

## TAPE TRANSCRIPTION

The following is a tape transcription with Ruahema Tairua on the 30 April in the privacy of her own home at 76 Goring St, Opotiki. Corrina Biddle and Julie Williams accepted her invitation to be interviewed.

### R.T.91.9 Side one:

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Aunty were you born and raised at Tauremu or Taurema?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Tauremu ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

At Tauremu ...

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yeah!

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Could you tell us about some of your experiences as you grew up from childhood to leaving school ... in regards to schools you attended, just anything in general ... that you could think of ... you know ... your food and how you survived and ...

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Oh yea, we came through the 1918-15 first World war that was a hard experience for our parents because of the out break of the epidemic then. When the soldiers came back during that period they brought back with them alot of sickness ... and the flu was one of them ... and our people were dying in that period ... dying of consumption and the flu ... it was a hard time for the families ... be alright if I'm talking in pakeha?

**Speaker: Corrina Biddle**

Kai te pai ...

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

It was a hard time for the families at that period of time ... cause the epidemic was hitting all families ...

R.T.91.9 Side one continued:

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Those days there were no Doctors..no nurses, it was far in between and the only nurse we had was ... it was the District Nurse and that was Nurse Cameron ... she used to live next door ... here on the corner house there ... that's their home ... she built the cottage.

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Is that where the Green's are living now?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yes, that was the Flemmings and Nurse Cameron ... she used to come out on a buggy ... on a gig ... travel down the coast and our homestead was her main headquarters ... during those periods and she worked from there then back to here. If the patients ... you know ... we can't look after the patients she'd bring them back here to the cottage and nurse them back to good health ... then she'll bring them back again..she didn't have an easy time ... she had a hard time ... Nurse Cameron ... really but she was so dedicated to her care of the people. She went out of her way to look after especially the Maori families, that was the period. Then the school days were also hard times for us because it was affecting the schools. The children..alot of our ... my age group at that time died of consumption. I can name you them ... when they were just you know ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Young?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Died young ... so at school the Education Department did their best to meet our needs. The childrens needs at that period and see ... we didn't go to school till we were seven, seven years not five. It was seven years that's your age and it was through ... later on it came down to five, so that we had to work at school too ... Help our teachers out because it was very hard those days, but they supplied the children with free coffee ... They did it at school and each one had to take their own mugs ... and washing slates that's every Friday we had to go down to the drain down below and wash our slates.

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Where was the school then?

R.T.91.9 Side one continued:

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

At the base farm ... the school was there then where the old schoolhouse is now. And Mattie Gaskill ... Mr McKay was our Principal then and Mattie Gaskill was the Assistant Principal ... then ... Miss Watson ... Oh, such a line of them!

So we had to go down to the drain down below to was our slates with pumice ... the frames ... see the slates those days were framed and we had to go down there ... and every Friday we had to go swimming down to the mouth of the river cause the mouth of the Waiaua river was straight out from the base farm and we used to go down there swimming. Every Friday the teachers use to take us down, and also when they brought in the ... all our students ... pupils then to English ... when they brought in the English we weren't allowed to talk Maori at that period, that was back in the 19 ... early 1930 ... I think that came in, we weren't allowed to talk Maori ... they put out pupils out onto the grounds playtime and if anybody is caught talking Maori your name go down on the list ... that's how they did it those days and we thought it was fun, but I see it today it was totally ... we thought the pupils thought it was fun to be scouts to catch anybody talking Maori.

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

So you were one of those scouts then (laughter) Oh Aunty!

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yes, then down your name go ... well we were punished ... we were made to stay in late. Those who were caught stayed in late ... sweep school rooms out or the boys chopped wood for the headmaster ... also the girls used to do housework for the headmistress and do her vegetables for cooking all this, we were kept back ... those were the punishments we had for talking Maori in those days. That kept over the years and which I see now ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Our downfall?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yeah ... so that's my experience and walking from different areas eh? From the Rahui there see when they had the twelfths there at Rangipakakina the twelfths, the firsts ... the pure's ... whatever you'd call them in those days. We use to walk from where Uncle Tiwai's is right up

**R.T.91.9 Side one continued:**

to Omarumutu school ... we use to leave 7 o'clock there in the mornings winter times and you had to ford the rivers ... the Waiti rivers and we had to walk from there to Omarumutu school and well we thought as kids its fun (laughter) ... But now I look back at the hardship we had to cope with, no shoes, no gumboots, no boots whatever, bare feet.

Then at Waiaua we had to do the same thing, we had to go to school from Waiaua through Omarumutu to the base farm, we had to go to school and we had to be there quite early. See very few ... the Gaskills they had horses, the Morris's ... they come from Morris's Bay ... Awaawakino ... they come from there to the Omarumutu school ... these are the people with horses ... they rode to school and we thought ... oh gosh! We thought it was something you know?

Flash horses, they were really looked after you can see it, you know it's not just left out in the paddock or whatever ... they groomed their horses. Especially the other families the Awaawakino family ... that's the Morris's, Helen and Bruce Morris ... that family ... they are up here at Woodlands now I think ... I'm not too sure. So that's my experience of school ... and then in the winter you had to light fires at schools it was fires in those days. All the senior pupils had to do that (sigh) ... that's as far as the school ... and our sports during the sports day ... the schools use to come together and have yearly sports and they use to come to Waiaua here some years and down to the beach some years and that was my experience of school in those days ...

I could well remember when Matiu Te Hau got his matriculation ... you called it matrices in those days instead of a university whatever you call it, he was the only one from that school that got his matrication at that time you know ... it was something to achieve ah ... we were really proud of him to get that ... he used to come from Rahui where Waea Te Hau and Aporina lived.

**Speaker: Julie Williams**  
Upokohapa, that area?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**  
Yeah by the umm ... Whata-a-kao bridge around there. Their house used to be up on the hill there, and that was my experience at that time. Right turn that thing off (laughter)

**R.T.91.9 Side one continued:**

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

That was great Aunt ...

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Ae, my dad, he was breaking in three farms at the same period Rangipakakina ... the Waiaua farm and the Waiotaha farm and he use to grow maize on the Waiotaha farm ... cropping time ... plucking time they used to have cribs till such a time when the maize cobs dry out then they call in the shelter ... the person who shells the cobs into bags ... that was an experience I'll never forget, at that period, then from that time when that is done we used to take it down to the wharf at Ohiwa, they use to have a wharf there and the boat used to come into there and we'd unload and back again ... we were doing that everyday till everything was finished.

During the weekends our Auntie ... used to take us over to Hokianga ... Hokianga Island because there used to be fruit trees on that island, peaches ... there were alot of peaches on that island and during this time when the peaches were ripe we use to go and pick them and bring them home and bottle them. She used to tell us the history of the island at those times during that period, but as kids you never took much notice of it eh?

You know ... play is the main thing those days, you forget about it, but when you think back and look back oh yes, we were told about this but we never took any notice. Now till I joined the Historical Society i see this all coming through and it puts my focus into that area. Yes we were told from our kuia so I can't tell you very much the history of the place, then I got to think back (laughter) so that's all as far as I could tell you about that area, but I enjoyed my life at Waiotaha cause I knew alot of the Waiotaha people and it's just coming through now going to Ohunga, tupapaku ... tangi and you meet up with them and you think ... oh yes ... I think back to their parents, o yes, we all worked in a ... especially plucking maize ... that was the area that brought the people together ... when you have them in a ... plucking maize, talking ... and talking about history and comparing history those days ... the knowledge of one person to another ... you know it was amazing ... oh and you hear them arguing (laughter)

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

What about food Auntie? What did you do in the line of you know, what were your food resources?

R.T.91.9 Side one continued:

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

We were very fortunate in the food line ... I think that's why our health is very good today ... Dad grew his own veges, he used to have a vegetable garden all year round and we lived off that and I do believe that's why, through ... see all the meats, chicken whatever came off the farm ... you know you kill over time, you pickle your own beef and pork ... you pickle your own meat. We never starved because it's all there all the time for us and fresh meat ... the main staple food at that period was beef and pork, you know they had it, they had it there all the time you know when you want a meat, oh well you just kill a pork or when you want beef you just killed and pickled it ... we never starved ... in that area..it's always there for us and I'm thankful for that period of time.

How we were looked after as youngsters and that went through the whole life too ... our lives went through our whole life today so that's as far as the food those days and also they shared their food you know the neighbours, kua patu kau ... ah ... come and get a quarter for their family ... they shared their food those days you didn't have to buy it ... chicken, they had chicken all over the place (laughter) the paddocks are covered with chooks ... all over the place ... (laughter) ... when you want a chicken ... well just catch it ... chop it's head off (laughter) ... oh ... that's my experience in the food line at those times ... because ... and they were great for tuna you know ... letting the hinaki go at night ... they take it right up the further rivers ... up the rivers and drop it there ... and those hinaki were always full of eels ... and you dry them ... that was the fish diet those days ... well they handy to the pipi's ... Waiotaha had theirs ... to the cockles ... food was never short those days ... so we lacked nothing in the area of food ... that's my experience of that area.

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

What about trading ... food for trading? Can you think of any ... you know ... was there a time when the Maori around the area traded their food with anyone?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

No ... no ... I don't remember ... that's before our time ... I think that's before my generation ... the trading not during my period ... no ... I can't remember that.

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Did you work after school? Did you have a job after school?



R.T.91.9 Side one continued:

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Oh yes ... had to milk the cows (laughter) ... oh yeah you bring the cows home from school ... you know the paddocks are far out ... you come back from school bring the cows home ... ready for the afternoon milking ... you got to get up early too ... you are woken up at 4 o'clock in the morning ... it was hard those days ... hand milking ... you thought nothing of it really because we didn't know any better ... till the machinery came ... that was a different year again ... we had to learn how to handle the machinery ... (laughter) ... but once we got that well it was no problem at all ... a ... cause ... a ... at Waiaua ... that's where I was brought up ... born and bred at Waiaua ...

... we were the first one to have that the Maori family to have that machinery ... we were the first one to have the telephone ... we were the first one to the wireless ... ne ... and all the people around the valley came down to use the phone or whatever their needs are so we were with people ... Maori community all the time and I thoroughly enjoyed that time cause we knew families even the Rahui people used to come here and we thought of came together as one big family ... and it was really an experience of my growing up in that period to know the families a which I thoroughly enjoyed ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Where did you live after you were married Aunty?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

On a farm ... on the farm I had to you see I was the last one of the family all the other family had gone out.

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

You are the youngest?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yeah ... they got married and they went out to their own homes I was left on the farm to help Dad to milk the cows ... even when I was having my children I was milking the cows which it wasn't easy ... looking after little ones ... going down to the shed ... it wasn't easy really but however that's life you had to go through that till I got married when Blackie worked for um um who did he work for ... Ron Smith ... I think ... bring in the cream ... Torere ... Rahui ... Tirohanga back to here ... and we moved here in 1948 ... 1948 and I'm still here I enjoy my life here ... At that period of time my

Crown Lands Act  
1877  
Crown Lands Sale  
act  
1879

R.T.91.9 Side one continued:

growing up there was a confiscation development ... was moving at that time ... cause I know my Dad was very much involved ... and also too ... when Apirana Ngata was developing the Maori land down the Coast here ... the headquarters was at home ... he always make for home ... it was Apirana Ngata ... chap from Rotorua Tiweka and his son and Rangi Rua ... those are the people who came down ... while Apirana was developing the schemes the Whaka ... Whakatohea schemes putting families back on to land here cause we had the depot at home and um I was keeping at the records ... at that time where nobody else to do it someone had to do it and when all the ...

they deliver all the manure ... wire etc into the depot I had to take records at that time so um it was an interesting um period ... for me anyway while they were developing the lands down here ... Hinahinanui was their biggest scheme ... they were bring that area and putting the families back onto that land that was the big project they had then ... for us the Whakatohea and at the same time too they were going around the hapu ... sorting out the ... um ... confiscation ... electing delegates all the names of the Whakatohea people into a book to know who they are at that time ... every meeting they had each family had to pay so much to support those people who were going to Parliament to take the case through the confiscation so they will have money to send these people down to Wellington and that was the area each family ... this is why I wanted this ...

it's in it ... I think it was 1/2 crown ... per family who had to pay and they had a monthly meeting at each hapu area tribe and that's where they discussed their business I tell you ... it wasn't easy ... there was some battles in these meetings ... oh look Whaiora Renata the one who from Ngati Rua ... he started the confiscation as far as I know ... it was him who got the people moving in this area and it's been recorded that's way back in 1898 ... so but if I get this book of and that's what the people those days gave all these names and people used to come far and wide of the Whakatohea ... if they know we've got a meeting here... you see them coming to that meeting it was really I think back now to the debates they had ... to the arguments they had ... what they should do and um ... um ... it wasn't easy cause a ... Apirana played a big part in that ... to sort of push the case at that period cause he was ... he was the Under-Secretary then in Parliament ... to the Maori Affairs ... so ... a but when I get this book I'll ... it was a wonderful experience for me cause Dad never left me home ... he won't leave me home cause being the youngest (laughter) ...



R.T.91.9 Side one continued:

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

being the cheeky one ...

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

He won't leave me home cause ka patua hoki a ... the older ones ... he takes me ... and a I'm grateful to that.

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

You've had lot of experience ...

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yeah ... I'm grateful all these things are coming back now to me ... yes ... they worked hard ... fought hard for this confiscation to come through ... and which it came through ... I remember quite distinctly meeting was at Opape that was 1947 I think ... arguments they had cause I answered the phone ... Apirana rung up from Wellington and said where was my Dad ... and he was out ... working ... and he said to me ... you are to tell him when he goes to the meeting ... of the Whakatohea ... this is the price for their land ... he named the figure right ... I said right I'll pass your message on ... and when we got to the meeting ... they argued in that meeting at Opape ...

the price was sixty thousand dollars ... pounds in those days but they took the twenty-two I think ... that's how much Apirana wanted for that to pay for our land sixty thousand pounds ... they argued in the meeting ... they walked out ... that's my Dad ... Heta Ropotini ... Atawhai ... Rai-mona stayed back cause the difference was here on was National Party and one was the Labour Party ... that made it very difficult those days ... Labour had a strong um hold in the Whakatohea then ... the National very few so they lost their price for the land but however the majority ... look rules but I quite remember that little whawhai when Ngati Rua walked out of that meeting ... but however that's how it is ... that's life ...

I think our people should be up there to know what they talking about when they stand on the marae ... ne ... they only talking but they don't know the history ... you only got to survey from the top of Makeo ... the whole Waiaua valley to know the history but fortunately for me I lived in the area ... my parents talked about the whole situation especially with Tuakana ... see we didn't believe what he said but he took us right on to the ground ... ne ... haere mai tamariki ma haere tatau ... took us right on to the ground and when I went on to the grounds ... to the pa to see the deep

R.T.91.9 Side one continued:

... impressions of those days what they were doing it's still there ... if you go on it today you'll see it there that's why I say ... these people ... young people talking on a marae should move out and learn the history of their districts ... kia mohio ia nei so they can talk about it ... they getting first hand information although the parents our kaumatua been telling us but to go on to these areas to see it for yourself to know and to believe it did happen well which it did happen to me oh well it's just a story (laughter) but no it happened also on me ... I've got the taonga that brought the whole picture in ... through these taonga um I've got them in the museum at Whakatane now um to know um oh yes it did happen so just last week when these people came to me ... the owner of the land going out to desecrate the dooms ... cause there's a urupa there so Gisborne rung me the other day um for them they're coming through here to have a look at the place but she said to me they're got the place on hold now the person who owns the land ... it not doing anything on it ... he's got it on ... they've got it on hold so I said thank you very much for stopping that but they'll be here in two weeks time to go out there and see the whole situation so our people of Waiaua should learn own history ... cause

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Those taonga Auntie would they have something to do with the history of that area.

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yes ... very much ... very much ... um especially the Waiwharangi that's the one but alot of people gonna be hurt ... through the history ... I think we should look at it as history ... although it's gonna hurt some people but it happened ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Can't turn the time back ...

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

No we can't ... I'm really interested in telling our people of Waiaua the whole history of that area cause I can take it right back to my growing up as a teenager ... the development of the Waiaua valley ... it was just beautiful ... see the Maori farmers got on to their valley ... developing their farms we had nothing in the line of implements ... but our pakeha neighbours further back he had all the implements and he was the man that helped the farmers of the Waiaua ... Maori families of the Waiaua families

R.T.91.9 Side one continued:

... to develop our lands and which we worked as families no pay ... no utu ... you worked ... we'll worked so on right down ... each families ... helped one another out ... say Gaskills ... we'll all go and help him shearing time ... ploughing of fencing time whatever or harvesting time ... cutting hay ... cause he has the machinery we didn't ... so we had to work that way right down ... right through out to the whole valley ... and that's how the Waiaua valley was developed it was through Mr Gaskill and Mr Ross ... they were the Pakeha farmers who had the implements and they were really wonderful ... they helped us develop the Waiaua valley and also they taught us how to grow orchards you know fruit trees ... for our own good ... it's a wonderful life I had out there ... cause I knew all the people that started from the back there ...

the Kings ... they used to be right up at the top ridge at the back of Gaskills ... they were a English couple that came and settled there their son married Mattie Gaskill ... Dick ... Dick King and um come down to there to the McDonnell's to the Gaskills to Wallman's ... to the Kelly's Maori ... Kelly's to the Mokomoko family to the Mihaere family then ah ... the Hannah family all these other families they're now the later generations but that's the families of these first families there then..the Whites ... then the Coleman's ... oh look you name it that valley was full of people not what it is today just one family ... but I thoroughly enjoyed my life out at the Waiaua valley ... floods ... we had floods ... (laughter) ... we had floods there ... when it floods it does flood ... we had the old bridge at the um top here where the Walkers are now ... that walkway bridge that was the old bridge ...till they built the new bridge further down and um we'd come right out to um ...

Worms B 3A  
Merepeke  
Pumeha  
Rough

## TAPE TRANSCRIPTION

However  
son of the  
Estuary  
of Waikato  
Parks

The following is a tape transcription with Ruahema Tairua on the 30 April in the privacy of her own home at 76 Goring St, Opotiki. Corrina Biddle and Julie Williams accepted her invitation to be interviewed.

### R.T. 91.9 Side two

#### **Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

... to um mouth of the river now where Charlie Grayson and lived they lived there..that's where um what's your husband's name ...

#### **Speaker: Julie Williams**

Joe.

#### **Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Joe ... see his grandparents lived in the Waiaua valley where Charlie Walker is now they use to be there there land was there ... they lived Toiroa there Te Toiroa ... Sally I remember ... that one who was with them ... Sally and um Joe but he was very young those days those are the ones I remember ... but I remember Te Toiroa very distinctly working ... it's only a small farm they were on at the time but I don't remember the year they moved out of there ... back to Torere ... I used to remember his sisters coming up here ... If they can have the Waiwharangi in the musuem at ah ... Canterbury so he came ... picked it up and took it with him but when he died I rang ... I wrote to them to return it ... that's when it came back ...

So ah ... ah as I say the story to the Waiwharangi is gonna hurt alot of people but however that's history ... and I think we should know the story to the whole setup at Waiaua cause that hill across the Waiaua ... from the marae from the marae there across the river that small hill ... see there's Tapahe ... Makeo ... Te Pahi where they had the battle ... see there used to be hundreds of people used to live there you couldn't credit it can you ... hundreds of people lived there and during the Maori wars ... this all happened and that's where the battle begun ... there if you were to go on to that place now you still can see the deep impression of the ... when they built fire ... see they got all pallisades ... aids off the Te Pahi hill to build their fire and they got their fire and at that particular time they could see the enemy coming from Opape so this is my story I was told ... then they lit the fire and when the fire was lit they knew exactly ... host people knew

R.T. 91.9 Side two continued.

... exactly who was going to win the battle ... cause if the signs was there right with them they could read their signs ... those days they could read the signs they knew straight away who ... who was going to win the battle so they alerted their people what to do to go straight out ... right down to mouth of the river and meet the enemy there which they met the enemy there and that's where the battle ... they had the battle ... so at the same time they they sent their runners ... back here to the Whakatohea to come out and ... and help them back there ... or they ... they kill ... so they send their ... I can't tell you the name of the runner at the moment but that runner came through to Opotiki here and alerted the Whakatohea to go out here ... then the battle was going on there ...

... funny thing the surveyor took me on to the Waiwhero there ... the surveyor took me on to the land where he surveyed the land and this is where I saw the whole thing the battle ground ... oh frightening! ... to me anyway being a Maori too (oh laughter) ... that's where I saw that lake ... there's a lake there at the mouth of the river ... I've heard about the stories the people going duck shooting on this lake and the experiences they had ... but till I went with the surveyor on to the property to this place ... aue scary you got to see the lake itself to know what I'm talking about cause it's not just water ... it's really dark ... like blood ... like the lagoon it's like blood the water ... yeah no and it was eerie for me ...

So anyway the surveyor took me and we circled the lake took me across up to the boundaries of the section and just further down there where the um owner of the land now ... is developing ... is an urupa ... not far from the lake there is an urupa at ... Parerimu Bennett has always told me about the history of that place cause there people Ranapia family is buried there too ... at that urupa ... at the mouth of the river ... the Waiaua river ... where that um tree where that tree only one tree there ah ... one tree there ... that's where the cemetary is ... one of my son's was named after the person who's buried there ... Rangihakere ... he's buried there so that tree reminds me of the one here at the mouth of the ... Waioeka river ... there's one tree there when you go out ...

At Connor's farm here ... that's a cemetary there too ... that's the Ngai Tama cemetary that one and same as that one there so you know all these areas I think we should ... which you people are doing I think you people are doing great work in compiling the histories of our people for the coming generation ... I feel very strongly about that cause if it wasn't for



Arnold Treloar  
Horns Land Agent  
Rangiora land agent  
Notes  
Himorau B N03 C  
1920's

R.T. 91.9 Side two continued:

the Pakeha recording ne ... our history we'd be lost ... it not everyone not all Maori not the Maori of today can read our Maori writing on those carvings ... no ... that's how they kept their history ne ... but you and I today can't read it ... so pencil and paper ... I'll tell you an interesting thing I went to a ... Hikutaia Domain ... last week ... it was friends of mine they are the caretakers of the domain ah that no ... turn the other side ... you can write on that like a paper ... the tree is growing in the Hikutaia Domain what they call a Rangiora ... the tree ... beautiful tree and I brought the leaves back ...

you write on it ... that's it ... that's paper ... so this what I'm saying to you girls ... move around in your own society ... your own community ... to know ne ... what's happening ... see that's history itself the Hikutaia Domain and it was years ago when Mr Potts ... write on it ... and um write your name on it ... you can take that with you (laughter) ... oh yeah clear aye it's like paper ... it is conversation on the Rangiora ... Take that with you ... so I didn't go down to the tree at Hikutaia Domain but the next trip we'll make I'll go down and see where the burial trees where they burried all their tupapaku ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Getting back to this battle Aunty ... that was between Ngai Tai aye ... Ngai Tai and Whakatohea.

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yeah yeah ... that was the battle there so when (pause) Punahamoa came with his party out to before he left he said the victory is ours ... he knew straight away the victory was theirs so he urged his people to go out into battle and that's where the mouth of that river so ... alot of people were killed at that time and they gathered all the people and threw it into that lake ... this is the story I was told and threw it into that lake when you go and see that lake today ... the water is still blood colour it's like that ... and I feel in my days should have um I don't know who all the people were killed whether it was the Ngaitai people or our people but they were all put into that lake away from their sea ... they gathered them all and put them into there so that's my experience of that place and also when they caught their leader Tuterangikurei that's their chief aye ... they brought him over here to dry off ... and they dried his head I shouldn't be telling you this...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

No Aunty that's alright ... we've got abit of it ... abit if it at work.

**R. T. 91.9 Side two continued:**

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Ne? ... Over here there used to ... pa there too ... if you go to the Ngaio there right out to sea ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

That's where ... Snell?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yeah ... you go through that way ... our people from the Whakatohea here was drying Tuterangikurei head on their feet in front of the fire and the degrading ... um to the people so Ngaitai came to and ask for their Rangatira to ... kia whakahoki atu to them ... so what they did here right ... they had to pay a price of that head and they paid it with the Waiwharangi ... it was in the hands of Ngaitai ... the Waiwharangi ... they got it from Ngati Porou and Ngaitai had the Waiwharangi so that's how the Waiwharangi came into the hands of the Whakatohea ... through that ... so they got chief's head back ... Tuterangikurei so you know I think alot of that of that time ... the hurts of the people aye through the battles of our ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

Couldn't be helped aye ... actually had to happen if that.

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Yeah I think this is where we the people the zzzmaori people got to really look at ourselves how we lost our lands ... it's all through the battles ... you know further down at the mouth of ah Ohiwa there ... there's another pa ... the Onekawa pa and that's big pa that and that's got great history that pa and with the Waiwharangi here this is how the Waiwharangi came into the hands of the Whakatohea so it's still in the hands of Whakatohea today and I've got it on me at the moment ... I won't go into the story of how it came into my hands ... so that's the situation it's a big battle but inter-marriage has brought the people together ... you know with the Whakatohea and Ngaitai I hope this will heal the differences to me anyway I hope that will heal ... that area and let by-gone by and we go from here ... develop the relationship ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

I think it has Auntie ... it has because I'm part from there you know I just feel as if well what's happened it happened in the past and ...

R.T. 91.9 Side two continued:

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

And lot of others too you know ... there's Stan Collier there so it's breeching the hurts aye ... so that's others might be able to help you out in that are but that's how as far as I was told out there cause Tuakana was the youngest ... he was the youngest person in a Maori battles those days that came to my generation cause he was telling us all this history of the whole ... battle ... he was one of them he was right in with it ... so I think we were fortunate in that area ... see he was telling us when they lost the Waiwharangi ...

... at that time it just had the blade not the carved handle to it ... he reckon they ... it was lost and one night he was at Rangipakekina ... he dream't about it ... he dream't about it ... pigs were rooting on top of Makeo ... and this thing came and then early in the morning still dark ... he left Rangipakekina to come up to that spot and I can tell the spot it's on the other ridge ... of Makeo facing Te Rahui not the other one but the one between Waiaua and Te Rahui and he pointed out the area where he came up and he pick that up and took it home ... oh I don't know how true it is but that's what he said so um ... so I don't know ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

But he did some marvellous things though aye Aunty.

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Oh yes ...

**Speaker: Julie Williams**

He was a marvellous old man aye?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Oh he was ... he was ... he was that old chap he had a foresight ... what I mean tana tahi Maori ... he knew what was happening and what was coming and he was warning us all the time you know ... don't do this ... don't do that ... don't go here ... don't go there and you keep into one area ... and at that period I just caught that period of where ... they didn't have any coffins ... he was a master in that ... they use to wrap it with whaariki ... and buried them down straight not lying straight ... I caught that period with him and also then when it came to the ... cause he used to gather alot of ... especially where there ... this Te Pahi is ... there use to be alot of ... bones lying around ... human bones and it's no trouble to him to see him

**R.T. 91.9 Side two continued:**

... walking amongst these areas ... bagging it and taking it to the cemetery at Omarumutu ... oh it's no trouble to him oh marvellous ... and that's my experience with him ... te taha Maori ... the depth of the taha Maori with him he was just marvellous to work ... in that era and he knew exactly what to do ... his karakia ... he didn't do anything without karakia ... it's always karakia first and karakia last and he always did that and he protected us in that area ...

I remember when my brother Fred finished milking this morning ... he went across to help Maera Jones ... she wanted her tapapa kumara ... it was ready for the season ... tapapa kumara and he went across the river to dig her plot and we could see it from our kitchen window we were having breakfast at this hour ... he was digging across the river all of a sudden this old chap Tuakana was in the right place at the right time you know he didn't live with us he lived at Rahui but he came to us two days before and he stayed with us and we saw Fred digging ... next minute we saw him running across the paddocks ... this Tuakana knew straight away there was something the matter up there ... he left the breakfast table he went across ... met Fred at the river and we saw them there ... he was talking to Fred ... next minute Fred came back home ... he was white ...

... his face was white then the old chap went across to where he was digging and we watched ... we saw him crossing ... cross the river disappeared when he came back ... Fred couldn't talk ... he couldn't and when the old Tuakana came back from where he was ... then he told us the story of what happened there while Fred was digging ... he dug up all these bones ... when it was high ... dug all these bones and this old chap gathered at ... these bones up and took it to the Rangimatanui and buried them there when he came back he told us what happened what happened while Fred was digging and that was that memory still in my mind today ... to see Fred..the experience he had.. and we had with him after he came back from there to home he couldn't speak for hours..he was that shocked so that was another experience I had in that year ... it wasn't easy to with with you know so near to the that time ... you know it brought all that battle back to us anyway so that was the battle Waiaua valley as far as I know ...

**Speaker: Corrina Biddle**

What was the religion.

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Eh?

R.T. 91.9 Side two continued:

**Speaker: Corrina Biddle**

What was the hahi at that time?

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Ringatu

**Speaker: Corrina Biddle**

Ringatu

**Speaker: Ruahema Tairua**

Oh dear ... Ringatu was the hahi I remember that cause a Ringatu was strong then ... we used to ... the Gisborne people ... that's the Browns ... Mic Brown's grandparents ... they used to come and we used to go Ruatahuna ... te whakakotahi te hahi and I used to go to Te Wainui ... I used to go with them ... Wainui you see Dad never leave me home he always take me (laughter) he always take me with him on a spring cart those days all horse ... horse and buggy aye ... not like the modern cars you got today ... that was all horses ... and I enjoyed it to ... (laughter) ... come to town on a spring cart ... they used to have a water hole a trough ne? ...

Anei at the Hukuwai here ... and the horses come there and drink there and come in there ... to town here and ... when I go past the Hukuwai there I remember this horse trough (laughter) ... and the road wasn't here then it was out on the beach ... that's the old road ... you come through um the beach ... you cross the Tirohanga river on to part of the road ... then come to Hukuwai here ... you come in or to Snells beach you come in come off the beach ... and on to the a town here ... those was the hardships those days ... and it they thought nothing of it ... you know they didn't know any ... we didn't know any better ...

Makeo is my favourite ... every Saturday up on those hill ... as a teenager ... had nothing else to do ... (laughter) ... cause we weren't allowed to work on a Saturday ... we were very strong in the hahi Ringatu so what can you do ... so I used to climb that hill alot ... when Tony went up the other day I was pleased he went up .. but he had to struggle up ... with the gorse up now ... oh thank you very much for coming ...

**End of interview and tape**