

NGA TUPUNA – THE ANCESTORS

Nga Tupuna – Introduction

This second sheet introduces the key events and ancestors in the Ngāti Hāmua story including the arrival of Kupe to Aotearoa and the Wairarapa, the Kurahaupō waka and its associated tribes, and key ancestors such as Haunui, Rangitāne and Hāmua.

Kupe

With the passing of time the famous explorer Kupe visited the Wairarapa in his canoe Matahorua while in pursuit of a giant wheke (octopus). The octopus had stripped Kupe's nets of fish offshore in the ancestral home of Hawaiki. Kupe and his companion Ngake pursued the octopus across Te Moana Nui a Kiwa (Pacific Ocean) before discovering Aotearoa (North Island of New Zealand). After stops at Muriwhenua and Hokianga the Matahorua caught up with Ngake in his canoe Tawhirirangi at what was to become Rangiwahakaoma (Castlepoint). During their stay they named several places including Rangiwahakaoma, (Castlepoint Reef) after a man and literally where the sky runs, Matira, (Castle Rock) meaning lookout, Taurepi (Deliverance Cove) and Taorete (Ocean Beach).

As it turned out, the octopus was giving birth in a cave at the northern most point of the reef. Before Kupe could kill the giant fish it escaped and headed south. The cave was thereafter-called Te Ana o Te Wheke o Muturangi or 'the cave of the octopus of Muturangi' (the octopus being a pet of Muturangi, an enemy of Kupe).

Kupe and his companions chased the octopus south down into Kawakawa (Palliser Bay) The wheke was eventually killed at the entrance of Te Moana o Raukawa (Cook Strait) at Totaranui (Queen Charlotte and Tory Sounds). The eyes of the once great fish were placed on rocks at this place that are called 'Nga Whatu' or 'The Brothers' to this day. Kupe and his family named many other places throughout the Wairarapa and Wellington areas during his travels most noticeably for Ngāti Hāmua, Kawakawa (Palliser Bay), so named because Kupe's daughter made a wreath out of the kawakawa plant for him.

Photo (right) – aerial shot of Rangiwahakaoma (Castlepoint) with Castle Rock in the foreground and the reef out to the right.

There are several interpretations of the meaning of Rangiwahakaoma. One version is that he was an ancestor; the second is that it is the name of a waka and the third is that it means – 'the place to stand to see the running sky'.



The Story of Haunui-a-nanaia

Popoto and his wife Nanaia had a son called Haunui-a-nanaia who was the ancestor of the Te Ati Hau a Paparangi people of the Whanganui region. Haunui had reason to pursue his errant wife Wairaka who had run off with a slave. He set out from his home at Te Matau a Maui following the path of Wairaka and her lover across the island and down the west coast. After exacting his revenge he decided to go home via the East Coast. Haunui named many of the landmark features that he came across during his journey.

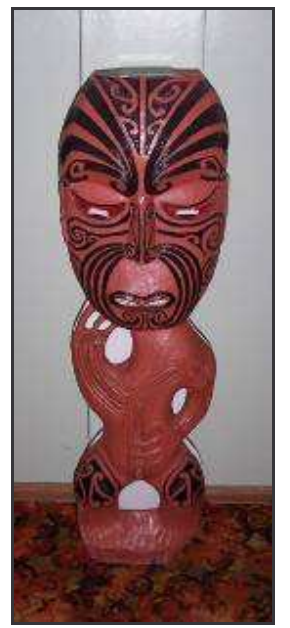
He started back towards Te Matau a Maui. He climbed a high mountain and on reaching the top he sat down to rest. There he thought about what he had done. He named the mountain Remutaka - 'to sit down'. It is now known as Rimutaka. As Haunui sat there he saw a lake before him. When he looked towards the lake the reflection of the sun caught his eyes and made them water. It was this incident that led to the name - Wairarapa. It was not so much the glistening water but the reflection of the sun that caught his eye and made them water. The full saying is found in a number of old waiata that have been left behind, 'ka rarapa nga kanohi ko Wairarapa' - his eyes sparkled hence Wairarapa.

After resting a while Haunui stood up and saw in the distance, at the northern end of the valley, a high mountain standing alone. He concentrated on this mountain as a navigational landmark and named it Rangitūmau - meaning 'standing up to the sky' or alternatively 'holding up the sky'. Haunui descended Remutaka and travelled into and up the valley. At the first river he came to he discovered a whare or maemae, the walls and roof of which were thatched with Nikau Palm leaves. He named this river Tauwharenikau - 'the house made of nikau'.

At the next river crossing he sat down on a bank to rest and as he looked down into the water he imagined he could see Wairaka's face which made him sad. This river he named Wai o Hine Wairaka - 'water for his woman' referring to the tears he shed. We know it today as the 'Waiohine' that passes just north of Greytown. He named the next river - Waiawangawanga, awangawanga meaning uncertain or troubled because the river appeared to go in all directions with many bends. We know this river today as Waingawa and it still retains its many braided channels.

At the next river he tested the depth with his tokotoko/walking stick and gave it the name Waipoua. Another term for tokotoko is pou and wai is water. The final river that Haunui named was Ruamahanga meaning 'twin forks' which can refer to the many tributaries that join the river or also to a waka-inuwai (bird snare trough) that he found placed in a fork in a tree by the river.

Haunui returned home on his god Rongomai, a giant eagle that is today seen in the form of a meteor, but before doing so visited Rangitūmau to look back over the land he had come from.

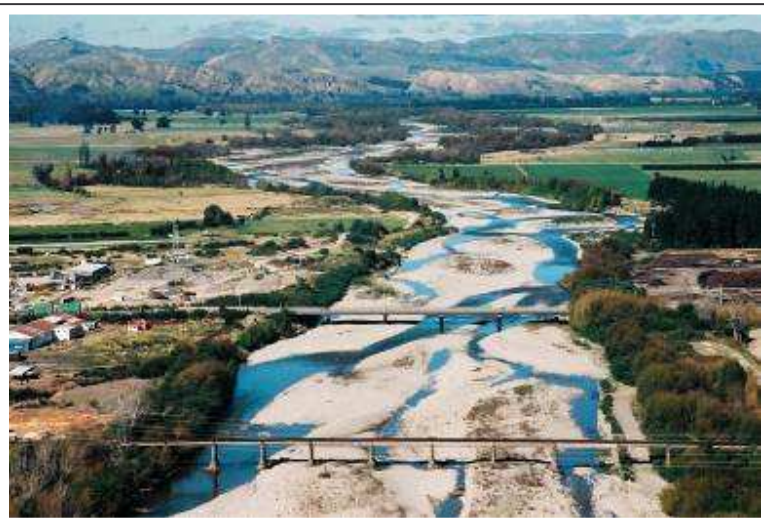


Above photo: Carving of Haunui-a-nanaia by Takirangi Smith

This carving was completed in November 1990 in honour of the famous ancestor - Haunui. It now resides in the boardroom of the Rangitāne o Wairarapa Inc offices at Te Haamua, Cornwall Place, Masterton

Photo – Right: The Waingawa River looking eastwards past the rail and road bridges south of Masterton. East Taratahi is shown to the right and Buchanan's is on the left. The Maungaraki Hills near Te Whiti appear in the background

This picture shows clearly the multi-braided river – wai- āwangawanga.



Tara Ika and Tautoki

The union between Whātonga and Hotuwaipara gave us Tara Ika, tupuna of the Ngai Tara tribe that occupied land from Heretaunga to Whanganui a Tara (the great bay of Tara) and back up to Manawatū. The marriage of Whātonga and to his second wife Reretua produced Tautoki.

Tara Ika and Tautoki, like their father, became great adventurers leaving a record of their journeys within the names of places all over the lower North Island. One place was Kapiti Island, which full name is 'Te Waewae Kapiti o Tara raua ko Rangitāne', or 'where the boundary of Tara and Rangitāne meet.' In this instance Rangitāne represents the descendants of Tautoki and referred to the west portion of the island belonging to Tara Ika and the east (Wairarapa) to Tautoki/Rangitāne. The brothers are also associated with the Tararua Mountains, with the meaning of the word being the walkway of Tara due to the regularity with which they walked along the foot of the range.

As a man Tautoki married Te Waipuna, the mokopuna of Kupe and together they had Tanenuiarangi or Rangitāne eponymous ancestor of the Rangitāne tribe from whom Ngāti Hāmua descend.

Photo (right) of the Tararua Mountains taken from Mt Dick, west of Carterton looking south towards the Rimutakas

Whātonga names the Tararua Mountains

One day Whātonga went on a fishing trip to Te Matau a Maui (Cape Kidnappers), the fishhook of Maui, where he caught many fish. In his kete there was a nohu (rock cod) that his wife Hotuwaipara cut her finger on. The couple's first child was named Tara Ika after this event to remind Whātonga of the accident. At this point Whātonga set off again on another journey of exploration. This time he travelled down the East Coast of the North Island, to the top of Te Waipounamu (South Island), Wellington and up the west coast until he came to the mouth of the Manawatu River. Following the river inland he came upon an extensive area of forest that became known as Te Tapere Nui o Whātonga (Seventy-Mile or Forty-Mile Bush) or the great district of Whātonga.

He had been away for a lengthy period of time by now and was thinking about his home and family. As he walked out of the forest into a clearing the clouds overhead parted revealing two peaks on a mountain range. His thoughts turned to his two wives Hotuwaipara and Reretua, imagining that the mountains represented their reclining bodies and so called the mountains Tararua after his two wives. Following this event Whātonga began the long walk home to Heretaunga.



Rangitāne

Rangitāne the man married Te Mahue and they had a child Kopuparapara. A second marriage to Mahiti brought about Whetuki. There is not much recorded about the life of Rangitāne although it is known that he lived at Heretaunga with his grandfather Whatonga for a time. Later he had his own pa on the site of the Whakatu Freezing works at Hastings. According to Ngati Hamua tradition Rangitāne is responsible for the longest place name in New Zealand. It is said that he sat down on a hill somewhere near Porangahau in central Hawkes Bay where he thought about his family. While doing so he heard the wind make the sound of a flute as it rushed between the hills. He named this place Te Taumata-whaka-tangitangihanga-te-koauau-a-Tanenuiarangi - 'the lookout where the flute of Tanenuiarangi was made to sound.'

Today the whareniui at Kohupatiki Marae near Hastings is called Tanenuiarangi, as is a small settlement that shares the same name. A cave on Kahuranaki Maunga near Te Aute in the Hawkes Bay is said to be the burial place of Rangitāne. For a man for which there is little known his legacy extended across hundreds of years of New Zealand's history. Tribally, Rangitāne became the name under which all the descendants of Whatonga identified themselves. So not only were there four branches of Rangitāne as per the modern political groups; Tanenuiarangi, (Manawatu), Tamaki Nui A Rua, (Dannevirke), Wairarapa and Wairau (Blenheim) but also closely related tribes such as Ngati Apa, Ngai Tara and Muaupoko.

Hāmua

Ngāti Hāmua is a hapū (sub-tribe) of the Rangitāne tribe. The hapū is named after Hāmua, a man that lived during the 15th and 16th centuries. There is not much known about the life of Hāmua although two places are forwarded as the place of his birth. One place that Hāmua may have been born was at Nukutaurua, on the Mahia Peninsula in the Hawkes Bay. The other possibility being that he was born near the present town of Marton in the Manawatū region.

Whakapapa of Hāmua



As can be seen from the above whakapapa, Hāmua was a child of Uengarehupango and Parutai. He had two brothers and a sister called Hauiti, Te Awariki and Hinekura. The siblings of Hāmua became eponymous ancestors of their own respective hapū although often the descendants of the four children of Uengarehupango used the umbrella name of Hāmua to describe their main affiliation.

Hāmua married Hinerongomai and together they had a son who they called Wahatuara. Wahatuara married Marotauhea through whom twelve children were born. Hāmua was thought to have lived with his family in the Heretaunga (Hawkes Bay) area with his relations. At that time the descendants of the Kurahaupō waka occupied the lower region of the North Island.

Rangitāne Whakatauki

“Te tini whetu a ki te Rangi, ko Rangitānenui ki te whenua”

“As numerous as the stars in the sky so are the myriad of Rangitāne on earth”

NGĀTI HĀMUA

Hāmua was to hold a notable position as the ancestor of a very large hapū that had its own extensive complex of sub hapū. Eventually the names Ngāti Hāmua and Rangitāne became interchangeable for some descendants of both tupuna. This made sense, as one ancestor was a direct descendant of the other, Ngāti Hāmua could never be rightfully claimed as a tribe in its own right. The fact that Hāmua was an uri mokopuna of Rangitāne had to be maintained in order to keep the tribal hierarchy intact. People could and did state that Ngāti Hāmua was their tribe in the sense that it was the largest and most identifiable group for them at various points in time. Actually a friendly debate continues to this very day among Rangitāne kaumātua surrounding the Ngāti Hāmua status as a tribe.

The term matua hapū is sometimes used to describe a large hapū or main-stem hapū; although as already stated Hāmua was sometimes referred to as a tribe. The overall effect of this network was that Ngāti Hāmua maintained a wide sphere of influence over an extensive physical area.

Ngāti Hāmua in the Wairarapa was most prominent in the main valley. This area covered the land from the eastern range of hills to the top of the Tararua Mountains and from the Waingawa River to Woodville. The Ngāti Rangiwahakaewa hapū and its sub hapū mostly populated the area north of Pukaha (Mt Bruce) through to the Takapau Plains in central Hawkes Bay. Rangiwahakaewa was himself a fifth generation grandson of Hāmua so that these people were part of the wider Ngāti Hāmua/Rangitāne complex of hapū. At some point in time the name Wairarapa was used to describe this whole region (much the same as the central and northern parts of our present electoral boundaries). At another stage, two closely related branches of Rangitāne came into being. These are known today as Rangitāne o Wairarapa and Rangitāne o Tamaki Nui a Rua. The two parts of Rangitāne have common interests in the area between Pukaha (Mt Bruce) and Pūhūtai (near present day Woodville). The major hapū throughout this shared area all descend from Ngāti Hāmua.

Ngāti Hāmua also had pa and kainga outside of the main Wairarapa valley. Some of the areas that they occupied included Mataikona, Rangiwahakaoma (Castlepoint), Waimimiha (South of Otahome), Whareama, Oruhi, Te Ununu (Flatpoint), Waikekeno (Glenburn), Pahaoa, Te Awaiti, and at Whatarangi and Te Kopi along the Palliser Bay coastline.

Further inland, Ngāti Hāmua lived at Parakawhara (Gladstone), Ahiaruhe, Te Atiwhakatu (Mt Holdsworth), Taratahi (Carterton), Wainuioru, Te Wharau, Ngaumu, Te Maipi, Te Hupenui (Blackbridge south of Greytown), Huangarua (Martinborough), Kahutara, Tauwharenikau and Wairarapa Moana (Lake Wairarapa).

People with Ngāti Hāmua whakapapa are also to be found beyond Wairarapa and Tamaki Nui a Rua. The Ngai Te Ao and Ngāti Pariri hapū from the Muaupoko tribe of Horowhenua and Waikanae share very close links to Ngāti Hāmua and Ngāti Hāmua were known to have lived on the shores of Punahau (Lake Horowhenua) at one point. The Ngai Te Ao people lived in the Whareama, Maungaraki and Taueru districts of Wairarapa before moving to the Horowhenua. The people of Ngāti Pariri came from Ihurua in the Forty-Mile Bush.

Hāmua is not a name that is exclusive to the Rangitāne tribe. There are a number of other tupuna called Hāmua who belong to different tribes and areas. One is Ngāti Hāmua of the Te Ati Awa people of Taranaki. Part of this hapū migrated south to Wellington where it became known as Ngāti Matehou and is associated with Waiwhetu Marae. Another Hāmua is a hapū of Tūhoe whose people live at Ruatoki. The name Hāmua also features in the histories of the Tainui people, the Waikato people and even at Kaitiāia in the Far North, however the kōrero relating to these Hāmua is different to the Hāmua of the Wairarapa.

Ngāti Hāmua was a major hapū in the Wairarapa and continues to be the paramount hapū of Rangitāne o Wairarapa.

Quick quiz – Nga Tupuna

1. Where did Kupe find the octopus hiding in a cave?
2. Who captained the Kurahaupō waka?
3. Where was the final resting-place of the Kurahaupō waka?
4. What was the name of Toi's pa in Whakatane?
5. Name Rangitāne's two wives?
6. What was the original name for the Waingawa River?

Answers at the back of booklet

Key Points – Nga Tupuna

- There are many placenames here in the Wairarapa associated with Kupe, the man who discovered Aotearoa;
- The Rangitāne and Ngāti Hāmua people all descend from the Kurahaupō waka;
- Whakapapa provides identity and connection to their waka, iwi, tupuna and whanau;
- The Kurahaupō tribes include Rangitāne, Muaupoko, Ngai Tara, Rongomaiwahine, Te Ati Hau a Paparangi, and Ngāti Kuia; and
- Ngāti Hāmua is the paramount (matua) hapū of Rangitāne o Wairarapa.