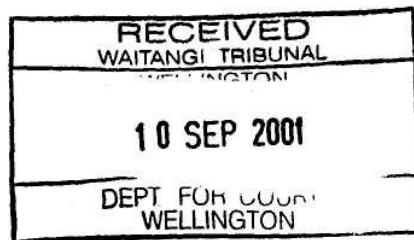


IN THE MATTER OF
AND
IN THE MATTER OF

The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

A claim by Horimatua Evans on behalf of
himself and his whanau

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF ALBERT JOHN EVANS
DATED 2001



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1. My name is Albert John Evans. I am a fisherman, and I live in Auckland. Hori, or George, Evans is my brother.

Life on the farm

2. When George got the lease on Waiheke, I decided to go and live on the island and work on the farm too. At the time I was living in town on the mainland in Auckland, and working on the boats.
3. It was all about the Evans *whanau* establishing itself as a family unit again. I went there with my son. George and his kids were all there, even my sister came over. She had just been widowed, and she was like a mother hen to us. My other brother was going to come over too. to be our stockman. He never lived on the farm though, because we got kicked off before he arrived, after we had been there only a few years.
4. It was good that the *whanau* was there all together, but times were still pretty rough there on the island. We had a hell of a lot of hard work to do to get the place up to scratch. Me and my son were going to live in the shearers' quarters, but when we turned up they were in a really bad state, so that took a bit of work to do up. The top house, too, we did it up really nice. George and his family lived there.
5. As for the farm work, for starters there were no water troughs at all, so we had to put in a whole new system. Then there were the silage pits We had the farm fully stocked with cattle, but there was not enough feed through the summer, when it got really dry. So we had to dig pits for storing feed, it was really tough because of the hard dry earth.
6. There was so much ongoing work, it was a difficult farm to run. There was the fencing too -I did miles and miles of fencing in my time on the island. Real goat country too, a lot of it - straight up and down, volcanic rock to deal with everywhere. We had a lot of trauma while we were on the farm.
7. We never drew a wage either. I never did, my son didn't, George's boys didn't. It was all from the heart - we put everything into it.

The meeting in Kawhia

8. I went along with George to a meeting in Kawhia with the people from Maori Affairs. The meeting was to try and work out a solution to the problems we'd been having.
9. The meeting went on for a while. They all talked about the best way to settle the thing with George, so that Ngati Paoa would get the land back and George would get compensated. The deposit that George had paid was the main topic. They were clear on that one though, George would get it back. The main dispute was over the interest, and who would pay for the debts over the farm. Maori Affairs had held the money for quite a long time, and we thought they should pay interest on it.
10. The Maori Affairs people had to go away and talk about the interest and the farm debts some more. It was their only hang-up. Just before the meeting finished Sir Graham Latimer got up, and made a motion to get the whole business over with. He did it in Maori. I'm not fluent or anything, but I can understand Maori just fine. Sir Graham said they should pay George out - give him back his deposit. Bob Mahuta was there, he seconded Latimer's motion, and then they all agreed.
11. We walked away with smiles all over our faces, we said "it's all over". Of course, it wasn't over. The Board wouldn't cover our debts for the farm, so getting the deposit back would've been worthless. George has been struggling for justice ever since.

Conclusion - impact on our *whanau*

12. At first it was great on Waiheke, we all got together again like a good old-fashioned Maori *whanau*. Some of us had already had hardships - George and Mary were widowed. So we all got together to make it easier on everyone.

13. But in the end it the experience has broken us like never before. I am disillusioned with the whole thing. It should have been a straightforward matter, settled long ago. Soon we'll all be gone, and it'll be the next generation's problem.

DATED THIS

DAY OF

2001

ALBERT JOHN EVANS