

Reflection on the previous work of Maori doctors in their communities:

Sir Maui Pomare, Sir Rangi Hiroa
and Dr Tutere Wi Repa

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Maui Pomare (1876–1930)

Te Ati Awa tribes, North Taranaki

Born at Pahou Pa, north of New Plymouth. He remembered the great gatherings he attended, as a child, at Parihaka. His family became involved with Te Whiti. In later childhood, he spent time in Chatham Islands. Schooling here was supplemented with periods at St Stephen's School and Christchurch Boys' High.

1885 Prior to his death in the Chathams, his father told him 'My son, seek the wisdom of the white man.'

1888 Entered Te Aute College. As a student here, he participated in the very first moves towards a reformist organisation: he was the youngest of Kohere's first health reform tour and according to Ngata, 'it was then that he made up his mind to study medicine and to take up works as a health officer.'

His baptism as a Seventh Day Adventist strained relations with his school and his family, but he persevered in his new faith.

1889 Studied medicine in the United States. 'My education is for my dying race' he wrote home to a friend. This project depended on private financial assistance from Adventist members.

1896 Returned to take a full medical course at the American Medical Missionary College in Chicago, a new institution with an emphasis on health education and the inculcation of dietary and other principles of good health. To support himself he gave public lectures on the Maori: many addressed were religious groups and sometimes he preached sermons. It was known that he was returning as a Christian doctor to spread the message of physical and spiritual health among his people. Once he returned to NZ he did not continue as a practising Seventh Day Adventist. He retained

his Christian faith but his Adventism was confined to personal dietary practices only.

1899 Completed his MD Degree in Chicago.

1900 Returned home and there was talk amongst his relatives of sending him to Britain and Europe for postgraduate studies. Went to Carroll to see if he could secure the right to practice in NZ. One month later, his qualifications were confirmed as creditable and a few months later he received his appointment as Native Health Officer. Pomare's name was placed on the Medical Register and became the first Maori Doctor, whom the newspapers saw as charming, enthusiastic, energetic and excited by the possibilities of his work.

His salary was £300 at first and rose steadily to £530 in 1911, at which time he was under the Native Department and being paid about the same as the Native Land Court Judges. He was a high-ranking civil servant that was second only to the Chief Health Officer, Dr James Mason.

In Rotorua, the Royal Visit Hui had 5 to 6 000 Maori present. He advised the committee responsible that managed hygiene and sanitation at the Maori encampment.

At Ohinemutu, he gave an address using parts of Genesis about healthy living. He inspected all the Maori villages and also the Pakeha Township, reporting on all the settlements

to the local authorities and receiving their thanks. As soon as the demolitions and housing improvements he had made were begun, he shifted to Poverty Bay.

Visited the kainga of Poverty Bay. He criticised the low-lying site of Muriwai marae, condemned many houses, gave instruction for the improvement of polluted water supplies and gave two medical lectures to the Maori theological students at Te Rau. Then he left, leaving newspapers commenting favourably and Maori pulling down their houses and fixing their water supplies.

As sole officer his job was to go amongst the Natives, visit their various paha, inquire into their general health, and inspect their water supplies and sanitation. Within two years he had visited every kainga from the Far North to the Deep South, including the Chatham Islands.

Also one of the aims of Native Health Officers was improvement of housing, theirs was the first concerted attack on unsatisfactory living conditions in Maori settlements. The NHO condemned numerous badly situated and otherwise substandard dwellings, and often had them burned or demolished in their presence.

Vaccinated a large number of Maori for smallpox who were willing to get the vaccination. This programme was allowed to lapse once he left the Department so much so that, with the 1913 smallpox epidemic, an estimated 85% of Maori were unvaccinated.

As Native Health Officer utilised association between them and the Maori Councils that were set up to forge health reforms among Maori.

Set up system of Native Sanitary Inspectors nationally.

1901–6 General shift in housestyle from rush whare to wooden houses in Maori villages with improvement in sanitation. After 1905, he also spearheaded, with Buck, a campaign for the building of latrines.

1902 Etahi Mate Rere published a four-page pamphlet describing the symptoms and treatment of infectious diseases, especially smallpox.
Produced other pamphlets after this including infant care.

Taipo Piwa: Nga Take I Toro ai me Etahi Raweke e Kore ai te Toro on Typhoid disease was popular.

Etahi Kupu mo te Ora – a 22-page booklet that concisely dealt with ventilation, water supplies, diet, hygiene, obstetrics, infant care, care of the sick and other matters.

1903 Attended and treated a typhoid outbreak in Maori Communities in Paeroa. Recommended that the government connect the kainga to the Paeroa water supply, and criticised the town's sanitation.

1903 Pomare's annual report suggested that '*Native Doctors should become local health officers when they qualified.*'

Hone Heke, Northern Maori MP, took up the call in Parliament.

1905 Typhoid epidemic in Kawhia – he isolated the cases and 'talked seriously' to the people.

1905 Joined by Te Rangi Hiroa as Assistant Native Health Officer.

1908 Elected Vice President of the Young Maori Party.

Publication of Nga Kohungahunga me Nga Kai mo Ratou – his infant care manual. In this he was a strong supporter of Plunket (that had started up in 1907 by Dr Truby King as a response to high infant mortality) and endeavoured to inculcate Plunket principles of infant diet and hygiene.

1911 Left the Health Department.
Won the seat for Western Maori and retained it till his death in 1930.

One of his first tasks as a Parliamentarian was to move the preparation of a return detailing the training of Maori nurses.

1912 Commented on Parihaka's housing, piped water supply, hot water system, modern bakehouse and slaughterhouse and consistent cleanliness – called it the most Model Maori village in NZ. It was compared to all other kainga.

1918 The Great World Influenza Epidemic: he put aside his parliamentary duties, visited many kainga and treated the sick and organised Maori Council Action.

Sir Peter Buck

– Te Rangi Hiroa (1880–1951)

Ngati Mutunga Tribe, North Taranaki

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| 1880 | <p>Born in Urenui, North Taranaki</p> <p>Educated at Te Aute College, a student of John Thornton, and was one of the group the Young Maori Party that arose at the beginning of the century to give new faith and hope to what was looked upon as a doomed race.</p> <p>He won a bursary to attend medical school, along with Wi Repa. These bursaries were government funded and aimed at Maori youth.</p> | | |
| 1904 | Buck Graduated from Otago in 1904. | | |
| 1905 | <p>Buck joined Pomare as Assistant Native Health Officer in November.</p> <p>Part of their campaign was to ventilate and floor the whare runanga on marae (previous to 1900 this was unheard of).</p> <p>They did a certain amount of advisory work among the Native School teachers (most of whom were Pakeha), and whenever possible undertook medical inspection of the children. But they did not really have time for this and wanted a proper system of fully documented annual inspections.</p> <p>From subsidy returns made by Native Health Officers (most of whom were Pakeha), Pomare and Buck produced tables that constitute the first quantitative data on Maori morbidity since Thomson's statistics in the 1850s.</p> <p>Consuming another large part of their time was the important role the two government officers played in the selection and instruction of Native Sanitary Inspectors, and in the advising and encouraging of Maori Councils.</p> | | <p>were living in the model village. A report of the Exhibition noted that the '<i>clever young doctor</i>' spent his time not only supervising sanitation and attending to the sick but also '<i>taking an energetic share in the picturesque dances of the visiting tribes, and stripping to a waist-mat for the exciting haka and the thrilling peruperu.</i>'</p> |
| | | 1907 | <p>He investigated a measles epidemic in the Kaipara district. He stayed three days, addressing the people every evening and taking the opportunity to recommend a change of kainga site.</p> <p>On numerous other occasions Pomare and Buck hurried to outbreaks to provide or supervise treatment, see that the infection was contained, and usually to seize their chance to advise the people how to prevent future visitations of disease. In this way they were able to contain epidemics that formerly would have spread without hindrance.</p> |
| | | 1909 | Entered Parliament after winning seat for Northern Maori, previously held by Hone Heke. |
| | | 1913 | <p>Serious outbreak of smallpox amongst Maori.</p> <p>He left Parliament to take charge of the medical campaign in the North.</p> |
| | | 1914 | Outbreak of WW1. Became Medical Officer for the Maori contingent and served in Egypt, France and Belgium. Awarded a Distinguished Service Order. |
| | | 1919 | War ended. Came back to NZ to become Director of Maori Hygiene. |
| 1906–7 | He spent six months in 1906–7 at the International Exhibition in Christchurch where he was in charge of the Maori who | 1951 | Died in Honolulu. |

Tutere Wi Repa (1877–1945)

Ngatiporou, Whanau – a – Apanui, Ngati Kahungunu

Born at Hicks Bay. At Te Kaha Native School he won a scholarship to Te Aute.

1888 Started at Te Aute College and matriculated in 1899.

Served on the Te Aute Association, both before and after attending university.

One of the important tasks of the Association was the production of their monthly newspaper *Te Pipiwharauoa*. This was always entirely in Maori and it became an organ of both Maori Anglicanism and the Te Aute Association. It served as a vehicle for aspiring writers such as Kohere, Ngata and Wi Repa. Particular attention was given to health: writers denounced tohunga, published Health Department notices and explanations of them by Pomare, followed the progress of medical and other students and ran medical articles penned by Pomare, Buck and Wi Repa or solicited and translated by them.

Besides association members, many older Maori all over the country read *Te Pipiwharauoa* and wrote to it.

1899 Won one of the first medical scholarships at Te Aute with Peter Buck and entered Otago Medical School.

1908 Graduated in 1906, MB ChB, from Otago Medical School.

1908 Secured a position at Gisborne Hospital which was cancelled when the Board heard that their appointee was a Maori. An element of bitterness against Pakeha remained with him for the rest of his life which perhaps helps to explain the animosities he periodically aroused in the East Coast settlers and Health Department administrators.

1908–13 Wi Repa went into general practice and received a subsidy for treating Maori patients as Native Medical Officer at Te Karaka. The Native Medical Officer system sprang from a time when many Maori lacked a cash income, shunned hospitals and lived in districts where there were not enough Pakeha

1910–11 Held a special appointment in Te Karaka designed to eradicate Typhoid disease that had been long prevalent in the area.

1913 Wi Repa returned to practice amongst Ngatiporou around Hicks Bay and Te Araroa. Received a subsidy of £100 as Native Medical Officer and £50 from the Pakeha settlers. Remained there till his death in 1945.

He tried to get a travelling clinic service going, as Maori were reluctant to attend Pakeha doctors.

He devoted his professional life to medical practice in areas that were largely Maori and offered no chance of a good income. He retained his Anglican faith and became a keen student of the Maori past and present. Later he wrote that he worked among Maori because of his adherence to the Te Aute ideal. He described himself as a '*guide, philosopher and friend*' of his people, and was confident that those who had known him would '*testify that, in spite of the great struggle, I have not disgraced my profession or proved false to my ideal of service for our people.*'

1929 Undertook a tuberculosis survey amongst Maori from Matakaoa to East Ootiki, funded from Maori Purposes Board research grant from the Native Department, headed by Apirana Ngata.

This occurred after Wi Repa had criticised the existing Pakeha model, claiming that Health Department was incapable of providing suitable services for Maori in Suggestions for the Study of TB amongst Maori.

As this funding was outside current funding streams and done without the consultation of the Health Department, there were complaints about it.

Bibliography

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