

While they were busily employed at their work, the Ngaitara attacked and killed the whole of them, amongst whom was the daughter of Puraho.

This chief mourned sorely for his child and vowed to avenge her; but before he could do so, he was himself killed by the same people, who, feeling that they had incurred the vengeance of Ngai Tahu, were resolved to follow up what they had done to be the first in the field.

Observing from the mainland, which was only a short way off, that Puraho and Manawa went every morning at dawn to perform certain offices of nature at a particular spot where they had dug two holes together for the purpose, it was arranged to plant an ambush near the spot to lie in wait for them.

Accordingly, during the night, two warriors were sent to secrete themselves in the holes, where, hidden by the cross beams, they awaited the coming of the doomed men.

At break of day the two approached; Puraho being in advance, was the first to turn and sit on the beam. Manawa was about to do the same, when he was startled and prevented by the uprising of the warrior under Puraho, who killed that chief by a sudden blow on the back of the head. Manawa immediately fled and escaped into the pa.

The death of Puraho convinced Ngai Tahu of the insecurity of their position at Moioio, and they determined to abandon it and to remove to O te Kane, at the mouth of the Wairau River, where they built a strongly fortified pa. As soon as they had provided for the safety of their families, they began to take measures for avenging the death of Puraho, and the women so mercilessly slaughtered by Ngaitara.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Life on Moioio was not finished by the savagery of the Ngaitara-Ngai Tahu feud. The island was highly valued for its defensive qualities; its

closeness to the fisheries of Tory Channel and the blue waters of Cook Strait and its proximity to kumara growing lands at the head of Erie Bay. The archaeological evidence points to subsequent re-occupation and a long history of habitation.

The rubbish heaps left by man are windows into our lives. The midden that spills out of the slopes of Moioio Island provides clues to the life of the Maori in this area. The abundance of shells, fishbone, bird bone, and charcoal stained soil that is found here indicates a long period of occupation.

In addition 27 pits of the kumara storage type suggest cultivation over many years. In fact the Moioio pit complex is the largest discovered in Marlborough Sounds. The gardens, presumably in Erie Bay, have been obliterated in European farming activity.

LIFE ON MOIOIO

What would life be like in such a location in prehistoric times? The milder weather of the Sounds would make for a tolerable existence

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