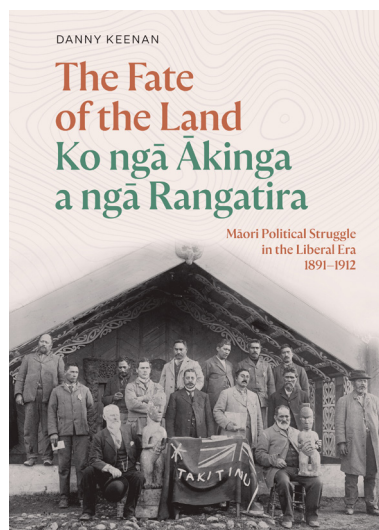


# The Fate of the Land Ko ngā Ākinga a ngā Rangatira

## *Māori Political Struggle in the Liberal Era 1891–1912*

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### THE BATTLE FOR MĀORI LAND AND LIVELIHOODS

In the second half of the nineteenth century, settlers poured into Aotearoa demanding land. Millions of acres were acquired by the government or directly by settlers; or confiscated after the Land Wars.

By 1891, when the Liberal government came to power, Māori retained only a fraction of their lands. And still the losses continued. For rangatira such as James Carroll, Wiremu Pere, Pāora Tūhaere, Te Keepa Te Rangihiwini, and many others, the challenges were innumerable. To stop further land loss, some rangatira saw parliamentary process as the mechanism; others pursued political independence.

For over two decades, Māori men and women of outstanding ability fought hard to protect their people and their land. How those rangatira fared, and how they should be remembered, is the story of Māori political struggle during the Liberal era.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Danny Keenan (Ngāti Te Whiti ki Te Atiawa) completed a PhD in history at Massey University in 1994 and became a senior lecturer there in 2004. In 2009 he won a Fulbright Senior Scholar Award to teach New Zealand history at Georgetown University, Washington DC. He has published widely on Māori and New Zealand history. In 2016, *Te Whiti O Rongomai and the Resistance of Parihaka* (Huia, 2015) received a Ngā Kupu Ora Māori Book Award and his 2009 book *Wars Without End: Ngā Pakanga Whenua o Mua New Zealand's Land Wars — A Māori Perspective* was revised and reissued in 2021.

### SALES POINTS

- The vital story of the resolute defence of Māori interests in the face of immense state power
- Addresses a serious gap in our understanding of land loss and politics during this important period
- An engaging text and over 60 illustrations bring to life the leading politicians and activists of this defining era in New Zealand politics under liberals
- Essential reading for all historians, lecturers, teachers and students of Aotearoa New Zealand history

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The Liberals were New Zealand's longest unbroken government. They took office in January 1891 and survived for 21 years, seven under a coalition government, until July 1902. They did not govern again, though they joined a coalition government between 1913 and 1929, finally emerging into a new United Party government in 1928.

This book examines the Liberal administration with a particular emphasis on the 1890s, a period of rapid change, both detrimental and far-reaching effect. It traces Major Mitchell's involvement with the Crown from the earliest days of Pākehā settlement, before highlighting the *late determined* importance of rangatira who sought to engage with, and influence, Liberal government policy. The chapters that follow explore the intransigent political issues facing the Liberal government, and the extent to which the government's response to economic marginalisation, community privation and demographic loss.

Integral to this was the issue that most energised Major Mitchell's endeavours because the stakes were so high – the fate of the land itself. Though Pākehā largely saw coven as separate matters, for Māori, political sovereignty and the land were inseparable. As the author writes, 'the land was the heart of the nation'. In the words of Māori poet Eide Dūrie, 'The land was posited as a bridge, being from which the community derived, grounding and securing' (compiling



Repetition Movement rangatai gather, 1876. The Repetition Movement galvanized Ngāi Kahungunu opposition to deceptive land purchase practices used by Pōkai in the Hawke's Bay. Headed by Hōne Te Waiata, the movement's newspaper *Tā Whānui* was published between 1874 and 1878 under the leadership of Hōne Te Waiata and Karaitiana Takamoana. ALEXANDER



insisted that, more than that, even Waikato lands should be returned, and that Māori settlers should be taken back to Auckland. As Tūhono realised, moving the Kingtanga beyond its recent history of military aid and appalling losses would not be easy, or even necessary. The Kingtanga, deserving of redress and justice, would chart its own course towards the restoration of its rightful ancestral lands and sovereignty.

Efforts to restore political unity also continued in the Far North when the warren Te Tiriti o Waikato was opened in 1875 at Waikato, signalling a Ngāpuhi commitment to ensuring that their rangatira, as guaranteed by the Treaty of Waikato, would not be forgotten. A second, larger warren was also opened in 1880. Three thousand Māori attended, including Native Minister William Halliday and Mihinui Taihanga. Also named Te Tiriti o Waikato, the new warren was built to host annual gatherings on 6 February each year, commemorating the treaty signing.<sup>10</sup>

In 1879, King of Thibet agreed to meet Native Minister Daniel McLean at Toklamkang. He was accompanied by Wernma Te Wheroa, Pema Thobas, William Marer, Alexander, and other Crown officials. When McLean arrived at Toklamkang, he was met by the King of Thibet, Pema Thobas, and Kapkha, near Whattos. Thibao came out of his wharero to meet him in person, something he rarely did. The king performed himself excited to meet McLean, whose significant reputation had preceded him.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the terms by which Thibao and his subjects would be allowed to trade with McLean. McLean made offers of land, resources and money, but Thibao refused all advances, insisting on the return of all confiscated Waklato lands. Further discussions could not break the impasse. McLean met Thibao one last time, in 1879, but again a conflict of interest did not result from the discussion on the nature of the trade.

Daniel McLean's primary duty was to offer cash to a public servant and politician with a recognised proficiency in dealing with Thibet. His successor as native minister, Daniel Poles, was unwilling to advance the discussions with Thibao. In May 1879, with George Grey now premier, Thibao once again met officials, including George Grey, Native Minister John Richardson and others. The meeting was a failure. Thibao was not present, the gathering was a significant one, but still Thibao would not relent.<sup>11</sup>



original proposal for Kōwhirianga had been drawn up in Tōwhā's village.) The current member for Northern Māori, Eparima Te Mura Kapa of Aupōuri, was a member.

Not surprisingly, most of the principal targets came from the far North, including Hida Hida Nigamu, who would be elected to Parliament in 1893, including Shigenaga Tsunemasa, the East Coast, Hecotocang, Central Plateau and Pongwe Bay were well represented at Watangi, as were Wazirani and Wafimani.

Notable by their absence were *nagatama* from the *Kingtama*, and *emimono* from *Nishi Matsugatake* and *Tanabata*.<sup>10</sup> Also missing were a number of significant *nagatama* who had been part of the long struggle for *Tei Kōshōtama* but had not lived to experience this occasion. *Pōshi Tōhara*, founder of the *Ōkita* *Parish*, had died just one month earlier, on *Ōkita*, on 12 March 1896. *Hirata Tōkuzō*, who had worked closely with *Tei Kōshōtama* since 1879, died on 27 November 1896. *Hōmei Kōmei* died in 1895. In 1891, *Tei Kōshōtama* had lost its travelling companion and fellow visionary, *Tōshinsha Tei Sasagawa*, in 1896.

The importance of this 14 April 1896 gathering has been much discussed by historians. *Utsunoyama* (no. 4) describes it as 'a further meeting, following many others, particularly the 1890 *Osumai* issue where *Tei Tōshinsha Kōshōtama* was formalized. For *Rail Kōmei*, it was a 'constitutional' assembly, where the empowering constitution of the future *Kōshōtama* was drafted. As *Shōdō*, *Asahi* and *Yokohama* classified it as a 'national assembly', it was the first time that *Tei Kōshōtama* embraced and cited Section 71 of the 1892 Constitution Act, which allowed for the creation of autonomous native districts, to provide justification



parliamentary speeches were given in English 'for the information of the white majority ... who could tell what interpretation was given of English speeches? Sometimes, Whitefield had been told, a Mikiel member would ask an interpreter what had just been said, *only to be told* it is nothing that concerns you'. If that were true, then 'that was not equal interpretation on both sides'.<sup>20</sup>

By the 1850s, Parliament had three interpreters, who were also expected to inform *Māori* members regarding on *House* activities, to translate petitions and other records sent to by *Māori* chiefs and bills and parliamentary papers. They were also expected to attend *Māori* public affairs and other ceremonies, and to be able to read and write in *Māori*.<sup>10</sup> By the late 1850s, *Māori* were proficient at English but still preferred to deliver speeches in *Māori*. *House* interpreters were steadily abolished in 1900, though *Māori* interpreters remained on staff for some time afterwards.<sup>11</sup>

The experience undoubtedly assisted in *Camell*’s intense interest in politics but it was a difficult time for *Māori* members critical of the government, no doubt because of the *House*’s limited ability to provide *Māori* members with translations of daily order papers and bills as required by many orders. For *Māori* members, writes *Somers*, ‘despair and despondency must have been common for much of the time’. Hindered by the lack of English, *Māori* members struggled to ‘follow the normal can and thrust of parliamentary debate. They also often felt ignored and ridiculed when they

During Carroll's time as interpreter, he worked with Māori MHRs Wiremu Maijapa Te Wheroo of Western Māori, Ihala Tainui and Mōri Kerei Tainui of Southern Māori, Hīnare Tomsana of Eastern Māori, and Hine Mōi Tihana of Northern Māori. As a member of the Liberal government, he would work with some of these men again, especially Hīnare Tomsana, Wiremu Te Wheroo

Carroll probably met his wife, Hēni Materoa, also known as Te Mairangi, during the early 1880s. Hēni's mother was Repeta Kahutia, the daughter of Kahutia. Her father was Mākaera (Mika) Tūrangī, who was born at Mākaera. Poverty Bay James and Hēni were married on 4 July 1881 in a Wellington registry office, having eloped from Gisborne because Hēni's parents disapproved of James. However, they soon returned home. Marcy years later, after the First World War, they had



Te Aranga workers performed a haka at Rotterda during the 1001 visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall. James Carroll organised a 'marae of 35 acres' to welcome them at Rotterda racecourse. With 5000 Māori in attendance, the two-week event was managed with commendable discipline, operating under the new Māori councils network with its focus on ameliorating communal health standards attesting to the importance of the health reforms being achieved by Māori. A *marae* (hauku) is a large hall used for



change appreciably. To overcome this cultural reluctance, Masi Fumate enlisted a network of Masi cottage hospitals, staffed by Masi, though under expert Pilehč supervision. These could provide care, accommodate relatives, offer nursing tutoring and general Masi health education. The cottage hospital idea gained wide acceptance, since sites were chosen (the first was to be in Hekiang) and Carol supported the plan and suggested government support, but the first-line record materialized. No Masi cottage hospitals were ever built.

**F**rom March to November 1901 the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (the future George V and Queen Mary) had supported a grand tour designed to thank the empire nations that had upheld the British during the South African War, which was still being fought. They arrived in New Zealand in June. The focus for Mary, Carrell decided, should be a large event in Botetown. Early in March he sent out an invitation to rangatira and established a ministerial group to oversee arrangements. Transport arrangements – by horse, coach, rail and steamer – began in April. Carrell was anticipating that at least 5000 Māori would attend. By August, Carrell was anticipating that the visit to the Botetown wharf would be the largest ever. The visit would be a "wonderful day" for them. They would also be a large area available to one side of the visiting Māori to practise their haka and other performance items.<sup>18</sup>

Before the royal party arrived, however, members of Miloki protocol threatened to impede the tour. Hēnare Kaihau, the member for Western Māori, had criticised the government for not ensuring that the royals would pay a courtesy visit to King Mahuta at Waahi, before proceeding to Rotorua. Suggestions were even heard that the Kingtanga might boycott the royal visit, unless the demands of the Kingtanga were met.

Hōne Heke Ngāpua criticised the Kingtanga stance, saying it was directed not only at the House but at all Māori. He suggested that Ngāpua had prior claims to a first visit because the royal party would sail through its waters, when first approaching New Zealand. In fact, Ngāpua had proposed Waitangi as the appropriate landing place for the party, given its shared historical significance, but Captain Hall had declined. *Parahiara* (1991, p. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100).

Rangatahi at Pihikahi at the signing of the final cession of Lake Waikarepa by Ngāti Kahungunu to the Crown, 1896. From the arrival of the first Pihikahi, thousands of acres of Waikarepa tribal lands were lost through forfeiture and the Native Land Court. In 1896, in an effort to protect Lake Waikarepa from further spoliation, rangatira of Ngāti Kahungunu ki Waikarepa gifted the lake to the Crown. <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/whakapapa/whakapapa-whenua/whakapapa-whenua.htm>



In the end, it was not to be. And as the Milder policies failed, Carroll had little else to fall back on. Finally, even with all his exceptional talent, he could no longer assuage the consequences for Milder of egregious land dispossession instigated by a controlling and unsympathetic government. In 1912, James Carroll moved to the Opposition benches, nonetheless retaining his immense influence as an statesman within Parliament and beyond. In 1909, he lost his electoral seat at Glasgow and immediately retired. He died in Auckland on 28 October 1921.

From the beginning, the heart of the matter for rangatira was the continued possession of the land, which had long provided Māori with political autonomy, social cohesion, economic security and cultural authenticity. Pākehā settlers, unwilling to accommodate Māori, had imposed their power-governing structures, in time appropriating spaces to Māori, but only under Pākehā suzerainty. Māori engaged politically with Pākehā, asserting the cultural legitimacy and physical grounding of their rangatiratanga, challenging the Crown's postulate assertions of unilateral sovereignty, sovereignty over the land.

After 1890, the Pilsch political landscape changed immensely. Bangata continued to engage, with the incoming Liberals, acquiring influence over native policy deliberations. There were many challenges for Bangata, not least, for some, the determined pursuit of political *korahitanga* beyond the reach of the

Following 1900, as part of land and health reforms, tribal councils were established with significant degrees of autonomy, but a scarcity of land for Fákéha settlement, alongside Crown indifference to Māori wellbeing, settled their fate. Reviews of remaining Māori land compounded the issues. With its electoral base severely weakened, when an unopposed minority of 30 voters, the

Throughout these difficult years, from 1891 to 1912, Māori men and women of outstanding ability fought hard, at great personal cost, to protect Māori and their land. How those rangatira fared, and how they should now be remembered, is the subject of this book.

Rangitikei gather in Greytown to celebrate the opening of a new wharfed at Papatia Pa. Rich Seddon stands to the left. After welcoming Seddon to Papatia Pa on 26 May 1860, Hone Tamahau Mahupuku thanked Seddon for his visit, saying it was *teia* that the premier should come and meet with the people. All of the tribes were present, he said, and they were all willing to follow Seddon to the wharfed on the frontier and to any point of conflict. Seddon replied that he was pleased to hear this.