

The meeting was between the representatives of the British crown, Governor Robert Fitzroy, Colonel Thomas Gore Brown and George Grey with Tawhiao, the second Maori King and his people.

It was not a friendly meeting.

Governor Fitzroy told Tawhiao that he wanted the land in the centre of the North Island divided in half.

Tawhiao was to have the western half and Fitzroy the eastern.

Caught Off Guard

Tawhiao did not expect such a demand and was caught off guard.

This was a big blow to him, and he was left with no alternative but to agree with Fitzroy and his colleagues who were well pleased.

But the great Maori leader had second thoughts.

He stood at his full height with all the regality of his monarchy and looked up into the heavens and bowed his head in silence for a few minutes.

Tawhiao prayed to God in humbleness and repentance, asking for a favour with earnestness and pleading.

E Te Matua nui i te rangi, homai te maramatanga ki roto i a au Whakaaria taku arero, taku hotu manawa.

Our father in heaven give me wisdom, knowledge and understanding.

On opening his eyes he focused them on Governor Fitzroy and asked him for his bell-topper hat.

Aghast and Bewildered

Fitzroy gave Tawhiao his hat, thinking to humour him but was aghast and bewildered when Tawhiao placed it on the ground.

Still standing, Tawhiao drew his tomahawk and raised it in a position to strike.

Governor Fitzroy yelled at him to stop and not destroy his hat, and Tawhiao put his tomahawk away.

Tawhiao confronted him with his next words, saying "Is it just right that you should cut my land in half, like I could cut your hat in half?"

Tawhiao then placed his hat on a map of the North Island and drew a circle around the rim of the hat to emphasise the fact that the land in the circle was his and called it Rohepotae, the hat boundary.

Eventually the gentlemen made an agreement and Tawhiao said, "Ma te Matua nui i te rangi, herea te rangi ki te whenua, whakamanahia, whakatapuhia tenei take waenganui i te Maori me

te Pakeha, amuri. Ake nei, ake, ake tonu atu. Amene."

"May God in heaven and earth bear witness to this solemn pact between Maori and Pakeha for ever and ever, Amen."

WN 28 Nov 1985

In reply to a solemn day in 1858

WT. 4/2/86

It is at a moment like this I wish I were a psychologist, to satisfy my curiosity, as to the subtle motives of Tahana Wahanui. (Interestingly, Tana Te Waharoa, the second King-maker, bares a name resemblance to the author). The apparent attempt of removing Tawhiao's 'mana' to enhance a hill that was once in the middle of a swamp, belies his cunning, when it becomes obvious that first, he has not done his homework in a little study from competent historians, or, secondly, he is emanating the same track-record of his mentors, who own the edifice dominating the skyline of the once Nehenehenui. It certainly does not sound like the place for a proud King to make a deal with the pakeha.

It was in 1858 that Wiremu Tamehana, 'crowned' an aging reluctant old chief, Te Wherowhero, as King, rather than 'Ariki taungaroa', at Ngaruawahia, who then took the name Potatau. Pei Te Hurinui Jones contends that the date was 2nd May 1859, while other authorities fix the date as 1858. The war broke out in Taranaki in 1861, one year after Potatau died, which was June 1860. The King was succeeded by his son Matutaera, (later known as Tawhiao). Three years later, in Tawhiao's reign he reluctantly found himself with his people at war with the Pakeha, when Lt. General Duncan Cameron crossed over the Mangatawhiri stream. By 1865, Tawhiao and his followers being routed, fled into the limestone country and territory of the Maniapoto, which subsequently became known then as the KING COUNTRY. (Note, this was long before the legend of Te Rohepotae).

The name of Governor Robert Fitzroy was mentioned also, alas this gentleman was only in office from 1848-1853 from where he returned to England and never returned. So Fitzroy, not even in New Zealand, having left five years earlier, could not have been present at the legendary Te Rohepotae meeting to

lend a hat, in 1858. Alas too, Tawhiao, was not yet king, he had to wait until 1860. However, an historic meeting did take place, where Tawhiao, together with 600 of his followers met a 'crown' representative, the Resident Magistrate, William Gilbert MAIR. This gentleman had been a friend of Tawhiao's and the meeting took place at Whatiwhatihoe at Alexandra, (now called Pirongia). This meeting was in July of 1881, three years after the meeting Tawhiao had with Sir George Grey and others in May 1878, when allocation and partitioning of Maori land was made, 'lands on the left bank of the Waipa'; 500 acres at Ngaruawahia, etc. etc.

Tawhiao's meeting on his home ground at Whatiwhatihoe, is well documented in Mair's Dairy. (If Te Whati Tamati, was alive today he too, would confirm....) The fact, was that Tawhiao put down his gun, this was followed by 70 warrior chiefs and followers of the 600 present, alongside of his. Seventy roasted pigeons were placed alongside, together with a 'fantail'. This was the talisman of peace offered by Tawhiao, a message that was flashed by telegraph throughout New Zealand.

The so-called prayers recorded in the article are out of character for the warrior Chief and King, Tawhiao, who was of the Pai Marire religion, brought from Parihaka, Taranaki, from the prophets Te Whiti O Rongomai, and Te Ua Haumeme. King Tawhiao, called his religion Tariaro.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, needs no back-drop of error to highlight its presence, when one of its apparent apologists has wittingly or otherwise chosen to handle the truth carelessly. It betrays his race by his prostitution of integrity on all the points he has raised. Our young teenage children are not dumb; and today the kaumatua are fast losing the mana and respect they should deserve. It is when the elders have printed misleading misinformation, to which this letter is a reply, especially in the light that the same letter, word for word was released in the Waitomo News 28th Nov. '85, now this letter in the Times, is obviously aimed at the Tainui readers of this Tainui-Maniapoto area, with motives, not for history's sake, but the misappropriation of mana for Tuhi-karamaea.

**Te Waa Me,
Ihaka Waitara-Amos,
KAWHIA**