitangi, was, to some degree, a product of the whenua in which it was originally drafted and signed; the harbours of northern New Zealand, the Bay of Islands in particular, where the West first entered with its portmanteau of

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

foreign species and ideas. This historical landscape has been described as a crucible of ecological and cultural change of a depth and rapidity 'perhaps unparalleled anywhere on the Earth'.⁶⁷ In the process, between James Cook's first visit in 1769 and Te Tiriti's signing in 1840, whenua and the customary systems that were part of it were transformed by incoming western influences.

Of all the northern harbours environments and resources, the most profound was to forests with timber that could be extracted and traded to Europeans. If, by 1840, the rangatira of the Bay of Islands were concerned about the loss of their whenua, the sudden depletion of their timber resource would have been a major element of it. Forests and timber were such a major feature of the trade in resources in the pre-Treaty period, that it is highly likely that there was such concern, and that that may have influenced the term 'forests' being included in the matters that the treaty's Second Article that guaranteed rangatira 'full, exclusive and undisturbed possession'.

⁶⁷ Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*, Cambridge, 1986.

Part II: The Timber Resource

...any quantity of masts and ship timber for the use of our fleets ...grows close to the water's edge, is of size and quality superior to any hitherto known, and may be obtained without difficulty.'⁶⁸

...on the banks of the river Cowa-Cowa which branches off the Wycaddy...a profusion of kaikaterre [kahikatea] spars, of the largest dimensions in use for naval purposes, growing close to the water's edge.⁶⁹

...they see the spars, which constitute their main form of barter, diminishing rapidly in the aftermath of the destruction of stands of timber along the river banks and near the sea where they can no longer transport them without considerable difficulty...⁷⁰

1760s and 1770s

The most profound of the changes that Europeans brought to the first whenua they entered occurred in the forests of the Bay of Islands. Joel Polack observed in 1840 in *Manners and Customs of the New Zealanders* that 'of late years, about the northern part of the country...the spars nearest to the water-side have been expended.'⁷¹ He noted it was James Cook who first called attention to 'the value of the timber of the country'⁷². Late in November, 1769 Cook 'resolved to bear away for a bay which we had Passd' and, turning his barque *Endeavour* towards a land that 'seemed fertile...came to anchor in a most spacious and well shelterd harbour'. Cook called the area the Bay of Islands, 'on account of the Great Number which line its shores, and...help to form several safe and Commodious Harbours, wherein is room and Depth of Water for any number of Shipping'.⁷³ Banks considered this 'indeed a most surprizing place'.⁷⁴ Along with Queen Charlotte Sound, the Bay of Islands was as good a harbour 'as any seaman need

⁶⁸ Lord Sydney, commenting on the role the Bay of Islands would play in the establishment of a colony in New South Wales, in 'Letter from Lord Sydney to the British Treasury together with The Heads Of A Plan', 1786, *Historical Records of New South Wales*, Vol. 1, Pt. II, Sydney, 1982.

⁶⁹ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence*.

⁷⁰ Cyrille Pierre Théodore Laplace, *Voyage Around the World on the Corvette La Favorite* [1991 ed.], commenting on Bay of Islands Maori.

⁷¹ Polack, *Manners and Customs*.

⁷² Polack, *New Zealand*, vol II, p. 388.

⁷³ J C Beaglehole (ed.), *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery: The voyage of the Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780*, Pt. 1-2, Cambridge, 1967.

⁷⁴ Joseph Banks, *The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks, 1768-1771*, December 1769.

desire to come into, either for good anchorage or convenience of Wooding and watering'.⁷⁵

Like in most other countries, said Banks, the Bay's outer open coast had little vegetation cover; 'but within that the hills are covered with thick woods quite to the top, and every Valley produces a rivulet of Water'⁷⁶. The Bay of Islands was far from a wild, unpeopled place: 'Every where round us we could see large Indian towns, houses and cultivations: we had certainly seen no place near so populous as this one was'.⁷⁷ It was these qualities that had Cook proposing, as he departed New Zealand waters:

Should it ever become an object of settling this Country the best place for the first fixing of a Colony would be either in the River Thames or the Bay of Islands, for at either of these places they would have the advantage of a good harbour and by means of the former an easy communication would be had and any settlements might be extended into the inland parts of the Country, for at a very little trouble and expense small vessels might be built in the River proper for the navigating thereof...So far as I have been able to judge of the genius of these people it doth not appear to me to be at all difficult for Strangers to form a settlement in this Country.

Two and a half years later, an event took place in the Bay of Islands that suggested that strangers might find forming a settlement difficult indeed. In France, at least, the death of the explorer Marion du Fresne strengthened the view that New Zealand was inhabited by dangerous indigenes and did not warrant an attempt at colonisation.

It was to Marion, said Dumont D'Urville in 1827, that Bay of Islands chiefs so 'emphatically' said they 'owe the pigs, onions, Swedes, cabbages, and turnips that they possess today'.⁷⁸ Marion's second-in-command, Julien Crozet, indicated that it was no accidental dispersal: 'I planted stones and pips wherever I went, in the plains, in the glens, on the slopes, and even on the mountains; I also sowed everywhere a few of the different varieties of grain, and most of the officers did

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Banks, *Endeavour Journal*, Vol II, p. 3.

⁷⁷ Banks *Endeavour Journal*, Vol I, p.442.

⁷⁸ Dumont D'Urville, *New Zealand, 1826-1827* (Olive Wright, ed.), Wellington, 1950, p. 198.

the same. In Crozet's brief garden on the island, Moturoa, at least, 'everything succeeded admirably'.⁷⁹

As M Gaimard, D'Urville's companion on the trip to see Taumarere's kahikatea observed, the new biota in Bay of Islands whenua were not the only reason 'the New Zealanders who live on the banks of the river Kawa-Kawa called us "*Marions*" too'.⁸⁰ Marion's expedition had also established in the minds of Bay of Islands tangata whenua that what Europeans wanted most was tall timber for their ships. But the appropriate trees were far from prolific, and needed Maori help to find them; and in addition, with the Europeans' interest came weaponry and utu of kinds unprecedented.

Visiting Haumi Beach in 1841, admiring the ti kouka tree under which 'the unfortunate Capt. Marion's body was cooked', the botanist Joseph Hooker was told that Marion was killed 'owing to the French cutting wood on a Tabooed place',⁸¹ across the Bay at Manawaora. Contemporary Maori evidence cited by Anne Salmond in *Two Worlds* suggests that it was Marion's disregard of Manawaora's Te Hikutu reproach for fishing in tapu waters that led to his death. Whatever the cause, it was the Bay of Islands possession of fine timber that had the French staying as long as they did, and acting as though its whenua was their own.

Entering the Bay of Islands in 1772 with ships whose masts had been ruined in the South Indian Ocean, Marion had begun making 'necessary arrangements for anchoring as soon as possible at a land where we imagined we would find everything we needed for the repair of our vessels and the replenishing of water supplies'.⁸² As one of his captains, Le Jar du Clesmeur, wrote 'Our vessels now in a safe haven, and sheltered from every wind, our first thought was to refit them...My ship had only her masts injured. For the new masts I required I went all up and down the coast searching for suitable timber from which to make them'.⁸³

⁷⁹ Quoted by W R B Oliver, 'Presidential Address', *Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute*, 82, 1955, p. 829.

⁸⁰ Olive Wright, *The Voyage of the Astrolabe-1840*, 1955, p. 198.

⁸¹ Transcript of J D Hooker's diary while Hooker was in New Zealand waters, Aug–Nov 1841, 88-103-1/09, ATL. Hooker refers to people at Haumi telling him of the recollections of 'an old man was lately alive and known to the inhabitants, who was present at the time of the murder'.

⁸² Ambroise-Bernard-Marie le Jar du Clesmeur, 'Historical Journal', in *Extracts from Journals Relating to the Visit to New Zealand in May-July 1772 of the French Ships 'Mascarin' and 'Marquis de Castries' Under the Command of M.-J. Marion du Fresne*, Wellington, 1985.

⁸³ Le Jar du Clesmeur's Journal, as cited in 'Records Relating to Marion's Voyage', in Robert McNab (ed.), *Historical Records of New Zealand*, Vol 1, pp. 348–481.

Finally, on 23 May, as du Clesmeur recorded, 'after a lot of difficulty, some natives who had been made to understand what we wanted took us to a big cove about a league and a half [some 7 km] from our vessels where we found the finest timber. I do not exaggerate when I say that I saw trees more than 90 feet tall, without branches or knots.'⁸⁴ Paul Chevillard de Montesson described the find as 'a fairly large forest where there was timber of a much greater size than was required to remast the *Castries*':

Although these trees were only a league and a half from the sea shore, access was impeded by three mountains and a fairly extensive marsh which made the transport of the masts very difficult. Mr Marion nevertheless decided to send three quarters of the crew of his two vessels with the tools required for making the masts and the equipment for transporting them to the water's edge.⁸⁵

The big cove with the timber was Manawaora Bay. Marion ordered Du Clesmeur to set up a masting camp there:

...on the 28th May I moved there with the greater part of my crew, some men from Mr Marion's vessel and a detachment of 8 soldiers to protect our workers. It took a full two days to set up this camp which would have to shelter us from the rigours of winter for at least a month.⁸⁶

By the time the French found the timber they needed, they had been anchored in the Bay for a month; time enough for local women to begin to show symptoms of venereal disease, and for thefts and reprisals, quarrels and misunderstandings and pressure on local resources. The masting camp itself was near a bay abounding with kaimoana and birds, a fact of which the fishers and hunters in the French expedition, 'seeing on the mudlands around this little gulf a great many ducks and teal'⁸⁷, took immediate advantage, not least Marion himself.

Le Jar du Clesmeur said how the French at the masting camp 'led the gentlest, happiest life that one could hope for among savage peoples. They traded their fish and their game with us with the greatest good faith'. But the sudden

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Paul Chevillard de Montesson, in du Clesmeur, *Extracts from Journals Relating to the Visit to New Zealand*.

⁸⁶ Du Clesmeur, 'Historical Journal', in *Extracts from Journals Relating to the Visit to New Zealand*.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

presence of an extra 200 or so people in the Bay, with nets and guns, going their own way but with no sign of going away, must have provoked disquiet and dissension amongst Manawaora's Te Hikutū and Ngati Pou.⁸⁸

At the time of du Fresne's expedition, the cove near the masting camp in which Marion and his men hunted and fished was immensely tapu, as a consequence of the drowned bodies of some local Te Hikutu people having been washed up there. According to a contemporary tangata whenua account, when the French were angrily scolded and had their gifts returned by Ngati Pou (who feared an attack by Te Hikutū for defiance of tapu), 'the foreigners took no notice, and persisted in drawing their nets on the beach':

The foreigners violated the tapu of Manawaora by fishing there and eating those fish; it was this that made the desecration of the tapu such a grave offence.⁸⁹

The outcome was that Marion never left the Bay of Islands. His death led to an eruption of retributive violence from his surviving compatriots of a kind unprecedented and never forgotten, seeding a link between Bay of Islands timber and the forceful power of muskets to which, the French had observed, 'they gave the name of Tapu'.⁹⁰

1780s and 1790s

Seventeen years after James Cook imagined a colony in one of northern New Zealand's wooded harbours, the Lords Commissioners of England's Treasury were told of their great value to the first scheme for a southern colony that was taking shape, one in which Joseph Banks was a considerable influence: the 1786 *Heads of a Plan for Effectively Disposing of Convicts, and Rendering their Transportation Reciprocally Beneficial to Both Themselves and to The State, by the Establishment of a Colony in New South Wales*. As well as 'the considerable advantage that would arise from the cultivation of the New Zealand flax plant in the new intended settlement', the plan proposed that to British presence in the South Pacific of the kind that the Botany Bay penal colony would enable:

⁸⁸ This interpretation is taken from Anne Salmond, *Two Worlds: First Meetings between Maori and Europeans*, Auckland, 1991, pp. 386-7.

⁸⁹ John White, 'The First Pakehas to Visit the Bay of Islands', in *Te Ao Hou*, 51, June 1965.

⁹⁰ Du Clesmeur observed, regarding the Marion du Fresne expedition's first encounter with Bay of Islands Maori, on 3 May, 1772: 'the name of Tapu which they gave our muskets persuaded us that they had already seen Europeans on their coasts'.

...the possibility of procuring from New Zealand any quantity of masts and ship timber for the use of our fleets in India, as the distance between the two countrys is not greater than between Great Britain and America. It grows close to the water's edge, is of size and quality superior to any hitherto known, and may be obtained without difficulty.⁹¹

Joseph Banks' regard for New Zealand's Bay of Islands and River Thames had been available to Europeans entering the new world of the southern Pacific almost immediately after the 1769-1770 *Endeavour* voyage, in the form of John Hawkesworth's 1773 *Account of the Voyages...for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere*. Repeatedly reprinted and re-edited, it was soon an essential item in the library of anyone with notions of colonies or missions in the new-found hemisphere, and indispensable to any sailing master. It made New Zealand *the* place in 'the South Seas' for spar timber.

Cook's and Banks' words led the earliest known ships to seek New Zealand spars to the Waihou, in Hauraki, the area that Cook had named from England's Thames, beginning in 1794 with the *Fancy* from Port Jackson, whose master went directly to where he knew Cook had seen fine stands of trees close to water. This visit was followed by the two ships *Hunter* in 1798 and 1799, and the *Plumier* and *Royal Admiral* in 1801.⁹²

1800–1814

In the first book on New Zealand, John Savage's 1807 *Account of New Zealand*, the Bay of Islands is said to be 'of the greatest importance to all persons navigating those seas, both from the excellence of the harbour, and the abundant and reasonable refreshment it affords':

The country in the immediate vicinity of the bay is almost destitute of wood, though there are immense forests at fifteen or twenty miles distance...The timber of which we have the most knowledge at present is the fir, which grows here to an amazing height, and of such dimensions, as to admit of being formed into a canoe capable of containing thirty persons,

⁹¹ Enclosure in Lord Sydney to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, 18 Aug 1786, in McNab, *Historical Records of New Zealand*, vol 1., pp.54-5.

⁹² For detailed accounts of spar-trading in the Waihou 1794–1801, see Geoff Park, *Nga Uruora: The Groves of Life*, Chapter 1, Wellington, 1995.

or in other words, five or six feet in diameter...the timber and flax produced here may at some future time be found highly valuable.⁹³

The first known spar trading in the Bay of Islands was in 1806 when the colonial armed tender *Lady Nelson* from Port Jackson, New South Wales, loaded seven 'very fine spars', some of which the Governor, Phillip Gidley King took to England for testing.⁹⁴ The ship had returned the chief Te Pahi to the Bay, along with George Bruce, the pardoned convict and marine surveyor who would soon marry his daughter; both of whom were to play significant roles in the budding trade in Bay of Islands timber.

It was most probably as a result of the *Lady Nelson's* voyage that Bay of Islands spars featured in the first-known report on Australian timbers after the establishment of the Port Jackson penal colony. Reporting to England's Commissioners of the Board of Revision in 1807, ex-Governor King said that, while he had never landed at New Zealand, he had:

...always understood that very finer masting of pine, and wood fit for planking, abounds throughout and is easily procured – which the good terms we are on with Tip-a-he [Te Pahi], Chief of the Bay of Islands, would greatly facilitate the acquiring of any quantity.

As with New Zealand's other great resource, 'the hemp of that country' (ie. flax, harakeke), King reported that 'much more satisfactory intelligence may be readily obtained from masters of southern whalers, who have constantly refreshed at New Zealand'.⁹⁵

King's reporting to the Commissioners of the Board of Revision occurred in the same year that the Treaty of Tilsit bound Tsar Alexander of Russia to close Russian ports to British traders and ban Russian trade with the United Kingdom, in support of Napoleon's attempts to blockade England. This halted Britain's importing of vital supplies of Riga hemp and spars for her navy. The latter sent British naval purveyors looking for alternative reliable sources. Merchants in England, New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land offered sample cargoes from New Zealand. At the same time, the fast-growing Australian penal colonies, and

⁹³ John Savage, *Some Account of New Zealand...*, London, 1807.

⁹⁴ Logs of the *Lady Nelson*, Admiralty, London: Captain's Logs 666, in Robert McNab Papers, Ms 47, folder 49, ATL.

⁹⁵ Philip Gidley King to Commissioners of the Board of Revision, McNab, *Historical Records of New Zealand*, vol 1, pp. 286-7.

the surge of shipbuilding which accompanied it, created new demands for spars and timber, for which traders turned to New Zealand.

The 'Chief of the Bay of Islands', Te Pahi, who Phillip King said would facilitate procurement of any quantity of timber, was well known to him as a result of Te Pahi's visit to New South Wales in 1805, the first influential rangatira to do so. King hosted Te Pahi and his sons at Government House, and spared no effort to convince him of the benefits of an association with Europeans. It was also as a result of the Rev. Samuel Marsden meeting Te Pahi on this visit, that he began to plan the establishment of a Church Missionary Society mission in the Bay of Islands under Te Pahi's protection at Te Puna, a safe anchorage already frequented by NSW whaling ships.

Te Pahi was, by 1805, one of the senior rangatira of the north-western Bay of Islands, and a descendant of both the ancient ancestral Ngati Awa, the original people of the area, and of their Nga Puhi conquerors, a combination which gave him great mana in the Bay of Islands. Governor King's reference to Te Pahi was with the prospect that the Bay of Islands abounded in timber, a resource which, if Te Pahi could not provide sufficient from his own forests, he could greatly facilitate the acquiring of any quantity from elsewhere.

The reality was that Te Pahi's whenua did not contain timber of the kind ship-masters and naval purveyors sought. When the European interest in spar timber began in the early 1800s, the only 'Spar District' in the Bay of Islands was in the south-west, in the whenua of the Taumarere chiefs Tupou and Tara, on the swampy river-flats of the Kawa Kawa River. There is evidence, from an spar-getting venture, in 1809, of considerable rivalry between Te Pahi and the Taumarere chiefs⁹⁶; a rivalry which is believed may have been behind his death, two years later, in retribution for the burning of spar ship the *Boyd* in Whangaroa Harbour.

The *Lady Nelson*, which returned Te Pahi and his sons from Sydney in early 1806, brought fruit trees, pigs, fowls and goods from Marsden and Governor King, together with a prefabricated house that was erected before the ship departed. But the *Lady Nelson's* log indicates some difficulties with Te Pahi once the ship was in the Bay. On 5th April, '3 chiefs from the Island of Titteranee, friends of Tippahee', came alongside. They were still on board a week later, when:

⁹⁶ Alexander Berry, *Reminiscences*, Sydney, 1912, for account of the *City of Edinburgh* in the Bay of Islands.

...Tippahee 2 or 3 times attempted to raise a disturbance in the vessel, lifted up weapons against some of the men whilst putting their orders into force. At noon Tippahee became very mutinous. I have understood from an Otasceitan [Tahitian] on board he told one of the chiefs to go on shore and bring his men to attack the vessel.⁹⁷

The following week, the *Lady Nelson's* captain:

...went with the boat to examine a deep bay to the SW...Found at the bottom of the Bay a river to run SSE and NNW about 3 miles, and one from the WSW to WNW. There is about 4 fathoms water, keeping the starboard shore on board, but after the first Reach, the River runs flat and three or four leagues on the larboard shore of the River. It is not safe for any vessel drawing more than 12 feet to attempt entering – the tide runs out about 2 knots and flows about 8 or 10 feet.⁹⁸

The two rivers at the bottom of the deep bay were obviously the Waikare and the Kawa Kawa, and there is no direct reference to spars being obtained from either area or to transaction with any local chief. But a week later, after sending Te Pahi's house and goods ashore, the *Lady Nelson's* captain said he had 'got on board 7 spars from the chief', and that the next day, they 'stow'd and lash'd the spars...getting ready for sea'.⁹⁹

The *Lady Nelson* was followed the following year, 1807, by the *General Wellesley*, which took Bay of Islands spars to Penang and Calcutta. An itinerant on board the *General Wellesley*, Edward Robarts, observed how a few days after they arrived in the Bay, George Bruce came on board, 'his face being [so] tattowd all over, he might pass for a native'.¹⁰⁰

Bruce had been in the Bay of Islands for a year, under Te Pahi's protection, and as well as wedding his daughter, Atahoe, had become a go-between for the spar-timber trade with the 'Spar District' chiefs. Asked by the *General Wellesley's* captain if he could procure any quantity of spars that would make masts for a ship, Bruce said he could get the ship loaded: 'He asked the Capt if he had any iron to make axes...The Forge was got up and next day several axes was made

⁹⁷ Log of the *Lady Nelson*, ATL.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Greg Denning (ed.), *The Marquesan Journal of Edward Robarts, 1797–1824*, Canberra, 1974, pp.182-9.

and given to Bruce'¹⁰¹, who took them to what was evidently the Kawa Kawa River:

He went in the Boat up the river and sent down some fine spars. Capt D was well pleased, and from that time two Boats was employd towing spars until the ship was loaded. I must confess that Bruce behaved himself well, for he seldom came down to the Ship, but remained up the river with the natives, cutting, clearing, and draging the spars into the water ready for the Boats. The ships crew had no trouble, only to fetch the spars and get them on Board.¹⁰²

If the river was indeed the Kawa Kawa, Robarts' description is evidence that obtaining spar timber from its chiefs in 1807 was a hazardous prospect, and that in Bruce's negotiating and trading for spars, he achieved what the men of the *General Wellesley* could not. Bruce, he said:

...most certainly deserved the greatest prais for procureing the spars, for without him we could never have got a cargo. Something would have happend between the Ships crew and the natives, as we had our plain proof of their treachery.¹⁰³

Tribal rivalries between Te Pahi and the Kawa Kawa chiefs, Tupe and Tara, may have had much to do with it. There is some evidence in this regard, in Alexander Berry's account of the spar trade, two years later, in 1809, when he sought to load the *City of Edinburgh*. On the ship's arrival at the Bay of Islands, she anchored at 'Tippuna, the residence of Tippahee', to deliver 'a son of Tippahee – a young man of the name of Motara'.¹⁰⁴

Captain Berry had the same hope as Governor King of 'Tippahee – the chief whom I expected to be able to provide me with spars'. He wrote how, when he met Te Pahi, he 'seemed friendly, but I found there were no spars in his district, and ascertained that such as I wanted could only be procured in an adjoining district from a chief called Tupé [Tupou]...who lived at some considerable distance'.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Berry, *Reminiscences*, p. 31.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

The Bay of Islands spar timber supply lay not where Te Pahi could lay claim, but in the hands of Ngati Manu and Ngati Hine. The eastern shore of the Bay, from about Kororareka southward and encompassing the Waikare Inlet and hills behind, was principally occupied by Ngati Manu and its affiliates. They formed part of a confederation that recognised the ascendancy of the *ariki* Tara, who moved mostly between Kororareka and Kawakawa, and who held the keys to 'the spar district'. The other principal components of this powerful clan were Ngati Hine, who occupied a tract stretching southward from the Kawakawa valley, and the Taiamai clans, whose coastal holdings occupied the southern shore of Te Kerikeri inlet from Okura seaward.¹⁰⁶

Berry's intelligence on Bay of Islands' timber would suggest that it was from the Kawa Kawa River kahikatea forests of Tara's brother chief Tupou that the *Lady Nelson* and the *General Wellesley* had obtained spars in 1806 and 1807. He thus immediately went to 'Kowa Kowa – the residence of Tupé':

The natives crowded around me in the most friendly manner; and when I asked for Tupé, a venerable old chief, blind in one eye, advanced towards the boat; the other natives making way for him. He seized me by the collar with both hands, and after the manner of his people, greeted me by joining his nose to mine...I asked if he was Tupé. He said "No, I am Tara. Tupé will be here directly..."¹⁰⁷

When Tupou eventually arrived, Berry told him that he wanted spars for his ship and asked him if he could supply them. Tupou agreed and accompanied Berry back to Te Puna. His behaviour with Berry's fowling piece on the trip, seizing and discharging it 'to show that he was well acquainted with the use of firearms', suggests that he had already been selling his trees for muskets and powder.

The following day Tupou steered the *City of Edinburgh* into Kororareka and then conducted Berry and party:

...in a boat to the spar district, which was on the banks of a creek, several miles beyond Kowa Kowa. There I found a large quantity of old dry spars in the forest. These I launched into the river, and brought them down in a raft, and made arrangements for new spars...¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Fergus Clunie, 'Kerikeri, The Untold Story', draft research paper for the Kororipo-Kerikeri Basin Sustainable Development Plan, 2005.

¹⁰⁷ Berry, *Reminiscences*, p. 31.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Deciding to repair a leak in the *City of Edinburgh* at Kororareka, Berry had the old spars from the Kawa Kawa river forest converted into stages for the men to work on. When he informed Tupou and Tara of what he proposed, 'they erected a very comfortable cottage for my residence on the shore'. An incident soon after revealed not only that the Kawa Kawa chiefs had already acquired muskets, most likely in exchange for their river's timber, but also to pursue what Berry termed the 'great jealousy there was between the tribes':

Tupé informed me that he had heard a report that a fleet of canoes intended to attack my camp at Kororarika, and afterwards to take the ship; but he assured me that he and his tribe would assist me in repelling the attack...At daybreak Tupé came into the hut while I was still in bed and took away his muskets...He said he was going away to his house at Kowa Kowa...

Not long after the chief had left, Berry's Bengal servant came into the room and said 'coolly and quietly' that there was 'a fleet of canoes coming around the point to attack us'.

The attacking canoes, from Te Pahi's base at Te Puna and led by his Ngati Rahiri confederate Waraki, tried repeatedly to seize the *City of Edinburgh*. Berry's men repulsed them with muskets, and towed the abandoned canoes ashore, to the admiration of those who watched:

...after all the enemy had disappeared, one of the Maoris – a grim old warrior – rose and addressed me thus:- "You have conquered Waraki." Waraki was the commander of the fleet of canoes. He was the chief of "Waitangi", *Anglice*, the Waterfall. I had never seen this chief. But Metatau, the native I had brought from Sydney, was in command of some of the canoes belonging to Tippuna.¹⁰⁹

The tension between Bay of Islands tribes in the early 1800s was evident some days later when Berry went over to Waitangi for duck-shooting. The landscape had 'neither houses nor cultivation nor any signs of inhabitants, and was...wholly unencumbered with trees', but Berry's guide Taranui told him that it was too dangerous a place to walk in, and refused to follow him along the river bank.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

His ship repaired, and promising Tupou and Tara he would return for more spars, Berry left for Sydney soon after, the two chiefs accompanying the *City of Edinburgh* to the heads. He returned late in 1809, immediately prior to the burning of the *Boyd* in Whangaroa Harbour. He actually attempted to take the *City of Edinburgh* into Whangaroa to get spars, 'on account of the favourable account which Ceronie had given me of that port'¹¹⁰, but was prevented by winds from doing so.

Welcoming the ship back, Tupou and Tara promised Berry 'every assistance in their power for loading the ship with spars', Tupou piloting the *City of Edinburgh* some miles further up Taumarere 'to a more convenient place for loading her'. In procuring the spars, Berry said, 'everything succeeded in a way equal to my most sanguine wishes':

The chiefs, assisted by their people, cut down the spars, and barked and squared the larger ones for the sake of stowage, all hands assisting them to the water. They were always regularly paid for their work every Saturday night...

Despite the tribal jealousies of which Berry had seen ample examples, there was also evidence of what King had reported about the chief Te Pahi; that he could facilitate the acquiring of any quantity of Bay of Islands spars. While the *City of Edinburgh* was moored in Taumarere, Te Pahi came on board accompanying the captain of a whaler who was seeking to 'get some spars for his ship from Tupé'. As Berry said, 'Tippahee could see the defenceless state of the ship at this time, for nearly all the men were employed in the boats or in the bush'. The situation was still the same a fortnight later, when Berry saw a waka taua approaching, with Te Pahi's son Metatau in command. The *City of Edinburgh* ship's men repulsed it with muskets.¹¹¹

The *City of Edinburgh* was still loading Kawa Kawa spars some weeks later when, coming on deck one morning, Berry found Tara 'in earnest conversation with some strangers, whom I had never seen before':

¹¹⁰ Captain Ceronie had been in command of a ship belonging to Simeon Lord of Sydney, and in the course of the voyage, entered Whangaroa Harbour, where he was reportedly widely believed by Maori to have been an atua, and to have caused the epidemic after he dropped his watch into the harbour: Berry, *Reminiscences*, pp. 54, 97.

¹¹¹ Berry, *Reminiscences*, p. 31.

Tarra then told me that the natives of Whangaroa had taken a large ship – that they had killed and eaten all the crew, and possessed themselves of all the muskets and gunpowder in the ship – and that they were preparing to come and attack me also...“You,” said Tarra, “must cease getting any more timber, and withdraw your people from the bush. Get them all on board and leave New Zealand immediately. Until you are able to go, I and Tupé and our men will stay on board and protect the ship”.¹¹²

Berry initially did not believe the report, and ‘continued getting spars until the ship was loaded’. But every day more reports of the events at Whangaroa kept coming in Berry determined to go there as soon as the Kawa Kawa spars were loaded. It was Berry’s account of the burning of the *Boyd* that made the incident so infamous, and that was instrumental in Te Pahi being wrongly blamed for it. Late the next month, on 26 January, 1810, the *City of Edinburgh* took its final departure from New Zealand, Berry having ‘heard from some ships I was in great hopes that my cargo of spars would find a good market at the Cape of Good Hope, for they were then much wanted there for the British Navy’.¹¹³

The burning of the *Boyd* in Whangaroa in 1809 was perpetrated by the Whangaroa chief, Te Pahi. But as a consequence of whalers confusing his names with Te Pahi of Rangihoua, Te Pahi’s village was raided and Te Pahi, widely suspected for the massacre, killed.¹¹⁴ It happened as the Church Missionary Society’s Rev. Samuel Marsden was making plans for a Bay of Islands mission station under Te Pahi’s protection; plans that were delayed until 1814 under the inheritor of his mana.

From what Marsden heard, the massacre was the result of the people of Whangaroa being defrauded of their timber resource. Writing to the Church Missionary Society in London in May 1810, he related: ‘On Saturday last, a Vessel arrived from New Zealand with Spars; which brings a Confirmation of the Fate of the Boyd...It is said...that one of our Ships, which touched there for Supplies, had taken away the Natives’ Potatoes by force, without paying them, as well as Spars which the natives had assisted them to cut.’¹¹⁵ Two months later, he reported further:

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Richard S Hill, *Policing the Colonial Frontier*, Part One, Wellington, 1986, pp. 32-4.

¹¹⁵ Samuel Marsden to Rev Josiah Pratt, 3 May 1810, in *Marsden and the New Zealand Mission: Sixteen Letters*, edited by P Havard-Williams, 1961 [2006 ed.].

I was informed by a Person who had resided a long time in New Zealand, that a Ship on her way from Port Jackson to India had called to take in Spars and had agreed with one of the Chiefs to laden his Ship with them. When the Capn. had got all his Spars from the Chief he sailed away and never paid him any thing for the Timber...¹¹⁶

Marsden was concerned about the *Boyd*, and the way the timber trade in the vicinity of the Bay of Islands was developing, because the mission he was planning was going to be dependent on such factors. One of his earliest contacts with Bay of Islands Maori was with Ruatara, the young rangatira from Rangihoua whom he befriended on the convict vessel *Ann* in 1809, returning to Australia after a visit to England. Ruatara subsequently spent eight months with Marsden at Parramatta, establishing his own farm and conceiving a grand plan to introduce Christianity and agriculture to New Zealand. He then returned to the Bay of Islands and became the successor to the mana of Te Pahi, who had died soon after the attacks on Te Puna in revenge for the *Boyd* massacre.

During the voyage from England, Ruatara briefed Marsden on 'the names of the principal chief ...who govern the northern parts of New Zealand'¹¹⁷. The missionary learned in particular that:

Terra [Tara], Tuphoo [Tupou] are brother chiefs. Terra is blind of one eye. His district abounds with fine timber and is situated on the banks of a fresh water river, which makes it very convenient for him to supply ships with timber when they touch there.¹¹⁸

Two years later, when two 'Sons of Chiefs from New Zealand', Tui of Ngare Raumati, and Kawiti, priestly 'son' of Tara¹¹⁹, visited Ruatara at his Parramatta farm, Marsden learned that Whangaroa was not the only harbour whose rangatira were being robbed of their timber. Kawiti told Marsden that:

...the English treated the New Zealanders very bad. A Ship on her way to India from Port Jackson put into the Bay of Islands, within his Father's Dominions. The master agreed with Terra his Father to load his Vessel

¹¹⁶ Marsden to Pratt, 20 July, 1810, in Havard-Williams (ed.), *Marsden and the New Zealand Mission*.

¹¹⁷ From Ruatara, Marsden identified several groupings of chiefs.

¹¹⁸ Marsden reporting on his discussions with Ruatara en route to Sydney from England, in *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society, 1810-1812*, cited in John Rawson Elder (ed.), *Marsden's Lieutenants*, Dunedin, 1934, p.23.

¹¹⁹ Tui's and Kawiti's identities are taken from Clunie, 'Kerikeri'.

with Masts and Spars – Terra fulfilled his Contract, and treated the Captain and Crew well. When the Captain had got all his Masts and Spars on Board – he sailed without giving Terra so much as an Axe, for all his Labor, in cutting and bring[ing] the Timber to his Vessel – The young man remarked very pointedly upon the Fraud of the Captain; and told me if his Father had been in England and had been guilty of such a Crime he would have been put in Gaol...¹²⁰

In March 1814 after Marsden had purchased the *Active*, he sent Thomas Kendall and others to the Bay of Islands to consult about setting up a Church Missionary Society mission. The *Active* carried £35/8/0 worth of ‘muskets, etc.’ needed for defensive purposes. Her captain, Peter Dillon, was charged with paying particular attention to ‘King’ Ruatara’ at Te Puna, and also with cultivating Tara and Kawiti, who held sway over the Waikare and Kawakawa ‘spar district’, and Korokoro at Te Rawhiti. He was also instructed ‘to bring as much hemp as you possibly can, and such spars and timber as you may’.¹²¹

Marsden himself travelled to the Bay of Islands on the *Active*’s next voyage, preaching his famous Oihi Christmas Day sermon three days after landing at Ruatara’s place at Rangihoua. A charcoal forge was set up the next day to replenish the new mission’s stock of axes. But in the absence of locally available timber to fuel it, and to build the mission houses, Marsden crossed the Bay to ‘secure the friendship of the chief ‘Tarra’ whose district, contained ‘the Cowa-cowa.. the part of the island where timber is found in the greatest abundance’¹²². Marsden was accompanied to Kawakawa by Maui, a kinsman of Tara, and a resident of long-standing at Marsden’s Parramatta home.¹²³ As Marsden’s companion, John Liddiard Nicholas, wrote:

As it now became necessary for the missionaries to lose no time in building their houses, and as the timber lay at some distance to the south side of the Bay, we weighed anchor on the morning of the 26th, and proceeded towards that place with the intention of procuring a supply...

After sailing about five leagues, we anchored in a spacious cove, at the head of which a beautiful river, called by the natives Cowa-cowa,

¹²⁰ Marsden to Pratt, 20 Nov 1811, in Havard-Williams (ed.) *Marsden and the New Zealand Mission*.

¹²¹ Clunie, ‘Kerikeri’.

¹²² John Liddiard Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand, performed in the Years 1814 and 1815 in Company with the Rev Samuel Marsden*, London, Vol I, 1817.

¹²³ Clunie, ‘Kerikeri’.

discharges itself through as winding channel. On this river the timber is floated down from the interior, and grows on the banks of it in great abundance...Mr Marsden, Mr Kendall, and myself, got into the boat, to visit a chief of considerable power, who ruled over the district where we expected to get our cargo...[T]o cultivate his friendship was a measure that might be productive of solid advantages, and at all events was highly necessary...

We landed at the foot of a small village called Corroradikee, where we found this chief, whose name was Tarra, sitting on the ground, and looking, from his years, which were not less than seventy, and his easy and conciliating deportment, like some venerable patriarch in the midst of his people.¹²⁴

Tara readily agreed to supply the timber, and Marsden's party set out:

...without loss of time, in order to engage the natives to cut down as much timber as would be necessary for our purpose, and bring it to the usual conveyance of the vessel...

Having in our visit to Tarra's district secured the friendship of that chief, a most important measure, our next objective was to proceed up the Cowa-cowa...

We rowed to the head of the cove...to the small channel through which the Cowa-cowa discharges itself into the cove. We now entered the open river, and rowing up along its smooth surface for about ten miles, the scenery on either side was bold and attractive. On whatever part we turned our eyes a rich and romantic prospect invited our attention...

If the accounts given by the natives can be credited, this romantic stream might be sailed almost up to its source; but this I very much doubt, though timber comes down in rafts from remote parts of the interior...¹²⁵

The Kawa Kawa river country was the whenua of the Ngati Hine chief Te Koki:

¹²⁴ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage*, p. 220.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

The principal chief in this part was Tekokee [Te Koki] , to whom the district belonged, though he was in some degree tributary to Tarra...Like Tarra, he received us with manifest symptoms of pleasure and goodwill...The chief, before we apprised him of the object of our visit, was already aware of it, having learned by some means that we wanted to buy timber of him; and addressing us on the subject, he told us there was *nuee nuee racow* (plenty of wood) and promised very willingly to shew us where we could be supplied...

Being accompanied by Tekokee, we re-entered the boat, and proceeded about two miles further up the river, till we came to where it divided itself into two branches.. [W]e walked along the banks through a thick grove...The timber in this grove is not large, nor could I observe any trees of the pine species, though there were several that appeared of an excellent quality...

Leaving this side of the river, we got into a canoe and crossed over to the opposite bank, where we entered a noble forest of pines, growing to a height of eighty and a hundred feet, before they branched out, and all of them as straight as if they had been shaped by nature, for no other purpose than to shew her regularity. There were none of them more than six or seven feet in circumference, and being close to the river, could be floated down without any great trouble or expense.

We now engaged with Tekokee to set all his people to work at cutting down the trees, and giving him a large English axe, a present with which he was much gratified, we returned with him to his village, and thence repaired back again to the ship.¹²⁶

On Marsden's return to the *Active*, the Ngati Maru chief Pomare came on board, offering timber all the timber that was wanted:

This man, whose district lay at some distance off, was the person who had supplied the vessel when she was here before, with nearly all the timber she brought back, and was well known to the missionaries. They described him as very artful and covetous, but one who at the same time might be extremely useful. He appeared quite the man of business, all his ideas being completely absorbed in plans of procuring tokees and axes. A

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

short time before we met him he had changed his name, calling himself Pomaree merely because he heard that was the name of the great king of Otaheite. This chief offered to supply us with all the timber we should want, and was very anxious to be exclusively employed on the occasion.¹²⁷

Marsden wanted, however, to search the other spar district, Waikare Inlet, as well:

We went up this river about two miles, and found the land on both sides very marshy but level all the way. We landed at a short distance from a village called Wycaddee [Waikare], which belonged to Wiveeah [Wetere], a chief of considerable authority in this quarter, but subordinate to old Tarra...

The chief was not home, but 'his relations...offering to shew us some large forests of excellent timber, we accompanied them to the place where they stood':

The principal forests mentioned by our conductors, lay at a short distance from this village, where the pines were of an amazing height, and the timber extremely valuable. The facility of floating down the trees was here very great, and the situation presented many advantages for a flourishing settlement.¹²⁸

A cargo of spars for the *Active's* return to Port Jackson was now Marsden's most pressing priority, and before long, Te Koki of Ngati Hine and Pomare of Nga Manu and were felling and towing logs to the mouth of the Kawakawa for loading.

1815–1820

The study revealed little evidence for the 1815–1820 period on Bay of Islands forestry or the timber trade. But as the period immediately preceding the musket taua, which had their beginnings in the Bay of Islands, it is important in the sense that during these years the rangatira began requiring muskets and powder in exchange for timber.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ Nicholas, *Narrative of a Voyage*, pp.240-1

The Church Missionary Society missionary Richard Davis complained in 1830 to his superiors in London that:

There are in this country at present a considerable number of Europeans who completely monopolize the Timber trade in the Bay of Islands, by purchasing the Timber from the Natives with Muskets and Powder, cutting it out, and selling it to the Shipping, &c : From those people we are obliged to purchase our timber or go without.¹²⁹

If the missionaries went into the woods and cut down timber for themselves, he added:

...the Natives make us pay very dear for it, which together with the loss of our time for Missionary work, makes the timber thus procured come doubly-dear. The Bay of Islands is but very thinly supplied with timber, this makes the natives very anxious to sell what little Timber they have to the best advantage.

But it was a trade that the CMS mission itself had been significant in initiating. The carpenter William Hall's amassing of spars and sawn timber for sale at Port Jackson, and to the Tahiti mission, caused acrimony in the Rangihoua settlement from its beginnings. Through Hall's enterprises muskets and gunpowder began increasingly dominating shipping trade, making it hard for any Europeans in the Bay of Islands to obtain food, goods or services without trafficking in them.

Samuel Marsden banned his missionaries from private trading in firearms as early as 1815. While all except William Hall had agreed to do so, some promptly yielded to temptation. By the end of 1817, with the chiefs of the spar districts eager to exchange their timber for muskets, and Maori sawyers keen to work in return for gunpowder, the mission was producing enough spars and sawn timber to both load the *Active* and supply the whalers.¹³⁰

Marsden had to again ban the traffic in powder and muskets, and dismiss two of his mission's settlers, on his second visit to New Zealand in 1819. During the visit he bought a 13,000 acre block of land from Hongi Hika and established a new settlement at Kerikeri. Not only was it was a better location for agriculture than

¹²⁹ Davis to Coates, 1 Sept., 1830, in 'Letters and Journals', Hocken Library.

¹³⁰ Clunie, 'Kerikeri', p.27.

the missionaries possessed, but more importantly it was closer to the ‘spar district’.

The Rev John Butler reported in his October 1819 journal: ‘The natives from Kawa Kawa brought fourteen logs of timber to sell, which we bought for axes, chisels, etc.’¹³¹ A few months later, he was complaining that:

...our timber is almost gone, and Mr Wm Hall is of opinion there will be a great difficulty in procuring a supply of this article for Kedee Kedee, as Kawa Kawa is thirty miles from this place, and the natives of Kawa Kawa are very saucy, and full of trade; and they will not look at us, except that we have a new musket in our hands. Mr Hall is of opinion that we shall never get a supply of timber until we have a team and timber carriage to fetch or timber from the Society’s wood.¹³²

The evidence concerning Bay of Islands forests and timber trade in the 1815–1820 period is largely confined to the accounts of the British naval supply ship the *Dromedary* that came to the Bay of Islands seeking spar timber early in 1820. The record of the ten months the *Dromedary* spent in the Bay of Islands, from February to November 1820, is found in a book by one of the military officers on board, Lieutenant Richard Cruise¹³³; the daily journal of another, Lieut. McRae¹³⁴; the journal of a seaman, William Jowett¹³⁵; and the log of a midshipman, Perceval Baskerville.¹³⁶ The *Dromedary* accounts provide one of the most informative records of the Bay’s spar timber resource and of the chiefs who controlled it in the pre-1840 period.

It was on the *Dromedary* that the Rev Samuel Marsden made his third call to the Bay of Islands. According to McRae’s account, as well James Shepherd (a new missionary) Marsden had:

¹³¹ John Butler, 21 Oct 1819 journal entry, in R J Barton (ed.), *Earliest New Zealand: The Journals and Correspondence of the Rev. John Butler*, Masterton, 1927.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months’ Residence*.

¹³⁴ ‘Notes by Lieut. McRae, during visit to New Zealand, on *HMS Dromedary*, 1820’: qMS-1172, ATL.

¹³⁵ Wm Jowett, Journal, on *Dromedary* at Bay of Islands, 1820: MS-Papers-4814, ATL: this is transcription by Elizabeth Marsden of the New Zealand portion of the journal, the original of which is held with MS-Papers-1141, ATL.

¹³⁶ ‘A Log of the Proceedings of HMS ‘Dromedary’, Richard Skinner Esq. Master Commander, commencing the 2nd Day of July 1819 and Ending the 31st day of 1821 kept by Perceval Baskerville, Midshipman.’, MSY-2983, ATL.

...under his charge ten New Zealanders who had resided with him for some time and were now returning to their own Country, amongst whom superior to the rest were Moihanga and Ripero – the former, son of Parakeckoo and the latter of Shonge [Hongi Hika] – Chiefs of consequence in the Bay of Islands'.¹³⁷ McRae also identified 'Tetoroo [Titore] and Eoe [Tui] – inferior Chiefs from the same place' with whom there was evidently considerable talk about spar timber during the *Dromedary's* voyage.¹³⁸

McRae's differentiating of Bay of Islands chiefs as 'superior' and 'inferior'¹³⁹ was part of what he described as:

...the result of observations made during...the frequent excursions I made and from associating with the natives and conforming with their habits more than any other European before me ever did or had it in his power to do I became possessed of a mass of information more certain and therefore more to be relied upon than could possibly be obtained in any other way.

The *Dromedary* was in the Bay of Islands at an early stage in the growth of the number of muskets, concentrated as this was in 1820 in the Bay itself. The ship's captain was under Admiralty instructions not to barter for timber with muskets, a fact that caused much grief on the *Dromedary* during its ten months in Tai Tokerau waters:

Had it been possible to extend the restrictions under which we were placed, before we sailed from England, of not issuing powder and muskets to the Natives¹⁴⁰, to the other ships that called at the island¹⁴¹, we should certainly have fared much better; but our attempt to regulate the trade the people were to receive from us, when they had another market to go to, merely served the whalers and inconvenience ourselves; while our men were compelled to live ten months on salt provisions, we had the mortification of seeing the crews of other ships refreshed with as much pork as they could consume.¹⁴²

¹³⁷ 'Notes by Lieut. McRae'.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ See Appendix for his list of chiefs in the Bay of Islands and vicinity, set out as written down by McRae.

¹⁴⁰ Cf Sadler on *HMS Buffalo* who came to the Bay of Islands in 1832 well stocked with armoury as the items of trade: see documentation in the Busby Papers.

¹⁴¹ This refers to the North Island, but especially the Bay of Islands.

¹⁴² Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, p. 142.

The circumstance caused disdain to be directed at the *Dromedary*:

Thus situated, the islanders, with their canoes filled with hogs, triumphantly passed us by, and remarked that King George's men were, with regard to their firearms, the stingiest they had ever met.¹⁴³

In the trade for spars, axes in the hundreds had to be handed over as some sort of compensation for the ban on muskets as exchange goods. Even so:

...our axes were held in little estimation. A single musket would have called forth more exertion from the natives than all the articles of barter we had on the ship. When George¹⁴⁴ received nearly one hundred axes for the spars we got from him, he asked with a sneer, what he was to do with them,¹⁴⁵ and of what use so many could be to him.¹⁴⁶

While muskets were not tradable by the men on the *Dromedary*, their significance was evident in the way 'the New Zealanders amused themselves in singing and dancing and cleaning their muskets...during the voyage'¹⁴⁷, and when the *Dromedary* anchored off Kororareka:

...several Canoes full of men, women and children...seeing their countrymen on board immediately commenced firing their muskets which compliment was returned...and during the continuance of the firing which lasted a considerable time, the noise was so great we could scarcely hear each other.¹⁴⁸

There was a similar circumstance when, a few days after the *Dromedary's* arrival, Te Morenga's great taua returned to the Bay of Islands from Tauranga.¹⁴⁹ William Jowett observed:

I Was over the River and see all the War Cannoos Coming from the River Thames...200 Prisoners the Bay of Islands Party Brought With them and

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Most likely referring to Tara ['George'] of Whangaroa: see McRae's 1820 List of Bay of Islands chiefs.

¹⁴⁵ Not least, perhaps, because the trees which the axes could fell were almost no more.

¹⁴⁶ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, p.142.

¹⁴⁷ 'Notes by Lieut. McRae', 27 Feb 1820.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ While McRae and Cruise both refer to the River Thames, S. Percy Smith, in *Maori Wars of the Nineteenth Century*, Christchurch, 1910, records the taua as returning from Tauranga.

they Kept them as Slaves and When the Git Short of Meat the Kill one of them and Eat them...A Grate Number of the Natives About the Settlement and they Had a Number of Mens Heads to Exchange For Axes or Powder...¹⁵⁰

A week before he had recorded:

When the Natives Go to War one Tribe Against the other all the Prisoners they Take they Keep them as Slaves and When one of their Cheafs Dies They Kill 10 of them and Roast them For a Feast and Rejoicement. But they only Eat their Legs and Thies and their Arms and Back Side they Do not Eat their Bodys and their Heads they Cut of and Cures them and Keep them to Exchange for Powder or a Knife or a pr. of Sissirs. But the Cheaf thing they Want is Muskets and Powder.¹⁵¹

The *Dromedary* reports refer specifically to four groupings of chiefs in particular 'spar districts' in the Bay of Islands and Whangaroa to which parties from the ship went to seeking timber. These are set out, below, principally from Cruise's account:

1. *Titore Takiri*

By the 1830s Titore was a major fighting chief in the Bay of Islands, and a significant force in the timber trade, trading spars (including with naval supply ships) for muskets to arm his military campaigns. In 1820 he was a passenger on the *Dromedary* along with the Rev Samuel Marsden, returning to the Bay of Islands via Sydney, from a trip to England for which he had departed in 1818.

It was Titore, telling the men of the *Dromedary* that the forests on his hapu's whenua at Waikare were for sale, that led to the expedition's first search for Bay of Islands spars. The morning after the *Dromedary's* arrival at the Bay of Islands, off Paroa:

Tetoro left us, and as we had promised to follow him in the afternoon, to see the timber he had so often spoken of during the voyage...Tetoro described his residence as on the banks of a river called the Wycaddy [Waikare].¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Jowett, 9 March 1820 journal entry.

¹⁵¹ Jowett, 2 March 1820 journal entry.

¹⁵² Entry of Feb 28, 1820: in Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*.

On their arrival, in the dark, at Titore's kainga, 'Tetoro pointed out the propriety of still continuing our excursion up the river, as the timber district was some miles from us'. Eventually they arrived at a village slightly inland that 'belonged to Wevere [Wetere] Tetoro's elder brother, and, of course, the greater chief'.¹⁵³

Cruise described the banks of the Waikare as 'in general, steep and richly wooded' with 'many villages upon them, in whose immediate neighbourhood were several small spots of cultivation'. The next day Titore took the *Dromedary* party on a 'long and fatiguing' walk to the forest whose timber he had offered them. But:

...no cowry trees, of the size that the *Dromedary* was instructed to bring home were to be found; and had they occurred in the woods that we examined, the distance was too great, and the ground too irregular for them to be conveyed to the banks of the Wycaddy...Tetoro seemed evidently grieved that the promises he had held out to us during the voyage, of furnishing the ships cargo, could not be realised by him, and he appeared low and dejected as we returned to the village, where we were met by the whole of Wevere's tribe.¹⁵⁴

Several weeks later:

We had a visit...from our old friend Tetoro; it was the first he had paid us; and he said he had felt so much ashamed of not having been able to realise the promises he had made during the passage from Port Jackson, of supplying the ship with timber, that he had not been able to prevail upon himself to come hear us.¹⁵⁵

Meanwhile the *Dromedary* men had found spars nearby in the Kawa Kawa spar district of the Ngati Hine chiefs Te Koki and Tara.

2. *Te Koki and Te Uru-ti*

The day after the fruitless search for spars in the Waikare district with Titore, the *Dromedary's* carpenter and some officers went 'to examine the timber on the

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Entry of Feb 29, 1820: in Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*.

¹⁵⁵ Entry of April 11 1820: in Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*.

banks of the river Cowa-Cowa [Kawakawa] which branches off the Wycaddy'. Hoping to find kauri, they:

...set off for the village of Cowa Cowa about 7 miles up the River of that name, which falls into the Whia Caddie, having been told that 5 years ago the missionary brig Active and a large Ship called "The City of Edinburgh" had got cargoes of timber at that place. On reaching the village, the Chief Tecokie¹⁵⁶ with almost all his people were absent, having gone on an expedition against another tribe leaving only their women and children behind.¹⁵⁷

In the absence of Te Koki and his people, the *Dromedary* party 'employed a native of Bengal a deserter from the City of Edinburgh who, marrying a New Zealand woman, had settled amongst them, to shew us the timber which was of a different kind to that we had seen at Whia Caddie' [Waikare].¹⁵⁸

Not far up from the confluence of the two tidal rivers, the *Dromedary* party saw:

...a profusion of kaikaterre [kahikatea] spars, of the largest dimensions in use for naval purposes, growing close to the water's edge; but they were as unsuccessful in their search for the cowry tree as they had been on the former day.¹⁵⁹

McRae's description of kahikatea reveals the authority that James Cook's accounts of New Zealand's timber harbours, from 50 years before, still had in naval circles:

It grew upon a flat swamp upon the banks of the river and was a species of Cypress bearing a small berry, by which we knew it to be similar to that which Captain Cook had seen at the river Thames and considered by him as fit for naval purposes. It is called Kaikatoria, and grew in considerable quantities on both sides of the river; it was suitable for our purpose as far as length and thickness went, but we were doubtful as to its durability, it having been reported that the timber taken at [to] the East Indies by the City of Edinburgh had not proved durable...¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ Called Te Koké in McRae's List of Chiefs.

¹⁵⁷ 'Notes by Lieut. McRae', 2 March, 1820.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ 'Notes by Lieut. McRae', 29 Feb, 1820.

¹⁶⁰ Notes by Lieut. McRae', 2 March, 1820.

Kahikatea, though, was not what the *Dromedary* men were looking for. By 1820, the British Navy's timber purveyors had learned that the Kawa Kawa kahikatea that Alexander Berry had taken to Penang and Malacca had not lasted as a naval timber.

However, after the *Dromedary* and its schooner had temporarily left the Bay of Islands, and searched up and down eastern Tai Tokerau for several weeks for signs of kauri:

...the carpenter and some of the gentlemen went up the river Cowa-Cowa in the morning to examine the kaikaterre that grows on its banks, and to ascertain if it were possible to purchase a cargo of it, in the event of the ship being disappointed in getting cowry elsewhere. The current was so rapid from the late rains, that the boat was with some difficulty rowed against it up to the swamp where the timber grew, and the inundation here prevented a near approach to the spars...¹⁶¹

By then, Te Koki had returned to his Kawa Kawa kainga, and hearing of the *Dromedary's* boat on his river, had come on board:

We had a visit from Tekokee, the proprietor of the timber on the banks of the Cowa-Cowa; he undertook to supply the ship with as many spars as she wanted, at the rate of one spar for each axe, and to float them down the river to her; remarking that although the swamp was impracticable for Europeans to work in, the New Zealanders did not care about it...He was accompanied by a person to whom the whalers had given the name King George [Te Uru-ti] or Kingi Hori; but this title accorded little with his very moderate pretensions as a chief of the Bay of Islands.¹⁶²

Te Koki's spars were not the kauri for which the *Dromedary* had come to the Bay of Islands, but its timber men decided to take them as the only available alternative: 'the Kaikaterre...growing to an immense height...in swampy ground...on the banks of rivers, and...easy to procure.'¹⁶³ A week after Te Koki's visit, Cruise wrote that:

¹⁶¹ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry for 8 April, 1820.

¹⁶² Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry for 9 April, 1820.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

The impossibility of securing a cargo of timber in the Bay of Islands was now obvious, and the carpenter had latterly formed a more favourable opinion of the kaikaterre. Of this kind of timber, as already has been observed, there was an abundance on the banks of the Cowa-Cowa, and a bargain having been concluded with Tekokee and King George that they should receive an axe for every spar they brought alongside, the carpenter was dispatched to mark the trees, and set the natives to work to fell them. On his reporting that he had completed these arrangements, it was determined to remove the ship as near as possible to the mouth of the Cowa-Cowa, and begin taking in her cargo.¹⁶⁴

Within a couple of days, Te Koki and Te Uru-ti had their people in a Kawa Kawa kahikatea swamp, if not the one in which the *Dromedary* men had seen the trees growing to such an immense height right beside the water, for that was another tribe's:

We visited the swamp where the natives were at work, and found Tekokee [Te Koki] and King George [Te Uru-ti] had cut down fourteen spars, but the opposite bank to that on which the carpenter had marked the trees he wanted. The reason Tekokee gave for this deviation from his instructions was, that he thought the spars he had cut were nearer the water; but as far as could be learned from others, a different tribe had disputed his claim to the produce of the right bank of the river. The wood was very extensive; and in a long shooting excursion we made through it, during which, many pigeons were killed, there was no prospect of its termination.¹⁶⁵

The *Dromedary's* carpenter and ten sailors had been 'some days up the Cowa-Cowa...assisting the natives in getting down the spars' when trouble erupted over payment with 'the chiefs who had contracted to supply them...Tekokee and King George':

For each tree was given an axe, which was supposed to be exclusively the property of the chiefs; and as a further remuneration, the carpenter was in the habit of distributing every second evening articles of minor value among the men and women who had worked under them. In the afternoon King George demanded the usual stipend for his people, which

¹⁶⁴ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry for 18 April, 1820.

¹⁶⁵ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry for 20 April, 1820.

the carpenter refused to give, telling him that the day's work had not been completed, but that they should receive it at sunset; upon this King George grew excessively insolent, and in a few minutes surrounded the carpenter's tent with about 100 persons, threatening to kill a native of Bengal who acted as interpreter to the carpenter.¹⁶⁶

Cruise reported how 'during this affair Tekokee conducted himself extremely well, taking no part in the tumult'. Te Uru-ti later apologised for the disruption:

King George remarked that 'their only object was to get as much as they could from the white men'. Both he and Tekokee declared that they were amply paid, that they had no reason to be dissatisfied and that they would again resume their labours.¹⁶⁷

The day-to-day activity as the kahikatea spars were brought to the water and exchanged for freshly-made 'tokees', or axes, is evident in the *Dromedary* log for the six weeks its men were in the Kawa Kawa:

20th April...sent Boats to sound at the Entrance of the Wycaddie River...sent Schooner with Surveyor to the Cowa Cowa to cut Timber

21st ...sent a Boat up the Cowa Cowa

23rd...sent a Boat up the Cowa Cowa

24th...sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa with the Commander. Issued...Spirits to twelve Men Campd in the Wood in consequence of their being constantly wet.

25th Sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa with the Second Master to Superintend in getting Timber

26th Schooner returned from Cowa Cowa...Armourers making Tokees for the Chiefs

27th ...sent a boat to clear the River

¹⁶⁶ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry for 3 May, 1820.

¹⁶⁷ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry for 3 May, 1820.

29th ...sent a boat to bring Party from the Cowa Cowa

30th ...the Revd S Marsden performed Divine Service

1st May Master...sent a Party to the Cowa Cowa as before...Carpenters making Buoys for Stream

3rd ...sent a boat up the River with the Commander

4th ...sent two boats up the River for Spars...sent Launch to assist in towing Spars down. At 5 boats returned with two Spars

5th ...sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa...sent Launch to assist the Cutter in towing Spars down. Carpenters on shore trimming Spars. At 5 boats returned with two Spars, towed the same on Shore to trim.

6th ...sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa...Carpenters on shore trimming Spars. Armourers making Tokees to pay the Natives for assisting in the Wood...sent the first Cutter assist in towing Spars down Also Landed the Cattle. Recd. two Spars. Haul'd them upon Shore

7th. Carpenters on shore ending Spars. People hauling Spars up on shore

8th Master sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa to assist in getting the Spars afloat. Master sent Carpenter on shore to trim Spars. Armourers making Tokees to pay the Natives for assisting in the Wood...Boats returned from the River

9th Master sent Sent Carpenter on shore to trim Spars. A party on shore collecting Shells for making Lime.

10th At Sunset received one Spar from the River

11th. Master exercised Great Guns and small arms. Fired twenty four rounds of Grape and round shot and Fifty rounds of Musket Ball. Loaded the Guns with round Shot and exercised them. At Sunset UpBoats

12th Armourers making Tokees

13th ...sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa...At 3 Boat returned from the River, reporting the Natives would work no more

15th ...sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa with 10 Men as an increase of Party to assist in cutting the Timber in consequence of the Natives having deserted us – Carpenters siding Spars...Armourers at the Forge...

16th ...sent a boat up the River with the Commander. At 4 Commander returned from the Cowa Cowa...

17th : sent a boat up the River...At 3 boats returned from the River with two Spars Haul'd the same on Shore for trimming

18th At 5 sent Jolly Boat to Tippoonah [Ti Puna] for Mr Hall Missionary¹⁶⁸ to act as interpreter at the Cowa Cowa to enquire the reason for their not working. People on Shore hauling masts

19th At daylight sent two boats up the Cowa Cowa with Mr Hall...At Sunset boats returned with two Spars Haul'd the same on shore

20th At Sunset boats returned from the Cowa Cowa with Mr Hall

22nd ...sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa

23rd ...sent a party on shore to haul Spars up Carpenters employed siding...

24th Carpenters employed making Crabb to get the Timber out of the Wood

26th Sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa with Provisions

28th ...sent the Jolly Boat to Tippoonah to land the Carpenter in order to walk over to Wangaroa, accompanied by Mr Hall Missionary, to examine the Timber

¹⁶⁸ It was Hall who, as Cruise describes, had come on board the *Dromedary* on 14th April, with 'the celebrated George of Wangaroa'; the latter's statement that 'he had plenty of cowry, and that he would load the ship with it for axes', led that June to the *Dromedary* shifting from the Bay of Islands to Whangaroa to complete loading its cargo.

29th At Daylight sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa for Spars

30th Sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa with the Crabb...Hoisted in two Spars for Spare Top Masts...anchored in Paroa Bay...boat returned from the Cowa Cowa

31st Sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa for Spars...Sent Cutter up the River to meet the Spars...at 5 boat returned with one Spar

2nd June Sent a boat up the Cowa Cowa for Spars...The skiff came down from the River reporting that the Flood had oblig'd the People to leave their tents. The boat sent in the morning remain'd, in readiness to take them off in case of necessity.¹⁶⁹

While the *Dromedary's* timber-getting party was up the Kawa Kawa, the ship was visited by the Whangaroa chief Tara seeking to sell his kauri spars. Accompanied by Church Missionary Society missionaries, a party from the *Dromedary* went to Whangaroa and found the kauri they had been seeking. The word went upriver to Kawa Kawa, and on June 8th:

Tekokee [Te Koki] came on board...and offered to accompany the ship to Wangarooa, and give every assistance in getting in the cargo; as it was understood that he was on friendly terms with the people of that harbour, his proposal was accepted.¹⁷⁰

Within a week, 'four spars were taken on board, and the remaining fourteen (being the whole produce of our labours at the Cowa-Cowa) were sent to remain on King George's beach (at Kororareka) until the return of the ship from Wangarooa'.¹⁷¹

3. *Korokoro and Tuhi*

A few days after the *Dromedary* anchored in the Bay of Islands, in Paroa Bay, 'a native...came on board who...told us that he was the younger brother of Krokro [Korokoro] to whom the greater part of Paroa Bay belonged'. From him, the men of the *Dromedary* learned that 'the barter of powder and muskets, carried on by

¹⁶⁹ 'Log of the Proceedings of HMS 'Dromedary' ...'

¹⁷⁰ 'Log of the Proceedings of HMS 'Dromedary' ...'

¹⁷¹ 'Log of the Proceedings of HMS 'Dromedary' ...', entries of 12 and 13 June, 1820.

the whalers, had already distributed some hundred stand of arms among the inhabitants of this bay'.¹⁷²

Soon, after failing to find the kauri they most wanted near the water in the Bay of Islands, the *Dromedary* and its schooner *Prince Regent* departed from Paroa Bay on a month-long search along the coast for kauri. On return to Paroa, they had not been long at anchor:

...before Kokro came to congratulate us on our return; and he seemed highly pleased at the want of his success. He now, in conjunction with Tooi [Tuhi], made an offer for the first time to muster all his tribe, and cut down, and load the ship with any timber that grew in his district.¹⁷³

The next day, Korokoro and Tuhi took the *Dromedary* party into the bay where Marion du Fresne's expedition had established its masting camp in 1772, and Marion had been killed:

The carpenter having pointed out some trees, at no great distance from Mannawarra [Manawaora] Bay to Krokro, he undertook to bring them alongside, gathering all his people for that purpose; but from the ruggedness of the ground, and its swampy nature, little success could be entertained.¹⁷⁴

The following evening:

Krokro came on board, and announced the failure of his attempt to get a spar down to Mannawarra Bay: he said he had cut the tree, dragged it out of the wood, and rolled it down a hill, when it unfortunately got stuck in a swamp and defied all his exertions to get it out.¹⁷⁵

Early in the morning, two days later,

...the carpenter, boatswain and some sailors were sent on shore with purchase-blocks and tackle, to meet Krokro and his people, and assist them in getting the spar out of the mud. Krokro did not make his appearance until one p.m. and instead of 300 men that he promised to

¹⁷² Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry of 1 March, 1820.

¹⁷³ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry, 6 April, 1820.

¹⁷⁴ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry of 7 April, 1820.

¹⁷⁵ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry of 8 April, 1820.

bring, he was only attended by seven. After leading the Europeans from one place to another, under the pretence of not knowing where the spar was, they at length ascertained that it had never been cut, and that the whole story was a fabrication.¹⁷⁶

Over a week later:

...two boats with several men were sent on shore to assist Krokro in getting down some cowry spars, that he said he had cut. They returned in the afternoon with five, four of which were scarcely large enough to make masts for boats, and the fifth was destined for a top-gallant-yard for the *Dromedary*.

With this last act of deceit our intimacy with Krokro ceased. His influence in thus part of the bay was so great, that it must have been an object to him to detain us as long in it as he could. While at anchor in Parro [Paroa] he considered the ship as his; and it appeared his neighbours had not the power to trade with us without his permission: an indulgence he seemed almost entirely to withhold from the people of the Wycaddy [Waikare].¹⁷⁷

4. Tara ['George'] of Whangaroa

The *Dromedary* had to leave the Bay of Islands to get the kauri timber the British Navy most wanted. Soon after it was realised that the Bay was bereft of kauri spars, and felling of kahikatea was proceeding instead, the *Dromedary* was visited by a chief from Whangaroa, the harbour to the north where it was known (consequent upon the burning of the *Boyd* a decade before) that spar kauri grew close to the water.

He came with an intermediary who had been negotiating timber trading in the Bay of Islands, often for muskets, ever since the first Church Missionary Society settlement in 1815:

In the afternoon, Mr Hall, one of the missionaries, came on board accompanied by the celebrated George [Tara] of Wangarooa, who had come to the Bay of Islands the day before, attended by seventy of his tribe...Mr Hall had put it to George, that, by loading the *Dromedary*, he

¹⁷⁶ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry of 10 April, 1820.

¹⁷⁷ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry of 19 April, 1820.

might make some atonement for of his former enormities, and ultimately regain the forgiveness of the English...Though many years have elapsed since the destruction of the *Boyd*, the people of Wangarooa will for a long time view the approach of a ship to their harbour with terror and consternation...[George] said that he had plenty of cowry and that would load the ship with it for axes.

Tara was the brother of Te Puhi, the Whangarooa chief who had carried out the *Boyd* massacre in 1809, a fact of which the Kawa Kawa chiefs, Te Koki and Te Uru-ti, regularly cautioned the men of the *Dromedary* during the following month:

The people of the Bay of Islands having a suspicion that the *Dromedary* might ultimately go to Wangarooa, took every opportunity of pointing out to us the danger attendant upon a visit to that harbour. Almost daily reports were made of the plots laid for our destruction...[A]nother 'George'...told us that his namesake of Wangarooa had cut down two spars, which were drawn near the water, and several others which were left more inland, as a snare to induce our people to come on shore, that they might be dealt with in the same manner as the crew of the *Boyd*.¹⁷⁸

Almost a month after Tara had made his approach to the *Dromedary*, a joint missionary and naval party went to inspect his timber:

A message having been received from George of Wangarooa, that he had got several cowry spars cut down, the carpenter accompanied by Mr Marsden and one of the missionaries, set out in a whale-boat to make a further examination of this harbour...¹⁷⁹

Five days later, in the evening:

...the party returned from Wangarooa, and reported that George had treated them with marked civility. He had cut down, and got into the water, twenty trees, only one of which was sufficiently large; but the banks of the river were found to abound with kauri; and as the natives showed every disposition to assist the Europeans, the carpenter was of opinion that there could be no great difficulty in loading the ship.

¹⁷⁸ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry of 4 May, 1820.

¹⁷⁹ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry of 29 May, 1820.

As we have noted, kauri was the British navy's first choice over kahikatea.¹⁸⁰ Thus 'it was determined to abandon all further operations at the Cowa-Cowa, and sail as soon as possible to Wangarooa'.¹⁸¹ Leaving fourteen Kawa Kawa spars in the care of Te Koki at Kororareka, the *Dromedary* completed her cargo with Whangaroa kauri before sailing for Sydney.

While the Bay of Islands continued to be *the* New Zealand harbour for shipping, naval interest in the Bay of Islands as a place for spar timber had effectively collapsed.

1820–1840

Naval timber purveyors knew from 1820, then, that the Bay of Islands no longer contained the tall timber close to water for which it had become such an important harbour. But it was from the Bay that the timber resource of northern New Zealand – along with other trade – was governed. By 1830, trade in and out of the Bay of Islands had become so intense that there could be as many as 30 ships anchored, many of them seeking timber for trade or repair. Few of them, however, have left a record of what transpired regarding forests and timber, or of the trade with the rangatira from whom they obtained the resource who traded timber with them. Of the accounts tracked in the archival record, there are two main ones:

- The visit of the French naval corvette *La Favorite* which carried out a hydrographic survey of the Taumarere–Kawa Kawa River waterways in 1831; the expedition influenced the Bay of Islands chiefs' petitioning of King William to protect their whenua, particularly their timber lands.
- The successive visits of the British naval supply ship *HMS Buffalo* to obtain spars between 1833 and 1840; and British Resident Busby's role as intermediary in obtaining spar timber.

¹⁸⁰ In Cruise's words, the 'timber purveyor of the Coromandel having given cowry a decided preference to kaikaterre, and the carpenter of the *Dromedary* agreeing with him'.

¹⁸¹ Cruise, *Journal of a Ten Months' Residence in New Zealand*, entry of 3 June, 1820.

The timber factor in the petition to King William

On 5th October 1831, thirteen Tai Tokerau rangatira met at Kerikeri to sign a letter to England's King William IV advising him 'that the Tribe of Marian is at hand, coming to take away our land' and petitioning him to become their friend and guardian.¹⁸² The rangatira – Wharerahi, Rewa and Titore Takiri, who had authority at the Bay of Islands and Waimate; Patuone, Nene, Moetara, Matangi and Taonui of Hokianga; and Te Morenga, Te Ripi, Te Haara and Te Atuaheere from Oromahoe and Kaikohe¹⁸³ – were all from the 'Spar Districts' (as the British Navy called them) of the Bay of Islands and Hokianga.

There was, as Bay of Islands' historian Jack Lee observed, a 'degree of panic' in the petition's general tenor. It reflected apprehension by the rangatira considered the most influential in its signing, Rewa of Waimate, and the CMS missionary who orchestrated it, William Yate. Two weeks earlier they had returned together from Sydney with the rumour that a heavily armed French warship was on its way to the Bay of Islands to annex New Zealand, and to avenge the killing of Marion du Fresne and his men in 1772.¹⁸⁴

The corvette *La Favorite* dropped anchor in the Bay the day after the petition was signed. Its captain, Cyrille Pierre Théodore Laplace, expecting that his ship would be 'continuously besieged by visitors, whose restless spirit and propensity for theft make them very troublesome to navigators', was struck by how intimidated the Bay of Islanders were by the ship's presence. Few canoes came near it, and only chiefs ventured aboard. But more than *La Favorite's* guns and its large number of crew were the cause, as Laplace soon learned: 'the natives...were perturbed...by false rumours'¹⁸⁵ spread by CMS missionaries 'thinking our sojourn in the region to be of political ends' and 'insinuating...that I had come to take possession of the Bay of Islands and to avenge the death of Marion, assassinated by their ancestors towards the end of last century'.¹⁸⁶ Laplace discerned this with much bitterness, according to Joel Polack,

¹⁸² Bay of Islands' Chiefs to King William of England [*GBPP*, vol 3: 'Correspondence with the Secretary of State Relative to New Zealand, 1840']. The rangatira are listed, in order, as: 'No 1. Warerahi, Chief of Paroa; 2. Rewa, Chief of Waimate; 3. Patuone and 4. Nene, two brothers, Chiefs of Hokianga; 5. Kekeao, Chief of Ahuahu; 6. Titore, Chief of Kororarika; 7. Tamoranga, Chief of Taiamai; 8 . Ripe, Chief of Mapere; 9. Hara, Chief of Ohaiawai; 10. Atuaheere, Chief of Kaikohi; 11. Moetara, Chief of Pakanai; 12. Matangi, Chief of Waima; 13. Taunui, Chief of Hutakura.

¹⁸³ As identified in Jack Lee, *The Bay of Islands*, Auckland, 1983.

¹⁸⁴ Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*.

¹⁸⁵ Keith V Sinclair, *Laplace in New Zealand in 1831*, Waikanae, 1998, p.66.

¹⁸⁶ Sinclair, *Laplace*, p.42.

particularly when he learned that 'Rewa, a chief, and many other natives were told' that he had come to avenge Marion's death.¹⁸⁷

Apart from refreshing its exhausted crew, the actual purpose of *La Favorite's* sojourn in the Bay of Islands was to show the flag on French trade routes where it had been absent, and to ascertain whether the Bay presented a new opportunity for French commerce. In addition, as Laplace had been instructed to do before sailing from each port of call, *La Favorite* was to survey and map the Bay's hydrography. Weather delayed *La Favorite's* departure for Valparaiso until 11 October, frustrating Laplace 'because M Pâris had completed with his customary zeal the survey of the Kawa-kawa River'. Underlying Edmond-François Pâris' very detailed 'Hydrographic Description of the Kawakawa River, Bay of Islands', was the Bay's fast-growing international reputation in the Pacific timber trade and Laplace's belief that access to timber by French traders would soon become an imperative.

Immediately after the Bay of Islands and Hokianga chiefs signed their petition to King William, it became clear to the missionaries that *La Favorite* had no designs on New Zealand. But the petition was nonetheless forwarded to the authorities, and led eventually to James Busby's appointment as British Resident eighteen months later. In it, the chiefs called themselves a people without possessions: 'We have nothing but timber, flax, pork and potatoes, we sell these things however to your people, and then we see the property of Europeans'. Placing timber first reflected the distinct possibility that, in the minds of Tai Tokerau rangatira in 1831, this was their main resource. If so, his was not to be for long, at least in the Bay of Islands.¹⁸⁸

In 1833, Edward Markham observed how 'the Bay was prettier formerly as the Islands were covered with Wood, but the Shipping has cut it all down'.¹⁸⁹ By 1835, a Waimate 'settler' was writing that 'there is no place in the world scarce with such timber for masts for ships and other things as here'.¹⁹⁰ So it would have had to be what Charles Darwin heard of with regard to the Hokianga spar district, rather than the Bay of Islands, when in 1835 he reported that 'the timber of the kauri is the most valuable production of the island'.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Polack, *New Zealand*.

¹⁸⁸ Sinclair's *Laplace*.

¹⁸⁹ Markham, *New Zealand*.

¹⁹⁰ Ward, *Information*.

¹⁹¹ Darwin, *Journal of Researches*.

In 1831 though, spar timber was *the* primary resource of Bay of Islands rangatira for barter with Europeans, the best resource for obtaining the muskets and powder that had been changing the tribal geography of northern New Zealand, and one they had come to associate with the prospect of militarised violence, both English and French. It is arguably the 'tribal memory' of a time not long gone when timber was the primary tradable resource for a rangatira with forests, that is preserved forever in the Second Article of the Treaty of Waitangi in the phrase 'their Lands and Estates, Forests, Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess'.

Before hoisting anchor on 11 October, *La Favorite's* Captain Laplace, received 'the farewells of Rewa, who brought me, as a parting souvenir of his friendship, several baskets of potatoes and two pigs'. Expecting to find the extolled Kawakawa River spar district thick with tall trees close to the water, he had been dismayed at the dearth of timber that he saw. Rewa was one of the rangatira¹⁹² who, dissuaded of *La Favorite* having any military intent, who had told him of the reasons:

They see the spars, which constitute their main form of barter, diminishing rapidly in the aftermath of the destruction of stands of timber along the river banks and near the sea where they can no longer transport them without considerable difficulty.¹⁹³

Laplace reported:

This dearth of timber seemed to concern acutely my friend Rewa one day when we were inspecting, under a large shelter, two superb canoes which he was making ready for an expedition against the natives of the Bay of Plenty...He listed for me in a doleful way the enormous expense he incurred in the construction of these canoes...The canoe in question was eighty-six feet long and four wide near midships...But what caught the navigator's attention was the boat's underwater hull, the extraordinary dimensions of the tree from which it was made...

¹⁹² Rewa was the only rangatira who Laplace identified by name.

¹⁹³ Sinclair, *Laplace*, p.90.

The spar trade with the British Navy (1833–1840) and the rangatiratanga role of Titore Takiri

In November, 1833, the newly-arrived British Resident in New Zealand, James Busby, was instructed by the Admiralty to assist the British naval supply ship *HMS Buffalo* in 'procuring a supply of Spars for His Majesty's Service'.¹⁹⁴ Busby directed Captain John Sadler to the chief Titore Takiri, who, two years earlier, with his brother chiefs Rewa and Wharerahi, had told King William of the significance of timber in the resources tradable with Europeans.

Titore, in fact, had already made the acquaintance of the *Buffalo* expedition. As one of the officers recorded, long before daylight the morning after the *Buffalo's* arrival in the Bay of Islands:

...several canoes came alongside, but the natives were not allowed to come aboard until after eight o'clock, at which time the two chiefs of Korroraraka, named Tetoree and Aquila, brothers, came off to enquire the purpose of our visit. They were paddled on board in a large canoe by about thirty men.

The two chiefs were tall, athletic, well made and powerful men, measuring rather above six feet in height. Their only covering was a mat, thrown loosely over the shoulders, and held together in front by the hands. They were much tattooed about the face; in complexion very dark brown; their hair was long and black; two or three wild fowls' feathers stuck in their hair by way of ornament: each armed with his merry, made of a green transparent stone, about 16 inches long, and sharp at the edges, slung with hoop round the wrist. None but chiefs were permitted to carry them. They looked about the ship for a few minutes, pacing the deck with a majestic manly step, and I could tell by their way it was not the first time they had been on ship-board.¹⁹⁵

We have already briefly covered the *Buffalo's* visit in Part One, but we will now detail it because of what it reveals. In the words of the officer, Richard Hodgskin, the visit was:

¹⁹⁴ R M Hay to Busby, 2 May, 1833; Busby Papers 1, NA.

¹⁹⁵ Richard Hodgskin, *A Narrative of Eight Months Sojourn in New Zealand with a Description of the Habits, Customs, and Character of the Islanders; the Climate, Soil, and Productions of the Country, Including Timber for Ship-Building; with a Brief Account of Birds, Fishes, Etc, Etc...in a Series of Letters*, Coleraine, 1841: second letter.

...to collect a cargo of spars of the pine species, but called by the natives *kowdie* or *kourie*, and of a size large enough for line-of-battle ships' top-masts. Several trials have been made in her Majesty's ships, and they have been fully proved to be equal, if not superior, to the Russian, or the best Virginian pine, being more tough and free from knots.

By 1833, British naval timber purveyors were well aware of the difference in the timbers with which the Bay of Islands in New Zealand had become associated, and the *Buffalo* expedition was not to make the same mistakes as its predecessors. As Hodgskin spelt it out with reference to kauri:

These beautiful and immense trees grow in most of the forests...The kowdie attains the largest growth on the sides and bottoms of deep ravines, always preferring stiff, clayey ground...A finer lot of spars never came to Europe.

He continued with reference to kahikatea that it:

...may be ranked next to the kourie for size and beauty, but not fit for masts, nor very useful or durable in building. It grows in low swampy ground, and, like the kourie tree, has a trunk clear of the branches, from 60 to 70 feet long, and the top is very handsome. This tree was formerly mistook for kourie, and HMS *Coromandel* and *Dromedary* brought some of the spars to England for masts. However, they were found to be useless for that purpose.¹⁹⁶

To obtain the kauri from its native proprietors, said Hodgskin:

...the ship was well furnished with various articles for barter such as blankets. Tobacco, pipes, fish-hooks, ammunition, and muskets, with some double-barrelled fowling-pieces, intended as presents for the chiefs.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ Hodgskin, *A Narrative*: seventh letter.

¹⁹⁷ Hodgskin, *A Narrative*: first letter.

He soon saw why:

They are excellent marksmen, and almost every New Zealander has his fowling-piece or musket, and of which he is a good judge – having procured them of the masters and crews of whalers, in return for pork and potatoes. I have seen them take off the lock to examine it before buying, and any defects seldom escape the penetrating eye of a purchaser.

The natives about the Bay of Islands are the most powerful, in consequence of their intercourse with Europeans and the crews of whale ships. They have plenty of arms and ammunition, through which means they have been successful in war, even with tribes at the distance of two hundred miles along the coast.¹⁹⁸

James Busby was soon making the *Buffalo's* commander aware of Titore's significance in this regard, although it would have been evident as soon as Titore and his retinue came on board and Sadler told them 'the object of our voyage':

...they were much pleased, and not only promised, but did afford us every assistance during our stay among them; and from all I afterwards experienced of the chief Tetoree, with frequent opportunities of dealing with him and his tribe, I always found him very honest, honourable and upright; and he certainly deserves every protection and encouragement from our government...He has invariably proved himself the friend of the European. He was a powerful and influential chief, had distinguished himself as a brave warrior, and was much feared as well as respected by most of his countrymen.¹⁹⁹

Busby's response to the Admiralty's instructions to *HMS Buffalo* does not survive, but Sadler replied to it the next day, advising that he was 'employed on a service of great importance to the Crown, the success of which depends on gaining the good opinion of the chiefs and Natives generally'.²⁰⁰ Busby had evidently warned him to be very cautious in trading for timber with local chiefs, Titore specifically, whose authority beyond the Bay of Islands might not be what they claimed. He had also apparently noted that the history of spar-getting in the Bay of Islands and its vicinity had made its rangatira suspicious of fraud:

¹⁹⁸ Hodgskin, *A Narrative*: third letter.

¹⁹⁹ Hodgskin, *A Narrative*: second letter.

²⁰⁰ Sadler to Busby, 21 Nov, 1833, Busby Papers 1, NA.

I think it would not be prudent in me (under the peculiar Circumstances in which I am placed) to interfere in any way with the subject of your Communication, as it is possible it might militate against my obtaining a Cargo.²⁰¹

Titore, it would seem, immediately took Sadler and *HMS Buffalo* to Whangaroa, where he held authority over forests known to still contain spars of the kind the Bay of Islands no longer did. Busby would not have been surprised at the spar-seekers going so quickly to Whangaroa. If Titore and Rewa had not already told him about the region's diminishing spar timber supply, Busby would have learned about it from the Rev Henry Williams, who reportedly said that 'he has no idea you could purchase a cargo any where else than at Whangaroa'.²⁰²

As Richard Hodgskin of the *Buffalo* recorded:

On the next day of our arrival, our commander, the two purveyors, and the chief Tetoree, accompanied by several natives went over land to the Whangaroa district, the distance being about 26 miles, to examine the forests in that neighbourhood. The forests of Wangarooa and the neighbourhood, contain plenty of excellent timber of the Kowdee species.²⁰³

Thomas Laslett, a carpenter assisting the *Buffalo's* timber purveyors, reported that 'several native chiefs' accompanied them on the Whangaroa reconnaissance, which revealed a landscape of timber from which there 'would be no difficulty in obtaining sufficient to load the ship':

Consequently, and as the object of our visit to New Zealand was to get a cargo of Line of Battle ships Topmasts, arrangements were at once made for leaving the Bay of Islands for Wangarooa Harbour.²⁰⁴

Three days later, 'twenty men were therefore told off...to make a beginning and test the trees as to their fitness for Spars to form the Ship's cargo'. They 'left on the 4th instant for the Forest of Paetu, with tools, provisions, and bedding, &c for camping out, proceeding first in the boats for about 5 miles up the river Kamimi,

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² Busby to Sadler, 14 December, 1833, Busby Papers 1, NA

²⁰³ Hodgskin, *A Narrative*.

²⁰⁴ Thomas Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal 1833–1834', MS-Group-1415, ATL.

and landing at the late Mission House of Mr White which had been hired of a Chief as a Depository for Stores.²⁰⁵

On 5th Dec 1833, the working party:

...went into the Forest, and one or two Kauri trees having been selected for felling, the work of preparation was commenced by which we hoped, if well followed up to obtain the Spars required to load the ship. The first tree cut down, two days later, 'measured 64 feet to the branches and about 126 feet to the extreme top, the butt diameter being 4 feet. This tree had grown on the side of a steep hill, and as the spurs of the root spread somewhat wide our axemen found that considerable labour was required to trim them off, before the cross cut saw could be brought into play.²⁰⁶

Twenty additional men were sent from the ship to strengthen the working party, and within a few days '5 Kauri trees were cut down, yielding lengths suited to our requirements and the Carpenters, sailors, and marines were employed to trim and dress them into shape, many of the men had never before used an axe'.²⁰⁷ As the *Buffalo's* spar camp grew:

Some natives...gathered round us either for employment or for what they could otherwise get; they built for themselves temporary huts to live in, and a miniature village appeared, which helped to give to the place a look of some importance...²⁰⁸

As Laslett reported, trade and exchange were soon occurring:

Purchased a fine Pig...And four good sized baskets of potatoes of a Chief, for which I paid the price of 'one Blanket'. Pigs are plentiful in the district of Wangaroa and potatoes are tolerably plentiful, these goods are consequently the staple of trade among the natives, and they bring them almost daily into our camp to be bartered away for Blankets, Shirts, Tobacco, Pipes and Muskets &c &c.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁵ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', 1Dec, 1833; and see his footnote: 'The natives set fire to Mr. White's premises and burnt a portion of it down one night, and then drove him away from the place. They never allowed him to return, neither would they permit any other missionary to occupy the station.'

²⁰⁶ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', 5-7 Dec, 1833.

²⁰⁷ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', 9 -13 Dec, 1833.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', 15 Dec, 1833.

But the new native kainga was suddenly deserted when 'the son of the Whangaroa Chief' was shot and stabbed by 'a Bay of Islands chief' over a local, Whangaroa woman. Laslett heard that the Whangaroa chief declared that if his son should deteriorate or die from his wounds, he would collect the neighbouring tribes and make war against the Bay of Islanders. The next thing 'reports of musketry were heard rather near our settlement. Our men consequently did not go into the Forest to work, but watched from the hilltop what was going on'.

He observed a war party 'working themselves up into a state of frenzy', and which then:

...suddenly dashed into the woods as if in pursuit. The sound of musketry was heard for some time after in the distance and we understood they were after the Nabooes or Bay of Islanders who stole away the woman.

He continued:

As soon as the alarm was over, our men resumed their work in the Forest, but at noon when they returned to their dinners the whole place swarmed with armed natives who annoyed us very much, for we had nought to offer them but a part of our meal, which could ill be spared, and deemed quite insignificant among so many, still it was offered them and they willingly accepted it.

We were anxious to keep on terms with these people, for we did not quite understand them, we knew further that if they were badly disposed, we were pretty much at their mercy, for we had nothing whatsoever at this time that we could defend ourselves with' towards night, the natives gradually moved off to their own huts, or to distant villages and during the next few days the camp was very quiet.²¹⁰

It is likely that James Busby's cautioning of Sadler taking the *Buffalo* into Whangaroa under Titore's authority was with just this kind of situation in mind.

As soon as the first Whangaroa spars were felled, Sadler wrote to Busby that Maori help was going to be necessary to get the ship and loaded, and advised on

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

the goods he had on board as barter for it.²¹¹ This was filed by Busby with the note: 'Not to be reported'.²¹²

While Titore had taken the *Buffalo* into Whangaroa, he largely absented himself while it was there (apparently as a result of his 'determined enmity' to Sadler's pilot, the Bay of Islands trader Gilbert Mair). That said, he added that the chief was 'certainly much feared if not respected, and I am quite certain it will be bad policy in me to risk the loading of the ship if it be possible to accomplish the object here, at the price of all the Barter, I have on board.'²¹³

It was his duty, Sadler wrote, to meet with the chiefs. His intention, therefore, was:

...to collect all the Chiefs and tell them what I will give for bringing within reach of the Tide during the Floods or Rainy season: Viz,

20 7 barrel Guns
 10 Single light Chiefs fowling pieces
 200 Muskets²¹⁴
 200 Scabbards for Bayonets
 200 Bayonets
 200 Cartouch Boxes
 200 Frogs for Bayonets
 200 Belts for Cartouch Boxes
 500 Flints for Fowling pieces
 5000 Cartridges Ball for 7 Barrel Guns
 500 pounds of shot lead for fowling pieces
 130 pounds of Musket shot
 8 Double barrel fowling pieces
 8 Bullet Moulds for [above]

²¹¹ Sadler to Busby, undated (but c.11 December, 1833), Busby Papers 1, NA

²¹² This note was pencilled at top-left, perhaps because of the reference to the schedule of armoury for barter for spars.

²¹³ Sadler to Busby, undated (but c.11 December, 1833), Sadler's emphasis.

²¹⁴ For the relative monetary value of muskets, see D U Urlich, 'The Introduction and Diffusion of Firearms in New Zealand, 1800-1840, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 79/4, Dec., 1970; see too James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, Wellington, 1986, pp.21-22;: 'It seems that, from 1830 if not earlier, the Maoris were able to insist on weapons of reasonable quality, avoiding the 'sham dam iron' guns made in Birmingham and Liege for the Africa trade. Such guns cost five or six shillings each, and 8,000 muskets exported from Sydney to New Zealand in 1830-1 had an average value of twenty-seven shillings each'. One would expect that Titore, a powerful chief, experienced in dealing with spar-getters as well as musketry and war, would be buying the latter, and it should be noted that he is trading with a naval client.

40 Bullet Moulds for Muskets
 5000 Pounds of Five Grain Powders
 40 Red and Yellow Jackets
 40 [Red and Yellow] Trowsers
 100 Blankets
 4000 Fishing Hooks
 40 Small Hatchets
 40 Felling [Hatchets],
 500 Pounds of Tobacco
 50 Cast Iron Pots
 150 Three prong Forks for digging Potatoes²¹⁵

Sadler proposed that on delivery of 'the spars and other Wood requisite for completing the Cargo':

The before mentioned Articles shall be given to the Chiefs, who will pay the Slaves and other People employed in bringing the Cargo down out of the Articles of Trade above innumarated, with a perfect understanding if they cannot deliver it to a Certainty, (Viz the Completion of the Cargo) and without any further demand on me, The Contract to be at an end.²¹⁶

There were more than a few chiefs to deal with. A week after Sadler put his proposal to Busby:

...about 70 Chiefs...visited the ship to see what barter goods we had to offer for Spars, and examples of the goods were shewn them, consisting of blankets, tobacco, clay pipes, muskets, flints, &c.²¹⁷

There was much debate, but no agreement and the chiefs all soon left. There was no doubt, Sadler said of his proposed barter, that it:

...will be said to spoil the Market. But I cannot allow this matter to weigh with me. I have an object to obtain, and must not look to private adventurers who may bargain hereafter with these People in any manner they please.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ Sadler to Busby, undated (but c.11 December, 1833).

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 20 Dec., 1833.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Therefore, he told Busby, he wanted:

...your Assistance to call the Native Chiefs together in a few days and state to them the spars must be brought down to the River ready for floating them to the Tide by the flood, and also to state to them the Payments I will make on delivery – or when the tide flows.

Sadler's men on the *Buffalo*, he said, would 'assist in falling and...will do all the Squaring part'. The Whangaroa people had 'been as yet Civil but from the want of an interpreter, I cannot get them to understand my wishes'. He told Busby that he particularly needed Titore:

May I beg of you to send to Tetore, and request him to come over for the Meeting. I shall send to those in the Neighbourhood and name this day Week as the day of the Meeting, had I made this arrangement when in the Bay of Islands I see much uncertainty and misunderstanding might have been prevented.²¹⁹

'If the Chiefs refuse these Terms', Sadler added, 'I must recall my Men. and go to some other part whence I shall not be dependant on the Floods and when the difficulty will be but in sending Provisions to my Men.'²²⁰

In Busby's carefully edited reply, he acknowledged the difficulties Sadler and the *Buffalo* were likely to encounter in obtaining a cargo of spars, and particularly noted 'as a means of accomplishing this object your purpose to offer the whole of the articles you are provided with for barter'. This was 'on the condition of the whole of the Spars being Supplied before that period.'²²¹

Busby had grave doubts about the wisdom of Sadler trading so many firearms for the Whangaroa spars, and discussed the prospect with the Rev Henry Williams, to whom he showed Sadler's letter. He then cautioned Sadler not to go ahead with his proposed contract as it would create problems:

After having consulted Revd Mr Williams (whose long residence in New Zealand and perfect knowledge of the habits of the natives renders his opinion on such matters of great notice...), I am of the opinion that your proposition would fail in accomplishing the object you have in view: and

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ Busby to Sadler, 14 Dec., 1833, Busby Papers 1, NA.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

would therefore strongly recommend you not to make such an offer as it would instill into the Mind of the Natives ideas of so extravagant a nature as would make it difficult to procure such assistance as they might by other means be induced to render.²²²

Busby argued that the authority of the chiefs was only nominal, and without the cooperation of the people, 'it be in vain to hope that such a contract as you propose would be completed.'²²³ While, then, Sadler would obtain 'considerable assistance from the tribes in the neighbourhood...that assistance will not be constant' and he would have to 'pay them as they proceed'. The little experience that he had had convinced him 'that they have not patience to continue their labours unless they can make sense of their reward within a few days':

The best plan would therefore be to offer a certain payment for each Spar which they may drag down to the River and specify a further payment upon its being conveyed within reach of the tide. If however you offer a very large payment. they will very soon undervalue your Commodities and not work for others at all.²²⁴

Meanwhile, Busby added 'he had not sent for Tetore as it would give him an importance in his own eyes which would make it more difficult to deal with him'. However, Williams had undertaken to 'mention the subject' to him.²²⁵

Two weeks later, Sadler advised Busby that most of the Whangaroa trees were of poor quality and that the spar timber of the kind the *Buffalo* wanted for naval use was far less plentiful than had been imagined. He had not been able to obtain anything like the seventy spars he was seeking:

...it will be impossible to procure half a cargo. I have just received a note from one of our Surveyors who informs me, that two out of three of our largest spars after squaring have proved to be rotten in the heart notwithstanding their healthy appearance externally, and having reason to believe that this is the character of the whole forest which would not furnish more than twenty spars at that rate; obliges me to concur to the determination of at once giving up this station and proceeding to the Southward – It will be a serious lapse of time and to me a source of great

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

anxiety having already landed provisions for sixty men for four months which together with stores and implements for cutting will occupy a fortnight in shipping but I have no alternative having searched all the woods in this neighbourhood and find not more than twenty spars fit for our purpose in the whole and their requiring extraordinary labour in getting them to where the Tide flows.²²⁶

While the *Buffalo* had been in Whangaroa, Sadler had heard a rumour 'spread by some white man' that 'it is not our intention to pay after procuring the spars':

Under these circumstances I deem it my duty to acquaint you of my determination to remove - I regret it the more in consequence of the great civility of the Natives since our arrival here.²²⁷ As it will be a great disappointment to the Chiefs in this, and neighbouring places, who have all promised their assistance in dragging the timber down, I must leave it to your judgement as to the propriety of your presence being required here during the embarkation of the Stores.²²⁸

The next day, Sadler reiterated the poor quality of the Whangaroa spars they had felled, and noted the real reason for his pending departure:

...it will therefore be quite useless to remain...We have searched all other Forests in this Neighbourhood & cannot discover more than Twenty trees in the Whole.²²⁹

Despite what Sadler said of the 'civility' of the Whangaroa people, Thomas Laslett, in the spar-cutting party in the forest, reported that 'on the 23rd December there was further alarm about the natives, and it was necessary quite early in the morning to call in the working party and to bring their tools out of the Forest.' Then, five days later, they were 'astonished at receiving orders to take the whole of our tools out of the Forest to the camp', because of the 'suspicious and threatening attitude of the natives':

At the ship much alarm was felt at the conduct of the natives and the Guns were loaded with grape and canister shot, a strict look out was kept

²²⁶ Sadler to Busby, 30 Dec., 1833, Busby Papers 2, NA.

²²⁷ Note that on 14 Dec. 1833, Busby had replied to Sadler's letter re Whangaroa and Titore's 'authority' there over timber.

²²⁸ Sadler to Busby, 30 Dec., 1833, Busby Papers 2, NA.

²²⁹ Sadler to Busby, 31 Dec., 1833, Busby Papers 2, NA.

for canoes, and the men warned to be ready at sound of beat to arms in case of any demonstration of force coming from the shore...At night at the camp at Paetu there was an unusually large gathering of natives, and we could not understand the meaning of it...once after a terrific war dance which they gave, they attempted to set fire to our camp, but they failed owing to the bold front and interference of our men...Next day a supply of firearms was sent to the camp, for our use, and we felt somewhat easier.

Within days though, Laslett was reporting that the Paetu camp had been abandoned:

Mr Betts, our senior Purveyor who had been upon an exploring trip as far as Tutakaka in search of Kauri trees fit for spars, returned and reported that he had seen some good trees but he thought they were not equal to those which we had just left at Paetu.²³⁰

Sadler told Busby of his intention to take the *Buffalo* south to search for spars in other harbours. 'Reports from several of the Chiefs are favorable to my obtaining a Cargo with Ease to the South – and certainly in much less time and with less trouble'. But he was, he added, 'very badly provided' with information 'respecting the Coast or Timber...Indeed have nothing but Cook's Survey²³¹ and that on a very small scale'. Busby would oblige him very much, he added, 'by borrowing the Revd Mr Williams Chart of the Thames' for the *Buffalo's* search.²³²

However, when Sadler took the *Buffalo* out of Whangaroa on January 7th 1834 to look for kauri spars in the harbours of eastern Tai Tokerau, he had better guidance than James Cook's or Henry Williams' charts. It is from the timber purveyor on the *Buffalo*, Thomas Laslett, rather than Sadler, that we learn that the chiefs Titore of Kororareka and Korokoro of Paroa were on board:

Owing to the mistrust of the natives, we at 5am weighed anchor and sailed for Mourangie [Mahurangi] in the River Thames, touching on the

²³⁰ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal'.

²³¹ This supports the current author's contention (in *Nga Uruora*) that through this period, Cook's maps were on board ships, and that his statements on the Bay of Islands and Thames as being the best places for timber were followed closely.

²³² Sadler to Busby, 31 Dec., 1833, Busby Papers 2, NA.

way at the Bay of Islands to take on board Tetoré, and William Korokoro, two chiefs of the Nabooe tribe.²³³

For much of the next month Titore and Korokoro guided the *Buffalo* in and out of Hauraki harbours in what Laslett called ‘an inclusive search...for Kauri trees, fit for large spars’:

...some were found on the Wai-werra-werra[Waiwera]; and at Rotopotaka; some few also were found at the Wai Pehoi [Puhoi]. The only incident worth remembering in connection with these explorations of the Forests, was that we found a Mr Browne, a merchant residing in the locality very busy with a few natives marking the best trees with the intention of claiming them as his private property.²³⁴

On 24th January, a small detachment of men were sent from the ship in a canoe to the Forest of Rotopotaka:

...the native crew paddled us on in a very lively fashion, for some time, and until they came to Mr Browne’s settlement when most of the natives got out, and walked or waded fully hence deep in water and went to their own huts, where regardless of our detention they quickly smoked their pipes before they thought it worth while to come off again. However when they did come they brought with them a quantity of Potatoes, Fern Root, and other provisions for consumption in the Forest. Then we moved on again, and in time drew near to our destination, but here, owing to the shallowness of the water and the marshy nature of the shore we could not get the canoe close in, and had consequently to walk for nearly ½ a mile before we could touch firm land.²³⁵

Capt Sadler paid a visit to the Forest to see the start of the exercise. Five fine looking trees were cut down, and while three of these were found on examination to have defects which rendered them unfit for spars, they had nevertheless much good wood in them suitable for other purposes.

²³³ Laslett, ‘New Zealand Journal’, entries of 23, 28 Dec., 1833. The evidence in this account is that Titore and Korokoro were on board *HMS Buffalo* from 7 Jan 1833–18 March, in a search for spars south from the Bay of Islands to the Ngunguru–Tutukaka and then Mahurangi–Waiwera coasts, during which they went with a spar-seeking party over to Kaipara; after this they returned with a working party on a cutter to Whangaroa after the *Buffalo* had left the area because of ‘mistrust of the natives’.

²³⁴ Laslett, ‘New Zealand Journal’, entries of 17-23 January, 1834.

²³⁵ Laslett, ‘New Zealand Journal’, entry of 24 January, 1834.

The decision was made to load the *Buffalo* with Waiwera, Puhoi and Rotopotaka spars. At Rotopotaka 'about 150 natives were taken on and employed to assist in the work, which included the opening of a road from the shore to the selected trees'.²³⁶

All through February, Laslett reported:

...the natives were working with great vigour and earnestness with the view to secure early the payment for the spars delivered to the ship ... the combined efforts of the force were therefore directed to getting out Two spars and forwarding them to the ship's anchorage.

Payment having been made for these to the extent of 2 Blankets, 2 Muskets, 2 Cartouch boxes, 14lbs of shot, some powder, a cooking pot, and some Negrohead Tobacco for each spar, the natives all came back to the Forest highly delighted, and anxious to be set to work again.

Work was consequently found for them, some were set to cut off the branches and tops of trees felled, some to make stages to turn the spars on, this being necessary in some many cases owing to many trees having been cut from steep hill sides, while other natives were employed to open tracks or roads for hauling out the finished trees.²³⁷

The production of 'about one good spar a day' in the Mahurangi forests was much better than the *Buffalo's* shore timber parties had achieved at Whangaroa, mainly because of 'the difference in the size of the trees worked upon'. At Whangaroa, said Laslett, 'the diameter of the trees were excessive, while in the Mourangi district those selected did not much exceed the size required to yield the spar'.²³⁸

But by late February, it was becoming evident that while the Mahurangi forestshad better spar trees, there were simply not enough of them to fill the *Buffalo's* cargo:

About this time an impression began to be felt that we should not find trees enough at Mourangi to complete the Cargo and Mr Betts with Tetoré, Korokoro and other natives set out for Waikato, Waimatta

²³⁶ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 27 January, 1834.

²³⁷ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entries of 1 to 12 February, 1834.

²³⁸ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entries of 13 to 22 February, 1834.

[Waitemata], Wairoa &c to look about for other Kauri trees to fill up with if necessary.²³⁹

While they were away, the Waiwera forest was cut out of trees that were 'suitable for our purpose', and the working party there was sent to the Rotopotaka forest 'where there was still plenty to do'. But it remained plainly evident that to fill the *Buffalo's* cargo, they would have to return to Whangaroa.

Thus on 18th March, after the kauri-seeking shore party returned from Kaipara with Titore and Korokoro, some of the *Buffalo's* timber purveyors 'and a small working party of sailors, with Tetoré, Korokoro, and other natives together about 32 in number left Mouranghi in the 'Emma' cutter, John Payner Master and owner chartered to take us to Wangaroa'.²⁴⁰

Two days earlier, Sadler, the *Buffalo's* master, wrote to Busby from Mahurangi, conveying his disappointment at the quality of its timber and that he was sending a timber-getting party back to Whangaroa. Titore, he said, had undertaken to take them to a tapu forest that he had kept them from earlier, and to place a tapu on all other Whangaroa forests that the Navy may want in future:

In consequence of the number of Rotton trees here as well as at Whangaroa I find it will be impossible to complete our Cargo at this Port. I have fallen 140 Trees and the greatest part of the number partly squared before their [defects] were discovered. The produce of that number of trees amounting to thirty six or almost forty Masts. Having now intirely swept the Forests here of the Wood fit for our purpose (except that part which the Natives have sold to Mr Brown or rather reserved for him) and after a search in every part of this Neighbourhood and on the Eastern side the Firth of the Thames, I have determined on sending an Officer and Surveyor and Twenty [workers] to Whangaroa to cut and square sufficient to complete our Cargo.

...Tetori has promised to supply Natives to drag them to the Water and tells me he has another Forest which is much nearer the River than the one he first placed us. That it is Tabooed was the reason he did not shew it us at first but now he will take the surveyor into it and if he finds it suitable we are to complete our cargo from there.²⁴¹

²³⁹ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entries of 23 to 28 February, 1834.

²⁴⁰ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 18 March, 1834.

²⁴¹ Sadler to Busby, 16 March, 1834, in Busby Papers 2, NA.

Sadler told Busby that Titore had promised him 'he will not leave them until I arrive with the Ship and if he behaves on this as well as he has done in all his other transactions with me', he would reward him accordingly. After two months with Titore, and benefiting from his facilitating of access to Mahurangi's kauri forests, Sadler was full of regard for him. 'It is but justice to this Native to say. He has behaved extremely well ever since he has been with me and is in fact very superior to any I have seen.'

Sadler was less enamoured of his people: 'very bad are the whole race – These fellows work remarkably well. More like horses than Men. But they are dreadful thieves'. He noted that he had 'in my search seen some very good Spars but an establishment must be formed to remove any Timber to the Water'. However, 'where the Natives have taken me and told me I should find plenty, I found scarcely five in twenty miles in fact. The Natives know Nothing of the length of the trees'.²⁴² But he had also learned that further south, 'in addition to what I have seen...Mast pieces are in abundance at Mercury Bay and at the Monacow [Manukau] River (west Coast)'.²⁴³

Sadler told Busby that the *Buffalo* would commence loading Mahurangi spars the following week, and be 'ready for Sea to join my men at Whangaroa where I hope to complete by the end of June'. If Maori at Whangaroa work with the same spirit they do here, he added, 'six Weeks will more than Complete us'.²⁴³

By early June, 1834, the *Buffalo* was in Whangaroa and Sadler was expressing to Busby his happiness that, due to Titore:

...my Masts are all within reach of the tide. Thanks to the partial flood on Thursday Night and the great exertions of the Natives. Tetori deserves great praise for his personal exertion as well the example set to his people. He was in the Water a great part of Thursday Night & until Noon on Friday Without food...indeed had I not interrupted their conduct I could not have believed New Zealanders capable of performing so much work exposed as they are to the Cold and many of them with a Mat only for a Covering when they came out of the Water...their conduct on this occasion will cover a multitude of faults in my estimation.²⁴⁴

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁴ Sadler to Busby, 7 June, 1834, in Busby Papers 2, NA.

This was a contrast with the *Buffalo's* earlier time in Whangaroa when Titore had stayed away because of his antipathy to Sadler's pilot, and conflict among the river people had been constant companion to the spar-getting.

And as a result of Titore's promise to show the *Buffalo* expedition previously tapued forest, Sadler had:

...found in this neighbourhood sufficient spars for an other Cargo (should the Admiralty be disposed to send for them). Tetori has promised to Taboo all the Forests in which they grow for two years²⁴⁵ and on My Arrival at home I have promised him the Admiralty will communicate to you their intention.²⁴⁶

The captain wanted Busby's assistance in having Titore's promise 'put in a formal manner and signed by Tetori and other such Chiefs as may have any claim to the property'. Were he to draft it himself, he said, 'I feel much at a loss for a faithful interpretation fearing I may cause some mistake which may give offence'.

Pleased with what he read, Busby immediately replied that 'it would be exceedingly desirable to give as much solemnity as possible to the agreement you have entered into with Tetore'. He recommended:

...having a regular contract drawn out both in the Native and English Language, Signed by the Chiefs – and witnessed by one or more of the Missionaries – After which it might be lodged in my hands – It is really an object of National importance to secure as many Spars of the description you require as can be brought into Service before they decay'.²⁴⁷

Busby had 'no doubt...the Admiralty will take the necessary Measures for so doing – There is not much and difficult to be procured in the harbours you have visited', and 'no Kaudi Trees (as I suppose you are aware) have been seen to the Southward'. The possession of a regular contract 'for the purchase of all the Spars of the requisite dimensions within certain limits' would enable Busby

²⁴⁵ Orange in *The Treaty of Waitangi*, p.10: 'Major chiefs near northern harbours were drawn into direct, personal relationships with the Crown through visiting British naval vessels...Titore, referring to Britain's past conflict with France, offered to place a tapu on certain forests from which spars could be cut for any future Anglo-French engagement, a commitment which was acknowledged by a letter from the King and the gift of a suit of armour'.

²⁴⁶ Sadler to Busby, 7 June, 1834, in Busby Papers 2, NA.

²⁴⁷ Busby to Sadler, 7 June, 1834, in Busby Papers 2, NA.

himself to prevent 'competition from a quarter whence prices might be offered too tempting for the Chiefs to resist'.

A week later, Sadler sent Busby:

...an agreement entered into with the Native Chiefs, Titore, Tareha, and Wairua, of this neighbourhood, and my self on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the Duplicate of which I have to present to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty on the Buffalo's arrival in England, for their approvals, for which plan she will sail from this Port on the 25th instant.

The agreement stated:

We the undersigned Chiefs and Proprietors of the Forests Lands at Whangaroa, up the River Kio [Kaeo], and who, have firstly loaded His Majesty's ship Buffalo with top masts from 64 to 85 feet long: for the use of His Britanic Majesty do now in the presence of Mr Baker one of the Members of the Church of England Mission, and Mr Joseph Lynsyn second Master of the said ship, promise unto Mr J M P Sadler, Master Commanding the said ship in behalf of His Britanic Majesty's Government, to preserve all the Timber of such dimensions in this neighbourhood, for the span of one year and a half or untill a Communication be made through the British Resident at New Zealand as to whether it be the intention of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send a ship for another cargo or not.

Given under our hands on board of His Majesty's ship at Wangaroa. New Zealand this 16 of June 1834.²⁴⁸

The agreement is the only one of its kind known to exist. The copy that John Sadler sent to James Busby, held in Busby's papers in Archives New Zealand, bears the marks and names of the Bay of Islands rangatira Titore, Wairua and Tareha.

It was to be over three years before the *Buffalo* returned to the Bay of Islands, to the news of Titore's recent death:

²⁴⁸ Attached to Sadler to Busby, 16 June, 1834, Busby Papers 2, NA.

'Tetore' the greatest of New Zealand chiefs died about 3 months since, he had collected previous to his death some mats and other articles of native manufacture for Mr Sadler the late Commander of the *Buffalo* on her last voyage which he intended to present to him if he should come again; and when he found himself seriously ill he begged those about him to hand the presents to that officer and further to give to the new expedition all the assistance in their power. This was considered satisfactory as shewing that a favourable impression had been made upon this Chief, and we hoped upon the others.²⁴⁹

One of these, Tareha, a fellow signatory of Titore's 1834 Whangaroa spar agreement, immediately 'came to visit the ship – and see what was likely to come of our calling there, hoping that if we wanted timber to get some of the goods'. Laslett reported, with his usual ethnocentrism, that Tareha:

...an old chief, and enormously big heavy man, said to have 20 wives, and to be a terrible cannibal...owing to his great weight, had to be careful how he left his canoe, and it was quite a task for him to get up the ship's side; consequently it was thought necessary to pass a rope around him by which the sailors could assist him up the steps. On reaching the deck in safety, he squatted down loungingly, and there remained for some time holding out his hand to those who wished to shake it, and doing a chat with the officers. The old chief's body was well covered with shark oil and red ochre – which helped give him a hideous look while it yielded same time an unpleasant odour.²⁵⁰

As a result of the visit, five days later, with 'an Interpreter at hand to deal with the Natives', the *Buffalo* sailed from the Bay of Islands taking as passengers chiefs named as Aketto, Aradde and Etella²⁵¹, together with some others from Kororareka, an officer having been informed that there were 'plenty of fine Kauri trees growing in the neighbourhood of Tutukaka'.²⁵²

On arrival off Tutukaka, the *Buffalo's* timber purveyors and two second masters 'left to explore the banks for Kauri trees'. They took with them in addition to the boats crews, four Maori in each boat, 'and when we arrived in the Bay of

²⁴⁹ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal'.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ Other Bay of Islands chiefs are referred to later (eg 'Ariva' on 21 December and 'Aketto') in T F Cheesman's account of the voyage: see footnote 254.

²⁵² Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 27 Sept., 1837.

Nongardo [Ngunguru] we obtained 4 others from the village there as Aketto said they would know the place well, and be good guides’.

Kauri spars in great quantities were found almost immediately, as a result of which some of the timber party were to stay in the Ngunguru for months, ‘living in the woods until all the spars were got ready & stowed in the ship’²⁵³ in March the following year. One of the purveyors was Thomas Laslett, who as a carpenter assisting the timber purveyors on the *Buffalo*’s 1833-34 expedition had provided detailed accounts of the spar timber trading with Titore.

Within a day, they believed they ‘must have seen at least 100 very fine Kauri trees which would suit our purpose’.²⁵⁴ But three days later, returning to the tent after searching for trees, they found the *Buffalo*’s captain, James Wood, waiting to tell them ‘that the Nangandoans’, the Ngunguru people, disputed the right of the Bay of Islanders to any of the property in that locality and forbade them to deal in it:

It seemed the Kororarika men who we had brought from the Bay of Islands had no idea that any natives would be found at Nangando; they being under the impression the place had long since been deserted by its original proprietors in consequence of the severe fighting which a few years back had been going on there. Now however it appears that some of the Nangandoan Chiefs had returned and taken up their abode on the river side with the intention of keeping possession.²⁵⁵

Wood therefore negotiated an arrangement with the Ngunguru chiefs to supply about 15 men, bringing a little later on the same number more from the mountains. In response:

...the Nangandoans now wanted us to go further up the creek where they said they would show us some trees as fine as any we had seen, and accordingly we went about 5 miles further up, cutting our way through the obstructions caused by fallen trees as best we could, until we reached Waiotoi...finding plenty of young kauri trees 70 to 80 feet to the branches, but not many sufficiently large in diameter for our purpose.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ Journal of T F Cheesman, on board *HMS Buffalo*, Aug 3 1836–Mar 20, 1841, ATL.

²⁵⁴ Laslett, ‘New Zealand Journal’, entry of 30 Sept., 1837.

²⁵⁵ Laslett, ‘New Zealand Journal’, entry of 2 Oct., 1837

²⁵⁶ Laslett, ‘New Zealand Journal’, entry of 3 Oct., 1837

On Wood's return to the *Buffalo* the next day, 'about sunset, the Nangandoan Chiefs made their appearance upon a hill abreast of the ship – and signaled that they wished to come on board'. The following morning, another Ngunguru 'party of 12 natives' joined them, after which:

...our Barter goods were shewn to them: consisting of Blankets, Muskets, Fowling pieces, pipes, tobacco &c &c over which there was a great deal of talk, ending in a bargain being struck by which the natives were to get something of all the goods shewn to them for every spar that we took from the forest for loading the ship. The condition being that besides giving the timber, they should give us all the assistance in their power towards getting it out from the forest.²⁵⁷

When the *Buffalo's* timber party went back up the river to begin the felling for spars, 'some Nangandoan natives also joined and were set to clear some of the trees'. It was evident, Laslett said, that the Ngunguru people had been under missionary influence as 'these men...devote a short time every morning and evening to singing hymns and prayer.'²⁵⁸

Meanwhile, one of the *Buffalo's* second masters had been back to the Bay of Islands to obtain an interpreter, William Hanson, and 'had also got 40 natives of the Bay of Islands to accompany him in their canoes to Tutukaka, to be employed with us upon forest work'. The following day, the *Buffalo's* captain took them up to the Ngunguru forest to introduce them to the timber felling and squaring work, 'and as soon as this was done they commenced to build Huts in close proximity to our tents, evidently desirous of being neighbours'.²⁵⁹

A couple of days later, a boat came up the Ngunguru River, with many axes among its stores. The *Buffalo* men had planned to issue the axes to the men in the forest, 'hoping after a time to call the tools in again, or to charge the chiefs with them'. But when the men were at work with them in the forest, the local Ngunguru women rushed in and seized the tools for their husbands' use, and 'it was found next to impossible to restrain them without dealing roughly with them, and as with the men they had things pretty much their own way'.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁷ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 5 Oct., 1837.

²⁵⁸ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 15 Oct., 1837.

²⁵⁹ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 10 Oct., 1837.

²⁶⁰ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 12 Oct., 1837.

There was further frustration immediately the trees selected for spars began being felled, and most were defective or too short for the *Buffalo's* wants. Realising that 'much of their labour' had been for naught, 'they got out of temper'.²⁶¹ Laslett noted another problem which caused 'our Nangandoans to fall into the same mood as the Bay of Islanders and in the excitement of the feast, forget their evening hymns and prayers', that of food supplies. Late in November, after he had been 'out a great deal with the native chiefs searching over hill and dale for tall Kauri trees', he observed:

The natives were extremely badly off for provisions.., their potatoes being nearly exhausted; a few of their people are employed from day to day to catch fish in the offing and in this way the food is eked out, but they are driven to eat fern root, a hard woody substance that has doubtless nourishment in it, and which in Early times formed their chief sustenance in winter; this however was not at this time a favourite food with them, and they complained loudly about it. As a consequence of these almost famine times the natives crowd about our tents begging for biscuits, that we can ill spare in view of our own limited allowance...from the ship.²⁶²

However, he noted:

Notwithstanding the dearth of food among the natives, they went to work after tightly girding their waists with a belt of flax, to indicate the emptiness of their stomachs; and cut down tree after tree quite regardless of whether it was suitable or not; they made some fearful waste of good timber for ordinary purposes in this way, and no amount of persuasion would stop them; we were therefore obliged to let them do as they pleased...²⁶³

He went on to note later that 'so great was the dearth of food amongst the natives, that they almost one and all left the forest work to go into the offing to catch fish'.²⁶⁴ The food shortage had its impact on the spar-getting. On December 13th:

There was an outcry from the natives at the distance we were going back from the water for the trees, they said they should never be able to get

²⁶¹ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 14 Oct., 1837.

²⁶² Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entries of 25, 26 Nov., 1837.

²⁶³ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entries of 27-30, Nov., 1837.

²⁶⁴ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 10 Dec., 1837.

them out, they were too few in number to do the work, and too weak in body owing to the want of a proper supply of food to do it...As a consequence of this state of things, not a single native went into the forest to work to day.²⁶⁵

The next day though, 'the natives got over their objection about distances and went to work again; some to open track to get the spars out'.

The food situation was somewhat relieved in mid-December, when 'the Bay of Islands natives who left us about a fortnight since for their homes, returned with their canoes loaded with potatoes, and other food to the great delight of those who had remained by the work, and there was general rejoicing'.²⁶⁶

Despite the early dispute over proprietorship of Ngunguru spars, Bay of Islands chiefs continued to operate as if those they found were theirs. 'The Chief Ariva' [Arawa, or Awara?²⁶⁷], Laslett noted, 'is in good luck, he drew attention to several fine kauri trees that he had cut down, and I marked 5 of them to be topped off...one of the extraordinary length of 95 feet. This was the tallest tree of this description I had met with'.²⁶⁸

By the middle of January, the timber-getters believed they had felled enough trees. There was also 'a better disposition among the natives for work, and a strong force of them coming over from Waiotoi they soon began to prepare for hauling the spars out from where they dressed to the water side and were sent afloat'. The men were 'not a little pleased at their performances', especially when 'the last spar required for loading the ship was also got out of hand'. Laslett recorded: 'All hands were in thorough good humour'.²⁶⁹

By January 26th, the *Buffalo* was loading spars and 'nearly all the natives had moved out of the forest and taken up their quarters on the shore of Tutukaka harbour, to await the payment due to them for the spars and timber'. Laslett

²⁶⁵ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 13 Dec., 1837.

²⁶⁶ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 17 Dec., 1837.

²⁶⁷ Possibly the Bay of Islands chief Awara' with whom Captain Ross of the 1841 *Erebus/Terror* expedition was 'obliged to purchase' timber; Awara 'was quite prepared to resist their being cut down, as in former years, for only a trifling payment. But now, muskets, and these only, were required for the trees, and without them we should not have been able to have obtained a single spar, except by force, which in the temper of mind of the "Maories" would have led to serious results...As soon as Awara found his demand for two muskets for the spars was agreed to, he became more civil - pointing out the best trees, and the most easy way of getting them to the water': Ross, *A Voyage of Discovery and Research*.

²⁶⁸ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 21 Dec., 1837.

²⁶⁹ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entries of 12-15 Jan., 1838.

recorded the results of the months in the Ngunguru forest: 78 kauri spars, together with 72 pieces of kauri timber, four of totara and one of miro.²⁷⁰

On February 6th, the first spar was taken on board, and the 'natives were also settled with some of them receiving a good parcel of Barter goods; there were none that did not get something, and generally they seemed to be well satisfied.' Disharmony was soon removed: 'Areva grumbled a little, and pressed for more payment for the 95 foot spar – and having ultimately got it, he with the rest were in high glee.'²⁷¹

Six days later:

The whole of the Nabooe tribe, together with some of the Nangandoans left Tutukaka for the Bay of Islands taking with them the Barter good they received for the spars, timber etc. As they left the harbour they gave the crew of the Ship a very hearty parting...It was represented to me by those who witnessed it, that the fleet of canoes looked exceedingly pretty and interesting as they passed out from the harbour to the offing seaward on their voyage.²⁷²

While the *Buffalo* was being loaded, some of the timber purveyors headed south of Ngunguru with the Chief Atoa [Atua]²⁷³, and three other Maori. Leaving 'Waiotoi for the river Horohoro situated about 2.5 miles south of the Nangando [Ngunguru] River', they went 'as far as the tide would help us, and then landed':

We wanted our native guides now to shew us any good Kauri trees they knew of, but they did not seem to us, to be very clear as to where they could be found, and only invited us to walk over the tops of the hills to look around, from whence they said we should be able to see them. We could not however make out that Kauri was there is any quantity, and this inspection not giving us the satisfactory results we hoped for, we returned down the river...landing at the foot of a steep fern hill, over or beyond which Atoa said there were 'good Kauri' trees. The fern was about heart

²⁷⁰ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entries of 26-29 Jan., 1838.

²⁷¹ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 6 Feb., 1838.

²⁷² Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 12 Feb., 1838.

²⁷³ There is a chief named Atua among the 86 chiefs selling Waimate land to the Church Missionary Society missionaries in the 1830s: 'Waimate land deeds, 1830-1840', Geoff Park archives.

high, and being very thick Atoa set fire to it to enable us to get through and render the walking easy.²⁷⁴

However, no more kauri 'of any consequence' were seen.²⁷⁵

Up to the year of the Treaty, Bay of Islands chiefs endeavoured to exert the control over the timber forests beyond the Bay of Islands that had come with their conquests of the 1820s and early 1830s. On its visits in 1833-34 and 1837-8 the *Buffalo* had gone where Titore Takiri and his successors took them.

The *Buffalo* again came into Tai Tokerau waters two months after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Thomas Laslett was on board again, and not long after it anchored in Kororareka Bay, recorded:

...canoes with natives came off to the ship – among whom were the Chiefs Aradee and Awiu [Awia?] whose acquaintance I made on a former voyage.

They were not slow to recognise me and to hasten to show how pleased they were that I had come again among them with the ship to procure more of their spars. Both the Chiefs and their men did their best to please the Officers and ships company for they were in great good humour and favoured us with a war dance, while on our side everything was done that would help to make a good impression upon them, that they might in returning to the shore tell other tribes something of the nature of our requirements.

Laslett, although he had had seen the Bay of Islands changing through several visits in the 1830s, was astonished the next day when 'other natives came off to the ship':

Trifling articles of merchandise offered as barter for goods did not take; what they chiefly wanted was money or double-barreled fowling-pieces. We thought this a remarkable change to have come over the natives within only a couple of years and could only attribute it to the formation of an English colony there.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ This passage illustrates the way in which land, once in forest, was repeatedly burnt over for access.

²⁷⁵ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entries of 16-17 Feb., 1838.

²⁷⁶ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 19 April, 1840.

By the 1840 visit, serious trading in spar timber by Europeans had started. When, ten days after the *Buffalo's* arrival in the Bay of Islands, it departed for Mercury Bay, it was because a European trader said he had spars for them there. As Laslett reported:

It was mainly owing to a letter which the Commander of the *Buffalo* received from Capt Dacres of Sydney that we visited this neighbourhood, he having reported that he had some 400 Kauri spars ready prepared there, from which he offered a selection at the price of £20.0.0 per spar.²⁷⁷

The *Buffalo's* men eventually saw the spars when they 'pulled up the river about 5 miles to a swamp where we saw 5 masts and 16 Bowsprit pieces, some of which upon inspection were found to be slightly worm-eaten upon the side'.²⁷⁸ However, by then the naval timber purveyors had seen the quality of Mercury Bay Kauri.

Through the winter of 1840, they traded with the local chief Ngatiapa for spars. A huge quantity of mast pieces and squared timber was 'prepared and ready to be moved out of the Forest when the work was brought suddenly to a stand by the news of the wreck of the *Buffalo*'. Laslett considered it some of the best kauri timber he had encountered:

Taken as a whole I was favourably impressed with the idea that much good kauri timber could be obtained from the district lying between Mercury Bay and the Tirua River; and, generally speaking, I considered the Kauri trees here were more suitable by their dimensions for spars than were those I had seen at Maurangi, Tutukaka and Wangaroa.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entry of 29 April, 1840.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ Laslett, 'New Zealand Journal', entries of 20May–1 August, 1840.

Conclusion

The forests of the northern harbours in the 1830s had been depleting fast, something that Hobson's other advisor in February 1840, Henry Williams, had had direct experience. Writing of what he heard in 1835 when he visited the Bay of Islands, Robert FitzRoy said he knew 'with certainty' that Williams and his brother William had recently 'exerted all their real influence – that of advice – in pointing out the consequences which would result to some tribes who were inclined to part hastily with extensive tracts of valuable pine forests'.

He stated:

The real value of these trees was explained to the natives: and they were shown distinctly how a careful management of such stores of spars would ensure a future property, and sufficient maintenance for the native children who would otherwise be deprived of their birthright.²⁸⁰

We have concentrated on the facts of the loss, and the motivations of the British and others who benefitted, rather than the motivations of the sellers: as our sources are generated entirely by the ranks of the buyers and their allies, we are not qualified to venture into such areas of interpretation. The fact is sufficient to suggest an impact upon the events surrounding the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi.

This paper has focused entirely on contemporary accounts, virtually all which were written by Europeans: explorers and travelers, missionaries, government officials, settlers and men involved in the spar timber trade. It has made particular use of the journals and logs of naval supply ships that came to the Bay of Islands between 1820 and 1841 to obtain spars from local rangatira. It is in these latter accounts, more than any other, that the changing value of forests and timber are specified, and in which the Bay of Islands rangatira who traded timber with Europeans are identified. Tracking these accounts in historical archives and from secondary sources that were found to refer to them, has constituted the primary research for the paper.

It is evident from the documents researched that in the years preceding the Treaty, the chiefs of the Bay of Islands considered the timber of their forests to be

²⁸⁰ Robert FitzRoy, *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of His Majesty's Ships Adventure and Beagle...*, Vol II, London, 1839, p.601.

among the most valuable of the resources with which, historically, they had traded with Europeans; a fact well known to the principal architect of the inclusion of the term 'forests' in the treaty, James Busby. It is also evident that Busby was concerned at the dramatic decline he had observed in both the state of the timber resource and rangatira control of it in the Bay of Islands and adjoining harbours, and had indicated his concern to the British Government.

It is suggested that the scale of the loss may have influenced the proceedings at Waitangi on 5-6 February 1840; or, at very least, that this proposition is worthy of future research, including into the oral history of the affected tribes

Appendix: Chiefs as Listed by Lieutenant McRae, 1820

BAY OF ISLANDS

Matowhai		
Pomarré		Rungateeda no te Kaaingha
E Wharré		Waiheene no Pomarré
Poaka		Tamyte no Pomarré
E Teeké		Tamyte no Pomarré
E Po		Koeteedo no Pomarré Whaheene no Ténana
Te Ou Shou)	
Gnahooia)	
E Hooee)	Takoo Whaheene Koeteedo no Pomarré
E Ou)	
Murrewheea)	
E Hoonga)	
Te oure o Macaréq)	
Keadeedé doto ra)	
E Hooe E Caré kee te ty boudé)	Whyatoo no Tokoo Whaheené
E ah hā hā kakewah kakewah)	
Kakewa Kewa)	
Te ooré kamami tekke wa)	Wyatoo no Murrewheea whaheené
E hee wa Ehee wa eh)	no Shookehanga

BAY OF ISLANDS

Superior Chiefs

Shunghé Eeka	Te Keddé Keddé
Temoranghé hé Eeka	O'Coola
Pomarré	Matowhai or Cororadica
Koro Koro	Paroa

Inferior Chiefs

Te koké	Py hea and Cowa Cowa
Whewhea	Wycaddé
Towé	Rangahehoo
Bené	Paroa bay near Oneroa
Showrakke	Teekooranghe

WHANGEROA

Superior Chiefs

Te Porré
Te Poohai

Motoo
Kamimé

Inferior Chiefs

Matapo
Towwheetoo
Tarra or George
Ehoodoo

Motto uncle of Teporré
relation to
Brother to Tipoohé
" "

BREAM BAY

Tengangha
Kookoopa
Moodewhenooa
Shunghe
Porro
Cavalle Islands
O Keeda
Tyhammy
Kyterra
Tewheero
Pookanué
Korookoo
Te Wymatté
Tarriha
Rewa

Bream Bay
" "

Moodewhenooa or N. Cape
West side of the N. Cape

Tyhammy subject to Temoranghe
" "

Pookanue subject to Temoranghe

Wymatte subject to Shunghe
" " "