

Built in 1834, the Wesleyan Church situated at Raoraokauere is well documented. To be honest our parents hardly spoke about those days.”¹³³

Te Aua Tauira gives an account of the first church established at Raoraokauere:

‘The portion of Waitetuna belonged to Ngāti Te Wehi. There are cemeteries at Rauiri belonging to Ngāti Te Wehi, Rangipokana is buried there and he assisted in laying down the boundary. There is another at Te Tupa. Apianga, Kahukore, Parata, Te Opira, all of Ngāti Te Wehi and Ngāti Koura are buried there. There is another burial place at Herangi where Wiremu Tauira, Te Reituhi Korue, Rawiri Te Keno, Horomoana and about 500 people of Ngāti Te Wehi lived. There is another at Papahutewai, also of Ngāti Te Wehi, where Te Wakakahu, Tukotuku, Te Kaputi are buried. There is another at Mahoi called ‘Golgotha’ where Te Manuhira te Moke, Hori Kingi te Matiri, Hori Kingi te Matirau, chiefs of Ngāti Te Wehi are buried[...]Ngāti Te Wehi first built a church at Raoraokauere, then a mill, the first in this part of the country. Then another church of weatherboard at Papahutiure. A portion called Motukaraka was sold as a mission site to the Wesleyans by Hori Ahaia of Ngāti Hurumangia and he is buried there. A school site was afterwards added to this. There was a small piece called Rapueka adjoining Motukaraka sold to a Pakeha trader called Neri by Hori Karaka of Ngāti Hurumangia. There is the block shown on the map which was sold to the government by Te Ahomoana of Ngāti Naho. The first Europeans to come to this land were Abraham Mair, he lived at Oioroa, Ned was the second, then Harley. Afterwards Joe Graham who was stationed at Abraham’s place came. Then another named Haki Takarihi (Jack Davis) who was brought to Te Moke and also given a wife who was a sister of Te Rangiwahokaia, her name was Titititi. These were the earliest Pakeha on the northern side.’¹³⁴

5.3 Flour Mills

From 1845 to 1860 were successful years for Māori and Ngāti Te Wehi participated in trade through establishing a flour mill the first one in Aotea and owning ships which traded overseas. With the assistance of the missionaries Ngāti Te Wehi and other established the first water operated flour mill. Despite the encouragement of Ngāti Te Wehi to establish relationships with Pakeha, Aotea Harbour itself was not heavily settled by Pakeha because of its dangerous bar. Kāwhia Harbour was the main shipping harbour.

¹³³ Miki Apiti Interview, 20 March 2012. Document Bank Part C (Interviews and Unpublished Sources).File No.C14.,p.104

¹³⁴ Waikato MB 16 pp. 99-100. Document Bank Part E (Minute Books).File No.E8.,pp.52-53

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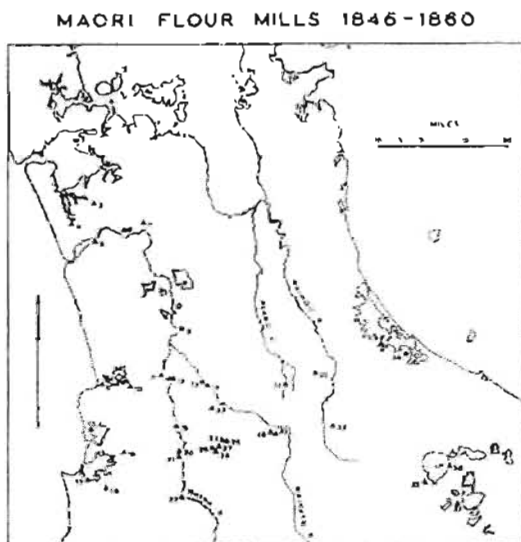
‘the result is interesting. It is extremely gratifying to see two or three old veterans in barbarous life sitting for hours near the waterwheel: its brisk rattling noise seems to impart new life into their stupefied souls. They chat with a new interest and vigour around the machinery whilst the water dashes and foams beneath their feet.’ The Aotea mill was the first Māori-owned water-powered mill in the area¹³⁵.

‘The intelligence of the mill at Beecham Dale’, it noted, as is usually the case among natives, has spread far and wide among them in the interior: and besides the three mills in progress [...] the natives at Pehiakura, in the Waikato district, are extremely desirous to possess the same advantage’¹³⁶

Kamanomano Mahu’s evidence in the 1909 Moerangi-Matakowhai title investigation stated:

Te Mari a kainga of Ngāti Te Wehi that is where the flour mill was built. Potatau ordered the hapū to build a mill there. But the kainga was there long before that. Aperahama Karu, Hone Waitere, Pita Mahu, Reihana Horeta Pehimana te Wehi, Rhipiti and others lived there. Hone Waitere the younger is living there now. The mill was built and Ngāti Te Wehi, Patupo, Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Reko, Ngāti Naho and other hapū of the district. Wheat for it was grown at Matakowhai and many other places.¹³⁷

The collapse of the flour and shipping industry impacted on Ngāti Te Wehi as they did not have any other commercial ventures to fall back on.



Map of Māori Flour Mills 1846-1860¹³⁸

¹³⁵ *New Zealand*, March 21, 1846..p2

¹³⁶ *ibid*

¹³⁷ Mercer MB 12p. 349. *Document Bank Part E* (Minute Books).File No.E1.,p.10

¹³⁸ JPS Volume 70 1961 > Volume 70, No. 2 > Māori flour mills of the Auckland Province, 1846-1860, by R. P. Hargreaves, p 227-232