



OUR BAY OF ENSIGNS
& other 'race' relations





Also by Bernard Gadd

Poetry

Oracle Bones

Pity Mr Hash

Too Right Mate, *with John O'Connor*

Stepping Off From Northland

shadow-patches, *with Janice Bostok/Catherine Mair*

1 imagines serifim

prognostications of the apricot

Fiction

Laya

Dare Not Fail

Blood of Tainui

Just like you said it would be & other stories



As editor

Pacific Voices

Catching the Light

Other Voices 1 & 2

Real Fire, poems of the 1960s and 70s







Our Bay of Ensigns
& other 'race' relations

historical verse

BERNARD GADD

HEADWORX
WELLINGTON





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in a *waka*, with permission of
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the missionary attends a little dying 1830s

and today a *rangatira*
butchered a boy of six years
not a child a slave
starving in a general famine
who stole from his possessor's *kete*
the woman's father struck
with his hatchet the little head
but failed in killing
so tied a rock about the neck
and flung him in a pool

but I ran up and pulled him out
the chief shot him
like a spasming rabbit

I buried him at once
to save the tortured flesh
from worse

it's said the food perhaps
was *tapu*

auto da fe inquisition
conversion at sword edge –
we preach nothing of those

Her articles 1840

in the Treaty it was written
was spoken:

maori

and at once
there was a waiting
for what that breath
and ink might
make

for by those

maori

everything was to be owned
yes even by children
and every estimable thing
possessed

and thus

maori

might be like
in majesty Her
English Scots Quebeçoise
Cape colonists or Irish
Malaccans Highlanders Untouchables
Eskimos Zulus Mauritians Maltese
but surely not Her
Tasmanian Aborigines

slaves 1842

possession was the Treaty pledge
so Matoro shipped himself
with thirty Moriori slaves to labour
for his living and for forty of his kin
out from the pitiable peacefulness
of missionaries and the nag
of British law
to settle freely
far on Auckland Island

some of the slaves lasted out
the twelve years of unending seas
spin drift chill and peat
that nurtured only turnip or cabbage
and wormy cod, pork fish-flesh tainted
seal meat and for a time the rivalry
of British colonists

and those enlivening feuds
invented
in Matoro's Viking mind

whanau 1840s

In 1848 Ngapora
rangatira of the Waikato
complained his young men
even his slaves
no longer obeyed

his authority was a toppling tree
and the British transplanted nothing

he didn't mention women
but in Otawhao
Morgan the missionary
opened a boarding school
for young abandoned
'half-castes'

maybe sometimes recalling
British fields
still swelling to Celt
and Anglo-Saxon
bounds



Tuamarina 1843

hysterias in fusillade
each party
almost equal
in dyings

Te Rangihaeata
in an instant elects
conviction
that *pakeha* ball
breached his wife's
breast

*I'm all the same
as Kuini Wikatorī*

stone edge
fells necks
till blunt as Heke's axe
will be

Chief Constable Thompson
Captain Arthur Wakefield —
those stipulators that survey
sheets were actual possession





and surrendered weaponless
gentlemen and labourers impressed
to marshal awe of rust
as cutlass or musket

and at once
acid as gunpowder
came sensings of a man o' war
broaching to broadside
Rauparaha's *mana*

and of the swamps of his nephew's
skulk and the roads
of old age's
supervision

and of hemp sacking
on fleeces and seed

and the map dots:
Wakefield
and Rangihaeata





Remuera *hakari* 1844

three thousand
fighting apt men
encamp a single
route march hour
from the town

the hosts and visitors gaudy
with scarves
form disciplined opposing rows
above a deep and grassy
bowl

each man bares
from waist up
knee down
or with cartouche and belt
fobs off
nakedness

new government
land sale muskets glitter
and iron tomahawks
and heirloom *mere*





haka ricochet
platoons speed down the slopes
in booms of echo
halt with a stillness
of men drilled utterly
in muscle

no one here shall see
the governor tremble
not this Fitz
Roy

I host *rangatira*
by the hundreds
at Government House
the press of my paperwork heaps
beyond their pungent
jostle of shoulders

‘cultivate peaceable fields’ I teach
‘grow fleeces make
yourselves clothes’





bay of ensigns 1845

Heke
Stars 'n Stripes abaft
slips *waka* to his civil
war

the governor
declares
a union
of cannon

missionaries muster
their Lord of Hosts against
republican offence

looting (theirs and *toas*)
ash and shot
and the Kororareka riff raff
transform to sorrowful
burghers dispossessed





hands 1850s

I've mounded baskets
at the bine
coppiced slim withies
by the water meadow
mucked out byres
set nettles in the heap
of flame

I stand on my own land

we were brought months
in dimming dankness
sickness and lewd curiosity
there were no ship's boats for us
only beyond aging wood
sea's capacious cuddy
we were hold-held with lies
even though we'd no hope of soil
only simple faith in our labour

*nothing but defeat
enslaves me*

I've made the half
circle of the world
and squat with my mate and children



in this plank pen
on someone's swampy lot
labouring merely by hours
in mire that might
firm to a track
for charity of pork
and potato
with each morning
inching us back to hunger again

the quick tussock
the ruffle of toetoe light
a wink of fish in the creek
are me

my fingers
my muscles yearn
to be deft against our want

you seek my ancestors' bones?
where are your bayonet
and round shot?





battered 1860s

which *rangatira* to follow?
whose *karakia* to believe?
which greed grip to fear least?

which victories, retreats,
deaths shall light us
safely?

can we trust
only swamps
and the flameless crouch
among trees?

which of our children
and old ones
can we carry?

dreams batter us
with recollection:
bivouacs of manuka
grit of bracken root





elegy *1860s*

of course I trusted
the logic of stockades
my bailiff it was they killed

I pity distended udders
and pigs haunted
by passaging ravagers

yet know my paddocks to be
more than mere skirmishes
across contestable soil



the way of our wars, Omarunui 1866

the prophet Barnabas
rode out of the bush
with maybe eighty men
a few women and a ten
year old boy

the *whanau* of the village fled
his fervency of *tupara*
the *atua* provided amply
their *whare* and store pits
and settlers' ewes

'Hauhau Newberry'
deserter
send word of the advance
of Colonel Whitmore
two hundred Ngati Kahungungu
(one *rangatira* newly
past his own chanting
to the *niu* yards)

and the two hundred farmers
and townsmen for whom
muskets could be found



Barnabas preached against
the white flag or earth banks
he died with twenty of his faithful
a few ran. the rest were prisoners

the land in the hills
of the godly community
was confiscated most
passing to Ngati Kahungunu
the prisoners were shipped in exile
to Wharekauri where Te Kooti
lit their souls afresh
some militia officers died later
in the *morehu* chase
two *kupapa* chiefs were elected MPs
and Whitmore parades yet
in sabre and braid

no one's learned why
Barnabas came





Pharaoh, quake again 1867

the rainbow of the moon's
white
crosses the darkness
of Wharekauri

is it the staff of the Lord
shakes this thatch?

down the lines
of the hands flows
the covenant
in fire

a grey sea
tautens tautens tautens
a schooner broaches
steadies
the bowsprit glints
with blood

star to star
climbs a lizard's
glimmer





Hokitika 1868

it was of course the Fenians' fault:
an empty coffin lead by a priest
protesting hangings in Manchester
had Loyalists arming at once

and Irish Greens rushing in from the sluices
a thousand special constables
were handed firearms of a sort
the agitating priest was gaoled

with the Fenian newspaper man
and the civil war among *pakeha*
was nothing but brawls and grog
and respite from unlucky claims

Colonel Whitmore's
little encouragements 1869

*the enemy must be hunted
out of the bush*

and thus for show of fear
or desertion from the flying columns
fifty lashes
*(though you can't flog
the cowardice out)*
and two year's hard labour
dismissal and always the threat
I fire if you hesitate again
or the court martial squad

and for courage a novel
New Zealand Cross
female captives for the use
of *kupapa*
five pounds for an enemy male
more or less alive
for a *rangatira* ten
a thousand for Titokowaru
five for a head or its ears
(even a child's
at a pinch)



prayers 1860s / 70s

pai marire prayed
with blood on lips

troopers & *kupapa* prayed
with bloody blades





flags *1860s / 70s*

in every ensign
the queen fights
with the chiefs



another Von Tempsky relict 1869

people trusted Lucy Takiora
(another of the half-and-halves
Te Kooti so suspected)
spy (ten pounds a month
and a four hundred pound plot
of confiscated soil)
trail finder true shot
(though fond Von kept her from
guerillero sorties)

*I risk my life in giving information
I've done more for the government
than ever for myself*

as Titokowaru's people
scattered Lucy reported
a return of elders
to their *kainga*
urging the camp commander's promise
for capture not death

but the *kupapa* patrol
shot the *kaumatua*
the weeping woman
struck and struck her betrayer
*I didn't remonstrate
a wrong had been done*



pastoral idyll *1870s*

& afterwards Titokowaru
ebulliently priced
for pastoralists
the bushels
of his cocksfoot
seed





fugitives 1870s

the teacher of more
than gunpowder resistance
slips with three or four
from tree to tree
through wet
bush

contingents and *kokiri*
in a glisten of enfields
savage *whanau*
fire *kainga* and winter
stores

yet the speculator in acres
the sheep run lessee
gold prospector
preacher banker surveyor
lawyer Prime
Minister
feel their blood
jump
peacelessly





complaint of bones *1870s / 80s*

we were lifted
from fields
where we'd fallen
from breath

freighted on steamers
cart or truck
to hills or paddocks
or parks

which of our parts pieced?
and to which gender? age?
enmity?

we were scrubbed
and set on racks
among songs and mumbles
possibly of prayer
jaws pelvises
drying on poles

did the earth
come on us again
in enclosure
of womb
or as cannibal ravening?





did we wait
for an agonising
knit of sinews
sprout of cells
and light
blossoming wildly
in irises
blinking from clay?



labourers *1870s / 80s*

1

'twas Joseph Arch
the Godly preacher
and our Agricultural Labourers Union man
got me the emigrant's ticket

the farmer who owned
my hovel
and lent not an inch
for potato and cabbage

with his brothers the Justice
and Parson came trotting
to the barracks to hale me
back to their labour

but I wasn't again for wet clothes
and no fireplace for drying
nor day's glitter sweated away
for enough for tea kettle

broth's water on bread
with maybe the taste of an onion
and sour cider or a foul well's water
and tithes and no answering back



till death in the workhouse
while over the hedgerows
lardy grouse lurched and quail
it's transportation to pluck

2

we hid
at the edge of Te Wai Pounamu
from measles Te Rauparaha
and the scarlet fever

then the buyer came on his ship
to lay lines on his paper
but none of his pounds
were ours

we own no hunting grounds
of the weka
nor eel and whitebait waters
nor the mounds for potato tubers

our trees are burned
and the roots of *tī* and bracken
the tui and kaka gone
alien fish possess the rivers





we are nothing but hours
for hire for scraps
of oatmeal flour rice
bread and good luck's scrag of meat





afterwards *1870s / 80s*

ownership's gone
so see them arrive
smiling
the peacemakers



utterances: Sir George Grey
and Te Kooti 1878

*you are now our light
your words are the lamp
of loving*

the arthritic premier
and the asthmatic fled
from the ambush of trees

*the law shall be the parent
of poor people
of orphans
and of everyone
in want*

and there shall be no
squires nor chiefs
their lips tattooed
with crowns and pounds

nor the church of politicians
or *rangatira*

we'll each sit
on the ample seats
of the steam whistler



its tracks
pressing across the beds
of sleepers



another winter 1879

the shot's penned
in shepherds'
barrels

*those half savage dogs
have savaged our sheep
and these people
umu'd our wethers*

the run holder's manager
advances his stout boot

*these thirty whare and their gardens use
unconscionable room of our hundred
thousand acres*

the inspector of the Armed Constabulary
instructs on trespass

*no no
no land further
than the seeing
of Kemp in his vessel
was sold*



and again through snow
and ice and wind
the drays the walking horses
the stumble of feet
the cough of the dying child
the prophet's old-man
strength leaking

and at the head of the track
houses collapsing in ash





gospel of provender

at Mohaka the women set a *kono*
of potatoes by Te Kooti's path
let yesteryear's terrorist feel
the coals on his head

at Parihaka they offered loaves
to Bryce and his constables
come and break
our bread not heads

at Patea it was a return apt
for historians
Titokowaru in a buggy
eight hundred marching the town bounds
the residents feeding them two
tons of bread and some bullocks
and the next year feasting in turn on Titoko's
stuffed geese turkeys fowl
the peace of this one-eye careworn man
wheezing towards a coffin





dust *1881*

Hiroki that
mere nobody
murdered a surveyor
persistently poaching his porkers

Parihaka
took him in
dish washer
to the once muncher
of warrior parts
Titokowaru

when troopers finally
appropriated
his landlords and him
the prophets went
stoic to bars
in a dray
chained Hiroki
sneezing their dust



Her Majesty declines 1884

‘also ma’am, a man
styling himself as king.’
‘another dusty purse
and hack edge claymore?’
‘a New Zealander, merely,
ma’am.’ ‘but could he recall
to sight an instant my Albert?’
‘the visage is rather tattooed.’
‘so what is the antique’s wish?’
‘for land levied too
liberally from his tribes
as recompense for their
late rebelling.’ ‘but what then
could our poor emigrants own?
how is Sir George Grey advising?’
‘as I recall he’d have said
that the colony hosted a deal
too many scoundrels eager
for acres beyond any shadow
of scruple. yet he too thought it ill
to turn ships battened with hopes
into harbouring hulks, urged all
to make bounty together.’
‘quite the Gladstonian! tell
the antipodean near-Godwinson
my pain widows me even from empire



I cannot play his soil's consort
while each morning bereaves
afresh of my own precious Albert-
land. let him turn his trudge to ...'
'Wellington, ma'am.' 'and there
strive with dry eye to bargain some
seemly Saint Helena ... yet entreat him
to think forever first of their children
in the way of my poor deep dear.'





sticks 1890

the *ariki* beat
her daughter for bloodying
'commoners' who wouldn't do
her wish

but the girl
already knew
the difference between
the ends of a stick





houses

Chinese gold miners in the 1870s
lived in caves or under canvas sheets
or boughs across dry stone walls
and apart from the *gweilos*
of Arrowtown

historians in the early
twentieth century stared
at backblock Maori bark
raupo and fern trunks wondering
if they were sketching
the genuine traditional *whare*

and the farmers and surveyors
in bush and scrub
only in prospering later years
set planks for walls

in the depression
they put the rail
over Arthur's Pass
in snow from tents
and tin chimneys

plusher
than the 'starlit hotels'
of the swagger



1914

1

please post no

Maori garrison here

the administrator telegraphed

we'd have to treat them

like white folk

what might our Samoans

then expect?

2

contemporary infantry

service

said Maui (bart. in waiting

for diligence in sundry

Tory ministries)

shall break the communism

of the tribe

free the competition

of the individual

for wealth

objectors 1918

Waikato *iwi* conscription resisters
slept on prison boards
and ate plain bread
or broke stones

Archie Baxter
in a bolted cabin
was shipped to Étapes
bound with knotted rope
to a board out in whatever weather
for hours a day
then sent to the front and beaten
till a doctor saved him
from the firing squad
by signing him off as insane

but then Archie
was a poor man
who questioned
entirely authority



gentlefolk 1929

gentlemanly Major Gordon Coates
wrote kindly to my grandparents
of their elder son's death
beside him at Mailly Maillet

depression PM he knew the value
of handing cash from Native funds
to Hereditary Maori Nobility
to keep the *whanau* feeding themselves
costless to government accounts

and Ratana and Labour out
of The House

and the common lot
in their proper ranks just
as in battle





an eviction or two 1940 / 90

coming home
from launching his *waka*
at Waitangi
the carver stayed
a night
with *pakeha* friends

NO MAORIS
the landlady said
means you're all out

her grandkids
found a few decades on
their local boozier
too was forbidden turf





a garden of 1960s

Chinese growers

'but I don't hire Chows'

and Maori labourers

'no Hori hair cuts here'

turned soil's red

'keep them kids

off me mezzanine floor'

fried or boiled or with rice

Pukekohe spuds were judged

universally ok





Lao lullaby 1995

this pendant
silver
true silver
and its links:
my father's gift

a policeman
he hid
when he visited us
I was a child
they came searching
he ran off through
dark through traps
and the black river

this shape is
our sign
peace
it means always
peace





he lives
so far
from me
is beyond
travelling
keeps with unknown
friends

there was blood
burning red noises red
they told me this
it was far
from me not
my remembering

see how the light
is every day
on this
love
of my father





the new century

true, some millions of dollars
parcels of land
and someone else
to sign on
for the evils
of our past
assuage

and now a branch
of an off-shore corporation's
on a lot or two of our land
we'll retool ourselves
offer the services third
world workers can't
and of course
for *esprit de corps*

and lay on-line connections
and Sky to every *whanau* home

you'll see them
our senior executives
at all the conferences
on Freeing Trade
eying in sorrow protestors
ineducable for *Tē Ao Hou*





graduation 2001

the fluency of *te reo*
from the Scottish rector
and of the *karanga karakia* and *waiata*

all the Polynesians Chinese
Viet Nameese and Indian
graduands
in *koru*'s hoods
courteously heard

though no one
among the staff
had thought to learn how
their names were said
not even those of the *iwi* few





passages 2001

all these immigrants, eh
elbowing *tangata whenua*

our kids? they're doing great
in Aussie and the States





Eichmann's complaint *2001*

holocaust
in Aotearoa? I
so much more
than decimate!





three balls *2001*

is The Treaty
a pawn shop
where anyone trades in
unwanted Articles?





prophecies

1

to kill the lingering
whale
call for Ngati Moni

to fell the final
kanuka stand
hire Ngati Mana

to roast the sole
albatross chick
rely on Ngati Puku

to set the resort
on the lonely beach
apply to Iwi Inc

to delight in the last *haangi*
karanga powhiri
waiata haka koru
buy your tickets soon





2 forerunners: Moriori and so many more

the Treaty tribes:
old scribbles
of land courts
and Tribunal reliance
on tales of peoples
whose ancestors came upon us
barely before the *pakeha*

our few hearths flicker
we know the names
of our streams and hills
and our dead

our old enemies pray
to all the gods they find
we listen to the breathing
of our earth

our year of strength
will come
our children
learn



3 the host of the democrats

*let the mightiest
be estimated
at no more
than the least*

Levellers Radicals Luddites
Diggers Chartists Marxists
Suffragettes Fenians
Co-ops Republicans
shoe maker blacksmith carpenter
stand alert in Mangere Greymouth Geraldine
Doubtless Bay
with pike and pistol
plough and padlock
wood-block and cartridge
web-site and slogan

*for each voter
our determination is
the justice
of a single voice*

*and on every head
commonly
the crown*



the atlas of deprivation 2001

this time the red's not
imperial Brits
only the people with maybe no
phone car job house
of their own

spills across
the places of the *iwi* ... Northland
East Cape Western Bay
of Plenty King Country
the Whanganui River
and the roller-door-store
city blocks

around them the paddocks
tipuna owned
glow page upon page
with the emerald show
of wealth





Glossary

ariki — leader, chief

atua — God, a god

gweilo — non-Chinese

haangi — earth oven

iwi — tribe

kainga — village, home

karanga — call of welcome

kaumatua — elder

kete — basket

kokiri — attack party

kono — small basket for cooked food

koru — curved, spiral or looped motif

kupapa — Maori supporters of the Government in the wars

mana — influence, power

mere — hand club

morehu — survivors

ngati — tribal prefix

niu — mast-like pole about which pai marire worshippers marched

pai marire — followers of the religion of Te Ua

powhiri — welcome

rangatira — chief

tangata whenua — the local people, the indigenous peoples

tapu — sacred, forbidden

Tē Ao Hou — the new world, the changed world

Tē Reo — Maori language

tipuna — ancestor

toa — warrior

tupara — double-barrelled musket

umu — earth oven, oven

waiata — song

waka — canoe

whanau — family

whare — house



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