

IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL
OF NEW ZEALAND

IN THE MATTER OF: The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF: The Wairarapa ki Tararua Inquiry –
Wai 863

AND

IN THE MATTER OF: The claims of Rangitāne o Tāmaki-
Nui-a-Rua - **Wai 166**

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF MAISIE HANATIA
RANGIMAURIORA TE AWEAWE TATAURANGI GILBERT-PALMER**

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Introduction

1. My full name is **MAISIE HANATIA RANGIMAURIORA TE AWEAWE TATAURANGI GILBERT-PALMER**. I am married to Hona Te Moananui a Kiwa Gilbert Palmer. We have three tamariki, including one whangai daughter, and eight mokopuna.
2. I was born in Pahiatua on 5 January 1927. My mother was Arapera Mikaera Tataurangi. My father was of European descent. My old people were not happy with my mother marrying a Pākehā and because of that fact I was raised by my kuia, Hohora Waaka Anaru Paku and my koro Te Ao Mikaera Tataurangi Rangimauriora Te Aweawe. There is a photograph of my koro Te Ao at page 13 of the photograph booklet, “He Kanohi E Kitea, He hokinga Mahara”. It is through my mother and her ancestors that I link to Rangitāne in the Pahiatua area. My hapū is Ngāti Te Kapuarangi.
3. My links to Rangitāne go back to Tireoterangi through a Rangitāne rangatira known as Te Kapuarangi. My Rangitāne whakapapa is set out at pages 18 and 19 of the whakapapa booklet, He Tatai Tupuna, He Tatai Hono Hoki.
4. My evidence today will focus on my relationship with the southern portion of the Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua rohe and particularly on the Pahiatua and Mangatainoka areas.

Pahiatua

5. I was born and raised in Pahiatua and have lived there my entire life. The Pahiatua area and Mangatainoka district are very important in terms of our Rangitāne history. I am aware that the Mangatainoka block was sought by the Crown during the 1870s and that my Rangitāne tupuna initially declined to part with it.

6. Pahiatua is my turangawaewae. My right to call it my turangawaewae is through my whakapapa links to Rangitāne, and due to the fact that I have maintained ahi kaa for my whānau and the wider Rangitāne people in this area all of my life. I am one of the few tangata whenua still living in the Pahiatua area today.

7. In terms of Mangatainokoa, there are only a few Māori families who descend from the original owners of the Mangatainoka block and who have interests in that block today. Some of the land in the Mangatainoka block is owned by Rangitāne whānau, examples being:
 - (a) 28 acres owned by the Simon whānau who are the descendants of Te Koa, Te Aokautere and Whakarongo;

 - (b) 30 acres at Ruawhata west of Ngāawapurua on the Manawatu River is owned by the Poutawa whānau who descend through the Rora Painatu whānau of Ngāti Mutuahi; and

 - (c) 100 acres by Te Amokura's descendants who descend from Te Koeti who is a descendant of Te Kapuarangi.

The Origins of Pahiatua

8. The name Pahiatua is not the original Rangitāne name for the area in the vicinity of the current day Pahiatua township. The name Pahiatua was given by a man known as McCardle who came to our area and is known by Pākehā as the “founder” of Pahiatua.

9. McCardle was very friendly with a rangatira from southern Wairarapa, named Te Koneke Apirahana Pahiatua. Te Koneke was an uncle to Hohora Waaka Anaru Paku, who was a tupuna of mine. The name “Pahiatua” was then given by McCardle to the area that already had a Rangitāne name. It was called “Keremutupou”.

10. The name Keremutupou has its origins in the mystical world. The name relates to an important atua who guided the Kurahaupo waka to Aotearoa. The atua was known as Rongomai. Rongomai resided in a cave, ‘Te Ana-o-Rongomai’, which is situated south of the Pahiatua township. This area is known as Konini which means “the berries that grew on the Konini plant”. Local Pākehā people refer to this area as Pahiatua Hill. The hill is known to Rangitāne as Te Pane Atua.
11. According to my koro Te Ao, the name Keremutupou refers to the spring that flows between the two hilltops and resembles Rongomai bending over and water flowing between his buttocks. A literal meaning of Keremutupou is “the water that flows from the buttocks of Rongomai”. The stream in Pahiatua is also known as Keremutupou and still flows through the buttocks of Rongomai today. The stream flows right past my home where I have lived for the last 57 years.
12. The Keremutupou Stream was diverted by the local council in the early 1900’s. It was out of this stream that the local Pahiatua people used to get their water supply. However, they no longer get it from the stream, it now comes from the Mangatainoka River. My understanding is that they diverted the stream in order to satisfy local Pākehā farmers who were constantly getting flooded because of the flatness of the area.
13. The references to Rongomai and Keremutupou are still important to me and are referred to in modern times. The new Pahiatua hospital which was expanded in recent years has the name Waireka. The name “Waireka” is in fact a reference to Rongomai and his “sweet running waters”.

Te Pane Atua

14. As already mentioned, the cave of Rongomai was situated at Konini and the hillface is known to the Rangitāne people as Te Pane Atua. My koro told me that our people transported themselves to the Pahiatua area by

travelling along the Manawatu River and then into the Mangahao River. As they entered into the Pahiatua area from the Mangahao River our tupuna would see the faces of at least four atua outlined in the rockface around the cave of Rongomai. The name “Te Pane Atua” refers to our tupuna seeing the four faces of atua as they came from the Mangahao River. My koro Te Ao told me that they would say in Māori “Oe He Pane Atua”.

15. As a child I would go with my koro fishing at the lake below Te Pane Atua. We would go fishing for tuna and kakahi. It was my grandfather’s custom to always put some of the kai that we had caught from the lake back as an acknowledgement to the four atua who provided us with the kai.

16. My koro told me that when the flounder were swimming in the lake that meant that someone from the Taranaki area had passed away. It was explained to me that there was a strong relationship between the Rangitāne people living in the Pahiatua area and those from Taranaki. In more recent times I have understood the relationship between the descendants of the Aotea waka and our waka Kurahaupo. This has been discussed in the evidence of Manahi Paewai. I can remember as a child that the Taranaki people would come to this particular lake at least once a year to catch tuna.

Ngaawapurua

17. The Ngaawapurua district which is north of Pahiatua was historically an important place to our Rangitāne people. The Ngaawapurua area and many parts of the Mangatainoka block were well known for rich soil and successful cultivation of crops. This is possibly why the Rangitāne people during the late 1800’s wanted to retain the Mangatainoka and Ngaawapurua area, and not sell to the Crown.

Ruawhata Kainga

18. There was an old Rangitāne kainga southwest of Ngaawapurua known as Ruawhata. It was located on the left bank of the Manawatu River close to the junction with the Mangahao River. Ruawhata was a kainga for the Rangitāne hapu, Ngati Mutuahi.
19. When the land in and around Ngaawapurua was acquired by the Crown in the late 1800's many of the Ngati Mutuahi people who had lived there for generations moved to areas such as Tahoraiti and Kaitoki as those areas remained in Maori ownership. I am aware that some of my own family, that is the Rangimauriora family, moved with other Ngati Mutuahi whanau to Tahoraiti near Dannevirke. Those families today are known as the Kingis and the Wi Duncans ("Takana").
20. In my view it is unlikely that our people would have wanted to leave the area because of its fertile lands, the closeness of clean sizeable rivers, the relative flatness of the area and simply the fact that they had lived there for many generations prior to the arrival of the Pakeha.
21. The Ngaawapura area was such a good harvesting area it used to attract our relations from as far north as Tahoraiti, east to Mataikona and south to Hamua. People would come, not only to cultivate their gardens, but also to mahi tuna.
22. The banks of the Mangatainoka River (meaning the stream surrounded by native broom or "tainoka") provided flat land for easy travel. I think this may have contributed to the Crown wanting that area, as there was a desire to put a major railway line through to connect up the Hawkes Bay and Wellington areas.

The Railway Bridge at Ngaawapurua

23. I am aware that the first Pākehā bridge was put across the Manawatu River at Ngaawapurua in about 1880. This bridge was located very close to the Ruawhata kainga. The bridge was apparently washed away in a huge flood not long after it was completed. This was apparently to the glee of the Rangitāne people who lived at Ruawhata who had warned the Pakeha that the bridge site was tapu because it crossed a Rangitāne burial ground.
24. A second bridge was opened in 1885 after local rangatira removed the tapu of that burial ground. Bones from the burial ground were removed and taken by horse south to Hamua.

Hamua

25. The Hamua area which is situated south of Pahiatua and north of Eketahuna was a major Rangitāne settlement, particularly during the time of my tupuna, Nireaha Tāmaki.
26. One of the major pā in the Hamua area was known as Tutaekara. Tutaekara is named after an event where local Rangitāne destroyed an enemy flag captured in a battle.
27. I was always taught by my koro Te Ao to respect the Hamua area because our tupuna Te Hirawanu Kaimokopuna, and later Nireaha Tāmaki, resided in that area. There are photographs of Nireaha Tāmaki and Te Hirawanu Kaimokopuna at pages 1 and 3 of the photograph booklet, “He Kanohi E Kitea, He hokinga Mahara.”

Nireaha Tāmaki

28. As indicated, Nireaha Tāmaki resided at Hamua during his lifetime. Nireaha Tāmaki is buried at the Hamua urupa along with many of my tupuna including those transferred after the Ngaawapurua bridge was

erected. I am a descendant of Nireaha Tāmaki. Whangai of Nireaha still own land at Hamua today.

29. During my upbringing I heard stories about Nireaha Tāmaki and other chiefs like Huru Te Hiaro and Te Hirawanu. There is a photograph of Nireaha Tamaki at page 3 and Huru Te Hiaro at page 9 of the photograph booklet, “He Kanohi E Kitea, He hokinga Mahara.” From the stories I was told it seemed that Te Hirawanu and, in later years, Nireaha, were the main chiefs in the southern Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua area during the 1800’s. Te Hirawanu and Nireaha held the mana over the area including the Ngaawapurua waterways, which were important because there were no roads and no bridges until the 1880’s.
30. Hepa Tatere in his evidence will explain that Nireaha Tāmaki was responsible for setting up the Manawatu ferry business, which was quite successful until he lost the contract. We are all aware of this story.
31. Nireaha Tāmaki was also an important man in terms of negotiating with Government officials. I am aware that he was involved in the negotiations that took place over the laying of the railway through the Pahiatua/Ngaawapura area.
32. Nireaha Tāmaki was by all accounts a very hospitable man especially to local settlers. There is a humorous account in the book of C J Carle entitled “Forty Mile Bush – a Tribute to the Pioneers” which talks about the hospitality of Nireaha Tāmaki. I set out below the passage that I find rather humorous:

“Nireaha, the leading Maori Chief of the district, was a popular figure and kept an open house for any traveler. One rather weary Scandanavian, after a long journey, hesitated about accepting the insistent invitation of a number of big tattooed natives, but his mate assured him that they had no cannibalistic intentions, and that there was no safer place provided he left ‘the wahines’ alone. He had no idea what wahines were, but by treating

everything with suspicion, except the large bowl of stewed pigeons, ducks, kakas, eels and potatoes that all hands sat around and dipped into, he quite enjoyed his stay”.

Te Taperenui-o-Whatonga

33. As I was growing up I was aware that much of the land within the Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua area including the Pahiatua-Mangatainoka areas was covered in dense bush, known to the Rangitāne people as Te Taperenui-o-Whatonga or to local Pakeha as the Seventy Mile or Forty Mile Bush.
34. I can remember my koro, Te Ao, would talk about the loss of the birds. In his own words he would say “Kaore he korero a te manu” which essentially meant “the birds are not talking any more”. He would talk a lot about the loss of the huia and the kereru.
35. The huia was an important taonga to our Rangitāne people. My tupuna, Nireaha Tāmaki, as you will see in his portrait, wears a huia feather. I am in a privileged position to have in my possession a huia feather. The history behind this particular huia feather relates to Te Ao. The feather was presented to my koro Te Ao on the day of his birth. The reason he was given it was because he was the son of Mikaera Tataurangi Tupara. Te Ao was born about 1880 at Tutaekara Pā, near Hamua where our meeting house, Raupanui, was located. The hapū of Raupanui was Ngati Te Kapuarangi.
36. I have no doubt that it would have been Nireaha and other chiefs of this area who would have been there at his birth to present the huia feather to Te Ao.
37. The huia feather was given to me after the death of my mother in 1986. It was kept in a tin box just like the boxes that most Maori families have. When I was given the tin box, the huia feather was in a Maori bible. It is still kept in there today. The huia feather reminds me of Te Ao, his rank,

and is certainly a lasting connection to a taonga that was a big part of my tupuna's life, that is the Huia.

The Clearing of the Bush

38. In the Carle book that I mentioned there are some photographs, which show the clearing of the Bush to make way for the Pahiatua township. It brought tears to my eyes to see these photographs especially the ones which showed the destruction and burning of our taonga. I have attached some of these photos to my evidence (marked "A", "B", "C" and "D").

Te Ahu a Turanga

39. Te Ahu a Turanga, near the Manawatu gorge, remains an important part of the Rangitāne landscape. One of the more enlightening experiences that I have had in recent times related to this area.
40. I was contacted by Professor Mason Durie to go to a meeting at Rangiotu in the Manawatu some years ago. Professor Mason Durie indicated that there were some dignitaries of Victoria University who had requested a taonga from the Rangitāne people for their new university marae Te Herenga Waka. Mason indicated that, given that I was a mokopuna of Te Ao, I should attend this meeting.
41. The dignitaries from Victoria University had invited us to present a mauri as a foundation symbol for their new marae. The initial response from Rangitāne was to present a greenstone to the university. My response was that given we were tangata whenua we should give something from our whenua. That is what my koro, Te Ao, had done when we built our home in Pahiatua. He placed a taonga from the whenua at the front door of our home in Pahiatua. He gave the name Manawaora to our house.
42. After some discussion it was decided that a portion of stone would be taken from the sacred shrine at Te Ahu a Turanga i Mua Peak on the

Ruahine range above the Manawatu gorge, as a foundation for this new
whare tupuna.

43. All the sections of Rangitāne delivered this mauri to the site of the new meeting house on the Victoria University Campus in Wellington.

The Future

44. When I speak of identity I am talking about every person who has a whakapapa link to Rangitāne. They should be aware of that link and understand where their turangawaewae is. Identity is about providing all mokopuna of Rangitāne with a good education (both Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākeha) which in turn will give good opportunities for employment and opportunities for them to contribute fully to the Tamaki-Nui-a-Rua and national communities.
45. In my humble opinion, many of our mokopuna who are of Rangitāne descent are not aware of their own identity and this issue needs to be addressed and remedied. Without the whenua many Rangitāne have had no place to stand. Without a strong place to stand our people have remained lost for generations.