

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Treaty of  
Waitangi Act 1975

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

of Remehio TE  
MAUNGA  
MANGAKAHIA  
of Whangapoua  
and on behalf of  
the descendants  
and whanau  
members of  
HAMIORA  
MANGAKAHIA

**Brief of Evidence of John Andrew Willockra Browne**

1. My name is John Andrew Browne and I was born at Coromandel on 31 March 1944. That makes me almost 56 years old. When I was born my family were living at Whangapoua. I am the eldest of child of Terei Francis Brown commonly known by the family as Bunty and my mother Raiha Elizabeth Betty Leef. Terei was the son of Tangiora Whangapoua Browne (nee Mangakahia). When I finish speaking my sister Maureen will speak about her life in the family after I left home.

2. My mother and father had the following children.

John Andrew Willockra Milton	(Living)	Place of Residence,
Phillip Hamiora	(Living)	Milton
Fredrick Harding	(Living),	Milton
Herbet Wariki	(Descendant)	Buried Milton
James Mario	(Living)	Milton
Maureen Edith	(Living)	Whangapoua
George	(Living)	Milton
Pete	(Living)	Taupo
Frank	(Living)	Milton
Hone	(Living)	Coromandel
Whangai/Adopted	(Unknown)	Unknown

3. George Potae from Kennedy's Bay and Johnny Bright (Pareake's eldest son) went to Milton and started a shearing gang. That is how the Coromandel got to be in Milton. George asked my brother Phillip

whether he wanted a job down there and so Phillip and Herbet went to work for him. They needed shearers. Over the next 7 years, George, then Fred, then me with my family went down. I originally went for a holiday but stayed to work. Frank followed us. We all eventually came to work in the sheds because the jobs were there, not here in Whangapoua. I have been a shearer since I was 16 years. I started shearing in 1959 in the Wairarapa. But then I went back to the sheds. I have been a shearer for 35 years. I did spend 6 years learning brick laying and bakery but then went back to the sheds.

4. I was the only married man to travel down there. I was married to Gloria Petera. All my brothers that went to Milton married women down there. At one time we counted all the people up from this way and there were approximately 120 people, including their children, from the Coromandel. What is really interesting is that a big migration of people from Coromandel were in the Wairarapa during the 1950s to shear sheep or work in the sheds.

5. When I was growing up we lived on the Browne's Farm in the old homestead. I lived there until I was 14 years old and then I went to Coromandel High School. All the children that were brought up at Whangapoua would go to High School in Coromandel because there was and never has been a High School at Whangapoua.

6. When I was a boy the people living here including my family were the Mangakahia's, the Brights, Uncle Ruka, Waitis up at the Punga, the Denizes and the school teacher. The mill was up the top swimming hole at the Punga, near the Bright's house. At one time the Crozlyns were living in Whangapoua and I went to school with the 2 Crozlyn boys and Tim Mangakahia.

7. Whangapoua was a quiet place, it was a good place because I could do anything I liked and go anywhere I liked. There were few restrictions. As children we were expected to be respectful of the cemeteries around the place. On brave days we would climb Raukawa but usually we stayed off it. This was because of the legends that we were told about the place - we were scared of the kehua up there.

8. While I was a boy about 8-9, I was expected to help on the farm. We would have to mow the paddocks. This job was done with a horse and mower and then later on we used a tractor. We use to attempt to dig drains to stop drain flooding, but you cant really dig drains when you don't what you are doing. All the land around Whangapoua floods occasionally. On a good flood, the water from the Pungapunga and all the gullies would and rise probably six to eight feet. On the Mangakahia and Bright's lands, the farms would be badly affected and fencing would have to be replaced, reading would have to be upgraded. The costs of the fencing would be borne by the owners.

9. As a child we would also conduct basic farm work. If there

were any major problems we could always call upon Reg Mangakahia to help us. The farm seemed big to me then. We milked approximately 50-60 cows. My two brothers Phillip, Fred and I would milk the cows when my father was away shearing.. My father would shear at Whitianga, Colville, Hauraki Plains, Miranda, and on the islands including Waiheke. He was away a few months of every year. The cows were not enough to support the family. Uncle Ivan and my father would be away shearing together.

10. The farm work became really hard after I turned ten. When my father was home and it was time to fertilise you would have to carry the manure around in spit sacks (manure bags). You would empty half out into one bag, split the bag halfway down, put a hole in the top of the split, put your head through the hole and carry it around your neck then spread it by hand as you walked along. This was one chore that was very hard and my job was to load the sledge with 8 or 9 60lb bags of manure onto the sledge and then bring the horse and sledge to my father who would be sewing the manure by hand. Sewing involves distributing manure by hand over the paddocks. Looking back now, there was an art to it. It was hard work. Sometimes I would have to help with the fencing and scrub cutting. At that time it was only me that had to do this, the other boys were too small. I would have take mum to the creek to do the washing when the tanks were low. My brothers would go pig hunting with our two dogs. The dogs would catch them and we would kill them with knives. We used to hunt at Kini-kini (a ridge above the Bright's House and it is one of the landmarks of the area), and Martin Henans to the back of the Harbour House which has been pulled down since. We would go eeling in the Pungapunga.

11. I remember going to Coromandel or Te Rerenga in the winter was hard work because when they were building the Martin Henan straight it would get covered by salt water. For the three to four years they were building it, we would sometimes have to walk it to avoid being stuck. That was a hazard.

12. My father worked the Browne's farm until I left for High School. The farm was leased for a while by my cousin Winnie Mareroa and her husband. After just a few years my grandmother, Tangiora gave the land to auntie and uncle Lillian and Ivan Adams.

13. I jumped school one year later and went to the Wairarapa to work in the shearing sheds. I went to Milton in 1970. I have not lived in Whangapoua from the time I left to go to High School. Since I have been in Milton I have returned home on a regularly basis, on average every two to three years. I keep coming to Whangapoua because it is my home. My children want to come here to live, so that they can call the place home. All my children come back to visit on their own now. My children's' names are Andrea, Bridget, Terei, Jessica, Jason. I have seven grandchildren and one on the way.

14. In conclusion, I have walked, swam, played, ridden, hunted and fished from New Chums to Te Rerenga. I know this land like the back of my hand, it is home.