

TAMATEA: THE GREATEST EXPLORER BY LAND AND SEA

One of the greatest explorers in the history of New Zealand was Tamatea Ure Haea (also known as Tamatea Pōkai Whenua — Tamatea the explorer of land — and Tamatea Pōkai Moana — Tamatea the explorer of oceans). A man of enormous curiosity and energy, Tamatea roamed through Aotearoa from Muriwhenua to Murihiku (the far north to the deep south). Names associated with Tamatea's journeying are to be found down the full length of both islands of New Zealand.

Tamatea Ure Haea was the grandson of Tamatea Mai Tawhiti, high priest of the *Takitimu* canoe which came to Aotearoa from the Pacific. His exploits as an explorer are famous in Māori history. Hare Hongi (H.M. Stowell), an historian, in an article dealing with Tamatea Ure Haea, referred to him as the Māori Marco Polo. Many place names scattered throughout Aotearoa from Muriwhenua to Murihiku (the north to the south) recall Tamatea Ure Haea's exploits as an explorer.

He had a splendid canoe built which he named after his grandfather's famed *Takitimu*. With forty chosen stalwarts (some historians say seventy) he set out to explore the country by circumnavigating it. He went up the coast from the Hoki Anga, where the descendants of those who had arrived on the *Takitimu* had settled, visiting places as he went until he reached Rangaunu near Kaitaia. There he married Iwipupu and her two sisters and built his pā, Tinotino, at Ōrongotea where his son Kahungunu (progenitor of the present day Ngāti Kahungunu) was born.

At Ranganui, at the junction of the Kaiwaka tidal creek and the main Ranganui River, is TE TOKA TŪRANGA O TAMATEA, the rock upon which Tamatea stood. This rock, which can be seen on rare occasions at low tide, was last seen in 1895. On the Kaipara Harbour is Ō TAMATEA.

After the birth of Kahungunu, Tamatea buried his navel together with three sacred stones near the pā. This action was regarded by the tangata whenua with suspicion. It was seen by them as laying claim to land to which Tamatea had no right. Tamatea became aware that he was no longer welcome, so he moved his people to Tauranga. After a time he became restless and set off around the east coast, heading south. He rested on TAPU TE RANGA (a sacred place where certain rites were performed), an island in Te Whanganui a Rōtū, the large harbour of Rōtū, now the inner harbour of Napier.

From here, Tamatea led several expeditions into the interior without making any notable discoveries. He then sailed up the Ngaru Roro

River to Rūnanga, a lake near which a kainga was built. That place, where he consulted his gods, was called TOROHANGA (holding out). ŌTŪPAO PAO (to scratch) was the name given to the place where his pet lizard scratched against the side of the calabash in which it was carried. ŌWHITI, the crossing place, was named when his dog rushed across the stream ahead of him.

Tamatea walked from here across the Ruahine Range to Te Whanganui a Tara, having sent the *Takitimu* on ahead of him. When Tamatea and his party reached POHOKURA on the Ruahine Range they were low in provisions and near starvation. They resisted the temptation to go back and carried on with their journey. Before doing so, however, Tamatea tied a heitiki around the neck of his pet lizard (some say it was a tuatara) and released it into a cave. He led his men through the Manawatū district to the extreme south of Te Ika a Māui, to Te Whanganui a Tara where he met Taranoho of Ngāi Tara.

He then reboarded *Takitimu*, sailed across Raukawa Moana (Cook Strait) to Te Waipounamu and proceeded down the east coast, through Tai ō Marokura (the ocean of Marokura). Arthur Couch states in his book *Rāpaki Remembered*: "He entered Lyttelton Harbour, which he named WHANGARAUPŌ (bay of raupō) because of the great quantity of raupō which grew on the foreshore of what is now Allandale and Governors Bays." He also named the cone shaped hill which overlooks Rāpaki TE POHO O TAMATEA (the bosom of Tamatea). He stayed in Lyttelton Harbour only long enough to rest and replenish his stores, then continued his journey south through Tai o Ara i Te Uru, the Ocean of Ara i Te Uru.

He then cruised far to the south, past Ruapuke Island, and landed on an island in the Hazleburgh group for the purpose of making fire. He named the island TE KAUAHI A TAMATEA, kauahi being the wood which, when rubbed with another, produced the fire of Tamatea. On or near Bluff Hill is TE KĀREHU A TAMATEA, the oven of Tamatea. He then sailed on through Te Ara a Kewa, the pathway of Kewa, today Foveaux Strait, and into Te Moana Tāpokopoko a Tāwhaki, the Southern Ocean, to Te Wae Wae Bay. There *Takitimu* was directed towards the mouth of a river which flowed into the bay and because of its strong, turbulent current, one of the crew named it WAI AU.

The *Takitimu* is said to have been wrecked off southern New Zealand and the TAKITIMU Mountains were named to keep the canoe in memory. The Murihiku people say that the *Takitimu* Mountain is the canoe turned to stone.

There are two versions of how *Takitimu* was wrecked. Both are interesting.

One is that just below the Otago Peninsula, *Takitimu* ran off a great wave, now represented by Mauka Atua, Mount Sefton. This mountain represents Ōroko, the name of a particular great wave which is active during certain seasons. Struck by the wave, *Takitimu* lost its bailer, which turned into rock and is now the HOKANUI Hills west of Gore. Then she was struck by another great wave ŌKAKA, now the name of a ridge west of the Waiau River. There *Takitimu* lies as the range of mountains east of the river which bears its name.

That Ōroko and Ōkaka are the names given to particular great waves which follow each other, is confirmed in the following southern waiata:

Takitimu was tossed about
— as the small berries of the poroporo.
At the mouth of Waimeha she lost her bailer.
You, of the wide expanse (ocean)
Caused the distraction
And you Ōroko, you Ōkaka
Demolished her. Alas.

NGĀ RĀ O TAKITIMU, the sails of *Takitimu*, are the plains between the WAIMEHA and Ō TAMATEA Rivers.

The following names associated with Tamatea were recorded by Herries Beattie in *The Māoris of Fiordland* and suggest that before the wreck of the *Takitimu*, Tamatea had sailed some distance up the west coast of the South Island. Other sources confirm this.

In Taiari (Chalky Inlet) there is an island called TE HORAHAKA O TE KĀKAHU O TAMATEA, the laying out of the cloak of Tamatea. The promontory known today as Red Head Cliffs is TE PŪKĀREHU O TE AHI A TAMATEA, the ash from Tamatea's fire. TAKA O TE KĀRAHU A TAMATEA, a dark coloured cliff near Ōrāriki (Cape Providence) was so called because there some tattooing pigment which Tamatea had on the *Takitimu* fell overboard. Dusky Sound is known simply as TAMATEA. Six small islands at the mouth of the sound were named after six other Tamatea: TAMATEA NUI, TAMATEA ROA, TAMATEA KAI MĀTĀMUA, TAMATEA KOTA, TAMATEA A WAHO and TAMATEA HIKITEA. HINETAMATEA is a river in the Karangarua state forest, some distance further up the West Coast.

There are different versions of how Tamatea travelled back to Te Ika a Māui (the North Island) after the wreck of the *Takitimu*. One version is that he had another canoe built after the wreck of the *Takitimu* and named it *Karaerae*. But Arthur Couch in his book *Rāpaki Remembered* states that he walked back through the Mackenzie Country to the Port Hills above Christchurch where misfortune overtook him. His carefully tended portable fire container was lost and he and his party nearly perished in a southerly gale.

By means of karakia (incantations) he appealed to Ngātoro I Rangi, ariki of the northern volcanic mountains Tongariro and Ngāuruhoe, for help and the old ariki sent flames from his mountains. The flames came down the course of the Whanganui River and across to Nelson where they rose up into the air dropping a piece off at Hanmer, so giving rise to the hot springs there. From this incident, Hanmer gained the name TE WHAKATAKAKA O TE NGĀREHU O TE AHI A TAMATEA, where the ashes of Tamatea's fire lay. The flames finally reached Tamatea on the hills above Whangaraupō (Lyttelton Harbour), bringing the warmth which saved his life. The memory of that event is preserved in the name NGĀ PŪKĀREHU O TE AHI A TAMATEA, which also refers to the ashes of Tamatea's fire, known today as the Giants Causeway, a prominent outcrop above Rāpaki. On the homeward journey from Whangaraupō, one further name was given by Tamatea. A sharp peak in the Seaward Kai Kōura Mountains was named UMERAU after one of Tamatea's wives.

On his homeward journey, either in the *Karaerae* or in another canoe acquired from tangata whenua, Tamatea called in at Kāpiti Island to replenish his stores before moving north. Opposite the mouth of the Whanganui River he and his party were surprised to see a towering cloud of smoke rising from the interior. Tamatea decided to investigate. His party went up the Whanganui River to what is now known as Pūtiki Pā and met with the people there. Before going ashore, Tamatea's son, Kahungunu, decided to dress his hair by tying it into a topknot using the fibre of a variety of flax known as wharanui. Tamatea named the place TE PŪTIKI WHARANUI A TAMATEA POKAI WHENUA, the topknot tied with wharanui flax by Tamatea, the explorer of land, shortened now to PŪTIKI. The variety of flax known as wharanui is still a prized resource.

In his determination to see the smoking mountain for himself, Tamatea went on up the Whanganui River by canoe. The name of the canoe is uncertain. One version of this part of Tamatea's travels says it was the *Karaerae*; another says he built a new canoe which was named *Takareira* or *Takaria*. As the canoe was paddled and poled up the river, prominent features were named. T.W. Downes, an historian of Wanganui, noted several:

TĀNGAHOE (to cut paddles), a tributary fourteen kilometres up the river from Pipiriki; TĀNGARĀKAU (to cut trees), a place about twenty-three kilometres higher up where he cut timber for new topsides for his canoe; TE URE Ō TAMATEA (Tamatea's manhood), a cylindrical rock forty-five centimetres long and fifteen centimetres in diameter, protruding from the river bank at Ōhauora, a village 150 kilometres from Wanganui; here also is a cave in which Tamatea camped, named TE ANA A TAMATEA. Another rock

Place Names from Tamatea's Journeys

Te Toka Tūranga ō Tamatea Ō Tamatea Tapu Te Ranga	Rock upon which Tamatea stood Of Tamatea Place where certain rites were performed	Tamatea Kai Mātāmua Tamatea Kota	The elder Tamatea Tamatea's rope of human hair
Torohanga Ōtūpaopao Ōwhiti Pohokura Whangaraupō Te Poho ō Tamatea	To stretch or hold out To tap or scratch A crossing A certain kind of song Bay of raupō The bosom of Tamatea	Tamatea a Waho Tamatea Hikitea	Tamatea of the coast Tamatea (the meaning of Hikitea is unclear) (Derivation uncertain)
Te Kauati a Tamatea	Wood which, when rubbed with another, produced fire for Tamatea	Hinetamatea	Where the ashes of Tamatea's fire lay
Te Kārehu a Tamatea Waiau	The oven of Tamatea Turbulent current of water	Te Whakatakaka o Te Ngārehu o Te Ahi a Tamatea Ngā Pūkārehu o Te Ahi a Tamatea Umerau	The ashes of Tamatea's fire The name of one of Tamatea's wives Topknot tied by Tamatea with the wharanui flax
Takitimu Hokanui	Tamatea's canoe Projecting sharply upwards	Te Pūtiki Wharanui a Tamatea Pōkai Whenua Tāngahoe Tāngarākau Te Ure ō Tamatea Te Ana a Tamatea Ngā Kuri a Tamatea Te Tūtae ō Tamatea Tūhoru Matangi	To cut paddles To cut trees Tamatea's manhood Tamatea's cave Tamatea's dogs Tamatea's excrement The waxing and waning (as of the wind)
Ōkaka	The second of the great waves	Riri a Tau	A wind that blows at certain times of the year
Waimeha Ō Tamatea Ngā Rā o Takitimu	Insipid water Of Tamatea The sails of the Takitimu	Te Papa o Te Waka ō Tamatea Pō Waru Poutū Taumata Whaka- tangihanga Kōauau a Tamatea Pōkai Whenua ki Tāna Tahu Tamatea	The board-strake of Tamatea's canoe Eight nights The standing post The summit where Tamatea Pōkai Whenua played his flute to his lover Tamatea
Te Horohaka o Te Kākahu ō Tamatea Te Pūkārehu o Te Ahi a Tamatea Taka o Te Kārahu a Tamatea	The laying out of the cloak of Tamatea The ashes of the fire of Tamatea The falling into the water of some tattooing pigment of Tamatea		
Tamatea Tamatea Nui Tamatea Roa	Tamatea Tamatea the Great Tamatea the Tall		

with protrusions that looked like dogs was called NGĀ KURI A TAMATEA (Tamatea's dogs). Another rock with markings that looked like excrement was named TE TŪTAE O TAMATEA (Tamatea's excrement).

During their trip up river, Tamatea and his party found that by building dams at the rapids they could continue on their course by means of temporary locks. There were three such 'locks', one at the upper rapids and two beyond, which were named TŪHORO MATANGI (the wax and wane of the wind) and RIRI A TAU (a strong wind that blows at certain times of the year). These last two dams were still to be seen in 1915 and the names were known to the Māori of the river at the time Downes was making his enquiries.

It was a long and difficult haul up the river and the party's difficulties continued when the portage to Taupō Nui a Tia began. At the source waters of the Whanganui, near where the portage would have begun, is TE PAPA O TE WAKA O TAMATEA (the board-strake of Tamatea's canoe).

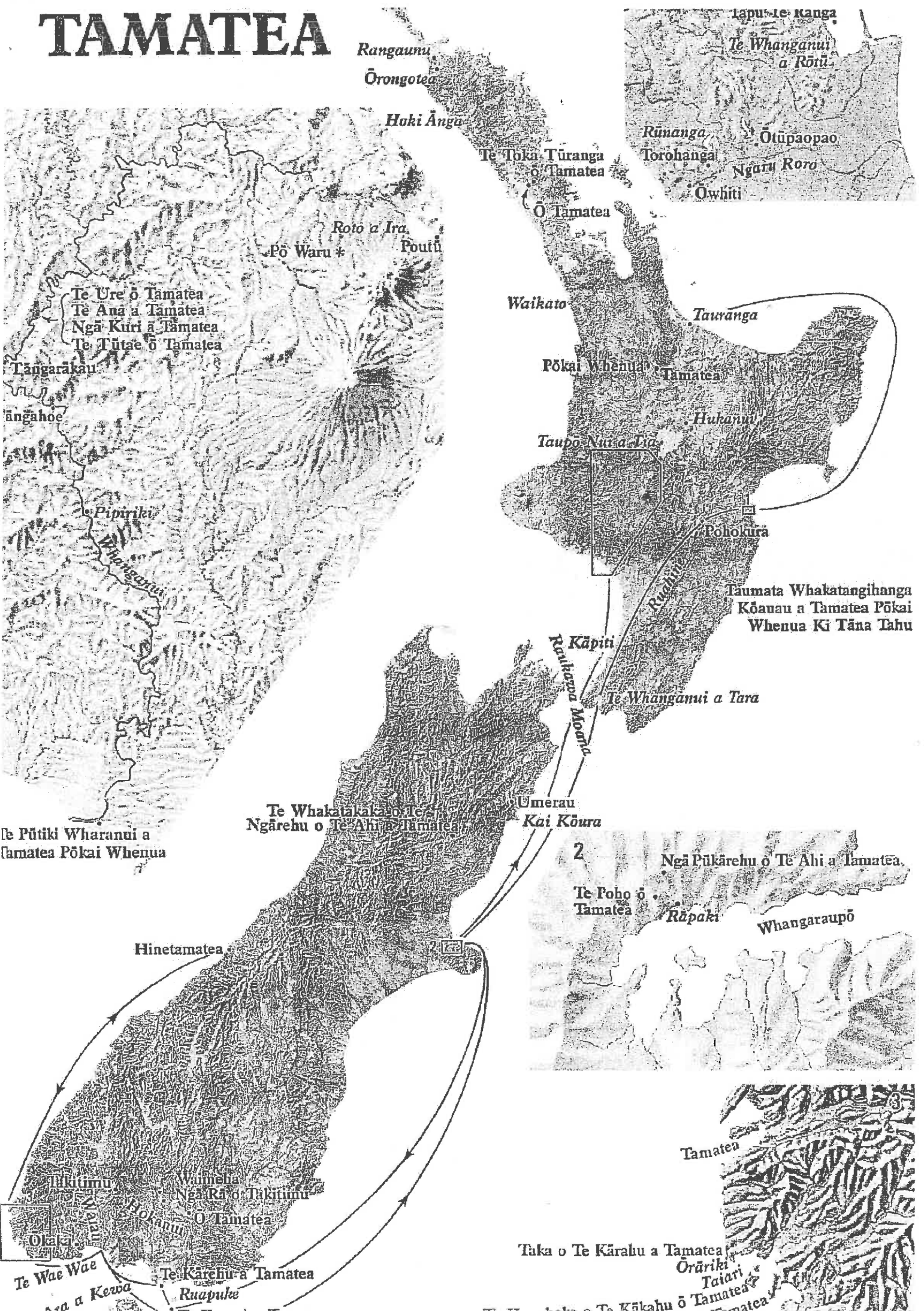
On their way to Taupō Nui a Tia, the party spent eight days and nights at one place which is named PŌ WARU (eight nights) before they reached Roto a Ira where they were met by Ngātoro I Rangi, the chief of that place. As he greeted his visitors, he thrust his taiaha (spear) into the ground; henceforth that place was known as POUTU (the standing post). This is at the east end of the lake where the river of that name flows out of Roto a Ira.

Tamatea went on with some of the local people, paddling the canoe across Lake Taupō then down the Waikato River to a certain place where the people of Ngātoro had warned them about the Hukanui Falls. The men of Tamatea did not bother to examine the falls before boarding their vessel and soon found themselves battling the furious current — some say too late to save themselves. Others say that some of the party, including Tamatea himself, survived, Tamatea eventually making his way back to Hoki ŀnga.

There are further names in other parts of Aotearoa attributed to Tamatea. A stream to the north of Tokoroa township is named simply TAMATEA and another close by named PŌKAI WHENUA. One of the most famous names recalling Tamatea is TAUMATA WHAKATANGIHANGA KŌAUAU A TAMATEA PŌKAI WHENUA KĪ TĀNA TAHU (the summit where Tamatea Pōkai Whenua played his flute to his lover), now known as TAUMATA.

There were five men with names beginning with Tamatea, the first of whom came from Hawaiki. Incidents become attached to a noted name, the legends grow through the centuries, to the point that disentangling the legends now becomes difficult. There is no doubt, however, that Tamatea Pōkai Whenua (Tamatea the explorer of land) and Tamatea Pōkai Moana (Tamatea the explorer of the ocean) are names given by whakapapa and history to Tamatea Ure Haea. Many tribes throughout Aotearoa claim genealogical ties to this famous tupuna.

TAMATEA



Rangaunu

Orongotea

Haki Ānga

Te Toka Tūranga
ō Tamatea

Ō Tamatea

Waikato

Tauranga

Pōkai Whenua

Tamatea

Hukanui

Taupo Nui a Lia

Pohokura

Taumata Whakatangihanga
Kōanau a Tamatea Pōkai
Whenua Ki Tāna Tahu

Kāpiti
Rauhoroa Moutia

Te Whanganui a Tara

Umerau

Kai Kōura

Te Whakatakakako o Te
Ngārehu o Te Ahi a Tamatea

2

Ngā Pūkārehu o Te Ahi a Tamatea

Te Poho o
Tamatea

Rāpaki

Whangaraupō

Hinetamatea

3

Tamatea

Taka o Te Kārahu a Tamatea

Ōrārīki

Taiari

Tamatea

Tāngarākau

āngāhōe

Pipiriki

Whanganui

Te Pūtiki Wharanui a
Tamatea Pōkai Whenua

Tākitimu

Waimaha
Ngā Rā o Tākitimu

Ō Tamatea

Olaka

Te Wae Wae

Te Kārehu a Tamatea

Ruapuke

