



NEW ZEALAND  
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**NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**



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BOOK REVIEWS

J.M. McEwen, Rangitane: A Tribal History. Reed Methuen, Auckland, 1986. 292 pp., index. \$35.00 (hardback only).

Before his book appeared, Jock McEwen assured me that it would be controversial. I assumed that this would be because it would hold out for the mana of the other tribal groupings of the southern half of the North Island, as opposed to the Waikato and Taranaki tribes who have held the mana whenua of Wellington and its west coast since the 1820s. This proves to be the case, but it is no facile polemic. Jock McEwen has distilled a lifetime's interest in tradition into a critical re-statement and compendium of the Kurahaupo iwi and its descendants.

The initial chapters take a hard look at Kupe and Toi, and their relationship with Kurahaupo. The principal ancestor is Whatonga, who from his first wife produces Tara and his line, and from the second wife, Tautoki. The latter's son, Rangitane lived in the Heretaunga (Hawkes Bay) district. Tara migrated to the Wellington district, and several chapters are devoted to Tuteremoana (of Rangitatau pa, at the entrance to Wellington harbour), and the Ngai Tara relationship with Ngati Ira and Rangitane.

The general movement of the Rangitane tribal grouping, partly in response to Ngati Kahungunu of Poverty Bay, was south into the Wairarapa and west into Manawatu.

The sources on which Rangitane is based are fully and clearly acknowledged, and include Simmons, Land Court records, Polynesian Society MS, critical views of S. Percy Smith, Best, and oral information principally from Rangitane personalities of the Wairarapa and Manawatu. The source of information is particularly interesting in relation to Te Whatahoro who was related to Rangitane through the Muaupoko of the Horowhenua.

The latter chapters of the book cover relationships with Ngai Tahu, and the conflict with the alliance of Ngati Raukawa and Ngati Toa in the 19th century. There is also a chapter on European land acquisition in the Manawatu.

This book is essential reading for anyone interested in the Maori history of the southern half of the North Island, because it is economical in its narration, well informed, and well indexed under personal name, place name, tribe, and general matters. Almost one quarter of the book is a compendium of Rangitane songs, with English translations and a critical discussion of the sources such as Nga Moteatea. The last quarter of the book contains genealogies.

Even though there are no maps, traditional place names are closely related to modern place names, and in the several cases where I know the areas concerned, they are precise and correct. This is a good book, and in the light of the many books of recent decades covering Te Rauparaha and the Te Atiawa, it provides a weighty balance.

Kevin Jones

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June Starke (ed.), Journal of a Rambler: The Journal of John Boulton. Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1986. 225 pp., bibliography index. \$75.00.

June Starke's labours on the journal of John Boulton have been long and thorough. The journal itself came into the Alexander Turnbull Library more than ten years ago. In 1979 Charles and Neil Begg published their The World of John Boulton (Whitcoulls, Christchurch) which was based on the journals and which included considerable extracts from them. Now the full journal is available together with a brief biography of the man himself.

The journal may be more properly termed 'reminiscences' since it was written in later life, "... for the amusement of relations and friends". A large part of it is an excellent first hand account of the Fiordland/Foveaux Strait region over a crucial and quite fascinating period of New Zealand history.

Boulton signed up as a sealer with the Sydney firm Cooper and Levy and arrived off southern New Zealand in April 1826 aboard the brig "Elizabeth". He was a member of a six man gang which then ranged as far north as Paringa in south Westland - where there was a clash with local Maoris. The gang then returned south along the Fiordland coast in their whaleboat spending seven months in Dusky Sound before going on to Pahia in Foveaux Strait at the end of the year. Thereafter, until early 1828, he lived among the Maoris and sealers of the Strait which he called "Solander's".

Not only does Boulton list settlements and the chief men and women of the region and give an important vocabulary of southern Maori pronunciation, but his close relationship with many Maori people allows much fascinating detail of a rapidly changing way of life. At the time sealers in the region were dependant on Maoris who, while happy to make use of what the newcomers could provide, were still very much in charge. Boulton's character sketches of leading men (p.107) have a certain piquancy since life and death depended upon correct judgements. "Tarbukka" (Te Whakataupuka) was "bold and active

- hospitable to whites", "Toowellah" was "not to be trusted - a rogue", and "Darwatooa" was "one of the 4 who stripped to kill us at Ruabuka".

Boulton is also something of an ethnologist. He gives sketches of a double and single canoe, a barracouta hook and other items. His pictures of houses (p.58) show rectangular buildings like those used throughout New Zealand. Among many aspects of Maori life in Murihiku which he describes there is an excellent account of barracouta fishing (p.75). Detailed descriptions of some settlements round out the valuable listing of "Settlements in Solander's Straits" (p.107).

The editor has done a good job of putting together what little is known of John Boulton's life, although since this of necessity relies greatly on his own account I prefer the original for much of it. A lack of editorial familiarity with scientific names occasionally shows through. For example Arctocephalus has at least three different spellings (pp.xxxiv, xlii and 26) and "mus rattus" (p.48) is now usually Rattus rattus (in the same footnote, for "huanua" read 'huahua').

Journal of a Rambler is an important addition to early historical accounts of New Zealand. It reminds us that everything did not happen in the north, but that the far south was also a focus of early nineteenth century contact between Maori and Pakeha. How sad that the dreadful price of \$75.00 will ensure that it does not get on to people's shelves as it should.

Nigel Prickett

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Margaret Drower, Flinders Petrie: A Life in Archaeology. Victor Gollancz, London, 1985. 500 pp., references, bibliography, index, maps, 118 photographs. U.K. 25 pounds.

Some years ago I picked up in an Auckland second hand bookshop a copy of Flinders Petrie's 1883 The Pyramids and Temples of Gizeh. It was clear from the various handwritten notes which had been tipped in that my copy was once in the hands of a believer in the curious cult of pyramidology. What I did not realise at the time was just how much we owe to Flinders Petrie's fundamentalist upbringing and his early links with pyramidology, his whole subsequent career in archaeology. Not that he went along with the nonsense: indeed his definitive survey of the pyramids of Giza demonstrated to all but the most fanatical adherents that its seductive chain of conclusions was in basic error.

Petrie first went to Egypt in 1880. Thereafter he spent three or four months there every winter for more than forty years. When he began, Egyptian archaeology was a destructive treasure hunt; when he finished, the outline of Egyptian history was established and Egyptology was subject to scientific methods and was a serious pursuit with a considerable literature. Petrie's archaeological stage was the most illustrious of all ancient civilisations and he bestrode it like a colossus.

He dug at all the most famous Egyptian sites: Hawara, Thebes, Meydum, Abydos, Memphis, Tell el'Amarna, and more than forty others. Since he was first to enquire into the history of the sites, rather than just loot them for saleable antiquities, his definition of their place and role in history is usually the most important single contribution that will ever be made concerning them. In later life he turned his attention to Palestine. At the age of 86 he still planned more fieldwork.

Petrie believed in Pitt-Rivers' dictum that "the date of a new discovery is the date of its publication". Each year a report on the previous year's work was submitted to his publisher before he returned to the field. In his long life he wrote more than one hundred books and over a thousand articles and reviews. He was assisted in this productivity by an encyclopaedic memory and a determination that allowed few other interests.

His career was not without its controversies. He fell out with the Egypt Exploration Fund which financed much of his early work, and with some of his co-workers. Later in life the museum authorities in Jerusalem were less than pleased with his work. I would like to know more of the other side of these undignified disagreements. One's sympathy is with the man of action rather than the bureaucrats but there may have been more to it than appears.

Indeed if there is one general niggle about Margaret Drower's book it is that her subject was so active and so productive there is little room for drawing back a bit and giving a wider view. This is not a warts and all biography such as makes Jaquetta Hawkes' Mortimer Wheeler so endearing. But it is an outstanding and important book which will be enjoyed by anyone of archaeological interests. Clear maps and more than a hundred photographs illustrate the life and life's work of a very remarkable man.

Nigel Prickett

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