

CHAPTER 3

MCLEAN AND THE RANGITIKEI–TURAKINA PURCHASE

3.1 NGATIAPA'S OFFER OF SALE AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

In the course of negotiations for the Wanganui block, Ngati Apa indicated their willingness to sell further territory to the north and to the south. However, three years of discussion took place before the Rangitikei lands could be purchased by the Crown. A swift transaction was precluded by the objections of other iwi claiming interests in the region. Ngati Apa, by offering to sell land to the south of the Whangaehu River were, in part, asserting their traditional right over it, but Ngati Toa and Ngati Raukawa at once objected to the proposed sale, and to the extent of territory under offer, arguing that they had conquered the whole of the Cook Strait region, from the Wanganui River to the top of the South Island.

The Government was, however, eager to accept Ngati Apa's offer of sale. Pressure for land was being generated from Wanganui and Wellington where New Zealand Company settlers continued to wait for the sections awarded in compensation by Spain. Lieutenant-Governor Eyre assured the company's acting agent that the Government understood 'the very great importance of at once adjusting the claims of the New Zealand Company settlers who have chosen the Rangitikei neighbourhood for the selection of their compensation allotments.'¹ The Government was 'anxious only to meet the wishes of the New Zealand Company and if possible close this long open question'.²

By this stage, too, the Crown view on Maori ownership was narrowing to exclude uncultivated lands. Earl Grey's 1846 instructions to Governor Grey reflect this more restrictive attitude, which had been expressed by the select committee on New Zealand some two years' earlier. Earl Grey was of the view that:

From the moment that British dominion was proclaimed in New Zealand, all lands not actually occupied in the sense in which alone occupation can give right of possession, ought to have been considered as the property of the Crown in its capacity of trustee for the whole community . . .

1. Eyre to Kelham, 23 April 1849, New Zealand Company (NZC) series 3/10, p 2, NA Wellington
2. Eyre to Wakefield, 20 April 1849, Donald McLean MS Papers 32 (137), p 3, ATL

He recognised that a principle of Crown possession of ‘unoccupied’ lands would be difficult to enforce, but directed Governor Grey to look upon this precept as the ‘foundation of the policy’ he was to pursue whenever possible.³

The view that there were ‘waste lands’ which might be acquired without purchase could not be sustained. It had been demonstrated by Clarke and the Protectorate Department that the nature of Maori interest in land was, in fact, so complex that, if every particular interest was to be located on the ground, and negotiated for, alienations would be limited in extent. While declining to implement Earl Grey’s policy as such, Governor Grey attempted to reconcile settler pressure and growing Crown support for land acquisition and settlement, with Maori resistance to dispossession. He instituted a practice of buying the rights of Maori over all their rohe, including areas which were used for hunting and in which other iwi might have a similar interest, without specifying those rights in the land in detail. Reserves were then made for the vendors within the alienated block.

In 1848, McLean was instructed in accordance with this procedure which underlay the practice of large scale land acquisition. He was informed that the Government was ‘desirous of purchasing the whole of the Native claims to the country between Porirua and Whangaehu . . .’ He was then specifically directed to mark off the internal boundaries of land reserved to Maori while leaving inland boundaries of the purchase undefined:

where the boundaries of these claims upon the coast are marked, the reserve will be ascertained and defined; then the whole claim, however far inland extending, having in every case been purchased, the mere registration of reserves will be the registration of the entire Native claims in the district. It is considered preferable thus to negotiate for the whole claims without attempting to define their exact inland extent, instead of

3. Earl Grey to Governor Grey, 23 December 1846, BPP, vol 5, p 69

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

suggesting in the first instance as the boundary of the desired purchase any great range of mountains or other natural feature of the country . . .⁴

This practice was intended to circumvent challenge and speed up the purchase, for to attempt to determine the extent of Ngati Apa interest in the interior ‘might have raised disputes and prevent[ed] the acquisition of the district for a lengthy period’.⁵

4. Domett to McLean, 12 December 1848, AJHR, 1861, C-1, p 251

5. Eyre to Domett, 1 October 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), ATL

Wellington

McLean proceeded cautiously in the early months of 1849, believing that this approach would save trouble in the long term.⁶ He toured the district, discussing the proposed alienation with both Ngati Apa and Ngati Raukawa. Ballara points out that McLean insisted on the resolution of quarrels among Ngati Apa hapu before he would negotiate with them, and argues that ‘by insisting that sales take place on a “tribal” basis as against sales by individual chiefs and their communities, McLean induced many independent sections of Ngati Apa to behave as one institutional entity’.⁷ Ngati Apa cooperated in this process because they were contending against the more numerous Ngati Raukawa. The Crown supported their right to sell, McLean representing Ngati Apa as bravely asserting their interests against a more powerful tribe. The Lieutenant Governor announced to a Ngati Apa audience that the Crown regarded their claims as ‘just’, while 400 Ngati Raukawa assembled at Rewa Rewa were given notice by McLean that the Government intended to proceed with the Rangitikei purchase.⁸

6. 22 February 1849, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, draft letters, 12 January–13 March 1849, MS 1224, ATL

7. H A Ballara and G Scott, ‘Crown Purchases of Maori Land in Early Provincial Hawke’s Bay – Report on Behalf of the Claimants to the Waitangi Tribunal’, claim Wai 201 record of documents, doc 11, p 71

8. 1–2 January 1849, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, May–July, December 1848–January 1849, MS 1222, ATL

3.2 TRIBAL RESPONSE TO PROPOSED NGATI APA SALE

McLean's diaries reveal much of the motivations of two tribes. One Ngati Apa chief stated that in 'former times' he had been 'friendly with the Ngati Raukawas. Now I wish to know the Europeans and be friendly with them'. Other Ngati Apa chiefs assured McLean that they were anxious to give up all their land to the Crown as an inheritance or place for the Europeans.⁹ The question was how far south those claims extended. Reihana Moitai stated: 'Omurupapaka is the boundary and Oruakatana is also the boundary including Omurupapaka'. This southernmost point of the Ngati Apa claim was five miles from the Manawatu River.¹⁰

Ngati Raukawa at first took the position that Ngati Apa was not entitled to alienate any territory at all. Taratoa, who was seen by them as holding mana from the Manawatu to the Whangaehu River, responded to McLean's announcement of the Government's intention of pursuing the purchase that 'he would not allow the Rangitikei country be sold nor would he sell any part of the Manawatu'.¹¹ The grounds of Ngati Raukawa objection were based partly on issues of mana. They considered that the region had been conquered by Te Rangihaeata and the area north of Kukutauaki Stream allocated to them by Waitohi. Te Rangihaeata was forthright in his rejection of Ngati Apa's assertion of right. At Poroutawhao, he advised

9. 10 January 1849, Donald McLean, 'Diary', May–July, December 1848–January 1849, MS 1222, ATL

10. 23 February 1849, Donald McLean, 'Diary', draft letters, 12 January–13 March 1849, MS 1224, ATL

11. 1 January 1849, Donald McLean, 'Diary', May–July, December 1848–January 1849, MS 1222, ATL

Wellington

McLean against the purchase, stating, ‘That they were slaves and had no right to sell that it was through Taratoa any of them was spared when they fought with them’.¹²

Other considerations than questions of mana underlay the Ngati Raukawa response – concern that Ngati Apa was selling land to Europeans on their very doorstep. McLean records that at a meeting held on 13 January, Taratoa did not ‘display any passionate feeling or obstinacy as regards the claims of the Rangitikei people further than stating his general aversion to dispose of land which he considered the natives required for their own use’. This concern also motivated Te Rangihaeata. He told McLean:

12. 17 January 1849, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, draft letters, 12 January–13 March 1849, MS 1224, ATL

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

He had an understanding with Governor Grey that from Porirua to Wangaehu should be for the Maoris . . . All the natives along this coast joined by my brother Iwikaw [?] of Taupo are strongly opposed to the Ngati Apas selling that country. The natives will be enslaved by you. I do not like natives living among Europeans on spare patches of land. It is a step to acquiring the whole What is money compared to land your money returns to you and we benefit little by it and lose our land.¹³

However, eventually, Taratoa, the other Ngati Raukawa chiefs, Te Rauparaha, and Te Rangihaeata, were reconciled to the sale of the Rangitikei as a means of satisfying European demands for land by territory they were prepared to concede to Ngati Apa. McLean records a speech of Te Rauparaha at Otaki which suggests that he saw the claims of Ngati Apa as surviving and as strengthened within the changed world of post-1840:

Children, my days for talking are over. We have cleared the forest of many of its trees but still we have left trees standing for shelter from the winds and now those trees ‘wakaruru hau’ as he termed them cause talk and annoyance – meaning the Ngatiapas – they have kept growing from time to time till they are become very large and difficult under the new order of things, Christianity, to cut down.¹⁴

But the claim by Ngati Apa that their right to sell extended to the Manawatu was rejected by Ngati Raukawa. McLean was advised that if he wished to purchase more land, ‘let it be the other side of the Rangitikei. Do not consent to buy this side. It will not be given up. All the people have determined to hold the land. The boundary is Rangitikei’.¹⁵

A large and crucial meeting was convened at Te Awahou Pa on 15 March. Those present included George Kingi Te Anaua, Aperahama Parea invited by McLean, and five other Whanganui chiefs who came independently; some two hundred Ngati Apa, including senior chiefs, Kingi Hori Te Hanea, Kawana Hunia, Aperehama

13. 17 January 1849, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, draft letters, 12 January–13 March 1849, MS 1224, ATL

14. 23 January 1849, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, draft letters, 12 January–13 March 1849, MS 1224, ATL

15. [Hakaraia and Others] to McLean, 20 January 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), ATL

Wellington

Tipae, and Te Whaitine; and a large contingent of ‘about one hundred men comprising the most influential members’ of the Ngati Raukawa. Among the older Ngati Raukawa chiefs present were Nepia Taratoa, Te Ahu Karama Paora, while the younger missionary leaders of the tribe are listed as including Tamehana Te Rauparaha, Ihakara Tukumarū, and Matene Te Whiwhi. Martin Te Rongomaitai, a chief of Ngati Upokoiri, and 10 Ngati Maniapoto also participated.¹⁶ In Wilson’s account based on J D Ormond’s reminiscences, a few Rangitane were also at the meeting, allying themselves with Ngati Apa. He describes the non-sellers as Ngati Raukawa and Ngati Awa, under the leadership of Te Rauparaha, Te Rangihaeata, and Taratoa.¹⁷

16. Meeting at Te Awahou Pa, Rangitikei, 15 March 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), pp 1–2, ATL
17. J G Wilson, *Early Rangitikei*, Christchurch, Whitcombe and Tombs, 1914, p 28

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

At the meeting, the majority of Ngati Apa reiterated their intention to sell their interests in the Rangitikei. Their land was ‘now in the ocean or given up to the sons of the ocean the Europeans’.¹⁸ Not all Ngati Apa chiefs, however, agreed to the alienation. Panapa, who is described as having extensive inland claims, stated his refusal to sell: ‘I will not give up my land. No! No! I love my land too much to give it up. Your place is in England, that is the place of the Pakehas, you have no right here’.¹⁹ In McLean’s eyes, however, Panapa’s stance was tainted by his association with Te Rangihaeata, and he had earlier ‘rebuked’ the Ngati Apa chief as a deserter from the interests of his tribe.²⁰

Ngati Raukawa again expressed concern about the pace of alienation: ‘we are now crowded on both sides, Wanganui north of us is sold to the Europeans, Port Nicholson south and Porirua. Now this is.’²¹ While the right of Ngati Apa to sell land to the north of the Rangitikei was now conceded, they stressed that the river should be regarded as the southernmost limit of any alienation. McLean reported that Raukawa acknowledged the existence of Ngati Apa interests on the south bank but still expressed ‘the strongest opposition to its being purchased or possessed by Europeans’.²² This stance was expressed by Kingi Te Ahu Ahu whom McLean records as saying:

It is right you should welcome us. We were friends long ago before this new tikanga – or new order of things took place, we also had quarrels before then, but we should keep friends. Just look Mr McLean, the boundary we claim is the Rangitikei, your people shall have one side, and we shall keep possession of this side but our retaining possession of it will not be for ourselves but for your people also; meaning for the Ngatiapa.²³

18. Meeting at Te Awahou Pa, Rangitikei, 15 March 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), p 19, ATL

19. *Ibid*, pp 10–11

20. 3 March 1849, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, draft letters, 12 January–13 March 1849, MS 1224, ATL

21. ‘Meeting at Te Awahou Pa, Rangitikei’, 15 March 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), p 8, ATL

22. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 26 June 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), ATL (cited in J Luiten, ‘Whanganui ki Porirua’, claim Wai 52 record of documents, doc A1, p 16)

23. Meeting at Te Awahou Pa, Rangitikei, 15 March 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), pp 12–13, ATL

Ngati Raukawa stressed repeatedly to McLean that the south bank should not be bought by him: 'Do you wish for strife Mr McLean? I will hold all this side, and the other side shall be yours. Rangitikei, Rangitikei, Rangitikei shall be the boundary.'²⁴

In the face of Ngati Raukawa opposition, territory south of the Rangitikei could not be sold by Ngati Apa. Clearly, however, there was dissatisfaction at this limit to their claim. McLean records that towards the end of the meeting, when Ngati Apa was asked whether they consented to no Europeans living on the south side of the river, only one or two of the tribe agreed, along with the 10 Ngati Maniapoto: the others firmly objected to consent from having previously ceded their lands to the Government.²⁵

McLean continued:

Kawana Hunia seemed much affected with the proceedings as if feeling his want of power to entirely establish the right of his tribe to dispose of all their ancient claims and possessions a great portion of which are now in the hands of the powerful Ngati Raukawa tribe before whom he was 'contending'.²⁶

24. Ibid, p 20

25. Ibid, p 21

26. Ibid, p 23

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

McLean's acceptance of Ngati Raukawa's obstruction of any further alienation was for the short term only. Early in March he recorded his optimism at Ngati Raukawa's softened stance on the Ngati Apa claim and pointed to his intentions with regard to the south bank. If it proved necessary, Ngati Raukawa's tribal entity was to be undermined: 'If I find any obstinate opposition in buying the Manawatu I will treat with the chiefs separately and by this means bring the majority to terms and so arrange matters satisfactorily'.²⁷ He believed that the alienation of Rangitikei–Turakina would be followed by others along the coast:

This purchase once undertaken and persevered in by the Government will induce many of these tribes (especially the Ngatiteupokoiri of the Manawatu and those inhabiting Ahuriri and the East coast who are in communication with and connected with the Ngatiapa of Rangitikei) to offer their superfluous land for sale to the Government.²⁸

McLean saw Ngati Raukawa's acquiescence in the alienation as:

the means of breaking-through a combination on their part and several other tribes in correspondence with them, who resolved, embodying their resolution in a written document drawn up at their public meetings, to make a stand against the further acquisition of land by the Europeans excepting by way of annual lease for cattle grazing.²⁹

The concern to curtail Maori leasing land on the west coast was in line with Crown policy elsewhere. There was a growing realisation that Maori would never sell the freehold if leaseholding became entrenched and gave them a regular source of income. As Ihakara told McLean and Ngati Raukawa, 'To lease for two, three and four years for sums was good as the land afterwards reverted to themselves but to sell he would not agree to on any account'.³⁰ But the Maori effort to control the disposition of their land rights was deliberately thwarted, the Government's intent

27. 22 February 1849, Donald McLean, 'Diary', draft letters, 12 January–13 March 1849, MS 1224, ATL

28. Meeting at Te Awahou Pa, Rangitikei, 15 March 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), pp 25–26, ATL

29. *Ibid*, p 21

30. 13 January 1849, Donald McLean, 'Diary', draft letters, 12 January–13 March 1849, MS 1224, ATL

being most clearly enunciated in Grey's Land Purchase Ordinance 1846, which prohibited direct leasing of Maori land, and created a Crown monopoly of all land transactions – not of purchase alone.

3.3 THE SETTING OF RESERVES

After the Parewanui meeting, 43 Ngati Apa accompanied McLean and the surveyor, Parks, on a preliminary inspection of the block. Boundaries were pointed out, and McLean reported that he had taken every care during the inspection to ensure that Ngati Apa understood that they were giving up all rights as far as their claim extended to the interior – ‘that the whole of their country north of Rangitikei excepting their reserves must in accordance with the understanding I repeatedly had with them at their several public meetings now passed into the hands of the Government’.³¹ McLean accommodated the expectation of vendors that they would be able to continue to hunt and trap on land that had been sold. But, while they might still traverse the land to snare birds, it was emphasised that other rights would be confined henceforth to the areas specifically reserved to them.³²

31. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 10 April 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), p 5, ATL

32. Ibid

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

McLean had been directed ‘to reserve such tracts for the Natives, as they may now or at a further time require’.³³ According to his notes of the earlier discussions, McLean had assured Ngati Apa that the Government would not take such advantage of their willingness to sell as to leave them entirely without land. But much of his effort during the April inspection was directed towards limiting the extent of the areas to be reserved. He argued that sufficient land already had been set aside as a ‘general reserve’ between the Turakina and Whangaehu Rivers – although in effect, this area seems to have been simply excepted from the sale. It was intended that most Ngati Apa would move to this area for the ‘eventual settlement of the whole tribe’.

McLean had insisted that Ngati Apa should sell as a tribal entity. Now he resisted proposals that large reserves be put aside for individual hapu, refusing on the grounds that Ngati Apa, as a whole, were already sufficiently provided for. Nor were the additional lands that were reserved ever seen by McLean as truly inalienable. He reluctantly agreed to the reservation of some 800 acres at Turakina, but informed the Colonial Secretary in his report on the final sale that the leading chief of the river had told him ‘that in the course of a few years, he will dispose of the Turakina

33. Domett to McLean, 12 December 1848, AJHR, 1861, C-1, p 251, no 5

reserve . . . as he intends at my suggestion to make immediate preparations to settle between the rivers'.³⁴

Ultimately, McLean would not tolerate Maori impediment to settlement, and underlying his actions was an uneasy, and often inconsistent, mix of paternalism and self-help ethic. Under an entry titled 'pensioning chiefs' McLean predicted that:

Land reserved by the Govt . . . would be productive of great good incorporating them with the Europeans and manifesting that although the Govt purchased large tracts from them that its parental care for their welfare was not neglected and that although they once sold their land it was again obtainable from Europeans.³⁵

McLean believed that Maori would be compensated for any loss of their land by enhanced security and clarity of interest under the European title system, noting:

34. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 21 May 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), ATL

35. McLean, 3? April 1849, Donald McLean, 'Diary', Maori notes, April and June 1849, MS 1225, ATL

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

I do not doubt but it would greatly facilitate the purchase of all wastelands if we could introduce a more paternal and liberal policy with the natives by which they could easily repurchase any land they required or wished for in addition to their reserves at a moderate rate say 3/- – 5/- per acre instead of holding it as locked up from them . . . instead of laying it out to good interest which would be the case by getting the labour and cultivation of aboriginal settlers to play in a more agreeable and independent manner for themselves than under their own native system which is always subject to squabbling and dissension.³⁶

The belief that the position of Maori would be improved if they reacquired land under Crown-granted title, predisposed McLean to limit their reserves. However, no practical assistance towards that transition appears to have been given.

Although there were exceptions, McLean was generally prepared to accede only to requests for small reserves of limited value. He agreed to Aperahama's request for the reservation of a urupa site on the coast, as this land was of 'little or no value' and provided that there was no danger of conflict arising from cattle trespass in the area. But he denied Reihana's wish to keep his cultivation ground at Matawhero, allowing its retention for a three-year period only, 'as this land may be all valuable and shortly required if the agent of the Canterbury settlement is wise enough to select this country as a site for the settlement'.³⁷ McLean also rejected the notion that Ngati Apa should be able to retain land to sell as settlement expanded and its value had risen. He recorded that when the party reached the northern bend of the Turakina River some 10 miles from the coast, his guides wished to turn back:

we camped here for the night the natives objecting to proceed further in this direction alleging the forest as impenetrable and that it was claimed by the Mangauhau natives, a district branch of their tribe residing at Wanganui – I soon discovered that the natives along with me were the actual claimants of the lands which they alleged to be the property of the Mungawhao tribes, and found that a few intriguing young men ingeniously concocted this pretext – with a view that the land should be reserved under the pretence of being the property of a tribe who had not appeared at any of the meetings when the sale of the country was discussed. The object of these young men in endeavouring to reserve the forest ranges and other large portions of their claims

36. 5 August 1850, 18 September 1850, Donald McLean, 'Diary', Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

37. 19 April 1849, Donald McLean, 'Diary', Maori notes, April and June 1849, MS 1225, ATL

Wellington

was to dispose of them afterwards in small allotments when the value of the district should be enhanced by the location of European settlers.³⁸

McLean was particularly concerned to forestall any effort by Maori to block off the interior. He told those who accompanied him on his inspection that:

as ample reserve was made for them between the Turakina and Wangahu rivers I would not recognise any boundaries or pretended claims limiting the Europeans from going as far into the interior as their present rights as a tribe extended . . .³⁹

Thus, Ngati Apa were dissuaded from retaining a portion of land on the track to Taupo. McLean interpreted their wish as intended to ‘prevent the Europeans from getting further inland’, and convinced Ngati Apa that an intersection of Maori and Pakeha interests would result in ‘further discontents’.⁴⁰

When McLean reached Porowhara, Panapa, who had cultivations there, again raised objections to the sale:

At Porowhara, sixteen miles from our last stage, we found some native plantations owned by Panapa, a ngatiapa chief of most forbidding countenance, who deserted his tribe and joined Rangihaeata, threatening with that chief to use his utmost influence in preventing the sale of the district. Our reception was not the most friendly the natives (excepting a few who came up from Parewanui to meet me) loudly exclaiming against the sale of their lands. Panapa erected a flag staff that morning where his claim, which is considerable, commenced stating that he would die by it before he would cede his land.

38. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 10 April 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), pp 2–3, ATL

39. Ibid, p 5

40. Ibid, p 9

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

His language which was violent was evidently borrowed from Rangihaeata who I understood from some of the natives on their journey to Taupo was very much vexed that the Europeans were acquiring a right to such a large territory in a part of the country where his retreat into the interior might be intercepted, should he at a future period find it necessary to take refuge there.⁴¹

McLean later stated that Panapa was persuaded by his arguments and ‘yield[ed] his opposition’, much to the ‘annoyance’ of those who had failed to win their own arguments for reserves and ‘were now indirectly instigating the others to make a firm stand for their lands . . .’⁴² But Panapa’s consent appears to have been limited to accepting the alienation of tribal land other than where his primary claim lay. His name does not appear on the deed and he is subsequently mentioned by McLean as opposing the position of the inland boundary.⁴³

3.4 FINALISATION OF PURCHASE

The preliminaries took longer than McLean had anticipated, but by May 1849 he was ready to finalise the purchase, noting that:

All the external boundaries of the district are now ascertained as far as necessary and the survey of the reserves nearly completed so that the whole of the arrangements

41. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 10 March 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), pp 9–10, ATL

42. Ibid

43. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 13 May 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

Wellington

with the Ngati Apas may be completed on receipt of the first instalment of compensation.⁴⁴

A large gathering of Ngati Apa and a number of chiefs of other iwi in the region had assembled at Wanganui. McLean invited all claimants to speak on the sale before signing the deed:

The principal chiefs and claimants, responded to this request, by declaring in the most emphatic terms, that it was their firm and mature resolution to part with their lands to the Government, and that they anxiously desired to participate in the various advantages they would derive from the settlement of a numerous European population amongst them.

44. 26th April 1849, Donald McLean, 'Diary', Maori notes, April and June 1849, MS 1225, ATL

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

The deed of sale was then read over, the natives fully assenting to the boundaries and other conditions therein specified . . .⁴⁵

McLean reported that only Reihana and Ngawaka demurred. Although they agreed to the general provisions of the sale, requests for more extensive reserves were repeated. These applications were again rejected by McLean because ample reserves were already provided for them.⁴⁶ The boundary descriptions were re-read, and the deed signed, Reihana and Ngawaka being among those first to do so.

On the following day, the deed was read again for the benefit of those who had been previously absent and more people signed. A number of chiefs spoke to their people, confirming their commitment to and understanding of the sale. Laments were sung for the departing land.⁴⁷ The first instalment of £1000 was then distributed, a large first payment being considered advisable by McLean in order to satisfy 500 claimants, many of whom had ‘contracted debts in anticipation of receiving a large amount similar to what they are aware has been recently offered for a less extensive district at the Wairarapa’. Satisfaction of Ngati Apa was also deemed important to influence Maori ‘at the Manawatu and elsewhere who are present tenacious of parting with their land . . .’⁴⁸ Ten pounds was received by each of 86 hapu, £40 by Aperehama Tipae of Wangaehu and Paora Turangapita of Turakina, and £60 by two leading Rangitikei chiefs, Hori Kingi and Hunia Te Hakeke. The remaining £1500 was to be paid in three further, annual, instalments.

According to McLean, ‘some portions’ of this first payment would be distributed by Ngati Apa to ‘chiefs not immediately connected with their tribe . . . in order to

45. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 21 May 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), p 3, ATL

46. Ibid, p 4

47. Ibid, p 9

48. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 11 April 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), p 3, ATL

secure the acquiescence of those chiefs to the disposal of their lands'.⁴⁹ It is not clear whether Ngati Raukawa participated in any disbursement of the proceeds. McLean only mentions in 1850 that he saw Hori Kingi who 'agreed to proceed to Rangitikei to send a present to Rangihaeata for his Ngati Apa claim'.⁵⁰ Walter Buller later suggested that Ngati Raukawa received part of the actual purchase money on the understanding that Ngati Apa would participate in any later payments for the Manawatu. But this seems unlikely given Ngati Raukawa's expressed resistance to further alienation, and most contemporary observers agree that they did not accept payment for the Rangitikei block.⁵¹

In exchange for the sum of £2500 and the consideration of reserves, Ngati Apa, calculated as numbering some 250 persons at 1850, gave up all their lands between the Rangitikei and Turakina Rivers, and to the north of the Whangaehu. The boundaries of alienation were described in the deed as follows:

49. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 1 May 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), ATL

50. 29 July 1850, Donald McLean, 'Diary', Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

51. Buller to Mantell, 31 August 1863, Mantell Papers, MS 83 (236), ATL

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

The river of Rangitikei on one side the sea on the other side, on one of the other sides the river of Turakina thence towards the interior to where our inland boundary adjoins. The whole of the land between Turakina and Whangaehu rivers are reserved to be a gathering place for the men of Ngatiapa. The whole of our lands on the northern side of the Whangaehu we permanently hand over to Mr McLean. The commencement of the boundary is at the mouth of the Whangaehu river, thence following the course of that stream to Tapiripiri thence to Oeta thence proceeding to a place over against the boundary set aside for the Whanganui settlement thence along that boundary to Motukaraka thence to the sea.⁵²

The Rangitikei block was eventually surveyed at some 225,000 acres. A payment of 2.6d per acre was thus made for land which McLean described, on the whole, as a ‘most valuable and extensive acquisition, capable of maintaining a numerous European population and superior to any other part of the island for cattle runs’.⁵³

The ‘whole of the land between Whangaehu and Turakina Rivers’ – an area later estimated at 30,000 acres – was ‘reserved to be a gathering place for the men of Ngatiapa’.⁵⁴ Also reserved ‘in consideration of our [Ngati Apa’s] final surrender of all these lands of ours’ were 800 acres at Turakina, 1600 acres at Parewanui, Te Kawana Hunia’s urupa of 12 acres, eel-fishing rights in any lakes until they were drained, an eel-fishing station at Otukapo comprising 50 acres, and the right to cultivate at Te Awahou for another three years.⁵⁵

The protracted nature of negotiations, the large scale meetings, the lamentations in farewell of the land, the number of signatories on the deed, and its wording, all would suggest that McLean had genuinely attempted to identify the legitimate sellers and obtain their full consent to the sale. The significance of McLean’s effort was, however, limited by his failure to accommodate the interests of many individuals and communities in his reserve allocations and by his dismissal of those

52. Turton, Deeds, no 69, p 213

53. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 10 April 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), p 13, ATL

54. Turton, Deeds, no 69, p 213

55. Ibid

Wellington

who opposed European expansion. The integrity of the Crown's negotiations was also subsequently diminished by the purchase of the area south of the Rangitikei River. McLean took the purchase only as far as adjoining tribes would countenance, but their acquiescence was won by prevarication about the Government's future intentions. Ngati Raukawa had renounced their claim to land north of the Rangitikei on the understanding that the south bank would not be purchased by the Government. But clearly, there was no intention on the part of the Government to cease land purchasing operations at this point. In fact, the purchase of the Rangitikei block was seen as the 'thin edge of the wedge' opening up the rest of the west coast to sale and Ngati Raukawa's recognition of Ngati Apa's presence as far south as Omarupapaka would be used against them in later years. The subsequent alienation of the south bank involved a repudiation of the Government's tacit recognition of Ngati Raukawa authority, which had permitted a smooth transfer of the Rangitikei–Turakina block to the Crown.

3.5 THE INLAND BOUNDARY

The inland boundary remained undefined – a matter of some concern for European settlers since the interior portion of the purchase comprised the most fertile lands. The question of where the boundary lay almost immediately became the ‘subject of serious discussion among the natives’, and gave ‘rise to hostile expressions . . .’ towards settlers in the area.⁵⁶ During the preliminary inspection, McLean had formed the opinion that Ngati Apa claims extended ‘inland from te Moria bush . . . about six miles, having co-jointly with the Wanganui tribe individual claims beyond that to a settlement named Otara [present-day Ohingaiti]’.⁵⁷ These lands lying between the Porewa Stream and Rangitikei River, were to form a focus of resistance to sale and disputed claim.

At first, Lieutenant Governor Eyre did not perceive that the undefined boundary might give rise to problems. He believed that where the claims of two tribes met, it was ‘always necessary in purchasing to obtain a cession of the rights as far as such claims extend of the party purchased from, whether that point be clearly defined and agreed upon or not’.⁵⁸ But New Zealand Company concern that this would provide an excuse for repudiation prompted a change in instruction to McLean. He was now ordered to return from Taranaki and advised that:

56. Swainson to Colonial Secretary, 28 August 1849, New Munster (NM) series 8 1859/916, NA Wellington

57. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 10 April 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), p 8, ATL

58. Eyre to Domett, 1 September 1849, New Munster (NM) series 8 1849/916, pp 2–3, NA Wellington

Wellington

if the boundary is not definitely decided upon – seen and understood by the Natives – and marked in some way upon the ground the sooner it is done the better . . . I cannot too strongly impress upon Mr McLean therefore that in all purchases it is *essential* that however far supposed rights to extend some distinct and definite boundary must be acknowledged by the Native and be marked on the ground, as the limits of the land absolutely purchased, and to which the rights of the selling parties are undisputed – and this limit or boundary should exist on every side of the purchase either in a natural feature of the country or in Surveyor’s lines. [Emphasis in original.]⁵⁹

McLean assured Eyre that it had been in anticipation of future difficulties that he had arranged for the Ngati Apa to accompany him on his preliminary survey, ‘to point out the exact inland termination of their claims’.⁶⁰

McLean returned from Taranaki to finalise the Rangitikei boundary in May 1850. Word having reached McLean that trouble was brewing about the inland boundary, he travelled from Taranaki via the Upper Whanganui. He reported that:

At Purikino, I met Te Heu Heu, who I was most anxious to see before he returns to Taupo, as I was informed that he, Rangihaeata and Taratoa had been making some objections to the interior boundary of the Rangitikei purchase, and that a post had been put up in their name by a native named Panapa to indicate that opposition would be offered to an extension of the boundary beyond that spot.⁶¹

59. Lieutenant Governor to McLean, 7 September 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

60. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 1 October 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), p 3, ATL

61. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 13 May 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

McLean persuaded Te Heu Heu to accompany him to Whanganui, so that he might ‘in the presence of the chiefs and assessors at that settlement have an explanation from him of such proceedings’. The Tuwharetoa chief agreed to withdraw his opposition, which had been directed towards the claims of Ngati Apa rather than to the Crown’s purchase per se. At the same time, Te Heu Heu maintained his right to be consulted in the matter, offering to ‘assist in definitely laying down an interior boundary’.⁶²

By this time, the second instalment of the payment was due. McLean was advised to defer disbursement ‘until all questions that may give rise to future difficulties respecting boundaries are definitely arranged’.⁶³ This course was rejected by McLean as ‘highly imprudent’.⁶⁴ The money was still unavailable at the end of June, and McLean reported that the Rangitikei people were growing ‘most discontented at the delay’, preventing settlers from occupying their selections at Turakina. He warned that the Government was in danger of alienating not only Ngati Apa, but also all other tribes from whom it might ‘now or eventually desire to purchase land’. He pointed out that Wairarapa Maori, for example, ‘might justly argue that the settlers are more punctual in paying their annual rents than the Government promise to be in carrying out that admirable system of paying annual instalments’.⁶⁵

The second instalment of the purchase price was paid in July, but further trouble surfaced regarding the interior boundary. During the 1849 inspection, McLean

62. Ibid

63. Domett memo on McLean to Colonial Secretary, 14 May 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

64. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 1 June 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

65. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 20 June 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

Wellington

mentioned that while some Ngati Apa regarded Otara as the boundary, that settlement was:

inhabited by a migrative band of Taupo natives, whose claims or rights to reside there are disputed by the Ngatiapa who also object to their receiving any payment for land to which they have not a hereditary or legitimate right.⁶⁶

66. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 1 October 1849, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3), ATL

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

In July 1850, these people whom McLean describes as ‘principally outcasts’ and a ‘wandering tribe’ were led by their chief, Pohe, to take possession of land at Porewa.⁶⁷ McLean reported that this group ‘with many others throughout the island, viewed with considerable alarm and discontent the inland extent of the Rangitikei purchase’.⁶⁸ Pohe (like Te Heu Heu) was asked at Parewanui Pa to explain his conduct, before those who had sold the district and a number of chiefs whom McLean had invited from Whanganui and other places. McLean rejected Pohe’s claim to Porewa and inland portions of the district, which he interpreted as deriving from general opposition to European settlement and fear that the alienation of Rangitikei ‘would lead to the acquisition of more of the interior and eventually dispossess the inland tribes of all their land’. Pohe was told that his ‘fears were quite as unfounded as his claims appeared to be’, and he reluctantly returned to Otara which McLean promised to exclude from the purchase.⁶⁹

McLean blamed Pohe’s actions on Whanganui Maori, based at Pukehika (near Ranana), who had claims at Murimotu and Otara – apprehensive as they were, ‘that each instalment paid to Ngati Apa would extend the inland boundary till it eventually included their bird-snaring ranges . . .’ at those places.⁷⁰ In August, a meeting of some 1500 Maori was convened by Reverend Taylor at Pukehika. McLean used this opportunity to enquire into disputes and to assess the disposition of those objecting to the inland boundary. Hemi Nape, described by McLean as the ‘ringleader of the rebel tribe at Pukehika’, and ‘troublesome during the war at Whanganui’, eventually agreed ‘to relinquish his opposition provided his interior

67. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 30 July 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL; 19 July 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

68. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 30 July 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

69. McLean to Colonial Secretary, 13 May 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

Wellington

claims were not interfered with as he had been given to understand that the Government contemplated a road being made through this country . . . to Taupo . . .’ McLean records that he dispelled this, and ‘other idle rumours [that] excites the jealousy of the upper Whanganui natives’.⁷¹

McLean decided to gather together as many chiefs as possible to settle the Otara boundary and ‘to prevent any future difficulties’.⁷² Te Rangihaeata and Taratoa (living at Maramahoia) agreed to assist in the question and it appears that McLean was able to mobilise the support of the coastal-based chiefs against the claims of the interior tribes.⁷³ McLean’s party travelled up-river. He records that a pole had been set by Te Heu Heu at Te Pohui, a settlement on the south bank, occupied by a mixed group of Ngati Whakaterere and Ngati Pehi, and headed by Ngawaka, whom McLean describes as a ‘Taupo man’.⁷⁴ Ngati Whakaterere opposed the boundary while McLean’s party, which included Taratoa, Wiremu Te Tauri Parata, and Hori Te Rangiao, spoke in favour of a settlement of the question. Taratoa is recorded as speaking ‘with great animation in favour of the whites having all the Ngati Apa’s claims’.⁷⁵

70. 5 August 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

71. 27 July 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL; McLean to Colonial Secretary, 12 August 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

72. 29 August 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL; McLean to Colonial Secretary, 17 September 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

73. 7, 21, 29 August, 2 September 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

74. 14 September 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

75. 3 September 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

McLean and the Rangitikei–Turakina Purchase

The party then travelled on to Whauwhau where McLean had decided to fix the boundary as being a point acceptable to all parties.⁷⁶ McLean reported that while some individual Ngati Apa had claims beyond that point, they intersected with those of other tribes, ‘which as the present boundary includes all the most desirable and available land are not worth contending for’. None the less, McLean was able to report that a ‘considerable enlargement’ of the block had been conceded ‘without further remuneration’, while inland settlers would be able to use the ‘waste country’ falling outside the boundary since Maori were ‘unlikely to occupy it in its present valueless state’.⁷⁷

The boundary was cut for a mile and walked over, while Taratoa made a speech promising to uphold it ‘against any troublesome characters from the interior’.⁷⁸ The surveyor Park went with a large group of Maori to carry on, cutting towards the Turakina, while the chiefs remained with McLean. A notice with the chiefs’ names attached was sealed in a bottle and placed at the boundary stating that this marked the ‘certified inland boundary (of the Rangitikei purchase) as decided by the natives and myself’.⁷⁹ At Rangatuau, Taratoa defended McLean against criticism that neither Te Heu Heu nor Te Rangihaeata had been present when the line was fixed, and again spoke in favour of the decision:

What chiefs are so much above me that they will interfere with McLean’s boundary and mine. No, let our boundary stand. What can Rangihaeata do without me and why should Te Heu Heu a friend of the Governor interfere. The boundary is at Te Whauwhau and the other or inland side is for myself, for the natives.⁸⁰

76. 4 September 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

77. 6 September 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL; McLean to Colonial Secretary, 17 September 1850, Donald McLean Papers MS 32 (3A), ATL

78. 5 September 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

79. 6 September 1850, Donald McLean, ‘Diary’, Maori notes, 19 July–12 October 1850, MS 1229, ATL

80. Ibid

Wellington

A document confirming the settlement of the boundary, was signed by Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Hau ki Whanganui, and Wiremu te Tauri o Taupo, as well as by Ngati Apa.

