Land and Memory:
reflections on the Williams' story, from Pēwhairangi to Pouerua

Samuel Carpenter, St Paul's Paihia, 4 February 2014[1]

Mihimihi:
Ka whakarongo ake au ki te tangi a te manu nei, a te ma tui: Tui, tui, tuituia; tuia i runga, tuia i raro, tuia i roto, tuia i waho; tuhia ki te muka tangata, i takea mai i Hawaiiki nui, Hawaiiki roa, Hawaiiki pamamao; tuhia ki te hono wairua kia ki ake au, ka ao, ka ao, ka awatea. Tihei wa mauri ora; mai i te whei ao, ki te ao marama.
(*loose interpretation:* Acknowledging that we are connected to all things, to those things in heaven and on earth, to those who have come before us from many places, to those who have departed this world...)

Opening:
In this bicentenary year of the coming of the Christian gospel – the 'good news' or Te Rongo Pai – to these shores, it seems only proper to open my remarks tonight with the words of a Maori churchman as he reflected on the legacy of Christianity in this very place and throughout the country, and in particular on the legacy of the work of Karuwhā, Te Wiremu, Henry Williams.

The Rev Matiu Taupaki, of Te Rarawa, was ordained in 1861 and ministered from Paihia to the wider Bay of Islands area.[2] In 1876, he was the key mover in establishing the memorial to Henry Williams that stands outside this church building. The memorial is expressed to be from the Maori church, and some prominent iwi are mentioned, including Ngati Kahungunu and Ngati Porou, and of course, Ngapuhi. In his address to the large hui of Maori and Pakeha that assembled to mark the unveiling of this memorial – some 800 strong[3] – the Rev Taupaki said this; he did not hold back:

> Think of the wickedness of our island. The exceeding heavy stone which weighed us down was cannibalism, but that did not deter him. He forsook his own country and people, parents and relatives. He arrived here in 1823. He landed at Paihia, and there built his first fortress, the church standing before you. It was in that fortress he forged the weapons of war wherewith to overthrow the strongholds of the earth.

Taupaki gave a rendition of the long series of tribal disputes and warfare in which Williams had intervened, and his long journeys across the country to establish missionaries amongst

[1] **These lecture notes are provided for informal distribution, not for publication.**
[2] New Zealand Herald , Issue 4966, 16 October 1877, Page 3 (http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=NZH18771016.2.24&srpos=23&e=01-01-1876-01-01-1878--10--21-byDA---2Taupaki-- accessed 30 Jan 2014)
[3] New Zealand Herald, Volume XIII, Issue 4424, 18 January 1876, Page 3 (http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast?a=d&cl=search&d=NZH18760118.2.29&srpos=2&e=01-01-1876-01-01-1878--10--1-byDA---2Taupaki- accessed 30 Jan 2014)

other iwi.[4] What I find most interesting about Taupaki's language is the metaphor of fortress and war. Taupaki envisages the Paihia church as a turreted castle – or perhaps, a pallisaded pa – in which Williams drew on all the resources of Christian scripture and tradition, and prayer, to wage a spiritual war against powers present in the land. Through proclamation of Te Rongo Pai, much of it translated right here at Paihia, and the missionary peacemaking, Taupaki saw that the spiritual dynamics and atmosphere of Aotearoa NZ underwent a profound sea-change.

Introductory theme

It may be a truism to say that the histories and identities of people are interwoven with the land or landscapes in which they live. By telling the stories of people, you are telling the stories of the land, and vice versa. I want to suggest tonight that three sites are integral to telling the Williams' story in the north, and are bound up with it: the Paihia mission precinct; Te Tii Waitangi; and Pouerua-Pakaraka.

Paihia

The Paihia mission precinct was perhaps the central mission site of the 1820s-30s. The *Herald* was built and launched here. British Resident James Busby landed here in 1833, to a large welcome and hākari by local Māori and the mission. On Sunday 9th February 1840, the first Rā Tapu following the Waitangi Treaty-signings, the Paihia church hosted the newly-minted Lieutenant Governor Hobson and his retinue, together it must be supposed with some Maori residents of the mission. On that Sunday it was almost certainly Williams who led the liturgy and preached the sermon on 'the duties and opportunities of governments'. T Lindsay Buick records briefly the happening of this service and the sermon's subject;[5] frustratingly, the lack of footnotes/endnotes means I have not been able to trace the source of this story. But it is a wonderfully suggestive occurrence. The text of that sermon, if it could be found, would be a fruitful source for comprehending the missionaries' support of British intervention in Nu Tireni/ New Zealand.

Te Tii

The Paihia mission and the Te Tii Waitangi site became interlinked quite early on in the Williams' story. Te Tii Waitangi, the land we now know as Te Tii marae and campground on the south side of the Waitangi estuary, was taken into a trust arrangement for local hapu by Williams, on behalf of the CMS, in the 1830s. It was the site where largely unrecorded but possibly defining Treaty discussions took place. Later, in the early 1890s, Henry's sons, Edward, Henry junior and John, supported hapu claims in the Native Land Court – in furtherance of the original trust arrangement.

There is some complexity to this story, as there is with understanding most land transactions in these early years. I have reconstructed the story in the following way: In 1830, Henry

[4] Quoted in K Newman, *Bible & Treaty: Missionaries Among the Maori – a New Perspective* (Auckland: Penguin, 2010), p 321.
[5] T L Buick, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, 3rd ed (New Plymouth: Thomas Avery, 1936), p 163.

Williams acquired the Te Tii land for the CMS in a transaction with Te Kemara, Te Tao and other rangatira whose affiliations were primarily it seems to Ngati Rahiri. In 1839, he transferred or reconveyed this land to Ngati Rahiri, or at least the portion of land the hapu was occupying and cultivating. In 1841, Williams claimed the whole area, comprising some 700 acres, for the CMS on the basis of the original 1830 transaction. In the Old Land Claim documents, the land carries the name 'Waitara'. Williams did not originally inform the Commissioners of any trust or reconveyance of the land to Ngati Rahiri. However, when Te Kemara was called, he testified to his signature on the 1830 deed, and agreed with the boundaries, but added that Williams had agreed to their keeping the pa area within the claim. When the Commissioners recalled Williams, he confirmed this story, emphasizing that while the hapu could continue to occupy 'as far as the stream Hineriria' they could not sell to a third party.[6]

Now there might appear to be some wrinkles in this story; for example, why, if Williams reconveyed the land in 1839, did he claim it for the CMS in 1841 seeking effectively a grant or confirmation of land ownership from the Crown? And why did he not testify at first to the existence of the ongoing occupation/cultivation by the hapu of a portion of the land? These are difficult questions to answer, perhaps. What I have not yet told you is how we know about the 1839 re-transfer. In 1891 the Native Land Court sitting at Kawakawa awarded the whole of this 700a block to the local hapu Ngati Rahiri. They did so primarily it seems on the basis of an original document executed by Henry Williams in 1839 apparently reconveying the entire block.[7]

What I think is most interesting about this story, at least for the journey I am going on tonight, is who was supporting Ngati Rahiri in the Land Court: it was Henry Williams junior, Edward Williams and John Williams – Henry's sons. They testified to this reconveyance, and/or to their understanding that their father had wished to preserve this land in the possession of the hapu to occupy and cultivate, and for fishing. And this very significant fact helps to reconcile the earlier narrative somewhat, I think. For if Williams had intended this, which the Land Court evidence and judgment clearly supports, then it made sense for him to seek an award to the CMS in 1841. By holding the legal interest under a Crown grant, the CMS could protect the hapū interest – perhaps as a type of trust or beneficial interest. There were a number of CMS trust deeds of this nature at the time. If the CMS were not awarded the land, then it would be left legally unprotected.

Now this is in fact what happened. Through the contortions of the Old Land Claims' process, and in part due to the artificial policy about maximum areas able to be awarded to Pākehā claimants, and probably a good deal of colonial politics thrown in, the CMS was eventually only granted a portion of all its Paihia-Waitangi claims, and this area did *not* include Te Tii Waitangi. Other Land Court evidence suggests that in fact the Crown had sought to claim Te

[6] P Berghan, 'Northland Block Research Narratives', vol 2 (CFRT, 2006), pp 437-438.
[7] Native Land Court, Northern Minute Book no 11, July 1891, pp 35-48.

Tii as surplus land.[8] If this had occurred, then that land would have been lost to Maori, as did occur in other areas of the Bay of Islands. It is tempting to speculate that, in that event, the Waitangi Te Tii marae and campground as we know it today would not exist. But this is mere counterfactual. What we know for sure is that Henry's sons, prominent people in their own right, stood by Ngati Rahiri's claims; and this must have counted a good deal in the Native Land Court of that time.

They also paid for Ngati Rahiri's lawyer. Henry Williams junior's dairy for either 30 or 31 March 1891, records the following:

> Tane called to say the Native Land Court will sit at Waimate on the 8th April to hear the Ti Case[.] I arranged with Reed to conduct the case for them for £5. We are to meet at Reeds office on Monday to coach Reed up in the case.

And then on 2 April: 'I was in the office all day preparing the papers re Te Tii for Reed on Monday next.'

Now who was this Tane? His fuller name, Tane Haratua, appears on the Court's 1891 order, at the very top of the list of names. It is almost certain that he was a son or grandson of the Haratua that became one of the Williams' good friends at Pakaraka.

The stories of Henry Williams' role in protecting the Te Tii land lives on, though perhaps the detail I have given has been lost to living memory. At the 150th Williams family commemorations in 1973, the family was welcomed on to Te Tii marae, and Ta Hemi Henare (or Col. J C Henare as he then was) reminded those gathered that Williams had 'given' the land to the local hapu in the early days.[9] Fitting, then, that Williams has been carved into the central pou in the whare waananga at Te Tii.

Let us dwell for a moment more on the meanings of this 1891 combination of Maori and Pakeha in the Native Land Court; perhaps it would be more correct to say – of mihingare Maori and mihingare Pakeha – of Maori and Pakeha missionary Anglicans or their descendants. Fifty or sixty years after the period of the original transactions, the support the Williams family showed for Ngati Rahiri demonstrates the presence of meaningful intergenerational relationships that had their tap-roots in the pre-Treaty mission period.

Beyond the simple reality of ongoing relationships, I am interested in the question of to what extent, deeper and enduring culture-change was experienced by European-British missionaries in New Zealand. This is a subject requiring real scrutiny by historians and anthropologists. To what extent was a new type of human being created by sustained inter-cultural contact in a new land? I would like to refer to another example that suggests that sympathies between descendants of missionary and Maori ran deep, affecting the outlook on

[8] Refer Stirling and Towers report, part 2.
[9] Te Ao Hou, no 74, 1973, pp 42-43 (http://teaohou.natlib.govt.nz/journals/teaohou/issue/Mao74TeA/c17.html, accessed 2 Feb 2014).

issues of the Treaty and justice especially. I will not refer to the context, I will simply quote from this 1867 document by Henry's son, TC Williams:

> As I hold the opinion, in common with many others, that the Treaty of Waitangi has been clearly broken by the Government of this country in their dealings with the Natives for the acquisition of the Manawatu block, and as I am the son of the Rev. Henry Williams above-named, I need offer no apology for now coming forward to assist the Natives "on the north side of Cook's Strait" in standing up for their rights guaranteed to them by the said Treaty.
> I bring no charge against the colonists, for whom, as a body, I, in common with Parakaia and many of his countrymen, have a great respect. I believe them to have been misinformed and misled. When I ask any intelligent Maori the question "who are to blame for the past and the present state of things in New Zealand?" the reply is a ready one-- "Ko nga kai mahi o te Kawanatanga." When I am myself asked a similar question, my reply is the same--"the Government and the officers of the Government."
> THOMAS C. WILLIAMS,
> **A Native of New Zealand.**
> Taita, Wellington, July 18, 1867. [emphasis added][10]

Many other, prominent, examples could be proferred: Samuel Williams' financing of many Maori farming ventures on the East Coast, and of course the support he gave to Te Aute College and the Young Maori Party over many years. The intergenerational scholarship in te reo Maori on the William Williams line of the family, in particular. And what about the spouses? – Colenso's questioning of native policy in the House?; Kate Hadfield's work in Otaki and the support she gave her husband – one of those 'turbulent priests' of the mid-19th century New Zealand?

I will return to this subject of culture change in a moment.

Pouerua-Pakaraka:
The third site at Pouerua or Pakaraka was, and still is, known as the Retreat. In many respects it inherits the history of the first two sites, as Henry and Marianne, together with some of their Paihia Maori friends, moved there in 1850. A key site in its own right, the area holds an important place in the origin stories of today's Ngapuhi iwi. One of the most archaeologically explored sites in Aotearoa, the original Williams land borders an ancient wahi tapu (Kaungarapa) and comprises Pouerua maunga. Within the land's boundaries were reserved two other wahi tapu, and an occupation reserve. Williams later purchased the occupation reserve in 1860, for reasons that are unclear, perhaps because the land had not been used or occupied by Maori for some time.

[10] Thomas C Williams, The Manawatu Purchase Completed; or the Treaty of Waitangi Broken, Williams and Norgate, London, 1868, pp iii-iv (http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/document?wid=1965&page=0&action=null, accessed 2 February 2014).

The physical journey the Williams took to Pakaraka took them past Te Tii Waitangi. It was a journey then that symbolically tied these three sites together. Marianne William's account of the actual journey – the retreat proper – has transported me every time I have read it; in truth, has moved me deeply. The pathos or human travail in these scenes is palpable. I want to read some of this account [or attempt to, as I have feared it would not be possible for me to do so]:

> May 29. We saw ten horses come in with pack-saddles; our son Henry and Pene Taui riding with them. The scene at the front door was an animated one; such a troop of horses coming up, the ground littered with straw, the entrance filled with heavy packages, a crowd of natives looking on, the women tangi-ing--a melancholy sound. Pork and potatoes cooking for the men; corn (the winter store for my fowls) got ready for the horses; all seemed to go right, no difficulties, no obstacles from any one.
>
> After dinner I had been called several times to go and see Katerina Hori and the Kawakawa natives, who had come in a body with Tamati Pukututu at the head of them. My husband was at the front door, a crowd around him, Tamati making his rere, and speechifying.[11]

She explains succintly the nature of these speeches in a letter to England:

> The tribe from the Kawakawa came down with their chief, Tamati Pukututu, the chief who protected the English stores and the camp at the Kawakawa landing place, at the last expedition of the English during the war. They expressed their great anger that Te Wiremu should attempt to leave Paihia without their consent, and at first declared that he should not go anywhere but to the Kawakawa, whither I was to be taken, forthwith, in a canoe, and where they "would build us a house." After the principal men had made their speeches with much gestures and animation, it was concluded that if "Te Wiremu" had been going out to sea they would have held him; but, as he was going behind, to be amongst the people, they would let him go, having first sent to examine the road, and found that it would be a shorter distance from their settlement to Pakaraka over land, than to Paihia by the river.[12]

And skipping back to her journal for the day of the 'retreat':

> May 31. It rained very heavily, and was dark and cold...
> We had some natives to breakfast; among them Pene Taui, who repulsed the troops at Ohaeawai; Tamati Pukututu, who protected the ammunition and stores of the English at his pa at the Kawakawa landing-place, on the last expedition to Ruapekapeka; Wickliffe, a nephew of Kawiti, but a fast friend of the English during the war; Hori, nephew to our old chief, who lived with us as a boy, and rowed in the boat which brought me to Paihia when I first arrived, now principal teacher at the Kawakawa, and "Major" Hara [possibly Te Haara, or Heta Te Haara]. . .
> After breakfast, a deputation from Kororareka was introduced. Mr. Busby was also there, and James King, who had just arrived. Mr. Busby stood forth, saying that a paper had been put into his hands to read. His voice faultered, and he frequently stopped. Mr. ---------- cried like

[11] H Carleton, *The Life of Henry Williams*, vol 2, p 237 (online version http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/)
[12] M Williams to C Heathcote, 18 June 1850, Carleton, vol 2, p 248.

> a child, and went out of the room several times. My husband rose to reply; it was long before he could speak. There was a long, deep pause; we all sat and looked at each other, or on the ground. The deputation requested that the address should remain with them, for the addition of further signatures.
> The horses had now all arrived. We took leave of our kindly Kororareka friends as we were led out to be mounted. Kate moved off first, and was nearly pulled off her horse on the road by poor Ritihia, who clung hold of the skirt of her dress, as she was seized upon to be carried off to be married, after having hid all day to make her escape to Pakaraka. A crowd of natives shaking hands all the way we rode down the road; a crowd at the boat-house, and again at Cook's; another party on the hill. Edward, our first born, rode by the side of his mother; John attended his father, and Thomas rode by Kate; Pene Taui's horsemen followed; Pene brought up the rear; about fifteen of Kate's school children ran by our side, and followed us to the Ti, where the crew of "The Children" and some others gave us three hearty cheers. It was now fine; the air and exercise greatly refreshed us. We rode cheerfully along; my husband's spirits rose as we proceeded; and as we ascended the road winding up the Taratara hill, looking down upon the graceful fern trees, and the steep wooded precipitous sides, riding through the brushwood that shaded the road on either side, we felt like Pilgrims ascending the Delectable Mountains [a reference to John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress].
> We arrived [at Pakaraka] as the light failed, before six o'clock, and were greeted by Henry, Jane, and Lydia, Our own chairs were placed for us on either side of the fire; we had reached the land of Beulah, where we may wait a summons to cross the river Jordan, and yet not wait idle in our Master's work,-- that work for which we had left our own dear native land. Kate and Lydia ran to the piano, and played a duet to welcome us...[13]

Henry's letter to his Maori congregations also fascinates me. The language is lyrical, with a distinct 'native' sensibility. For ease, I quote the English version here:

> Pouerua, June 5, 1850.
> Friend,--Here am I residing at Pakaraka. Paihia is left; the place where I have lived ever since my first landing on this Island. Paihia was not my own place; and now I retire from the rage of the sea, and the foam of the waves, lest I should be overwhelmed. I am now residing in the country; there are no waves here, the sea is smooth, but a gentle breeze, causing a slight ripple upon the surface of the water. **The top of Pouerua is to be my residence, where I can see before and behind me; no one will come here but my children: I love my children. Come, my child, and see me.** I am getting old, but my heart is still alive to speak of the things of God and of Heaven. Write to me. Keep near to God: His word alone is true; the word of man is false. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness, and all things else shall be added unto you.
> This is from me,
> From your father,
> HENRY WILLIAMS.
>
> Pouerua, Hune 5, 1850.
> E hoa e,--Tenei ahau kei Pakaraka e noho ana, kua mahue Paihia te kainga i noho ai ahau, o toku oroko taenga mai ano ki tenei motu, Ehara Paihia i toku wahi ake, tenei hoki au ka wakataha mai i te riri o te moana, i te pua o te ngaru, kei taupokina iho au, kei te tuawhenua

[13] Carleton, vol 2, pp 239-240.

> tenei ahau e noho ana, kahore o konei ngaru, marino tonu te moana, he hau komurimuri kau te pa ana e whakakarekare iti ana i te mata o te tai, **ko te tihi o Pouerua he kainga moku, kia marama ai te titiro ki mua ki muri, kahore he tangata e ahu mai ki tenei wahi, ko aku tamariki anake. Haere mai ra e taku tamaiti kia kite i au**, ka koroheketia ahau, otiia matatau tonu ano taku ngakau ki te korero i nga mea o te Atua, i nga mea o te Rangi. Tuhituhi mai ra ki au, kia piri tonu ki te Atua nana anake te kupu pono, he kupu teka noa to te tangata, matua rapu i te Rangtiratanga o te Atua, me tona tikanga, a ka hoatu hoki ki a koutou ara atu mea katoa.
>
> Naku tenei,
> Na to Matua,
> NA TE WIREMU.
>
> [emphasis added][14]

The phrase which fascinates me most is 'The top of Pouerua is to be my residence, where I can see before and behind me'. The original te reo of this is: 'ko te tihi o Pouerua he kainga moku, kia marama ai te titiro ki mua ki muri'. Now Williams was of course not going to live on the summit of Pouerua, so why did he speak in this way? There is too much to unfold here; but perhaps Williams is revealing a comprehension of the significance in the Maori landscape of a pa sanctuary on top of a maunga, and even of the ancestral significance of maunga and Pouerua itself. The use of Pouerua as a place referent at the head of the letter is unusual, even singular – standardly, both Henry and Marianne would use 'Pakaraka'. That use accentuates the sense that Williams was placing himself in this Maori landscape with some real appreciation of its significance to his Maori audience.

The next sentence is also strongly indicates Williams' view of the world: '...no one will come here but my children: I love my children. Come, my child, and see me...' ('... kahore he tangata e ahu mai ki tenei wahi, ko aku tamariki anake. Haere mai ra e taku tamaiti kia kite i au')

This echoes Marianne's reference to 'both our European and Maori friends' in her retreat letter to England. The view of human and spiritual equality before God is quite evident in these communications.

April 23rd, 1851, Henry recorded in this dairy: 'Trinity Church, Pakaraka, was opened for service; the whole country side – Pakeha and Maori – in attendance. Great rejoicings.'[15]

In another letter back to England, Marianne captures some of the remarkable aftermath of the retreat:

> Pakaraka, November 6, 1851.

[14] Carleton, vol 2, p 254 (te reo Māori version, in Carleton's footnotes on p 300.)
[15] Carleton, vol 2, p 280.

> Henry has missionary work sent him by his Heavenly Master, who owns and employs him. His flocks follow him into the wilderness, and he has had visits from parties of enquirers and old communicants from every part of his late district, occasionally meeting large assemblies of them at Kororareka and the Kawakawa, where he has administered the Lord's Supper and baptism as well as here. Within twelve months the number he baptised was one hundred and sixty-three, some of whom have been long preparing. Our congregation is a scattered one; some come from a distance of eight miles, but near to us are large heathen tribes who never attended the means of grace. Sometimes I think Henry was purposely sent to deliver his message to them. There is a "shaking amongst the dry bones." [a fascinating reference to the Book of Ezekial]
>
> The old warrior, Kawiti, has great influence with them, and they were with him during the war. He also was till lately an obstinate heathen, though having a nephew who is one of the principal teachers. About ten days since Kawiti went from Waimio, beyond the Kawakawa, to meet Henry at the Kawakawa. For the first time in his life he attended the services, and on the Monday morning before he left he made a public speech, declaring himself a believer; that he had found that the greatness of the white people was their goodness; that all their goodness came from the Bible, and that he should now whakapono [believe] and go about amongst the people to urge them to attend church and seek to know the truth. Yesterday we heard he was coming here to hold a visitation with these tribes, intending "to plant in the neighbourhood," to see that they attended church. Haratua, who was with Kawiti at the defence of the Pa of Ruapekapeka, has long lived near us and is a candidate for baptism, his son having been one of the first adults baptised at Trinity Church. Is not this a contradiction to Governor Grey's prognostications and fabrications? Heke's body was brought with great state last summer to Pakaraka, and his tomb is in these woods, in a native reserve.[16]

The son of the Haratua named here may well be the Tane Haratua of 1891 Native Land Court fame; given the timelapse of 40 years though, it could well be the grandson. A little research task to follow up perhaps. Kawiti was baptised in February 1853, an event drawing a large crowd to Trinity Church.[17]

There is too much in these few journal entries to comment on in the timeframe I have tonight. They are a tremendous source of history – that is events seen through the eyes of real flesh and blood human beings. To rely on them unduly, without an even handed use of other sources, would be unsafe. But I go along with the historical vision of Carlyle and Ruskin, as recently described by British historian Simon Schama:

> Their passion was engaged in the redefinition of clarity: to replace the reliability of distance with the unreliable but more faithful experience of proximity. The clarity of

[16] Carleton, vol 2, pp 284-285.
[17] M Williams to C P Davies, 23 Feb 1853, Carleton, vol 2, p 293.

> distance proceeded from the superiority of hindsight. But Carlyle in particular **yearned to make the reader humble in the face of ultimately inscrutable providence** and thus recover through rude force, the uncertain outcomes of history and art**, to set the reader down again on the edge of undertermined possibility** [emphasis added].[18]

What is this really saying? That history is experienced or lived without the benefit of hindsight – is lived forwards. The historian's task, then, is to cast of the shackles of the backward-looking gaze, casting herself instead into the midst of the historical actor's world – the world of their thoughts, motivations, contexts. To disentangle oneself completely from the knowledge of what came after is of course basically impossible. But I like what Schama says here about Carlyle's historical sensibility – the yearning to become proximate with the subject, to attempt to see and feel the world through their lenses, rather than judge them from a distance through our own. In a word, humility.

Closing:

So what are we to make of these sites of memory, and the people that helped make them, as we look back from the vantage point of 2014? Otago University historian, Tony Ballantyne, has recently argued that New Zealand historians need to reframe and refocus their task as one concerned with the making and remaking of places. Rather than working with binary categories of Maori and Pakeha, coloniser and colonised, and with monolithic categories of race and nation, new histories need to concern themselves more closely with the local, the contingent and the peculiar. Ballantyne points to the need for histories that link the changes experienced in local economy with cultural mores and codes that at least in part drove those changes.[19] This would be, I think, to answer another of his calls to anthropologise Pakeha historical actors, as much as certain Maori actors have been anthropologised by historians, such as the late Judith Binney with her studies of Te Kooti and Rua Kenana.

What I take from his arguments are the following. First, we need to do much better work in recontextualising the actions and thinking of our historical protagonists, whether they be Māori, Pākehā, Chinese, chief, slave, missionary, whaler, governor, Protestant, Catholic (or perhaps Anglican CMS, Wesleyan, French Catholic), Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Hine, Te Arawa, or Ngāti Porou. Second, we need to reconstruct particular local contexts with much greater attention to local detail and variation. Third, we need histories that combine the economic and the cultural, so we can achieve a greater appreciation of *who* the people were that lived in landscapes, *how* it is that they have changed those landscapes according to their particular cultural imperatives (including philosophical and theological ones), and also, how those landscapes have *changed them*.

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[18] S Schama, 'Gothic Language: Carlyle, Ruskin and the Morality of Exuberance', London Library Lecture, 12 July 2008, in *Scribble, Scribble, Scribble: Writings on Ice Cream, Obama, Churchill and My Mother* (London: The Bodley Head, 2010), p 363.

[19] T Ballantyne, ' "Waste" and "Improvement": People, Power and Place in colonial Otago', keynote lecture at *Australia New Zealand Law and History Society* conference, University of Otago, 27 Nov 2013.

I hope I have made a start on this historiographical path in my reflections on the Williams' story tonight.

In drawing to a close now, I return to the 1876 memorial address of that Maori churchman, the Rev Taupaki. In a sense, these words capture the central legacies of the Williams story:

> His [Williams] word was the Treaty of Waitangi, which confirmed to the Natives the possession of their lands, giving to the Queen the sovereignty in the Government... let the erection of this stone be a witness amongst us that the Maori Church shall stand, and not be cast down for ever.[20]

The memorial standing outside this church – this site of memory – reminds us that history is more than the flux and flow of material causes and effects. It points to changes that are more profound – that go to matters of the heart, the soul and the spirit, and thence from those regions back again to the world of light – mai i te whei ao, ki te ao marama. Amine.

[20] Newman, *Bible & Treaty*, p 321.

