

IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

**Wai 2180, Wai 1705, Wai 647, Wai 588,
Wai 385, Wai 581, Wai 1888**

IN THE MATTER OF

the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 and the
Taihape: Rangitikei ki Rangipo Inquiry
(Wai 2180)

IN THE MATTER OF

a claim by Isaac Hunter, Utiku Potaka,
Maria Taiuru, Hari Benevides, Moira
Raukawa-Haskell, Te Rangiangoa
Hawira, Kelly Thompson, Barbara Ball and
Richard Steedman on behalf of themselves,
the Iwi organisations who have authorised
them to make this claim and the Mōkai
Pātea Waitangi Claims Trust (**Wai 1705**)

AND

a claim by Maria Taiuru and others for and
on behalf of Wai 647 Claimants (**Wai 647**)

AND

a claim by Isaac Hunter and Maria Taiuru
and others for and on behalf of the Wai 588
Claimants (**Wai 588**)

AND

a claim by Neville Franze Te Ngahoa
Lomax and others for and behalf of the
Potaka Whanau Trust and Nga Hapu o
Ngati Hauti (**Wai 385**)

AND

a claim by Neville Franze Te Ngahoa
Lomax and others for and behalf of Te
Runanga o Ngati Hauti (**Wai 581**)

AND

a claim by Iria Te Rangi Halbert and others
for and behalf of the Wai 1888 Claimants
(**Wai 1888**)

**Statement of Evidence of Erena Mete-kingi-Anson
12 February 2018**

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Statement of Evidence of Erena Mete-kingi-Anson

1. My Name is Erena Mete-kingi-Anson.
2. I am a member of Ngai Te Upokoiri hapu of Ngati Hauiti.
3. I live at Rata on “Taraketi” farm.
4. My first husband was Tauaiti Epiha Potaka or Rata
5. My second husband was James Marshall Anson of Mangaraupi.
6. Two of my children are giving evidence namely, Raihania Potaka and Utiku Potaka.
7. My journey begins in Whanganui with my Mete-kingi and Patapu whanau of Putiki.

Whanganui

8. My dad, Whakaari Te Rangi Takuku (Rangi) Mete-kingi worked as a farm supervisor at the Dept. of Maori Affairs. He worked always with the people and the land and was knowledgeable of our whakapapa which went hand in hand with each other.
9. Many a meeting was held in Aunty Hera Scott’s front room at Putiki. Dad, Hepi Te Heu Heu, John Te Harakiekie Grace, Hoeroa (Joe) Marumaru, Hera Scott, Ian Robson and old man Horsley would meet and so many hours would be spent with the focus on the land and how everything would be put into place to serve the people and tie everything together to safeguard the land and stop people from selling the land to the pakeha. This eventually led to the formation of the Morikaunui and Atihaunui Whanganui Incorporations.

Putiki

10. My beginnings of the love of the land were nurtured by my Aunt Pikirangi Tauri. She who took me in my early years to these places carrying our kete, kaimoana, watercress, eggs and much more was

gathered. It was all a big game to us kids building a fire at the river cooking our Patiki (flounder). What an idyllic life we led. Roaming the whenua of Putiki and as we grew older in age we wandered further afield riding our bikes to Kaitoke and Paure lakes where the tuna is.

Rata

11. Then came change, the move to Rata to the family farm 'Taraketi' in 1958. Oh my goodness, cousin Hoani Park and I up to the back of the farm. "What is that?" Hika!! There's something hanging out of that sheeps kumu. We'd better go home and see what it is, so off we go and tell the story. We were told to get back there and pull it out so we went to do our duty to the poor sheep and from that day became the midwives for the flock of sheep. This was the start to a life time of working on the land at Taraketi.
12. In the early years young Richard Steedman's Pop and Aunty Kaa Steedman spent much time at Taraketi with my parents, it was always the korero of the land and the church. They were our whanau from Winiata. Boy Steedman also came. He would also come without his parents which at the time I found interesting, considering young people never really sought dad out but he said years later "he got a lot of sound advice from Tuks."
13. Dad became the first Chairman of the newly formed Aorangi/Awarua Trust and his son Rangipo Mete-kingi also served on the Trust.

Taraketi Farm

14. We have a small bush on the property at Taraketi which was one of my favourite places. Dad and I would stand on the fringes and he would point and name all our native trees. He then would tell us the types of manu and berries which they would feast on. You could hear the whirring of wings as the tui flew by then the flitting of Piwaewaka. Then we would gather piko piko to go with our corned

beef. We would also cut the aka (supple jack) for our tokotoko. My dad looked so stately as he gave his korero. I loved the bush it was so prolific with bird life, beautiful. Sadly it is only a small remnant of what once a vast country of wilderness where my tupuna once dwelled.

Pourewa Block

15. Across the road from our farm-house is the Pourewa block named after the stream running through our property. This property was where the Hunia whanau were settled. It was my dad's vision to build a new whare where the old one once stood. The reason for him wanting to re-establish the whare was to re-connect our Hunia whanau back to the whenua. Sadly this did not eventuate.
16. I still see my dad those many years ago as we stood at the back of the farm looking down and out across the land. Time passing in silence, there was no sound but I felt a reaffirming of my identity from deep within to a newness of life upon this, the whenua of our tupuna. Dad picked up a handful of soil from a furrow and said as it trickled through his fingers "this is E Koro, this is Grandpa, this is me, this is you, this is my mokopuna". In a sweeping motion of his arm he said "the net was cast, it was cast right across the land, this is the way of the white man so hold fast to the land baby hold fast to the land.". I didn't realise it at the time but he was giving me my whakapapa to this whenua.

1. Te Rina Marereherangi

2. Rangipo Mete-kingi (E Koro)

3. Maihi Mete-kingi (Grandpa)

4. Whakaari Te Rangitakuku (Rangi/Tuks)

5. Erena Mete-kingi Anson

Joining the Lands

17. It was Dad's dream to tie our farms together, Taraketi, Aunty Bo's, the Potaka farms, the Pirere block of Aunty Ada Winiata's, and the Jack Potaka farms at Otamakapua the latter being under the New Zealand Insurance Company. Sadly only two of these whanau were happy to do this at that time so it never went ahead.

Racism

18. The lessees of Taraketi farm had been leasing the whenua for about 60 years, and when we moved back on to the whenua it was in very poor condition, much of it being covered with gorse. This was also evident on our Aunty Bo's whenua next door. To my father's horror and shock, both he and Aunty Bo and Uncle Coleman Rangi were served notice by the local council to appear in court on charges of neglecting to maintain their land by getting rid of the gorse. Uncle Coleman was determined to fight this in court. He approached a lawyer, John Rowan, who lived in Whanganui, his response was "You can fight them in court but you will never beat them, they will never allow it." Such was the law of the colonising power that held our people to ransom. It became an accepted understanding that our people could never win against them. It was like a crippling disease. And once more we were ground under the pakeha boot.
19. We grew up living in two worlds. The Maori world was at home, with our relatives and on our land. The Pakeha world was around us and where we worked. Dad sent one of my sons off to a posh pakeha boarding school in Christchurch so that he could learn the ways of the Pakeha and either use them to benefit the people or use them to stand up against the Pakeha. Such was his thinking of the time.

Ahi Kaa

20. Grandpa (Maihi Metekingi) had a bach at Waitarere. The koroua who lived there passed away and I thought now we'll be able to go

and camp out but to my disappointment Dad said "No, do not go there, his whanau hold the Ahi Kaa." So what my father said was law and that situation was never disputed or questioned. I now realise this was the way of our old people which has given me a better appreciation of what it means to hold the ahi kaa at Rata and the responsibility that goes with it.

21. Another korero my Dad shared while passing on the way to Wellington is when he looked over to the sale yards at Levin. He said, "we own some of that." Then in passing another day he said, "the sale yards there, we don't own any of that now, they've sold it." It does hurt when one knows our old people preserved the land for the whanau but our people were blinded by the love of money and material things and the land of course is a means to an end. My whanau are absolutely opposed to selling our land and intend to preserve it for generations to come!

Erena Mete-kingi-Anson
12 February 2018