



# Te Papa: Naboth's Vineyard?

Towards Reconciliation in Tauranga Moana  
Executive Summary and Recommendations

By Alistair Reese



Centre for Theology and Public Issues  
*Te Pokapū Whakapono me Ngā Take ā-Iwi*

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*Executive Summary and Recommendations*

Author: Alistair Reese

Series editor: David Tombs

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English Version. Last revised 30 October 2018.

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Layout: Judy Robinson

Cover image credit: [iStock.com/RomoloTavani](https://www.istock.com/RomoloTavani)

Cover design: Peter Scott

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Financial support

The project is funded through the University of Otago Leading Thinkers Initiative, which was established under the New Zealand government's Partnerships for Excellence Framework to support world-class scholarship at Otago.

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Te Papa Peninsula (courtesy of Stratum Consultants, Te Puke).

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*Later the following events took place.  
Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel,  
beside the palace of King Ahab of Samaria.*

1 Kings 21:1

*And He has given us the ministry of reconciliation...*

2 Corinthians 5:18

*When our lives are attuned to good things,  
When life is clear and the spirit flows strongly, all is possible.*

Ngāi Tamarāwaho prophecy

## Preface

This paper commissioned by *Te Kohinga*<sup>1</sup> and the Ōtamataha Trust<sup>2</sup> is a summary of a one-hundred-and-fifty-page report prepared for various parties, including local *hapū*, churches, and councils as a discussion document. The aim of the report is to provide an historical and theological framework to undergird the longstanding need for reconciliation between *mana whenua* and later settlers in the Tauranga district. Primarily, it deals with the impact of the purchase and alienation of the land known as Te Papa – the 1333-acre peninsula purchased by the Church Missionary Society in 1838, and which is now the “backbone” of the present-day city of Tauranga. It is hoped the report will provide not only information but also an impetus towards a reconciled city.

Dr Alistair Reese

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1 A Tauranga reconciliation network.

2 Legal entity representing the *hapū* of *Ngāi Tamarāwaho* and *Ngāti Tapu*.

## Summary

The Te Papa discussion report chronicles the encounter history and the various occupations of Te Papa.<sup>3</sup> It describes the migratory process into the area and acknowledges the various tribes who have exercised *mana whenua* on the land since 1000 AD. It is widely accepted that the *iwi* of Ngāi Te Rangi, Ngāti Pukenga, Ngāti Ranginui and Waitaha (relationship with Mauao) are the *tangata whenua* of the wider region, while the *hapū* of Ngāti Tapu and Ngāi Tamarāwaho are acknowledged as being the *mana whenua* of Te Papa.

The report also describes the peninsula as a contested land, the site of various incursions by different groups who have sought to exercise their *rangatiratanga*. The groups include *ngā tauā* (war parties) from Te Arawa, Ngāpuhi and Ngāti Maru of Hauraki. These conflicts, especially the latter's attack on Ōtamataha, had a significant impact upon Te Papa and the way it was occupied, especially in the 19th century. The contest for occupation and authority rights from these earlier days of habitation continues to influence present day inter-*iwi* and inter-*hapū* relationships. These are complex bonds and the report acknowledges the ongoing need for reconciliation, especially among the wider tribal groups of Ngāi Te Rangi, Ngāti Ranginui and Ngāti Pukenga. These issues lie outside the parameters of this report, nevertheless, the importance of these relationships should not be minimized in any longer-term goal to reconcile Te Papa.

Because of *Te Kohinga's* present brief, and for practical purposes, the report has mainly confined itself to the relationship between the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the Crown and *mana whenua*. However, the Tauranga Council received several Lots by way of Crown Grants, as “endowments in aid of the borough funds” and also for “recreation purposes”. The first transfers in Cliff Road and the corner of Wharf and Willow Streets took place in 1885. Evelyn Stokes records that the original Town Hall was erected on Lot 45 on the corner of Wharf and Willow Streets, a site that “had been ‘Reserved for Native Purposes’”.<sup>4</sup> Other Lots were transferred at later dates. Thus, while the Council was not involved in the original alienation of Te Papa it has become “implicated” via its “inheritance” of these Lots from the Crown. Consequently, the report references the invasion from the north by Ngāpuhi and the attack on Ōtamataha by Ngāti Maru, which preceded and perhaps “facilitated” the entrance of the Anglican mission agency CMS to the region. A war-weariness, spiritual curiosity and the quest for modernity led local Māori to invite Henry Williams, a frequent visitor to Tauranga, to establish a mission station. After a few attempts, a station was finally established in 1838 by Archdeacon Alfred Brown, who negotiated the purchase of Te Papa from various local leaders. The arrangement was controversial from the outset and several witnesses contested the purchase when they testified before the 1884 Commission of Inquiry. Their testimony was rejected by Commissioner Godfrey. In 2006, the Waitangi Tribunal opined that the Crown grant to CMS was an abrogation of its Treaty of Waitangi obligations. A position ultimately accepted by the Crown in its settlement with Ngāi Te Rangi in December 2013.

3 Alistair Reese, *Te Papa: Naboth's Vineyard? Towards Reconciliation in Tauranga Moana*, full report available on request from the author.

4 Evelyn Stokes, *A History of Tauranga Moana* (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1980), p. 108.

CMS's motives for buying such a large parcel of land were several. These included their evangelistic ambitions and a humanitarian concern for Māori in the face of an increasing demand for land by the new settlers. Te Papa then, became not only the site of an influential mission station but also served as a landbank against the increasing tide of emigration from Europe. However, the CMS strategy ultimately proved futile. The demand for land plunged the *motu* into a period of warfare igniting in Waitara, Taranaki. It then spread to the Waikato and ultimately to the Bay of Plenty, as the Crown sought to satisfy its own military, land and fiscal strategies. Military occupation and legislation prepared the way for *raupatu* (confiscation) and a reconfigured land.

The assaults on *hapū* in Taranaki, Waikato and finally the occupation of Te Papa by Crown troops heralded a change in the relationship between CMS and the fledgling colonial Government. Initial vocal opposition to Crown policy in Taranaki transformed into support for their strategies against Kingitanga and a tacit but uncomfortable acceptance of the occupation of Te Papa. It became a dilemma of loyalties for the missionaries. Caught between “the devil and the deep blue sea”, Brown in particular, sought to fulfil his pastoral duties to both Māori and the new troops. However, his allegiances to the Offices of the Governor and the Queen, appointments he interpreted as being divine, meant that his actions ultimately came down on the side of his countrymen. Actions that were interpreted by many, including his Māori parishioners, as a betrayal. This “betrayal” is epitomized for many by the hospitality he offered the night before the Battle of Pukehinahina to the English officers, at the now iconic Eucharist meal at his residence at the Elms.

The Government's desire to combat Kingitanga, establish a defensive line from Raglan to Tauranga, and facilitate new settlements in the colony, led to the battles of Gate Pā and Te Ranga. Battles, that not only resulted in the loss of life of the influential Māori leaders, Rāwiri Puhirake Tuaia and Hēnare Taratoa, but also the confiscation of thousands of acres of land. This confiscation initially included Te Papa, because of a Crown misunderstanding – they assumed the peninsula was owned by Ngāi Te Rangī. However, while these *raupatu* claims over the peninsula were withdrawn, the pressure on Te Papa continued. The harbour and land remained firmly within Government sights and various representatives sought to entice CMS into parting with their titles.

This Crown pressure prompted William Williams and Alfred Brown to ascribe the epithet of Naboth's Vineyard to Te Papa – a biblical reference to the unjust seizing of land in about the 8th century BC by the authorities of the day. The story of Naboth's Vineyard is found in 1 Kings 21: 1–29. It records the unjust seizure of a vineyard on the eastern slope of the hill of Jezreel, in Galilee. The vineyard belonged to Naboth, and was close to the royal palace of King Ahab of Samaria. Ahab wanted to buy the vineyard but Naboth refused to sell. He was forbidden to part with his ancestral inheritance under Jewish law. Ahab's wife Jezebel schemed to bring false charges against Naboth, and had him stoned to death. Ahab then took possession of the vineyard but the prophet Elijah confronted him with God's judgement for what he had done and Ahab repented for his actions.<sup>5</sup>

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5 Despite Ahab's repentance, the threat of judgement remained over his household, and later came to pass with the death of his son Joram and Jezebel (2 Kings 9: 21-37).

The pressure upon CMS to yield their control of Te Papa eventually succeeded. This despite their own Trust Deed declaring that the land is:

*[a]cquired and is retained under a solemn Trust that it should be applied to the benefit of the Native race & Church & that it should never be bartered or sold for the mere purpose of raising money. The Natives who gave the land for the benefit of themselves & their posterity would have just ground of complaint against us if we sold that land for a Military Settlement. We have therefore declined all offers. If the Government need the land for public purposes they may take it from us, but we shall then claim compensation.*<sup>6</sup>

Despite this seemingly unequivocal declaration about the sanctity of the Trust, a decision in March 1866, to offer the Government's four-fifths of the Te Papa block without compensation, in return for a fifth of the surveyed sections, was made at a meeting between Burrows, Brown, Bishop Williams and Sir William Martin. Even Frederick Whitaker, the Superintendent of Auckland, who once said, "Any man who gets land out of the natives and cultivates it, is a public benefactor" and who oversaw the transaction was surprised by the "generosity" of the CMS proposal. Whitaker wrote to the CMS Land Committee Secretary Rev Burrows, "I beg that you will state to the Board that in my opinion their offer is a very liberal one, and on the part of the Govt. I accept it".<sup>7</sup> The remainder one-fifth was kept by CMS but sold within a few years as surveyed sections. In January 1873, the Central Land Board, which comprised William Williams, Robert Maunsell, Archdeacon Brown, and Burrows, agreed to sell 17 acres, which included the mission house, to Alfred Brown.

The "ownership" changes of the 1300-acre isthmus opened the way for the metamorphosis of Te Papa. In the first instance, it transformed from a land that provided political, economic and cultural sustenance to the *hapū* of Ngāi Tamarāwaho and Ngāti Tapu into a CMS mission base. In this phase of transition, the Māori imprint lessened while it became a nexus of modernity. By invitation, the CMS centre became an influential political and social centre that provided spiritual and technological inspiration to *tangata whenua* and in return various *rangatira*, including Matiu Tahu and Wiremu Tarapīpī Tamihana, provided important protection and patronage to the new arrivals.

After the land wars, as a result of the *raupatu* and the alienation of Te Papa, members of both *hapū* have suffered the ignominy of not only the loss of land, and the associated economic benefits, but also the loss of *mana* as a result of the consequent diaspora.

The final alienations saw Te Papa under Government control develop into the fledgling provincial town of Tauranga. The surveyors' pegs were responsible not only for reshaping the landscape into sections, but also delineating the roads which provided access for the troops and the influx of new settlers. Te Papa was reshaped and renamed. Streets named after Monmouth Redoubt and General Cameron superseded the significant sites such as Ōtamataha and Pukehinahina. The names of Te Papa and *rangatira* such as Hēnare Wiremu Taratoa and Rāwiri Puhirake faded from view.

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6 Venn to Rev.S. Comperts, 1 September 1865, CMS Home Letterbook 1864-66, C.H./L. 16, Micro-MS-Coll-04-067, cited in O'Malley, p.81.

7 F.Whitaker to Rev R Burrows, 9 March, 1866, IA 15/10 National Archives.

William Williams' and Alfred Brown's appellation of Te Papa as Naboth's Vineyard proved prescient. This was a warning ignored by many and forgotten by most. However, the recent Waitangi Tribunal hearings have seen many of those memories stirred as the stories were told and the calls for justice from *kuia* and *kaumātua* were aired. But, Te Papa was only peripheral to those claims and lay outside their main considerations of the Crown. Nevertheless, the loss that is Te Papa remains embedded within the consciousness of many. In January 2007, at a *hui* convened by *Te Kohinga* at Holy Trinity Church, to listen to local *kaumātua*, one Ngāti Ranginui spokesman declared, "We are in danger of losing our footprint on the land".<sup>8</sup> Another *kaumātua*, Colin Bidois, responded to a question about his recollections of the deprivations suffered by his people: "It is as though it was yesterday".<sup>9</sup> It is the view of this author that the restoration of that lost "footprint" is a key, not only to the healing of memory and reconciliation but also to providing a healthy heart in the city.

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8 Ngāti Ranginui *kaumātua*, Huiākahu Kawe, January, 2007.

9 Pirirākau *kaumātua*, Colin Bidois, January, 2007.

## Reconciliatory Ideas for Te Papa

The main goal of this analysis is to provide some ideas towards Te Papa as a reconciled land. Reconciliation is about the healing of relationships. Because of its tumultuous encounter history, Te Papa is in need of reconciliation and healing. These encounters, between different *iwi* and *hapū*, new settlers and *mana whenua*, not to mention the relationship with creation itself, under pressure from the demands of a 21st century city, mean that the needs are great. The totality of the reconciliatory challenge is beyond a study such as this; therefore, as stated, the main emphasis of this report has been the relationship between the church, *mana whenua* and Civic Government (as representative of later settlers). Hopefully, this particular focus can result in some incremental reconciliatory movement.

It has been proposed that reconciliation or *hohou rongō*<sup>10</sup> is about the reconfiguration of relationships and as such is like a giant jigsaw puzzle. Drawing on this analogy, means that an important “piece of the puzzle” lies in understanding the backstory behind fissured relationships. In this instance the backstory of Te Papa is perhaps best encapsulated in the nomenclature of Naboth’s Vineyard, a name attributed to the isthmus by the CMS missionaries. This terminology arose from their prophetic foresight about the prospective alienation and occupation of the land via unjust means. Ironically, the terminology fits not only the actions of the Crown, the Council, the military settlers, but also the actions of their own mission organisation.

The reference to the biblical story of Naboth’s Vineyard to represent the unjust alienation of Māori land was not restricted to the missionaries at Tauranga. The motif became a regular 19th century refrain utilized by various Māori tribes and individuals as well as concerned Pākehā.<sup>11</sup>

The question then remains – if the description of Te Papa as Naboth’s Vineyard is accurate, that is, a place of betrayed trust and a forfeited inheritance for the descendants of Ngāi Tamarāwaho and Ngāti Tapu, what can now be done to ameliorate this? This difficult task is attempted in this final section which proposes some imaginative ideas that might contribute towards a reconciled future.

10 There are some regional dialect differences re the use of this term. The term used here: *houhou rongō* for reconciliation is taken from ‘Towards Some Foundations of a Systematic Māori Theology: He Tirohanga Anganui Ki Ētahi Kaupapa Hōhonu mō Te Whakapono Māori’, a PhD thesis by Hokinaga Catholic Priest, Henare Tate of Ngāti Tamatea and Ngāti Manawa of Te Iwi o Te Rarawa.

11 See Alistair Reese, ‘Truth, Repentance and Naboth’s Vineyard’, University of Cambridge, MPhil Thesis, 2007.

## Te Papa and the 21st Century: 'Ideas' for Discussion

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In September 2013, the Tauranga City Council's latest District Plan, The Tauranga City Plan, became operational. In mid-2016, the Council launched a consultation document to amend this Long Term Plan, proposing the idea of a "Civic Heart". From a reconciliatory perspective this Plan may be an opportunity gained or an opportunity lost.

Implicit within this concept, demonstrated by the use of the "heart" metaphor, is the idea that cities are "living beings" that need to reflect something of the lived lives of its inhabitants. This brings to mind the well-known *whakatauki* (proverb): *He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata. What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people.*

Tauranga is Te Papa, or at least Te Papa is the physical heart of Tauranga. At the centre of the concept of a "Civic Heart" is identity. What the Tauranga City Council proposes is to construct a milieu that best reflects and nurtures identity. Identity forms out of the past and reaches into the aspirations of the future. It speaks of genealogy or *whakapapa*, it speaks of land and its inhabitants – and how they relate to each other and the places they occupy. Identity speaks of *kaitiakitanga* or stewardship, it speaks of rights and responsibilities, of *mana whenua* and *rangatiratanga*, as well as *manaakitanga* or hospitality. Above all, identity speaks of those whom we are in relation to, and where and among whom we dwell.

## Reconciliation Background

The Government has made an apology to both Ngāti Ranginui and Ngāi Te Rangi for the *raupatu*. Minimal land was returned as only that which is under Crown control can be included within the settlement process. Acknowledgement and apology to Ngāi Te Rangi and Ngā Pōtiki included reference to Te Papa.

The Crown also acknowledges that land on the Te Papa Peninsula which today constitutes the Tauranga central business district was included within the confiscation district, and was conveyed to the Crown by a private institution despite this institution previously insisting that it would always hold this land for the benefit of Māori.<sup>12</sup>

However, the acknowledgement and apology to Ngāti Ranginui [Ngāi Tamarāwaho] did not include any reference to Te Papa.

From the turn of the century, especially following the recommendations of the Waitangi Tribunal, the Tauranga City Council and the Bay of Plenty Regional Council have adopted a more consultative stance with *tangata whenua*. This process of change is ongoing as we learn what it means to outwork Article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi in local affairs.

The church in Tauranga has also made some *ad hoc* apologies to certain Māori leaders regarding Te Papa but as yet no substantial and comprehensive response or attempts at restitution. Certain sections of the church have and continue to make a conscious effort to reorient their relationship with *tangata whenua* and seek to understand what a meaningful relationship might look like. In some respects, this report represents one of those efforts. In the spirit of that endeavour and in response to the biblical and local calls for justice the following recommendations are proposed for discussion.

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12 Ngāi Te Rangi and Ngā Pōtiki Deed of Settlement, p.30. Note on p.13: "by June 1864, the Crown had selected land at Te Papa for a military township. The CMS opposed this saying that Māori had given the land to the Church to hold for the benefit of Māori. The Te Papa Peninsula was within the boundaries of the confiscation district, but the Crown came to accept that CMS land was not included in the terms of the 1867 proclamation. In 1867, faced with the possibility of having the whole block taken, the CMS negotiated an arrangement with the Crown whereby the Society handed over four-fifths of the land without payment. When acquiring the land, the Crown made no provision to recognise that the CMS described as the 'solemn Trust' under which it held the land for the benefit of Ngāi Te Rangi and other Tauranga Māori."

## Recommendations

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- It is our recommendation that the church in Tauranga Moana and the mission agencies with historical association to Te Papa, especially CMS, follow the Crown example and apologize for their role in the alienation of Te Papa. This apology is not only representative in the stead of their *spiritual ancestors* but also a *present* apology and acknowledgement that the church has been silent for generations re the historic injustices. It is also an acknowledgement that the majority of people within the church of Tauranga, i.e. Pākehā, have benefited significantly from the colonisation of Te Papa. It is an acknowledgment that because of cultural preference, the church and its agencies have sometimes obfuscated the divine intention of the gospel to Māori.
- A Reconciliatory Statement from the Tauranga City Council is also seen as essential.
- These apologies need to be substantiated in some meaningful way. The following restitutive suggestions are ways that the acknowledgements of wrongdoing might be strengthened. In light of the February 2017 Supreme Court Wakatū decision, restitution may be required rather than being a voluntary option.<sup>13</sup>

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13 See *Proprietors of Wakatū & Ors v Attorney-General (SC 13/2015) [2017] NZSC 17*.

## Reconciliatory Restitution

Restitution might be advanced from an acknowledgement of the identity and *mana* of Ngāi Tamarāwaho and Ngāti Tapu. This could be done in the following ways:

- A formal involvement by Ngāi Tamarāwaho and Ngāti Tapu in the administration of the Elms.
- The return of some symbolic land to the two *hapū*. There remains in public ownership significant sections of land on Cliff Road that overlook the harbour – this is the site of Ōtamataha Pā. There is a small finger that connects the Elms and the Mission Cemetery and the Monmouth Redoubt with the downtown area of Tauranga Moana. It would be a significant reconciliatory gesture if this land was returned in some form to the two *hapū*.
- We propose that on this site a building or *wharenui*, perhaps called the *Te Whare Hōhou Rongo ki Tauranga Moana*, be constructed. Ngāi Tamarāwaho and Ngāti Tapu would be the *kaitiaki* of this *wharenui*. However, with their agreement this redeemed land and building would be a “civic space” that was available to *Ngā Mātā Waka, Tāngata Tiriti* and *Ngā Hau e Wha*, that is, all the citizens of Tauranga Moana. It would become the gateway to the City, a place of welcome and a centre for events. As well, together with the Elms, the Mission Cemetery, Ōtamataha Pā and Monmouth Redoubt, a living museum space (literally and metaphorically) that not only records the past but points to the future for Tauranga – a safe and secure harbour and place. See the Tūhoe building *Te Kura Whare o Ngāi Tūhoe ki Tāneatua* below as an example.

While these apologies and restitutions will never fully compensate for the loss, past and present, it is hoped that such a gesture will serve as a demonstration of the genuine repentance by the City and Christian mission.

It is also hoped that the move towards meaningful reconciliation will provoke others in Tauranga Moana to pursue constructive ways to heal the substantial rifts that exist not only between Māori and Pākehā, but also between Māori and Māori and the more recent multi-ethnic arrivals to the city.



Map – Ōtamataha area  
(courtesy of Stratum Consultants, Te Puke)



Tūhoe building *Te Kura Whare o Ngāi Tūhoe ki Tāneatua*<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> [http://arrowinternational.co.nz/portfolio\\_page/te-uru-taumatua](http://arrowinternational.co.nz/portfolio_page/te-uru-taumatua) accessed 8/09/2016. Used with permission.

## Chronological Process

- Meet with Ōtamataha Trust leaders to present and discuss the draft Report, Summary and Reconciliation Proposals. *Te Kohinga* holds that any movement forward requires the affirmation and support of Ngāi Tamarāwaho and Ngāti Tapu.
- Revise Report and Reconciliation Proposals after consultation with Ōtamataha Trust.
- Submit report to other local historians.
- Establish with advice, a strategy to implement agreed ideas within this *kōrero tūmanako* or hopeful dialogue.
- Engage with the various stakeholders, e.g. Iwi and Hapū of Tauranga Moana, Tauranga City Council, the Crown, the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, Bishop of Waiapu and CMS, the Elms Trust, Tauranga Ministers Association and City Philanthropists, Media and the wider Tauranga citizenry and others that will be discovered along the journey.
- Facilitate a strategy to develop a “land plan”, purchase land and construct buildings.

*Te Kohinga* understands that this is an imaginative and far reaching plan that needs the breath of God and the cooperation of many to bring to pass.

Nō reira ko tēnei te wā....

Alistair Reese for Te Kohinga

*“Huia mai kia kotahi he tikanga mā tātou ki runga ki te maungarongo. Join with us in unity around the goal of peace”.<sup>15</sup>*

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15 Letter to Wiremu Tarapīpī Tamihana by several chiefs taken prisoner at Rangiriri, 1863.

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