



IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

WAI 693

IN THE MATTER OF

The Treaty of Waitangi Act

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

a claim by WHAITIRI
MIKAERE on behalf of the
descendants of the Hapu of
Ngati Raukatauri relating to the
MATAMATAHARAKEKE
Blocks

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF
FRANCES HINE WHAKAAINGI MIKAERE
ON BEHALF OF THE CLAIMANTS
June 2000**

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CLAIM : MATAMATAHARAKEKE

WHAKAPAPA

TAMATEKAPUA

HUARERE TE

KOTERETAHI

TE KAUTU

RAUKATAURI

KAWAU

PAEAMANU

TUATIKI

TEOTEO

UREHAMAMA

PAEKE

TE TAIRINGA

TE WHAREKIRI

TE RANGIWHEAU

TE RUAHOHO

HENI

PERA TAMATI

WHAITIRI POKAPOKA

RIPEKA PARAONE

1. My name is Frances Hine Whakaaingi Mikaere, I am fifty three years old and I was born at the Coromandel hospital on the 14th July 1946. I am the oldest of the ten children of Ripeka Paraone and Te Oru Mikaere:
Haere atu ra oku matua, haere korua i te arai o
matua tupuna. Haere, haere, oti atu.
2. I was raised by my parents, in the bosom of our whanau in Manaia, our kainga tuturu. We lived with my maternal grandfather for the first four years of my life, though there was a brief sojourn of some six months in Tauranga, where "my sister Mariana was born and where my father hoped he would get work; he wanted to settle there. Our mother however, contracted yellow jaundice so we moved home to Manaia where she could get help and support. Our parents remained in Manaia for the rest of their lives.
3. I grew up at the knees of the old ones, grand uncles and grand aunts on both sides. My grandfather was a dairy and sheep farmer and my mother ran the house, cooked and cleaned for everyone, tended the house gardens and kept hens and ducks, not to mention a menagerie of tame lambs, pigs, cats and dogs. Our father, who had served in WWII with the Maori Battalion, had been badly wounded in the right arm and back. He spent a long time in a hospital and rehabilitation centre in Palmerston North, spending long periods of time there during the first two years of my life, as doctors tried to save the nerves in his arm. They failed and he lost the use of his hand. Rehabilitative therapy and treatment continued until I was seven years old.
4. One of the consequences of her husbands long absences was that my mother sought the company of our whanau more than she would otherwise have. In particular the company of her eldest sister Rena, her mothers sister and brother, Ripia Pokapoka and Jack Whiti, also know as Whitiwhiti Pokapoka and his wife Maremare. There were bad feelings between them and my grandfather; they never came to visit, we went to them.
5. My earliest memories are of Whitiwhiti ranting and raving about lands that had been stolen from us. In a loud voice he shouted at our mother and Rena that they should pay attention to what he was saying lest the land at Matamataharakeke be lost as well. He also spoke of Harataunga.
6. Whitiwhiti was embroiled in a bitter struggle to reclaim our lands at Omaru and Kopuatauaki. He claimed the lands had been stolen by a Mr Nicholls who had loaned money to his kuia Wikitoria Rangipiki. Wikitoria used the lands to secure the loan. When it was repaid, Nicholls refused to release the lands that secured the loan. Until her death Wikitoria tried to redeem the land, she sought Whitiwhiti's support and prevailed upon him to get it back if she should fail. Whitiwhiti also said his father Pera Tamati helped repay the loan, so it was a matter of adding insult to injury.

7. Whitiwhiti carried on the struggle after her death. He made dire threats against Nicholls and eventually took the matter to the Maori Land Court. The action was not successful. Undeterred he continued to threaten everyone at Kopuatauaki as he set about dragging the affair back into court. He realised he had overlooked the importance of whakapapa and felt sure that once the issue was made clear to the court the land would come back. Whenever we went to his house he could be heard chanting to memory the names of our tupuna. The ones I recall are Tuatiki and Teoteo. The old man persisted in his effort to reclaim birthright to all the lands throughout his life. He insisted Rena carry the burden if he should fail. In her old age she asked me to do something about the lands.
8. Each year our whanau would go to the southern point of Omaru Bay to get kina in the first flowering of the kowhai. It was the only place where kina would be fat and sweet at that first part of the season. Everywhere else the kina was still bitter to the taste. Later in the season the whanau went to other traditional grounds at Amodeo Bay, Waitete, Fantail Bay, Waikawau and Little Bay. The kaimoana collected included paua, koura and tuatua. Toward the end of the season kina was taken from the southern point of Kopuatauaki Bay because the kina were still in very good condition. We often camped for several days or more in one or more of these waahi during the summer season. I personally have made an annual journey by road to all the places we went to in my childhood.
9. My cousin Rena Richards and I had plans to build a Maori creative arts centre at Matamataharakeke. We found that the land had been alienated but at that point did not know how the loss had occurred.