

## Speculations from 1850: being some thoughts on Rangiātea and the House of Tāmihana Te Rauparaha

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**ABSTRACT:** In March, 1852, the *Wellington Independent* reported its satisfaction at the sight of a drawing of the interior of Otaki Church, by Mr. C. D. Barraud. It declared the drawing a faithful representation of the church and its congregation that had been executed with "that taste and excellence we are led to expect from the pencil of so able an artist" ([Untitled] p 3). It concluded that the print would soon to be published - "in colours" – as it would make a beautiful, interesting and "novel" picture. This claim was added to a few days later in the *New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait Guardian*. Without irony they described the theologically themed depiction as being "spirited" as well as graphic. They go on to claim the "Native Church at Otaki" as one of the "lions" of the "settlement". Yet, for all that initial eagerness, Rangiātea would not go on to become a popular destination, and it has remained largely a picture of architecture. Indeed, even scholarly interest in it as an object of architecture does not appear in depth until the doctoral research of Sarah Treadwell, in the 1990s, who located the architectural significance of Rangiātea in a dialogue with the spatial and cultural patterns of the traditional Māori meeting house. In 2008 Treadwell reflected upon her PhD work with the admission that, in hindsight, her argument suffered the same kind of representational stability we can find in Barraud's rendition. The significance of Rangiātea as the singularly outstanding example of Māori building of the 1850s is uncontested, but Treadwell suggests that what we know and mean by historic "significance" – in his case history's preference for clear lines of origin and influence – are not to be depended upon as a stable discourse. I take that as an invitation to speculate on aspects of Rangiātea's influence and significance with a particular focus on a near neighbour in Ōtaki, the house of Tāmihana Te Rauparaha.

In March, 1852, the *Wellington Independent* reported its gratification at the sight of a drawing of the interior of Ōtaki Church by Mr CD Barraud.<sup>1</sup> It declared the drawing to be a faithful representation of the church and its congregation that had been executed with "that taste and excellence we are led to expect from the pencil of so able an artist."<sup>2</sup> And, in conclusion, noted that the print would soon to be published - "in colours" – as it would make a beautiful, interesting and "novel" picture. This claim was added to a few days later in the *New Zealand Spectator and Cook's Strait*

*Guardian*. Without irony they labelled the theologically-themed depiction "spirited" as well as graphic.<sup>3</sup> They go on to describe the "Native Church at Otaki" as one of the "lions" of the "settlement," and as "an object of such interest as usually to commend a visit from every passing traveller."<sup>4</sup>

Unlike the *Independent*, the *Spectator* at the time displayed informed knowledge of the building, mentioning the "massive totara columns" and emphasising that the ridge board – not the columns - was formed from a single tōtara slab "to be the mast of some great

ammiral."<sup>5</sup> These "peculiarities of native construction" the *Spectator* points out "are faithfully rendered in the drawing."<sup>6</sup> It finishes:

We understand it is the intention of Mr. Barraud to have the drawing executed in coloured lithography in England, and if the copy equals the original its merit both as a work of art, and a faithful representation of a most interesting monument of native architecture, will ensure it an extensive sale not only in New Zealand, but

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<sup>5</sup> "Otaki Church" p 2. This phrase appears in quotation marks in the article and is taken from *Paradise Lost* where Milton compares the largest ship in a fleet – the admiral – to the spear carried by Satan. Consequentially, as a reference for Rangiātea's central columns it presents some ambiguity as to whether the comparison is to the grandeur of the mast, or the hand that wields it.

<sup>6</sup> "Otaki Church" p 2.

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<sup>1</sup> Barraud, Charles Decimus "Interior of Otaki Church."

<sup>2</sup> "[Untitled]" p 3. The *Independent's* conviction for the accuracy of Barraud's drawing is not helped by their error in stating the length of the church as 20 feet.

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<sup>3</sup> "Otaki Church" p 2.

<sup>4</sup> "Otaki Church" p 2.

also in England.<sup>7</sup>

In October, 1853, Barraud was advertising the availability of his coloured engraving, "Interior of Otaki Church, New Zealand," through an agent in Nelson,<sup>8</sup> which the *The Nelson Examiner* would describe as "an interesting and ornamental object."<sup>9</sup>

Yet for all that initial eagerness Rangīātea has remained largely just a picture of architecture. Indeed, scholarly interest in it as an object of architecture does not appear in depth until the doctoral work of Sarah Treadwell in the 1990s, who located the architectural significance of Rangīātea in a dialogue with the spatial and cultural patterns of the traditional Māori meeting house.<sup>10</sup> In 2008 Treadwell reflected upon her seminal work admitted that, in hindsight, her argument suffered the same kind of representational stability we can find in Barraud's rendition. Treadwell writes:

I now consider Rangiatea as a patterned continuity - an emergent condition that operates with abbreviated time (many of its manifestations are temporary) and a refusal

of completion and finish. It is aligned in these qualities with the lightweight, permeable and renewable architecture of the Pacific.<sup>11</sup>

Treadwell describes Rangīātea as offering a "patterned continuity" that operates with abbreviated time and a refusal to be understood as finished. Treadwell is particularly concerned with those images of Rangīātea – etchings, photographs, sketches – that constitutes its representational identity. But the view of Māori architecture as being defined by a temporal subjectivity in conflict with the linearity chronology of Western buildings is becoming increasingly prominent, perhaps even conventional.<sup>12</sup>

Bill McKay has observed that many Māori strongly resist Pākehā encroachment, and yet Māori buildings are highly likely to incorporate Western forms and motifs albeit to their own ends.<sup>13</sup> This paper is concerned with one Māori building – really just a cottage – in which such encroachment is not just apparent, it may well be defiant. However, I am mindful that McKay's point on

encroachment as historicism (as Treadwell reminds us) is just as invasive as any other expression of foreign influence. I am mindful of presenting "a Pakeha's idea of what is Maori."<sup>14</sup>

Using the example of a Christian theological explanation given to a pre-contact carving, McKay has observed that such a paradox is, by Western definitions, incorrect, but it nonetheless remains meaningful in Māori interpretation.<sup>15</sup>

Rangīātea is, then, not comfortable as an object of architectural history, but as a singularly outstanding example of Māori building in the 1850s it nonetheless holds an uncontested prominence. This presents an uncomfortable disjunction. It may not be temporally stable but it nonetheless stands for Māori architecture. So much so that Deidre Brown has been able to describe it as a Māori building on a scale without precedent.<sup>16</sup> It might seem self-evident that scale in architecture is synonymous with significance but it is worth considering that position as symptomatic of European architectural

<sup>7</sup> "Otaki Church" p 2.

<sup>8</sup> "Lately Published" p 4.

<sup>9</sup> "New Zealand Architecture" p 1.

<sup>10</sup> Treadwell "Rangiatea" pp 19-34. Treadwell "European Representations."

<sup>11</sup> Treadwell "Rangiatea Revisited" p 13.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of this see: McKay "Resonant time and cyclic architecture" pp 295-300; Brown "He kokonga whare e kimihia" pp 64-68.

<sup>13</sup> McKay "Looking at Maori Architecture" pp 2-10.

<sup>14</sup> McKay "Looking at Maori Architecture" p 1.

<sup>15</sup> McKay & Walmsley "Maori Time" pp 202-203.

<sup>16</sup> Brown *Māori Architecture* p 46.

history. Nonetheless the history of Rangīātea is framed as one of size, with descriptions detailing the breadth and depth of the interior, alongside the internalised native ornamentation. It is the case that one often repeated story of the church's construction concerns Samuel Williams (son of Henry Williams) cutting ten feet off the length of the ridge pole in the middle of the night. Ostensibly an action to end debate on the beam's length, Treadwell has speculated that this action might have served to truncate the projected length, and thereby denied Rangīātea a porch extension.<sup>17</sup>

Accounts differ on the exact specifications of the native church at Waikanae but there is no mistaking the distinct scale or execution. Two British officers passing through the district in 1846 gave it their approval thus:

The native church is well worth seeing, as an example of Maori ingenuity. It is 40 feet long by 30 broad; the inside is neatly fitted with reeds, and kind of arabesque painting on the wood work, has a good effect, and is executed with some taste.<sup>18</sup>

A few days later they recorded seeing a bigger native church under construction in Pakeika –

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<sup>17</sup> Treadwell *European Representations* p 42.

<sup>18</sup> "JOURNAL, Kept by Two British Officers" p 3.

"it will be 64 feet by 34 feet"<sup>19</sup> – and a larger one again being built in Pikirike, in brick: "which is a novelty in New Zealand architecture."<sup>20</sup> Finally, they make mention of visiting the native church at Mata Mata, "[w]hich is 75 feet long, built of totara wood, and is the largest in New Zealand."<sup>21</sup> We can take from these accounts two important inferences. The first is that during the mid-1840s there were a notable number of large-scale churches being built by Māori. And secondly, that these churches were sought out by travellers. On this last point we should assume one important reason for visiting native churches was because they represented areas of Christian influence and therefore some political stability. However, it is also apparent in vivid language provided in period descriptions that these churches were also visited as novelty destinations, as things in themselves to be seen and reported back on. They mark, in some small way, the beginning of a tourism founded in something more than New Zealand's natural features. At least for Pākehā.

In Barraud's depiction, the congregational

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<sup>19</sup> "JOURNAL, Kept by Two British Officers" p 3.

<sup>20</sup> "JOURNAL, Kept by Two British Officers" p 3.

<sup>21</sup> "JOURNAL, Kept by Two British Officers" p 3.

figures disappear against the volume, and as though understanding this they huddle against the outside walls and the base of the towering timber columns. It is depicted then as an inside vast enough to be considered an outside, and, as Treadwell has observed, the ornamental characteristic of the interior is consistent with a reading of it as a traditional exterior. The caveat to this interpretation is that the interior of Rangīātea is not carved. The reasons for this probably have much to do with the pejorative influence of the Anglican clergy. The extent to which the use of traditional Māori carving in Rangīātea was viewed as an undesirable atavistic practice was still apparent in Rev. Canon Hohepa Taepa's history, published upon the church's centenary. He writes:

The church is entirely Nave, displaying to great advantage the distinctive and symbolic features of Maori architecture. It was the people's intention that their grotesque figures of pre-Christian days should remain in their meeting houses, whilst only the simplest and finest form of decoration should beautify this interior.<sup>22</sup>

By "the people's intention" we should assume he means those converted Māori who composed the first congregation, but, even then, it is a curious claim that carving should

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<sup>22</sup> Taepa *The Rangiatea Story* p 34.

only be found *within* meeting houses. 100 years on beauty has become defined by principles of simplicity and fineness in form, and, as Treadwell observes (although for very different reasons)<sup>23</sup> the grotesque appears in a domesticated expression, made safe and palatable to Colonial tastes.

It is a paradox that the Māori-ness of Rangīātea was claimed from its inception while the nearby house belonging to Te Rauparaha's son, Tāmihana, was seen as every part a Pākehā proxy, and therefore of far less interest than its grand neighbour. I hope to suggest that the opposite may be true of this modest and, now lost, dwelling.

In July, 1848, Te Rauparaha was living with his son, Tāmihana, in a yet to be completed house, from where he was able to observe the building of Rangīātea. At this time Taylor wrote of it that it "will be an interesting building when finished, being a kind of union of the English and Maori styles."<sup>24</sup> At the time of Te Rauparaha's death Rangīātea was not yet completed, and his funeral was conducted

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<sup>23</sup> For Taepa the three columns and accompanying ridgepole symbolise the trinity joined under one God. Taepa *The Rangiatea Story* p 36.

<sup>24</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 127.

from Tāmihana's house. Descriptions of the proceedings emphasise that Te Rauparaha's casket was displayed on the verandah of the house, with red blankets, festooned with crepe and silk rosettes, hung around it.<sup>25</sup> It is apparent from first-hand accounts that Te Rauparaha's commitment to Rangīātea never extended as far as being baptised, so it is not at all certain that his funeral would have been held in the church had it been finished. Indeed, I would go so far as to suggest that the unavailability of Rangīātea, and Tāmihana's Christian commitment, have been reasons for not looking further into any other significance of the verandah in this case, and to which this paper turns.

Judge Henry Samuel Chapman, making his second visit to Ōtaki, in 1848, generously praised the work of the missionaries for bringing civilisation to the Māori. His enthusiasm for the effectiveness of Hadfield's work may well have been influenced by his experience of the hospitality of Tāmihana Te Rauparaha, and his wife Ruta. He described their home as a dwelling in Pākehā-style, 33 feet long, and comprising of four rooms with

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<sup>25</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 135.

ornamentation of Māori designs.<sup>26</sup> Guests were provided with a meal consisting of roast goose, potatoes, bread, butter and milk, served, said Chapman, a l'Anglaise.<sup>27</sup> So impressed was Chapman by the experience that upon his return to Wellington he forwarded some perforated zinc to serve as windows.<sup>28</sup> Whether these "windows" ever arrived is not apparent. However, images of Tāmihana's house do exist and they provide a fascinating insight into this most Pākehā of whare to which I will shortly turn. However, to fully appreciate the architectural significance of this modest dwelling so overshadowed by its theological neighbour it is worth examining other period accounts.

When he visited in December, 1848, Rev Richard Taylor described it in some detail. It was, he wrote, three rooms "ornamented in the native style"<sup>29</sup> although, he goes on to emphasise, it was neatly finished by an English carpenter. Taylor gives the house dimensions as 33 feet by 18 feet, and noted that it contained two large central posts, the lower proportions of which were carved "in

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<sup>26</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 90.

<sup>27</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 91.

<sup>28</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 92.

<sup>29</sup> Taylor quoted in Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 130.

the grotesque figure of a native."<sup>30</sup> So too, wrote Taylor, are the posts of the verandah. Tāmihana's house, while reassuring visitors of his commitment to Pākehā values for civilised behaviour, in the use of internal and external carvings also displayed Māori attributes otherwise excluded in Rangīātea as being too primitive.

Nonetheless, when in 1850 Hadfield was visited in Ōtaki by Mrs John Robert Godley (the wife of the managing director of the Canterbury Association) she was taken to the home of Tāmihana, which she found to be of white weatherboard with tall chimneys, French doors and a deep verandah decorated with a green trellis. The interior was in a Māori design, painted red and white, with tukutuku work, but overall, she declared, "It looks much better than it sounds."<sup>31</sup>

Tāmihana was an important figure for the Christian Mission Society in Ōtaki. The son of a feared and unrepentant chief, his conversion to Christianity was a highly symbolic triumph. Even his name, Tāmihana (Thompson), was compliant having been

adopted by him when he had been baptised by Hadfield, in 1841.<sup>32</sup> It is likely they first met in 1839 when Tāmihana, and his cousin Mātene Te Whiwhi, went to the Bay of Islands looking for a missionary, returning with Hadfield and Henry Williams. In 1846, when Te Rauparaha was arrested, Tāmihana was living St. John's College, which had been established by Bishop Selwyn in Auckland (having been shifted from Waimate North in 1846). And yet written accounts present a conflicted figure. Tāmihana's penchant for European clothes and other accoutrements of Englishness presented him as a figure of the CMS's broader endeavour to bring civilised society to the colonies, and the Rev JF Lloyd, upon meeting Tāmihana (in 1849) expressed his admiration: "In no respect is he different from ourselves except in the colour of his skin."<sup>33</sup> But, for all that, Tāmihana never became fluent in English, preferring to speak in te reo Māori.

In the view of Eric Ramsden, Tāmihana was little more than an opportunist whose greatest weaknesses were his vanity and an exaggerated sense of his own importance.<sup>34</sup> It

is probably fair to say that unlike the previous generation of Māori (represented so obviously by his father), Tāmihana saw Hadfield and the other missionaries as representatives of a new social order in which the Church was in control. Ramsden's view is that if he is remembered at all it is "as a Maori who aped the Pakeha in most things. Certainly, in later life, his ambition was to be a Maori equivalent of the English squire."<sup>35</sup> His love for expensive clothes, spirited horses, and "the good things of life" did nothing to endear him to his fellow Māori who found his Pākehā style of living alienating.<sup>36</sup>

All these qualities are acted out in his own house, so what then do we make of Tāmihana's "pretty" verandahed cottage? Or, more importantly, what do we make of those aspects of his cottage that do not fit a purely Pākehā conception of domesticity? On the one hand it fits perfectly with a model of picturesque England, with the verandah following the example set in the architecture of the CMS mission house (such as the one Tāmihana visited in Waimate North). But at the same time the use of Māori

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<sup>30</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 130.

<sup>31</sup> Godley quoted, Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 163.

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<sup>32</sup> Oliver "Te Rauparaha" n.p.

<sup>33</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 142.

<sup>34</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 176.

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<sup>35</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 176.

<sup>36</sup> Ramsden *Rangiatea* p 176.

ornamentation, especially carvings, suggests a world less purged of atavistic values than Rangīātea. As Treadwell has written on the representations we have of the house, it vacillates between picturesque cottage and carved house; of individual power over collective organisation; and on a continuum of exploited architectural opposites: structure/ornament, exterior/interior, permanent/temporary.<sup>37</sup>

I do not intend to reproduce Treadwell's analysis, but will summarise the character of the images Treadwell critiques, and add a photograph to the collection. From there I will extend the context of Tamihana's verandah by identifying some related treatments.<sup>38</sup>

The various images commonly feature a pitched roof cottage with a lean-to verandah enclosed by a trellis. Some depictions show two verandahs, one on each long façade, and many of the representations display carvings

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<sup>37</sup> Treadwell "European Representations" p 167.

<sup>38</sup> "The House built for himself by Tamahana [sic] Te Raparahau [sic]" in E.D. "The Story of the New Zealand Mission" p 139, reproduced in Treadwell "European Representations" p 181f.; [Gold] "Thompson's Warree [sic] Otaki New Zealand"; Wynyard "Wiremu Tamihana's house, Otaki"; Swainson "Thompsons (Young Te Rauperaha [sic]) new house, Otaki."

to the bottom of the posts that early visitors recalled. It is this verandah upon which Te Rauparaha's body was held *in state*, and the combination of the carved posts, and the artefacts of mourning that were installed, lead Treadwell to the suggestion that we consider this space as functioning like the porch of a meeting house, and therefore it should be understood as not being constrained by European definitions of architecture.<sup>39</sup>

The image I will add to this list is a photograph from the Alexander Turnbull Library, who identify it as depicting the Wallace family, of Ōtaki.<sup>40</sup> There is some circumstantial evidence to suggest that this is the house of Tāmihana. It features the trellised verandah, and the figures include relations of Te Rauparaha. The most notable points of difference are not the absence of carved figures on the posts, but the added presence of fine and ornate carving to the verandah lintel beam. Nonetheless it seems probable that this is Tāmihana's house photographed by AFT Chorlton (c1910 at my best guess).

Unlike the earlier drawings, in this image the

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<sup>39</sup> Treadwell "European Representations" p 170.

<sup>40</sup> Chorlton "Photograph of Wallace family on the verandah of their house at Otaki."

presence of figures makes it apparent that the trellis operated as a definite spatial separation. Against the colonial stereotype of the verandah as a conditional open transition between house and world, here the verandah is a conditional closed volume, one more in keeping with formal demarcations than simple transitions. Combining the carved post beam, record of figurative carvings on the posts, and Treadwell's interpretation of it as a traditional porch, I feel a reading can be made of this space as representing a shift between profane and sacred domains. That is, in Māori terms, it represents a threshold between a noa (profane) exterior and a tapu (sacred) interior. To this end the carvings to the beam supporting the verandah roof should be read as far more than simply ornamental as they elevate the lintel to the ritualised entry function of the pare.

In a typical arrangement the pare (and its accompanying jamb posts) offer a diminutive entry to the whare interior and lies against the wall rather than being of the wall.<sup>41</sup> However there are important exceptions, the most important of which for my purposes is the house of the first Māori King, Pōtatau Te

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<sup>41</sup> Simmons *The Carved Pare* p 10.

Wherowhero, at Raroera Pā in the Waikato, where a feature I am comparing to the pare extends along the length of the dwelling, paralleling the gable ridge.<sup>42</sup>

In John Johnson's sketch of Pōtatau Te Wherowhero's whare (1843) the pare is not shown as carved, but what is evident is the low palisade fence that encloses the porch just as the trellis in Tāmihana's house. For Te Wherowhero this unusual arrangement, so unlike the familiar linear axiality of the wharenuī, may well have held a particularly powerful symbolism. A significant part of the wharenuī's meaningfulness is found in the gable form of the porch and, as Treadwell has recognised, this shape is a foundational model for a culturally unified nation. In the *Church Missionary Gleaner*, of 1884, the social organisation of a proposed Māori Kingdom is found in the whare:

Europeans are the rafters on one side, the Maories [sic] are the rafters on the other side; God is the ridgepole against which all lean; and the house is one.<sup>43</sup>

As Rosenfeld has put it, the metaphor of the house singularly expressed the Māori

interpretation of the Treaty of Waitangi before the Land Wars.<sup>44</sup> It is easy to see how such a reading was designed to appeal to a predominantly devout society where the faith and reliance on a God is central, and Rangīātea, despite its lack of porch, is still a powerful gable expression. But the gable was not the only architectural metaphor evoked to account for Māori-Pākehā relations in the nineteenth century. The "other" Tāmihana of this story is Wirimu Tāmihana, known as the King Maker for his pivotal involvement in establishing Te Wherowhero as the first Māori King, and thereby initiating the Kingite movement. For this Tāmihana the principle metaphor for Māori/Pākehā relationships was a post and beam structure. As Rickards writes:

He illustrated his conception of the king by pushing two sticks into the ground. "One is the Maori king, the other is the Governor." He laid a third stick on top of the other two. "This is the law of God and the Queen." He then traced on the ground a circle around the sticks. "That circle is the Queen, the fence to protect all."<sup>45</sup>

This is the system found in Te Wherowhero's whare; the Māori King to one side, the Governor to the other, and a joining beam

representing the law of the land. The diminutive fence then acts, however nominally, as the Crown's guaranteed protection around all.

If the *Church Missionary Gleaner* favoured the central image of God as a stable ridgepole, then they would have balked at Tāmihana's secular imagery that places its emphasis on an equality organised not by the laws of God but those of government, and yet the same figuration, in a more abstracted way, is found in Tāmihana Te Rauparaha's house. The carved verandah posts are figures of authority, the finely carved lintel beam is a connecting principle, and the trellis encloses all in a sanctified realm. This point is an important one as it contrasts Tāmihana's house with the porch-less Rangīātea, and provokes an interpretation of Tāmihana's house as far more radical than has been appreciated.

To further advance this hypothesis I will introduce a surprisingly similar dwelling from the nearby village coastal of Pūtiki, very near the Rev Richard Taylor's home in Whanganui. It appears that Taylor made the earliest image

<sup>42</sup> [Johnson] "The ware of Te Whero Whero."

<sup>43</sup> *Church Missionary Gleaner* quoted, Treadwell *Rangiatea Revisited* p 14.

<sup>44</sup> Rosenfeld *Island Broken* p 89.

<sup>45</sup> Wirimu Tamihana quoted, Rickard *Tamihana the King Maker* p 74.

of this distinctive whare.<sup>46</sup> His drawing of 1858 shows building very much like Tāmihana's house with a verendah attached to the long edge of a thatched whare. Carvings to the posts and verendah ridge are evident, and tekoteko figures appear on the gable peaks. In the background Pūtiki church sits as a parallel feature in a parallel relationship just as at Ōtaki. Taylor identifies this as the house of Miti Kingi but it is probable that he meant Mete Kīngi Te Rangi Paetahi, who was actively involved in bringing an end to tribal warfare through the 1850s. In this period, he attended King movement meetings including the great meeting at Pūkawa in November, 1856, where he spoke against it.<sup>47</sup> Along with his physical opposition to the Hauhau movement, and appointment to the House of Representatives as the first member for Western Māori, Mete Kīngi should be considered a Māori leader very much aligned with the Crown. So much so that when, in 1869, Governor GF Bowen made a vice-regal visit to Christchurch, he sought representation from Mete Kīngi, Wi Tako Ngātata and Tāmihana Te Rauparaha. It is not unreasonable to conclude that the verendah-

ed whare Taylor drew was a building of some significance as a model for a bi-cultural architecture. That this was also recognised by Pākehā is apparent in two paintings by Colonial artists. In the early 1860s John Alexander Gilfillan offered a rather romantic interpretation of Pūtiki Pā in which Mete Kīngi's whare is a central element of a contrived native scene.<sup>48</sup> Within a few years William Fox made a study of the verendah which lacks something by way of analytical rigour but which nonetheless shows that the posts and beam were well carved with figures consistent with a pare function, although here too the trellis is missing.<sup>49</sup>

The most recent image of this is taken from the pages of TW Downs' 1915 history of Whanganui.<sup>50</sup> It is titled "Old Mission House at Putiki" although Downs offers no further information regarding the whare, its place in Whanganui's history, nor even the origin of the photograph. In comparing this image to Richard Taylor's sketch of 1858 the work is substantially the same although a number of differences in detail are discernible. Most notably, the trellis work shown by Taylor has

been replaced by a picket-like fence. The carvings seem intact but the thatched roof has been replaced with shingle, and the cladding is now weatherboards rather than raupō. The immediate right of the building is becoming overgrown, and the general air of dilapidation suggests this photograph is a late one, probably within a few years of Downes' writing. What we can say about these changes is that between the two recordings attempts were made to make the whare a more substantial piece of architecture; by replacing the trellis, and improving the material fabric of the roof and walls. At the same time the relevance of these improvements would seem to become victim to a larger redundancy that is manifest in the whare's neglect. It is also telling that the new roofline comes over the top of the lintel, throwing it into shadow and bringing it under the envelope of the colonial verendah.

The final three images are photographs taken on, or about, the same year. Captured here the whare appears somewhat derelict; the roof is awash with timbers, a prop supports a verendah post, and the surroundings are neglected. There is a general air of architectural decline that belies the significance of this building. The fine carvings

<sup>46</sup> Taylor "Putiki Church and Miti Kingi's house."

<sup>47</sup> Oliver "Te Rangi Paetahi, Mete Kingi" n.p.

<sup>48</sup> [Gilfillan?] "Putiki Waranui pah Wanganui."

<sup>49</sup> Fox "Putiki, Wanganui."

<sup>50</sup> Downes *Old Whanganui* p 201.

are clearly visible, the trellis is back, and while apparently unkempt it is important to note that no obvious attempts have been made to modernise the whare. These photographs give some clue to why this might be the case.<sup>51</sup>

The first confirms the ownership of the whare as belonging to Mete Kīngi but goes further to identify it as having been once lived in by Reverend Richard Taylor. The personal journals of Taylor are filled with mentions of whare visits but this particular detail is important for establishing a direct Pākehā connection the houses of Mete Kīngi and Tāmihana. Along with Hadfield, Taylor was a highly influential among Māori of the lower North Island, helped in no small way by his mobility in the area. An amateur polymath, his journals are filled with small but informative drawings whose subjects include many buildings he encountered and the similarities between the houses of Tāmihana and Mete Kīngi should not be seen as something to which Taylor would have been oblivious. Indeed, it needs to be considered that he may have been involved, passively or

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<sup>51</sup> Harding "Vicarage once lived in by Reverend Richard Taylor"; Harding "Meeting between Dr Isaac Featherston and Wanganui iwi at Putiki"; "Wanganui Maori meeting at Putiki Pa."

actively, in their design as artefacts of conciliation between Māori and Pākehā values.

That view is pure speculation on my part, but the next two images offer something far more concrete. Both show public events taking place around the whare. In the first is a formal meeting between Dr Isaac Featherston presenting Mete Kīngi Te Rangi Paetahi with the resolution of the Provincial Council thanking the Whanganui Māori for their brave conduct at in repelling Pai Māire rebels at Moutoa. Seated between Featherston and Mete Kīngi is Tāmihana Te Rauparaha. That this building should be chosen for such a notable ceremonial occasion indicates to me its importance at the time.

The second photograph depicts the same whare from the rear, and it is here captioned as a "meeting house." It seems reasonable to assume that this too is a significant meeting and the possibility is offered in the archival entry that it may be with Governor George Grey. It is apparent in the number of people that there would have been some difficulty in accommodating all in the whare, but this reading should not detract from other details. For example, for the greater part the group is

Māori, and composed of men, women and children. Also, and unlike the previous scene, the attention of the group is formally focused around the behind the whare, which in turn appears to have a rudimentary timber scaffold at its centre. The rear of the whare is not defined by a verandah and carries no carving. Equally identifiable are the boundary provided by the palisade type fence, and the very visible line of attachment of the verandah onto the gable end strongly suggests that it was an addition to an existing whare. My point in making this distinction is to highlight how the whare, and especially the carved verendah lintel, marks a spatial distinction in the activities. The front of the house for meeting with Pākehā, the rear of the house for meeting amongst Māori. Mike Austin has stressed the significance in Polynesian architecture of using orientation and frontality to define the marae as a cleared surface for ceremonial needs and daily life, a point historically lost on colonial Europeans.<sup>52</sup> I see a similar, albeit more complex, division being made here. The whare of Mete Kīngi has no interior/exterior division, but a spatial condition of before and after with the former being the outside world of Pākehā politics and

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<sup>52</sup> Austin "Rapa Nui" p 12.

the latter the inside world of Māori relations. In this reading the significance of the whare diminishes against the potency of the carved verandah to classify spatial activities and hierarchies. To this end the carved verandah ridge beam is a powerful symbolic threshold. I have compared it in function to the pare, but in the example of the spatial divisions found at Pūtiki this is not enough, and I suggest that as a threshold transition it is more akin to an elevated paepae (house threshold), or flattened maihi (bargeboards) of the whare rūnanga (meeting house). That is, it specifically addresses traditionally defined domains of noa and tapu for an emergent Māori Christianity.

If so, then the irony is that the carved verandah never became widespread, and by the 1880s the whare whakairo, with its feature gable and porch, had emerged as the architectural symbol of Māori resurgence. Looking back, it is inevitable that we look to the shape and scale of Rangiātea for affirmation of this despite its lack of porch. And yet it seems likely that the verandah house of Tāmihana Te Rauparaha has much more to say of Māori/Pākehā relations. But that would have been well beyond even CD Barraud to depict to commercial success.

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