

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The evidence reviewed in this report shows that in the past Ngā Wairiki were a separate iwi, although allied to and much intermarried with Ngāti Apa. They were their ‘loving friends’, as Āperahama Tahunuiārangi put it. Ngāti Apa researchers describe how the two iwi formed an alliance in the turbulent years before 1840. It may be that throughout the twentieth century Ngā Wairiki have continued to be recognised as an iwi at times, on marae, at hui, and at other places where Māori people meet. Hints in primary records suggest this, but those records have not been presented to us as evidence in this inquiry.

The Treaty of Waitangi was signed by chiefs of groups called, in English, ‘tribes’. But the ‘tribes’ of that time were smaller groups that would later be deemed in popular consciousness ‘hapū’, or ‘sub-tribes’, of larger ‘tribes’. It was ‘ki nga Rangatira ki nga Hapu’ (‘to the Chiefs and Tribes’) that the Treaty promised tino rangatiratanga in article 2. Whether ‘hapū’ or ‘tribe’, Ngā Wairiki clearly were and are an entity that enjoys its own tino rangatiratanga.

4.2 FINDINGS

We find that:

- ▶ until the mid-nineteenth century and into the later nineteenth century, Ngā Wairiki were a separate iwi;
- ▶ in the late nineteenth century and throughout most of the twentieth century, Ngā Wairiki appeared in public records as a hapū of Ngāti Apa;
- ▶ no evidence of Ngā Wairiki protest against this perceived status has been presented to us for that later period;
- ▶ the proximate cause of the decline of Ngā Wairiki’s recognition was the treatment meted out to Ngā Wairiki by the Crown’s agent, Donald McLean, while negotiating the Whanganui purchase in 1848 and especially while negotiating the Rangitikei–Turakina deed of 1849;
- ▶ the Crown’s agent was aware of the separate existence of ‘the Mangawhero tribe’ and ‘the Whangaehu people’ – he was aware of their boundaries, and aware also of their opposition to the sale of some parts of the Rangitikei–Turakina purchase;

- ▶ the Crown's agent failed to properly investigate and compensate Ngā Wairiki for the purchase of that part of their interests in the Mangawhero lands included in the Rangitikei–Turakina deed of 1849;
- ▶ the Crown's agent rode roughshod over the groups' separate identities, boundaries, and protests, and instead created his own list of sellers and their hapū; and
- ▶ the Crown's agent awarded the land between the Whangāehu and Turakina Rivers to the 'men of Ngāti Apa' alone, even though he described the sellers of the Rangitikei–Turakina block as 'of Ngāti Apa, of Mangawhero and others'. By this action, he deliberately awarded interests in the lands between

the Whangāehu and Turakina to another people and merged the Ngā Wairiki identity with another iwi. Although this act was eventually undone by legislation and in the Native Land Court, it was already too late to undo the prejudice caused to Ngā Wairiki's identity.

In 1849, Ngā Wairiki suffered a heavy blow to their identity as a recognisably distinct iwi. We find that the Crown, through its agent, Donald McLean, breached the Treaty principles of good faith and active protection and, in doing so, caused prejudice to Ngā Wairiki by undermining their ability to survive as a group with a separate identity and recognition.