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BOOK REVIEWS

Atholl Anderson, Te Puoho's Last Raid. Otago Heritage Books, Dunedin, 1986. 100 pp., numerous illustrations, bibliography, index. \$19.95

In 1836 a Ngati Tama taua embarked on an extremely arduous and ambitious raid under the leadership of the chief Te Puoho. Starting out from Golden Bay at the north-west tip of the South Island the war party travelled down the densely forested West Coast, across the Southern Alps via Haast Pass, and into the interior of Otago where the various lakes, swift rivers and mountain passes were successfully negotiated before arrival on the wide flat plains of Southland.

Te Puoho intended to continue south to Foveaux Strait to attack the Kai Tahu in their small unfortified villages. The success of the mission depended on secrecy. But Tuhawaiki, paramount chief of the southern Kai Tahu, learned of their presence, quickly organised a retaliatory party and met the Ngati Tama at Tuturau, near present-day Mataura. In the ensuing fight Te Puoho was killed and the other members of his taua taken prisoner.

Atholl Anderson tells the story of Te Puoho's extraordinary raid and the Kai Tahu response in his second book on southern Maori history to be published by Otago Heritage Books. Over the past 150 years (1986, the year of publication is the 150th anniversary of the event) the raid has provoked a great deal of discussion in the literature. Conflicting theories have been advanced about the size of Te Puoho's group, his motives, the route taken through Central Otago, and the person responsible for firing the gun that killed Te Puoho. Anderson wisely keeps such controversy out of the main text of the book and gives, instead, a highly readable, straightforward narrative of what he feels is the most probable course of events. Additional information about nineteenth century Maori economic and social life, geography and mythology are given where necessary to assist the reader to understand the setting and actions of the various groups involved. Where Anderson has been forced to choose one of a number of different versions of a particular event, the others are cited and discussed in the detailed footnotes to each chapter. The reader is thus able to decide for her/himself which version she/he prefers.

Six appendices provide additional information and discuss in greater depth various aspects of the raid. Of particular interest to me was Appendix 4 on the motives for the raid (Anderson suggests that it was to gain control of the lucrative Maori-Pakeha trade in Foveaux Strait). Appendix 5 gives the background of the most important Maori informants and the

subsequent use of their recollections. Appendix 2 discusses the route taken through the interior of Otago and Southland (Anderson prefers the Cardrona/Nevis/Nokomai/Mataura alternative) and includes a table setting out, in chronological order, the route and war party size previous historians and writers have opted for.

The book is generously illustrated with photographs (colour and black and white), maps and figures to back up the text. It is with the maps that I have a few (albeit minor) criticisms. In some instances there are inconsistencies between them and the text. For example, the starting point for Te Puoho (West Wanganui Inlet, p.24 and elsewhere) is marked Whanganui Inlet on the p.8 map. Likewise there is some confusion in the use of Makarora (the present-day name of the Central Otago river and valley) and Makarore (the name of the 19th century village in the Makarora Valley) which could have been avoided if Anderson had included the present-day spelling of the river on the map on p.21 (both 19th and 20th century names of other rivers are given on the map). In Footnote 8 to Chapter 1 Anderson notes that it has been suggested by some that Te Puoho went south to Awarua Point at Big Bay before retracing his steps and turning inland at the Haast River, while others (including Anderson) believe that Awarua was the old name of the Haast River and that Te Puoho simply turned east when he first reached there. The map on p.21 confuses the reader, however, by excluding Big Bay from the map and by naming Jackson Bay (also south of the Haast) as Awarua.

These trivial points aside, Anderson has taken a large and difficult volume of traditional, historical and, to a lesser extent, archaeological material and synthesised it into a concise and well written account of Te Puoho's raid. It is fascinating reading and will be of great interest to laymen and professionals alike.

Wendy Harsant

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Early Eyewitness Accounts of Maori Life: 3 and 4. Extracts from New Zealand Journals written on ships under the command of d'Entrecasteaux and Duperry, 1783 and 1824. Transcribed and translated by Isabel Ollivier. Alexander Turnbull Library Endowment Trust with Indosuez New Zealand, Wellington, 1986. 217 pp. \$44.00.

What a pity the title of this book carries the wrong date for d'Entrecasteaux's visit and has the name of his 1824 successor misspelt. Nor does the variety of titles offered (on the front cover, half-title and title page) serve as a good introduction to the third volume of a series which offers

above all an exhaustive and accurate transcription and translation of the important French documents from the two voyages which relate to New Zealand.

The frigates Recherche and Esperance sailed from Brest in September 1791 under the command of d'Entrecasteaux to carry out scientific work and search for the missing French explorer La Pérouse who was last seen in Botany Bay in 1788. The visit to New Zealand was brief indeed, the two ships spending just one day, 11 March 1793, off the Cape Reinga - North Cape area. Several canoes came off and some trading took place, the Maoris showing a "... decided preference for iron", especially knives, axes and nails. In return the French were offered fish and "... assegais, war-clubs, flax, lines, fish-hooks etc." The detailed accounts of a number of Frenchmen add value to a brief encounter, although the very extensive library on board the Recherche did include early additions of Cook's voyages which were used to supplement the direct observations.

Louis Isadore Duperrey commanded the Coquille which visited the Bay of Islands for two weeks in April 1824 in the course of a round-the-world voyage. Among the more detailed and interesting accounts of this visit are those of Jacquinet, Berard, Lottin, Deblois de la Calande, Lesson and Poret de Blosseville. Many observations from the different journals have a sameness about them - perhaps not surprising when one considers the small community of officers confined together on the Coquille. There is nothing by Duperrey himself, while from Dumont d'Urville, who was second in command on this voyage, comes only a brief journal on nautical matters.

There are accounts of the famous defeat of Hongi by Murupaenga, memories of the 'unfortunate Marion', a lively interest in the immorality of Maori women who came on board the Coquille in large numbers, and valuable descriptions of the artefacts, homes and customs of the New Zealanders. In true 19th century style the Maori was perceived as being a mixture of the utterly deplorable and the wholly admirable. Blosseville writes (p.173): "Superstitious, slanderers; proud, cruel, unclean, greedy; brave, farsighted, good parents, good friends, respectful of the old, such are the New Zealanders today."

Lesson gives us a most interesting description of the medical condition of people living in the Bay of Islands (pp. 158-161), part of his report prepared for the Medical Board of the port of Toulon. Berard lists 45 crops, vegetables, fruits and garden plants grown at Kerikeri (p.113). Several contributions give detailed accounts of Hongi and Tuhi and other chiefs, Lesson passing on Tuhi's boast that he had enjoyed the favours of Miss Marsden (p. 139). From Blosseville

comes a valuable account of English missionary establishments at Rangihoua and Kerikeri (pp. 175-181).

The pictorial record of Duperrey's visit to New Zealand is presented by Tony Murray-Oliver in Appendix III, although it is unfortunate that these include only copies by Chazal of originals by Lejeune and others. Lejeune's sketches have an authenticity and freshness that raise them far above the Chazal copies. (Some Lejeune drawings are published in Andrew Sharp's, 1971, Duperrey's Visit to New Zealand 1824). In all this however, and as usual, the scholarship of the late lamented Tony Murray-Oliver shines through.

Nigel Prickett

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