

Chapter 4 ~ A short Ngāi Tai History

Tāngata Whenua

What follows is a brief overview written by Ngāi Tai historian Nat Green, especially for this publication.

He visited the school earlier this year and talked to all the students about his origins and the place of the Ngāi Tai iwi in the scheme of things in the Wairoa valley.

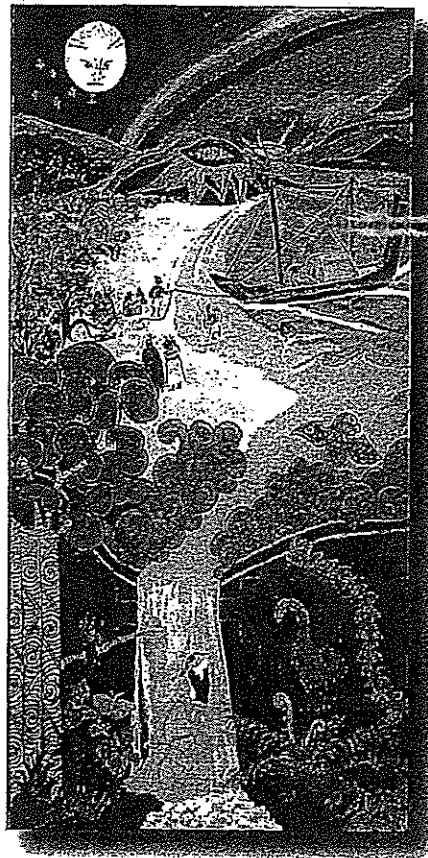
We gratefully acknowledge his story here.

A Short Ngāi Tai History of Clevedon.

The tāngata whenua ('People of the Land') of the Clevedon area are the Iwi or 'tribe' known as both Ngāi Tai, and Ngāti Tai. Ngāi Tai names for the land now known as Clevedon include Te Wairoa, and Ōtau. Te Wairoa describes both the Wairoa River and its wider surroundings. More specifically, the name of Ōtau refers to that part of Te Wairoa where present-day Clevedon Village now stands.

Ngāi Tai and Ngāti Tai ancestors first became established in this land with the arrival of the famed Waka Hourua (twin-hulled Polynesian sailing vessel) known as Tainui. The migration of Tainui to these shores is thought to have taken place sometime roughly between 1250 and 1350 A.D. Tainui came to Aotearoa (New Zealand) from the island of Rangiātea, in the ancestral homeland of Hawaiki. The Rangiātea of Hawaiki referred to by Tainui historians is the same Ra'iatea Island of Havaiki, near Tahiti (Society Islands).

Tainui was commanded by the Ariki ('Paramount Chief') called Hoturoa. After a long journey Tainui made landfall toward the East Cape of Aotearoa, near Cape Runaway, and went on to enter the Eastern Bay of Plenty. Here the beautiful young daughter of Hoturoa, who was named Tōrere-nui-ā-rua, left the waka and made her way ashore to the place named Tōrere in her honour. She met and married a local Rangatira (Chieftain) named Manaakiao, and in time they had a son, whom they named Tainui. In due course they became known as Ngāi Tai after Tainui's great-grandson Tai, and their descendants remain in occupation of Tōrere to this day.



Tainui waka after many adventures exploring the Bay of Plenty and Hauraki Gulf, entered the large open bay extending between Te Kōherurahi and Te Whakakaiwhara (Duders Point), and beheld for the first time the entrance of the long river and its estuary that they named Te Wairoa ('The Long Water'), after sacred places left behind in the islands. When all of the ceremonies had been concluded to claim Te Wairoa as a new home, the Tainui eventually moved on and explored many places throughout Auckland and the islands of Hauraki Gulf.

The important founding ancestors of Ngāti Tai aboard Tainui were the chiefs by the name of Te Keteanataua, Taihauā, and Taikehu, among others. Over time they settled and established the domain of Ngāti Tai from the mouth of the Wairoa, to Maraetai, Whitford and Howick, to the Tāmaki River and Waitematā Harbour, onwards to Takapuna, Mahurangi and the many neighbouring islands.

In the Clevedon/Wairoa area, Te Whakakaiwhara Peninsula near the Wairoa Estuary became one of the most important centers of Ngāti Tai culture. Here, over several generations, the people built the headland Pā also called Te Whakakaiwhara, Oue Pā and others presiding over the Wairoa River mouth, which sheltered a number of adjoining kāinga (village settlements). Pā and kāinga across the bay from Whakakaiwhara included Te Kōherurahi, Poutō and the villages of Mātaitai, Waitarata, Rotopiro and others. In those days, there was a lot more swampland than there is now, and many of the terraced headland Pā sites seen today would have appeared more like fortified islands rising out of the swamps.

Along the river's west bank were many settlements from Papepape (near the Bolscher Farm) to Tūawa (on the North Road side of Clevedon Village), overlooked by the forest Pā of Rangiwiri and Te Tōtara near the headwaters of the Rautāwhiti Stream. On the eastern banks of the lower Wairoa Valley leading up river to present-day Clevedon were also many settlements including Te Urungahauhau and Ōtau. Sometimes called a 'great Pā' (i.e. a very big settlement) Ōtau was comprised of many interconnecting smaller villages, and was famed for its prosperous gardens. Ōtau gained its name from the late 16th Century migration into the area by the Hauraki ancestor Marutūāhu. Marutūāhu and his servant came from Waikato to Te Wairoa on their way to Wharekawa in search of Marutūāhu's father, Hotunui. When they reached the point where the river was normally shallow enough to wade across, they were surprised to find the lowlands heavily flooded by rain. They had to float their possessions across river, buoying themselves along with them, hence the name Ō-Tau – 'The Place of Floating Across'.

Around the mid 17th Century, an important event took place at Tōrere. The Ngāi Tai people of Tōrere had become engaged in wars over certain lands, and, shortly before he

died, the elderly chief named Tamatea Tōkinui expressed his desire for his three granddaughters to lead their people to a new home. He told them to go and settle with their Tainui relations at Hauraki, and after he had passed away and been laid to rest at Tōrere, the three sisters embarked on a great migration overland. This event became known as Te Heke ō Ngā Tokotoru – 'The Migration of the Trio'.

Te Raukohekohe was the eldest sister, followed by Te Motu ki Tāwhiti, and the youngest sister Te Kawenga. They led 100 people of Ngāi Tai (some say as many as 500) from Tōrere across the Bay of Plenty to Tauranga, then into Hauraki, to the north of Coromandel near Moehau. They arrived at Te Kawau Pā at Papa Aroha, just southwest of Moehau, and there they were received by their Tainui relatives Ngāti Maru – the descendants of Marutūāhu. Soon after their arrival, another party of guests arrived by waka from Maraetai & Waitematā. These people were from Ngāti Tai, led by their Rangatira, Te Whataātau and his wife, Te Kaweau of Ngāti Maru. She was then pregnant with their first child, and Te Whataātau had brought her to be blessed by her people. He had also chosen the occasion because he had heard of the arrival of his Ngāi Tai relatives from Tōrere.



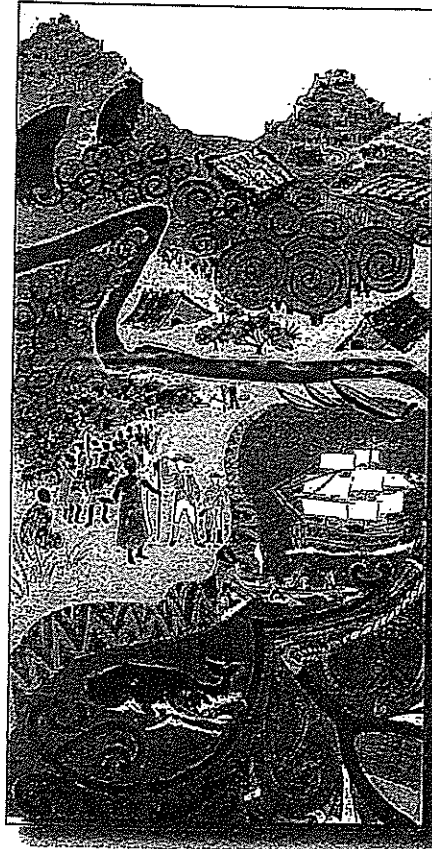
Now, during the formal exchanges of greetings at the Marae of Te Kawau Pā, Te Kaweau became jealous of the lavish attention shown by her husband to the three sisters. When Te Whataātau attempted to offer them a gift of the potted birds he had brought with him, his wife refused to give them up. Te Whataātau was so deeply humiliated that he resolved to return his wife to her own people. But the elder two Ngāi Tai sisters, Te Raukohekohe and Te Motu ki Tāwhiti, had been impressed by the hospitality of Te Whataātau, and felt sympathy for his predicament. They decided that he would make a good husband and provider, and so they and their people returned to live with Ngāti Tai.

Their younger sister, Te Kawenga, remained at Hauraki where she married Te Whiringa, a Rangatira from Te Uri -ō-Pou.

In honour of the union between Ngāi Tai and Ngāti Tai, Te Whataātau's people gifted the lands between Maraetai and Te Wairoa to their future descendants. From this time Umupuia became the regular meeting place for all the Ngāi Tai and Ngāti Tai people of the area. Te Whataātau and Te Raukohekohe had a son, named Te Wana. When Te Wana grew to adulthood he came to the people of Maraetai and Te Wairoa, and claimed the Mana of the lands that had been given to commemorate the joining of their peoples. Pledging to unite all the hapū and villages as one Iwi, he gained their support, becoming known as Te Wana Hui-kāinga Hui-tāngata ('Te Wana the Gatherer of Villages and People'). It is the descendants of these united Ngāi Tai/Ngāti Tai people who remain centred around Umupuia to this day.

The children and grandchildren of Te Wana and their followers continued to occupy Te Wairoa and Maraetai throughout the 18th Century, and new hapū also emerged in the East Wairoa/Kawakawa Bay area, from marriages between Ngāi Tai and other Iwi to the south. These hapū included Ngāti Kōhua, based principally at Mātaitai, and Te Uri Karaka between Mātaitai and Kawakawa Bay. By the turn of the 19th Century, the great-grandchildren of Te Wana had ascended to the leadership of Ngāi Tai. The Ariki by this time was the Great Chief of Ngāi Tai remembered today as Tara Te Irirangi. His generation of Rangatira led Ngāi Tai during the early years of contact and trade with European visitors to Auckland and Hauraki.

In 1821, Auckland was invaded from the Far North by Ngāpuhi under Hongi Hika, who had recently armed his people with muskets. At first, Te Irirangi managed to shelter his people from attack because of kinship relationships with some of the invading party, but this protection was only to be temporary.



Soon afterwards, while Te Irirangi was away attempting to obtain firearms, Te Tirarau, Paramount Chief of Te Parawhau, swept up Te Wairoa River with musket armed warriors to the hidden fortress of Te Tōtara. Ngāi Tai, armed only with traditional weapons, were thoroughly overcome. Te Tirarau had heard of the beauty of Te Irirangi's daughters, and following the siege of Te Tōtara he and his warriors took many women captive; among them the two eldest daughters of Te Irirangi – Te Whakakōhu and Te Ngeungeu.

Te Whakakōhu became one of Te Tirarau's wives, but Ngeungeu, who was not yet old enough to be married, grew up in Northland where she became widely respected by Māori and

Pākehā alike, as a noble young chieftainess in her own right. In time, she came to reside near the Bay of Islands, where she met and married a Scottish mariner and ship-builder by the name of Thomas Maxwell. They were married by the Reverend Henry Williams at the Paihia Mission Station, where Ngeungeu gained the Baptismal name of Sarah Maxwell, after Sarah Fairburn (nee Tuckwell); wife of the missionary William Thomas Fairburn.

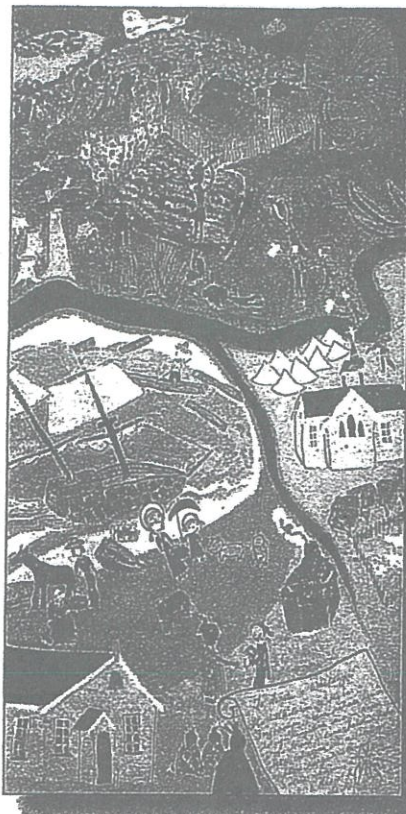
Thomas and Ngeungeu remained in the Far North, where the first three of their sons – Hone, Hemi and Rāpata – were born, and the whānau became known by the name of Makiwhara. They regularly visited Ngeungeu's people at Maraetai, and Thomas spent time at Waiheke Island, where in 1833 he built a ship from Waiheke timber named Te Matuku. It was the first locally built European sailing ship in Auckland.

Supported by the Mana of his father-in-law Te Irirangi, in 1837 Thomas Maxwell purchased a large block of land called Te Huruhe (Man O' War Bay) at the southern end of Waiheke Island from chiefs of Te Uri Karaka. The Makiwhara whānau moved to live permanently on the island the following year, where their next two sons, Hori and Patariki Makiwhara were born.

The missionary William Thomas Fairburn also established the Maraetai Mission Station near Ōmanawatere (Ōmana Beach) during this period, and paid regular visits to villages in the Wairoa/Clevedon area. Young Rangatira of Ngāi Tai first began attending school at the Maraetai Mission, where the Fairburn family taught literacy, carpentry, and other European skills.

In 1841, Thomas Maxwell built the 42 ton schooner that he named *Sarah Maxwell*. In December of 1841, Thomas departed for a trading expedition along the coast to Port Nicholson of Wellington. Ngeungeu was then pregnant with their sixth child, and went to stay with her father at Umupuia. Over the following months the *Sarah Maxwell* was trading up and down the coast, but in April 1842 embarked from Hawkes' Bay for Auckland and was never seen or heard from again. The ship was believed to have foundered in a storm, with all aboard presumed drowned. Soon after his ill-fated departure from Auckland, Thomas Maxwell's youngest son Ānaru Makiwhara was born at Umupuia in 1842.

European trade and contact with the area steadily increased throughout the 1840s. In 1840 Sir John Logan Campbell was hosted at Umupuia as a guest of Tara Te Irirangi for three days, and Ngāi Tai helped to build him a house on Brown's Island (Motukōrea). In 1844 George French Angas visited Umupuia and painted Tara Te Irirangi, and Ngeungeu with her son James Maxwell. Also in 1844, Te Irirangi and his nephew Watene Te Makuru made the first land sale to European settlers east of the river; around 5,000 acres just east of Clevedon sold to members of the Cleghorn & Goodfellow families. In 1850, Tara Te Irirangi and his brother-in-law Wi Te Haua built a Pā at Umupuia, and the following year Te Irirangi and his daughter Ngeungeu became good friends of the Governor, Sir George Grey, when they helped to secure peace between the Crown and other Iwi of Hauraki. In 1852, however, Tara Te Irirangi grew ill at Umupuia, and at his request was taken to the mouth of Te Wairoa, where he



died. From this time forward, the leading chiefs of Ngāi Tai became Hori Te Whētuki, and Te Irirangi's son Honetana Te Irirangi.

During the 1850s, European settlement of Clevedon began in earnest. Pioneer settlers such as the McNicol, Thorp and Munro families were welcomed by Ngāi Tai, transported through the area aboard waka, taught about the foods of the bush, and housed in Whare built for them with thatched Raupō rushes. Hori Te Whētuki became known to early settlers as 'Long George', being reputedly 6'6" tall, and took the lead role on behalf of Ngāi Tai in dealing with European settlers and traders. Ngāi Tai participated heavily in the local trade economy, with large orchards at Ōtau, Umupuia and Whakakaiwhara

(which became locally known as 'Peach Point'), and trading large quantities of Pigs, Potatoes, Kumara, Fish, Fruit and other produce on the Auckland Markets. Te Uri Karaka and Ngāti Pāoa meanwhile ran a successful Flour Mill at Rotopiro near Mātaitai. The Browne, Bell and Hale families also settled in the area during the early 1860s and became close friends with their Ngāi Tai neighbours. Dr. Hale was the first European doctor in the area and settled near the kāinga of Matuku.

Sadly, despite these good relations, fighting broke out between Māori and Pākehā forces on the outskirts of Wairoa South in July of 1863. Ngāi Tai as an Iwi did not take part in this fighting, but were invaded by Government forces at Ōtau and Te Urungahauhau. The people evacuated the area and fled to the mouth of the river under the leadership of Hori Te Whētuki and Honetana Te Irirangi. Both men wore British uniforms and flew the Union Jack from either side of the river's mouth to show that they were friendly to local Pākehā. Nonetheless, the Government confiscated over 58,000 acres of land, known as the East Wairoa-Ōtau Block. Many Ngāi Tai people began to leave the area in search of new homes and jobs.

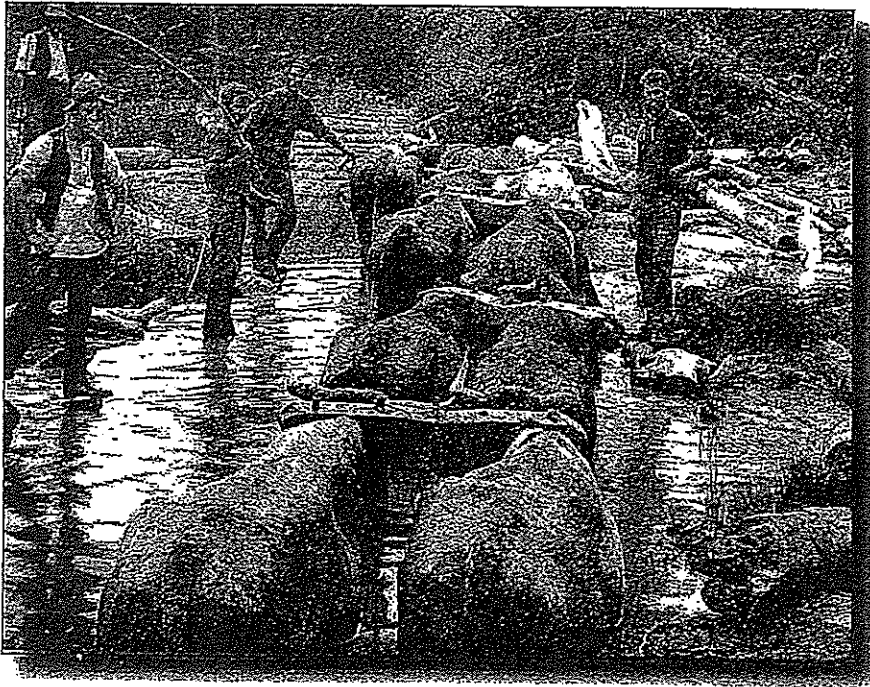
towards the end of the 1800s included the brothers Patariki and Ānaru Makiwhara, alongside Hori Te Whētuki's children Henare Te Whētuki and Riria Te Roto Kīngi, and Riria's husband Pepa Tauke Kirkwood. The Hetaraka/Reupena and Mihaka whānau remained prominent within the Mātaitai community, and members of Ngāi Tai and Ngāti Kōhua, including the Kirkwoods, Maxwells, Mihaka, Ngāpara and Kēpa whānau continued to work for local farmers such as the Duders and Munros or on local gum-digging settlements. A productive flax mill was operating at Umupuia by about the 1890s, and fruit and vegetables continued to be grown for trade on both the local and Auckland markets.

In 1894, the School Attendance Act required all children of all 'races' between the ages of 7 & 13 to attend school for at least three full days per week. The original 'Maraetai School' on School Road was then the nearest public school available to children from Umupuia, until its closure in 1905. The next school to open near Umupuia was 'North Road School', which was held in a tent from 1905 until 1908. During the 1890s and early 1900s the nearest schools to Mātaitai were held in

the Kawakawa Bay area. From 1910, when 'North Road School' became 'Maraetai No.1 School' and the original 'Maraetai School' on School Road was reopened as 'Maraetai No. 2 School', children of Umupuia along with the Duders and other children of the area attended both schools on a 'half-time' basis.

By the early 1900s Ānaru Makiwhara, although, now based at Waikato, remained the leading elder and Rangatira of Ngāi Tai. In the later years of his life and following his death in 1927, Ngāi Tai leaders included his daughter Emere Rangitakotokino Beamish, his granddaughters Maata Tūrama Reweti and Rahera (Rachel) Ngeungeu Beamish, and the grandchildren of Hori Te Whētuki including Te Arani Brady (nee Henare), Hauwhenua Kirkwood, and his sister Paretutanganui Kirkwood.

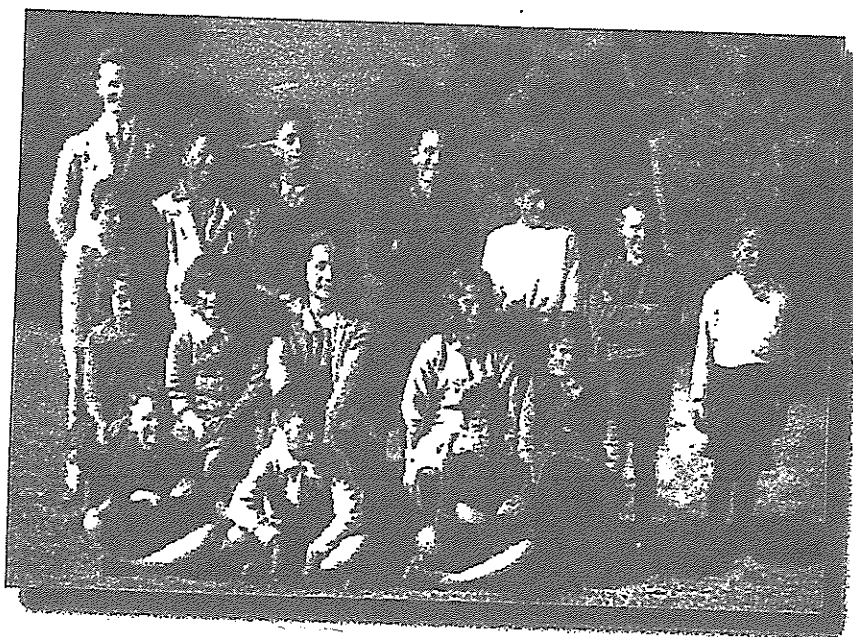
A number of the children and grandchildren of Patariki Makiwhara moved away to Tōrere & the East Coast, Taranaki or Waikato, but others remained and raised large whānau who remained strongly connected to both Umupuia and Mātaitai.



Hauling Kauri; a bullock team belonging to a Mr Dean, seen on the left with the whip. This photo taken near Whakatiri, Ness Valley in the early 1900s.

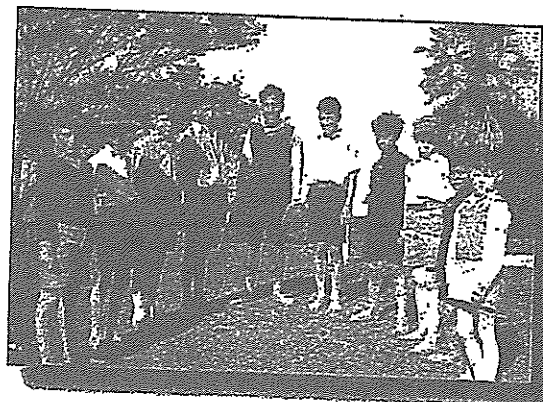
'Half-time' attendance of Maraetai No.1 & 2 Schools continued until 'Maraetai No. 1' got a full-time teacher and became 'Clevedon North School' in 1926. From this point onwards, most children from Umupuia attended 'Clevedon North School'; most being Maxwells and Maxwell whānau descendants. Across the river, Mātaitai School was by then being held in a tent. This continued for several years until the schoolhouse was built by the Education Board in about 1928.

With a few exceptions, Mātaitai School was attended by children from the Hetaraka, Reuben, King, Jack, Kēpa and Tūrei whānau until its closure in 1935, to become part of Clevedon School. Between 1934 and 1939, children from Mātaitai also attended Kawakawa Bay School, until that too closed under the consolidation scheme. Umupuia children continued to attend Clevedon North School until that too became a part of the main Clevedon School.



Mātaitai School 1934

Back row: Mr Lound, Dan Jack, Mattie Jack, Henry Tūrei, Reuben Hetaraka, Ronnie Butterworth, John Maxwell
 Middle row: Monica King, Eva King, Agnes King, Kui Maxwell, Nancy Maxwell
 Front row: Alan Butterworth, Tony Jack, Bob Hetaraka



Pupils at North Road School,
 formerly known as Maraetai No. 1 School