

pleasure. There are times indeed when they really appear to have a desire to learn; at others, the enemy of Souls seems suddenly to get an advantage over them, they become fretful and obstinate, they scowl, and act in a manner which grieves me.' In September, not long before returning to London, he reported that in church the young men liked to look over the hymnal when singing, though they could not read it. And yet, extraordinarily, on 26 June he had also written that Titeri had of his own accord written out the Lord's prayer, and dated that same day we find two letters written in copperplate handwriting, signed respectively 'Thomas Tooī' and 'Teeterree', and then others written similarly in August. The June letters convey Tuai's regret that he is unable to read and Titeri's self-condemnatory remark: 'I am very bad boy and cannot read the Book', and again, in August, 'Cannot yet understand to read the Book: some words very easy, some very hard; make my head ache'.

Until recently I had not located Micro MS 303, acquired by the Library in 1961, on which these letters appear. In 1965, being then interested in the career of these young men, I made some efforts to establish whether the later letters, received by the Turnbull on micro-film from the C.M.S., might be supposed to have been written by Tuai and Titeri themselves, or written for them, in language and handwriting which they might have been supposed to adopt. A Maori scholar pointed out that the style of expression and construction were those which a Maori with some knowledge of English might be expected to use. At the same time the impeccable spelling pointed to some considerable assistance, as in Titeri's account of a visit to the Tower of London: 'I see plenty guns, thousands. I see lion and tiger, and cockatoo; I talk to cockatoo he know me very well. I see Elephant quite astonished my countryman no believe if I tell him.' So likewise the letter headings ('London Oct<sup>r</sup> 28, 1818' and 'Baring in the Downes Jan<sup>y</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> 1819') could hardly have been composed by Tuai and Titeri themselves. An English graphologist, to whom I submitted photocopies for comment, could make no suggestion as to the identity or character of the writers other than to remark that they were probably written by adult Maoris of the time and that one bearing the signature of Teeterree was in a different hand from that bearing the signature of Thomas Tooī. On the other hand, Tuai himself, in 1824, told the Frenchman R. P. Lesson that he could neither read nor write, and had no idea what the missionaries had passed off in his name.<sup>10</sup> To suppose however that these letters were merely a hoax perpetrated by officials of the C.M.S. seemed nonsensical in that they were exchanged merely within the small inner circle with whom alone Tuai and Titeri had dealings, and though one letter, sent across the world to Samuel Marsden, eventually found its way back again into the pages of *The*