

HISTORICAL & TECHNICAL REPORT

X 005404

**Museums Victoria
First Peoples Objects**



**REPORT PRODUCED BY
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JANUARY 2026**

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KUPUTAKA/GLOSSARY

Kupu ē-kaupapa/Term

Aho
Aho poka (also known as Tīhoi)
closer fit i.e. custom fit
Haerenga
Hapū
Harakeke
Here
Hine-te-iwaiwa
Hītori
Hukahuka
Huruhuru
Iwi
Kahu puehu
Kahu tōi
Kairaranga
Kaitaka
Kākahu
Karure
Kauko
Kaumātua
Kaupapa
Kurupatu
Kawa
Paru
Potopoto
Pūrākau
Mātauranga
Rangahau
Rangatira
Remu
Tāniko
Taonga
Tikanga
Tūpuna
Te Ao Māori
Ua
Uri
Whakanakonako
Whakapapa
Whānau/Whanaunga
Whatu
Whenu

Whakamāramatanga/Definition

Horizontal or weft threads
Additional aho, shaping inserts, which create contouring for a
Journey
Sub-tribe
Phormium tenax or New Zealand Flax
Ties used to secure garments
The goddess of Te Whare Pora (The House of Weaving)
History
Tassels
Feathers
Tribe
Dog skin cloak
War cloak
Weaver
A finely woven cloak
Generic term for cloaks
Loosely twisted hukahuka
Side edge of a kākahu
Respected elders
Framework of the garment
A neck fringe on a kākahu
Protocols of practice, how things are done (see also tīkanga)
A black ferruginous mud used in the dyeing process
Tightly twisted hukahuka
Stories, oral history
Traditional knowledge
Research
Chief or chiefly in nature
Bottom edge of kākahu
Decorative border, either woven with dyed harakeke, or with wool
Cultural treasure or artefact
Correct procedure or custom (see kawa)
Ancestors
The Māori World or Māori worldview
Top edge or neckline
Descendants
Embellishments
Genealogy
Relative/s
Hand-twining technique
Vertical or warp threads

KUPU WHAKATAKI/PREFACE

‘Ko te manu e kai ana i te miro nōnā te ngahere, ko te manu e kai ana i te mātauranga nōnā te ao.’

The forest belongs to the bird who feasts on the miro berry, the world belongs to the bird who feasts on education.
Māori Whakatauki/Proverb

The *whakapapa* and *hītori* of *taonga*, or the provenance and history of cultural treasures, are as important as the items themselves. Whenever the term *taonga* is used within this report, the author is referring to cultural treasures, although Western practice usually refers to them simply as artefacts or objects.

Mātauranga (knowledge) of who the *kairaranga* (weaver) or the *kaiwhakairo* (carver) was, the *iwi* (tribe) or *hapū* (subtribe) to which they affiliate, the identity of the receiver, and the reasons for the gifting – are also *taonga* and unfortunately, far too much of this information has been lost to time.

Māori *taonga* rest in countless institutions around the world, museums, galleries, libraries, and private collections, and although the author does not take issue with this as such; he does feel that far too many *taonga* are displayed, or held, without an appropriate level of cultural and historical context. After visiting several museums in Europe, the United States of America, Australia, and the United Kingdom, the author noticed that several of our *taonga* had either minimal information, no cultural context, or worse, some information panels bore the terms ‘Unknown’ or ‘Unidentified’ and the name of the collector or collection was more prominent than the *taonga* itself.

As a weaver, a novice carver, and a Māori historian, the author felt that he was able to examine select *taonga* from institutions in countries to which he travels and produce documents that would provide these institutions with a general level of historical and technical information. The author has been fortunate to have undertaken extensive international travel, for work, research, and holidays, and has recently begun integrating museum and gallery visits into these trips; contacting institutions prior to any of his *haerenga* (journeys), to ascertain what *taonga* they have, and what he might want to access and examine – or what they would like to know more about.

By no means does he claim to be an expert in the study of Māori *taonga* and feels that there are others of greater standing within the field; however, he offers his knowledge, as best as he is able, to produce research documents that provide substantially more information than is currently held on these specific *taonga*.

The compilation and provision of these reports serve several purposes: to do the *taonga* justice by visiting and spending time with them; to examine them and promote their whereabouts; making their locations known to Māori (and other interested persons), and to uncover their *pūrākau* (stories) and bring them back to life. This third practice of uncovering their *pūrākau* achieves several outcomes, these being: to reunite them with *uri* (descendants) and *whanaunga* (relatives); to provide the institutions with a credible and informative record of the respective *taonga*; and ensuring their stories are not forgotten – *ka maumahara tonu tātou kia rātou*.

This particular *pūrākau* tells of the experiences the New Zealand Natives Rugby Union team, including Captain Joseph Warbrick (and his four brothers), and their 1888-1889 *haerenga* (journey) to Ahitereiria (Australia), and Ingarangi (England). During their tour, they played an amazing 107 games, winning 78 of them, at a win-loss result of 79%; which set the standard for the All Blacks, the Natives being the forerunners of the New Zealand national team. It was this team that introduced the *haka* and the ‘silver fern’ logo to the All Black legacy. This *kahu kiwi* (Kiwi feather cloak) was worn during this rugby tour and sold to Museums Victoria who are the current *kaitiaki* (custodians).

HAURONGO/BIOGRAPHY



The author lecturing at the University of Sydney; examining a *taonga* at Auckland Museum; signing a set of history books in which the author's research is published; and being interviewed by media at an ANZAC Dawn Service in Wellington.

The author's cultural background sees him affiliated with the *iwi* (tribes) of Ngāpuhi, Ngāi Tūhoe, Te Whakatōhea, and Te Whānau-a-Apanui, as well as having connections to Alveston in Gloucestershire, Bloomsbury in London, and Helsingborg in Sweden – all of which he has visited.

He is ex-military, having served in the army as a paratrooper and then military police officer; before studying a Bachelor of Arts, and then a Master of Teaching degree, and becoming a history teacher, and a military and Māori historian.

The author is a cultural practitioner: *kairaranga* (weaver), novice *kaiwhakairo* (carver), and *kaihaka* (performer). He is a published author, producing articles, reports, and story books; produced a historical short film; delivered lectures around the world; and contributed towards exhibitions in institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand, and Australia.

The author's research has been referred to in the media; mentioned in legal cases; used on government websites; presented in museums; stopped the sale of *taonga* at auction and assisted in the repatriation of *taonga* back to Aotearoa New Zealand. He has also appeared on television and radio in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, as a *tumu kōrero* (historian), in documentaries, news, and cultural programs.

The author is a husband, father, and grandfather, who believes in the importance of teaching his *whānau* (family) *mātauranga* (knowledge) and *toi Māori* (Māori arts) and including them in his *kaupapa rangahau* (research projects); taking them with him on these *haerenga* (journeys) if the opportunities allow.

It is his goal to contribute toward *Te Ao Māori* (The Māori World) in a positive and impactful manner and hopes that this report goes some way towards achieving this objective.

ARA RANGAHAU/RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



The author examining the *kahu kiwi* at Museums Victoria (2025).¹

This report was compiled by the author, utilising: online and library/archive-based research; consultation with curators; conducting interviews with members of the Ngāti Rangitahi *iwi* (tribe); as well as carrying out a physical examination of the *kahu kiwi* itself. The physical examination of the *taonga* was undertaken at a Museums Victoria site, on 16 July 2025. The online and library-based research was undertaken between March 2023 - January 2026. The consultation process and interviews with Ngāti Rangitahi academics and *kaumātua* began in May 2024, and are ongoing, as per Māori *kawa* and *tikanga*. Facsimiles of original documentation, provided by Museums Victoria during the research process, included: Report of the Trustees of the Public Library, Museums, & National Gallery of Victoria, for 1889. Information from, and images of these documents, are provided by permission of the Museums Victoria. All physical descriptions, including measurements, and condition notes, were obtained during the author's examination of the artefact.

I am deeply humbled and immensely grateful to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the following individuals and organisations whose unwavering support and invaluable assistance have profoundly enriched my research endeavours: first and foremost, to the late Joseph Warbrick, it is an honour to tell your story and I will never forget visiting you at the *urupa* (cemetery); my sincere gratitude goes to the people of Ngāti Rangitahi for bestowing upon me the tremendous honour and privilege of delving into and examining this cultural treasure. Your trust and confidence in my work are deeply cherished. To Orini Marr, a direct descendant of Joseph Warbrick, I extend my sincerest thanks for your invaluable guidance and collaboration throughout this journey. Your commitment to preserving our cultural heritage is truly commendable.

I'd like to extend my heartfelt acknowledgment to the esteemed staff at Museums Victoria, and the Australian Museum, who serve our people as *kaitiaki* (custodians) of our rich cultural heritage embodied in the Pasifika Collections. From Museums Victoria: Jade Hadfield, and from the Australian Museum: Myles Maniapoto.

I also wish to express my appreciation to all those who have contributed to unravelling the significance of this *taonga whakahirahira* (cultural treasure of great significance), including Dion Peita, and Keren Ruki. Your invaluable contributions have paved the way for a deeper appreciation and understanding of our cultural heritage.

Ka nui te mihi ki a koutou katoa...

**PŪRONGO KŌRERO O NEHE
HISTORICAL REPORT**

TĀHUHU KŌRERO/BACKGROUND STORY

“Brothers, that’s us” Joe stated nonchalantly, as he showed his four siblings the official selection sheet for the New Zealand Natives Rugby Union team. Shortly after, in May 1888, the Warbricks and their teammates would be in a training camp near Napier and preparing for the experience of their lives.

Joseph ‘Joe’ Astbury Warbrick (1862-1903), was a former Māori rugby player, who travelled to Australia (1884) and England and Australia (1888-89) to represent the New Zealand Natives, which was the first national representative side of Aotearoa New Zealand. Historian, the late Don Stafford, has claimed that Warbrick is responsible for creating the name ‘All Blacks’. In 2009, he was inducted into the World Rugby Hall of Fame (2008),ⁱ and is a member of the Māori Sports Awards Hall of Fame.



Joseph Warbrick circa 1884.ⁱⁱⁱ



Replica of the 1884 jersey.ⁱⁱ



Joseph Warbrick.^{iv}

Born in Rotorua in 1861, Joseph was the third son of English immigrant Abraham Warbrick and his Māori wife, Nga Karauna Paerau. Abraham, originally from Todmorden in Yorkshire, then of Astbury near Gogleton, had immigrated to New Zealand aboard the Martha Ridgway in 1840, and initially arrived in Nelson on the South Island. Once settled in his new home, he took up employment as a doctor, a store owner, and a linguist. Nga Karauna, born in Matatā in the Bay of Plenty, was the daughter of a Ngāti Rangitihī chief Paerau Moko-nui-a-rangi, and his wife Toki Pounamu Moko-nui-arangi. Abraham and Nga Karauna had five children, these being: Christina Paerau Warbrick; Albert Kahukore Warbrick; Alfred Patiti [Patchett] Warbrick; Arthur [Hata Reha] Warbrick and Joseph Astbury (Joe) Warbrick. After Nga Karauna’s passing, Abraham had further children, with wife, Harina Rangi Arna Warbrick (nee Kaipara) including a son, William Warbrick.



Map of Todmorden.^v



Todmorden, Yorkshire (circa 2023).^{vi}



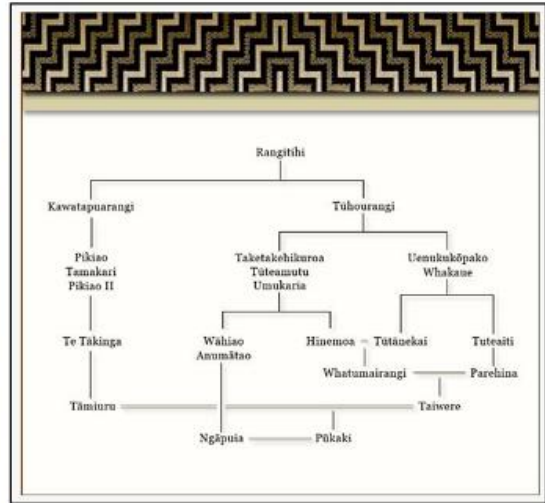
Abraham Warbrick (circa – unknown).^{vii}



The Martha Ridgeway (circa – unknown).^{viii}



Map indicating the traditional tribal area of Ngati Rangitahi.^{ix}



Whakapapa of Rangitahi and his descendants.^x



Rangitahi Marae, Matatā.^{xi}



Portrait of Joseph Warbrick (seated) and his younger half-brother William Warbrick.^{xii}

As a boarder at St Stephen's School for Native Boys in Parnell, Auckland, Joe acquired not only a good education but developed into a rugby player of enormous talent. Playing in bare feet, he could kick dropped goals from halfway. In 1877, aged 15, he turned out for Ponsonby in the Auckland club competition and soon caught the eye of the Auckland selectors. He was selected for the province the same year and remains the youngest player in New Zealand to play first-class rugby. He later played for Wellington and Hawke's Bay.



Auckland Rugby Union touring team 1883. Joseph (aged 21) is kneeling in the centre of the photograph.^{xiii}

Warbrick was selected for the first New Zealand representative team to leave these shores in 1884, making his debut against Cumberland County at Parramatta Ground on 28th May; a game which they won by 33-0. He played in seven of the eight tour matches, including the NSW Waratahs on 31st May; Combined Suburbs on 3rd June at the Sydney Cricket Ground; Northern Districts on 5th June at the Newcastle Sports Ground; and the NSW Waratahs again on 7th June at the Sydney Showground. The New Zealand team won all eight games, scoring a total of 167 points, and ceding only 17 points to their opposition; with Joseph scoring 12 points, from three dropped goals. Because of his surname, he is officially acknowledged as the 17th All Black (although the New Zealand representative team was not known by this name until 1905).



New Zealand rugby team 1884. Joseph is seated on the ground in the centre of the photograph.^{xiv}

Warbrick was the captain, coach and selector for the trip, while Thomas Eyton was the tour's promoter. The intention was to cash in on British fascination with 'indigenous visitors from the Empire' by sending a Māori rugby team to Britain. An 1868 tour by an Aboriginal cricket team from western Victoria had made money and Eyton hoped to emulate its success.

Warbrick scoured New Zealand for talented Māori players willing to commit themselves to more than a year of travel. Joseph and four of his brothers were all selected in the squad of 21 players for the tour. Most had no provincial experience, but the team still managed to win seven of nine warmup matches at home. The team was to be branded the New Zealand Māori, however, their critics gave them little chance overseas and as a result, five Pākehā players were included in a bid to strengthen the squad. The touring party was renamed the 'New Zealand Natives', supposedly on the basis that all 26 team members were 'New Zealand born'; in fact, two had been born overseas. They held a training camp near Napier in May 1888 and had their first game against Hawkes Bay on 23rd June, followed by another eight matches on home soil.



The five Warbrick brothers, who represented the New Zealand Natives team in 1888-1889.^{xv}



The New Zealand Native Rugby Union team in New Zealand, before departing on their tour of England and Australia in 1888. Joseph is kneeling in the centre of the photograph holding the ball.^{xvi}

English Tour

After concluding their first New Zealand leg of their tour, the team travelled to Victoria, Australia; where they played two games against Melbourne, winning the first (3-0) and drawing the second (11). They departed for England by steamer, calling at Egypt during a port stop, and playing what is believed to be the first rugby game in that country. They arrived in Tilsbury, near London, on 27th September, and began preparing for an arduous schedule – some fifty to sixty matches (averaging one game every 2.3 days), sometimes on consecutive days, and without reserves.

'The Natives played their first game in Britain on 3 October 1888, when they defeated Surrey 4-1. Their performance of a pre-match haka, and the black jerseys they wore, aroused curiosity.'^{xvii}



'Their War Cry before starting Play'.

The Maori Football Team : First Match at Richmond, Oct. 3 – Against the Surrey Club.^{xviii}

The above sketch depicts the New Zealand Natives performing a *haka* and wearing their *kākahu* and *korowai* before their game. The accuracy of the likeness of the players is questionable, however, the player to the right edge looks most like Joe Warbrick and is wearing a *korowai* which appears very similar to the *korowai* which is the subject of this report. Perkins (2011) explains that 'The cloak was like a tracksuit, keeping players warm and removed after the haka, but it also tells us about the symbolic role of garments in traditional culture.'^{xix}

Kākahu, which include *korowai* (cloak with tassels), *kahu pueru* (dog skin cloak), *kaitaka* (finely woven cloak), *kahu tōi* (war cloak), etc, are viewed as extremely valuable items; woven for, and worn by, those of high rank, and frequently gifted to others as a display of the esteem in which they are held. Handwoven, they take anywhere between 6 months to 3 years to produce (depending on the size, style, and decorative elements); they are highly regarded and appreciated by the receivers. Collections Officer, Myles Maniapoto (Australian Museum) poses the following question: with *kākahu* being adopted so visibly by this team, could this be interpreted as an assertion and expression of Māori identity overseas by their own volition; or were they merely costume props, in a situation engineered by Thomas Eyton (co-promoter of this tour), or somewhere in between?^{xx}



1888-89 New Zealand Native football team while in England prior to a match against Middlesex.^{xxi}

Their game against Middlesex at Fletching on 22nd October (pictured above), resulted in a loss by 0-9, and they would play another 29 games before the end of the year. Their first game of 1889 would see them face Bradford on New Years' Day, which they lost 1-4. They would play another 37 games, including: Ireland in Dublin on 1st December, which they won 13-4; Wales in Swansea on 22nd December, which they lost 0-5; England in Blackheath on 16th February, which they lost 0-7 (with much controversy); with Cambridge, and Oxford also being games of significance. Winning their final game against Southern Counties on 27th March 1889, saw the conclusion of the British leg of the tour, resulting in a playing record of 49 wins, 5 draws, and 20 losses from 74 matches (394 points for, and 188 points against); a win/loss record of approximately 73%, which is incredible considering the huge number of games they played, especially over such a short period.



New Zealand Native Rugby Team portrait, taken in Swansea, Wales (circa December 1888).^{xxii}

Joseph did not seem impressed by what many Kiwis, especially those with British heritage referred to as the 'Motherland', writing:

'As a country England did not quite come up to my expectations, and this is a prevalent view of New Zealanders and perhaps is due to the fact that from infancy we read and hear nothing else but England, and the imagination gets imbued with perhaps extravagant notions. That it is a wonderful country there are no two opinions ... but as a place of amusement England is, I should say, the rich man's paradise and the poor man's Hades.'^{xxiii}

1889 was the year that the now-iconic Tower Bridge was under construction. Ostentatious wealth was evident in many areas of London; however, it was unequally distributed. Many who lived and worked in the East End and docklands were being pushed increasingly into chronic poverty. This situation wouldn't have escaped Joseph and his teammates, who according to his writings, had expected much more of England.

Australian Tour

The New Zealand Natives team returned to the Southern Hemisphere, beginning their Australian leg in Victoria, with their first game against Maryborough at on 15th May; then playing a further 10 games, with their final match against the Victorian state team on 11th June, which they won 19-0. Whilst in Victoria, the Natives played 11 games of Aussie Rules. Joseph Warbrick also organised the sale of a *kahukiwi* (Kiwi feather cloak) to the Victorian Museum. It is believed that the team needed funds to help with their tour costs, especially as they had been away from home almost a year already. Museums Victoria acquisition records show this *kahukiwi* (Registration number X 005404) being registered at the museum on 10th June.

The next leg of the tour was to New South Wales, where they began their tour against the state representative side in Sydney on 15th June, which they won 12-9. Eight more games were played in this state, including games against Sydney University, Arfoma, the Permanent Artillery, Northumberland, Northern Districts, and a combined Parramatta and the Kings School XVIII. '...it was Parramatta's turn to host the visitors. The Cumberland Argus and Fruit Growers Advocate reported a week prior to the match that a letter was written to Mr Bennett of the Kings School advising him that he needed to have a "very strong" team to meet the Māori. "The team look rather unique in their beautiful and expensive mats and cloaks. 'Kia kaha' [be strong] must be the motto of the Parramatta boys whom we expect to make a good show against the boys of Niu Tirini". The match was played on 19 June 1889. The Cumberland Argus and Fruit Growers Advocate reported the team arrived in Parramatta by train. They were met at the station and taken to Roberts Hotel where they were formally welcomed. Mr Hugh Taylor proposed the health of the visitors and remarked that he had given instructions to 'his boys' they were to allow the visitors to win, a privilege always conceded to visitors from a distant land.' The Captain, Joe Warbrick, thanked Mr Taylor for his kindness and called for three cheers for Parramatta, which were reported as "Ake, ake, kia kaha." Ake ake kia kaha loosely translates as 'forever and ever be strong.' It is important to note that this common Māori phrase, which is still in use today, was widely known by non-Māori in Parramatta. The team were also invited to attend the School Children's Exhibition at the School of Arts, which they accepted. The paper reported there were 1000 present and 1001 perched on the fence at the Kings School. The Parramatta team wore a red uniform and the Māori team, black with a silver fern. The Māori team played under the United Tribes flag, then known as the New Zealand flag. The score was 21 - 0 to the Māori team.'^{xxiv}

Only days before leaving Sydney, to play their games against Northumberland in Maitland, and Northern Districts in Newcastle; Joseph Warbrick arranged for the sale of a *korowai* (of which the author has also produced a report) to the Australian Museum. Museum records show that this 'Mat from N.Z.' was bought from J. Warbrick for the price of four pounds and added to the register on 2nd July.^{xxv}



Image courtesy of the author (2024).

Their Queensland leg saw them face the Queensland state side in Brisbane on 15th July, which they won 22-0; followed by games against Toowoomba, and Ipswich, and another match against Queensland also in Brisbane on 22nd July, which they also won 11-7.



The New Zealand Natives before their match against Queensland, in front of the United Tribes flag and the Union Jack. Joseph kneels in the centre of the photograph and is holding the ball.^{xxvi}

Starting and finishing with an internal tour against New Zealand provincial teams, with fixtures in Britain, and Australia in between, the Natives played a staggering 107 rugby matches; winning 78 of them (at a win-loss record of 79%) between June 1888 and August 1889. For good measure, they also played 11 games of Australian rules. Joe Warbrick's contribution was severely hampered by an injury suffered at the start of the tour against Auckland, and he played only 21 matches. When the team returned to New Zealand in August 1889 he retired from playing (apart from a one-match comeback in 1894).^{xxvii}

The short film titled Warbrick produced in 2009, provides a brief insight into the experiences which the New Zealand Natives and Joseph faced during their time in England.^{xxviii}

Warbrick's New Zealand representative career was short because there was no national body (the New Zealand Rugby Football Union was not formed until 1892). The next official tour by a New Zealand team was not until 1893, by which time Warbrick had virtually given up playing.

Post Rugby

Post-rugby, Warbrick became a tour guide in the geyser fields of Rotorua. Geyser tourism had been given a major boost in 1900 when the Waimangu ('black water') geyser burst into life. It was the largest geyser recorded anywhere in the world between 1900 and 1904. On 30th August 1903, when Joe's brother, Alfred, who was a Chief Government Guide to the Rotorua thermal area, was leading a guided tour; the geyser exploded unexpectedly, killing Warbrick and three tourists (David McNaughton and sisters Ruby and Catherine Nicholls). According to Mr Donnelly, who was a witness 'one of the young ladies seemed anxious to get a snapshot'^{xxix} and the two sisters, aged 19 and 20, descended to the geyser's edge, against the advice of Alfred. It is recorded that Alfred said to Joseph "If an accident happens you know I will get the sack."^{xxx} Of the incident, Donnelly described hearing a terrible roar, with darkness consuming everything, and material raining down on them; scalding the four victims before washing them nearly 1500 metres toward Lake Rotomahana in a torrent of boiling water. Unfortunately, Alfred's warning to his brother would result in the loss of something worth much more than his job, the disaster taking his 41-year-old brother Joseph.



Waimangu Geyser erupting in 1903.^{xxxi}

He kōrero mai i te whānau Warbrick/Notes from the Warbrick family

*Ko Ruawahi te maunga
Ko Tarawera te awa
Ko Tarawera to moana o Te Awa o Te Atua
Ko Te Arawa te waka
Ko Ngāti Rangitahi te Iwi
Ko Rangiaohia te whare tupuna ki Matatā
Ko Rākauheketara te whare kai
Ko Moko-nui-a-rangi te tupuna
Ko Nga Karauana te tupuna
Ko Joseph tōku koroua nui
Ko Orini Rosa tōku Kuia
Ko Josephine tōku whaea
Ko Orini Marr taku ingoa nō Matatā ahau.*

The *pepeha* (introduction) above, and the information below has been graciously provided by Orini Marr, eldest great-granddaughter of Joe Warbrick.

‘Our *Koroua* Joseph Astbury Warbrick was inducted into the International Rugby Union Hall of Fame here in Matatā at our Rugby Club, on 24/11/2008 (two representatives came out from London for the occasion); they reminded us on this day that the 1888 NZ Native Team includes the black jersey, the Silver Fern and introducing the haka to international rugby.

They won 78/107 matches on this tour, playing an average of a match every 2.5 days! A famous recent Coach of the NZ Māori team, Matt Te Pou, was always interested in the history of the 1888 Team and during the 1998 Tour to the UK, they played Hawick (Scotland) where 100 years before, the 1888 Team had played; he said that they still have an 1888 *tokotoko* (walking stick) on display in the Hawick clubrooms.

Mr Te Pou also said they told stories of them sleeping rough in barns at the time plus putting on their overcoats at halftime to play in as it was so cold (and they won!). He said that as the drudgery of injuries and surviving the tour wore on (players had flu and pneumonia), the *haka* was introduced to *whakaohooho* (inspire) players; firstly, in the sheds, then when they went out to play.

Joseph Warbrick (b. 1 January 1862), who at 15yrs represented Auckland as a barefoot kicker, was initiator and inspiration for this 1888 Team and tour (in our whanau lore anyway!); he played, coached, helped manage and captained this team. His four brothers, Alfred, Arthur, Fred and William were also players in this team.

Joseph Warbrick died tragically in the eruption of Waimangu Geyser, 30/8/1903, only 14 years after returning from this tour of the UK; he had married Harriet Burt and at the time of his death, their only child, Orini Rosa, was 3 months old (b. 6/6/1903 – 6/6/1948).

Orini Rosa married Herbert Lindsay Anderson and had three daughters: Josephine Astbury, Moira Astbury and Lenore Rosa (all Anderson’s). Orini, Herbert and their three daughters were all proud rugby fans because of his legacy (Orini was involved with the BOP Rugby Union too, possibly because of her half-brothers Maurice and Ron Lees who both played for BOP). Aunt Moira stated in 2008 “We’re absolutely so proud. He certainly left some values for our game. And those values, excellence, they’ve been followed through I would suggest”.

Orini Rosa also died early of pneumonia on her 45th birthday in 1948. Her husband and daughters were avid rugby supporters, following the sport all their lives. Aunty Moira is still alive at 94 and thrilled this interest has occurred, but no one ever knew or spoke about, the legacy of *kākahu* or *korowai* in Australia. These sisters passed on their love of the game and their grandfather's legacy, to all their *tamariki* (children).

Koroua Joseph is buried at Awakaponga urupa (cemetery) just outside of Matatā, surrounded by his brothers, daughter Orini and two of his Granddaughters, Josephine and Lenore (by the way, Lenore has always been known as Bunny; she is Kelly's Mum – also had four sons).

His framed IRB cap, presented 24/11/2008, is now held in the Whakatane Museum for ongoing safe keeping.

Joseph is survived by his Granddaughter Moira Potae and twelve of his thirteen great-grandchildren and many *mokopuna tuarua* and *nui nga mokopuna*.^{'xxxii}

**PŪRONGO KUPU Ā-KAUPAPA
TECHNICAL REPORT**

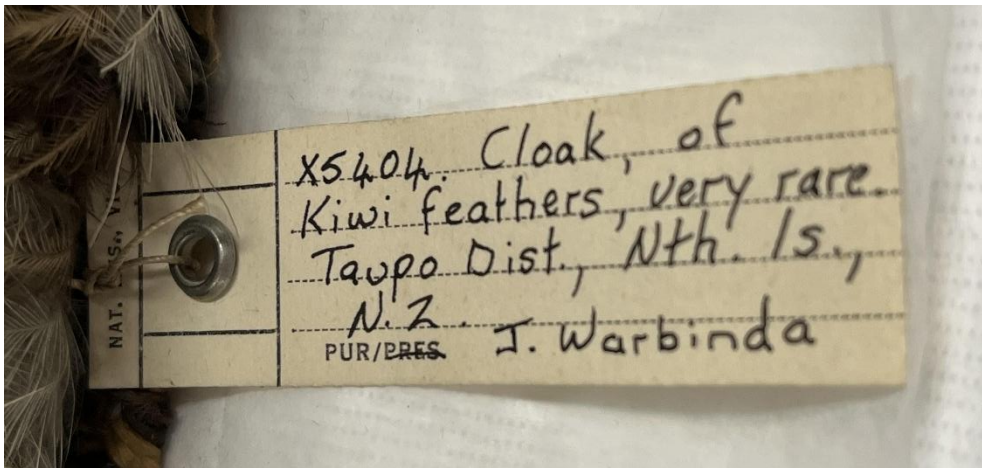
TAIPITOPITO TIROHANGA EXAMINATION DETAILS

Taipitopito whakawhiwhinga/Accession details

Accession details: X 005404

Momo kākahu/Type of garment: Kahu Kiwi (Kiwi Feather Cloak)

Pinetohu/Labels and tags: There is one small rectangular cardboard tag, which is affixed closely to the *remu*/bottom edge of the *kahu kiwi* with natural coloured twine. This tag measures 80 mm x 22 mm and bears the following information: 'X5404. Cloak, of Kiwi feathers, very rare. Taupo Dist., Nth. Is., N.Z. J. Warbinda' on the front, and a Museums Victoria barcode on the back.



Whakaahuatanga/Description:

A medium-sized *Kahu Kiwi* (Kiwi feather cloak) with two vertical white *huru* (feather) borders, one on each *kauko* (side edge), with the centre portion consisting of brown *huru*. Both the *remu* (bottom edge) and *ua* (neckline) comprise of an alternating brown and white appearance as white patches have been inserted at consistent intervals along each edge. Over 95% of the external *kaupapa* (framework) seems to have a thick, consistent coverage of *huru*, with only two small sections displaying a measure of *huru* loss. An aesthetically appealing *taonga*. There are two sections of *aho poka* or *tihoi* (shaping inserts) evident on the interior surface of the *kaupapa*, and there are decorative *kauko* and *remu* both with cordage made from *whitau/muka* (*phormium tenax*) that had been dyed dark brown.



The exterior surface of the *kaupapa*.



The interior surface of the *kaupapa*.

Rauemi/Materials

This *kahu kiwi* is constructed using *muka* or *whitau* (extracted *harakeke/Phormium tenax* fibres), natural *tae* (pigments), and *huruhuru kiwi* (kiwi feathers).



Harakeke (Phormium tenax) and the hauhaki (harvesting process).^{xxxiii}



A hank of *whitau/muka* extracted by the author on Te Whakatōhea lands.^{xxxiv}



Close up of *kiwi huruhuru* (kiwi feathers)^{xxxv}

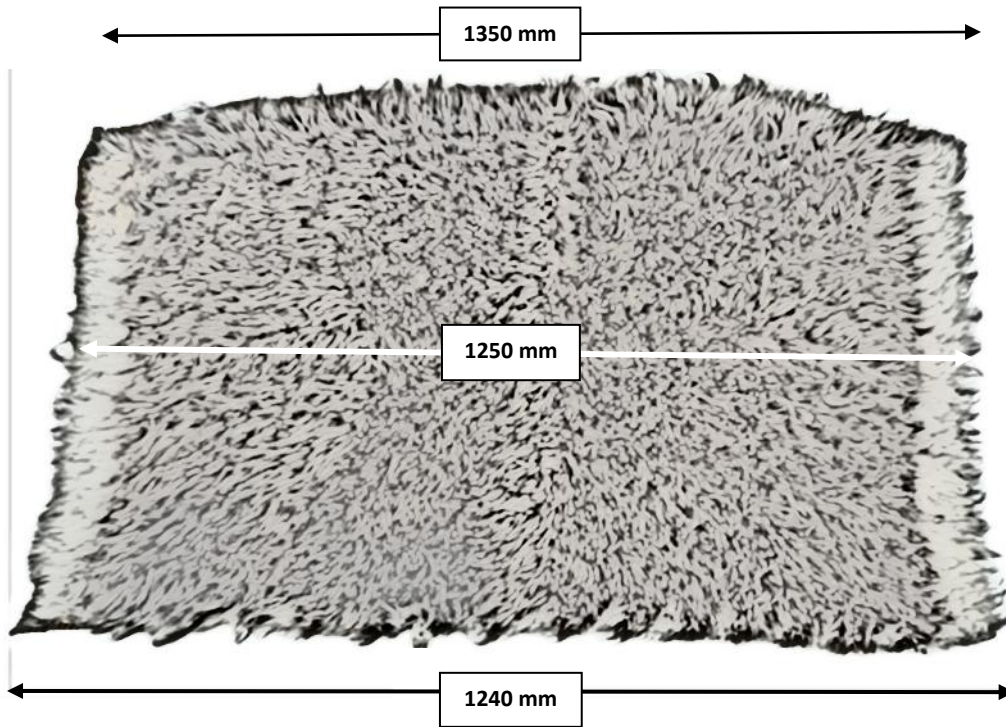
Taimaha/Weight

This *taonga* weighs approximately grams.

Inenga/Dimensions

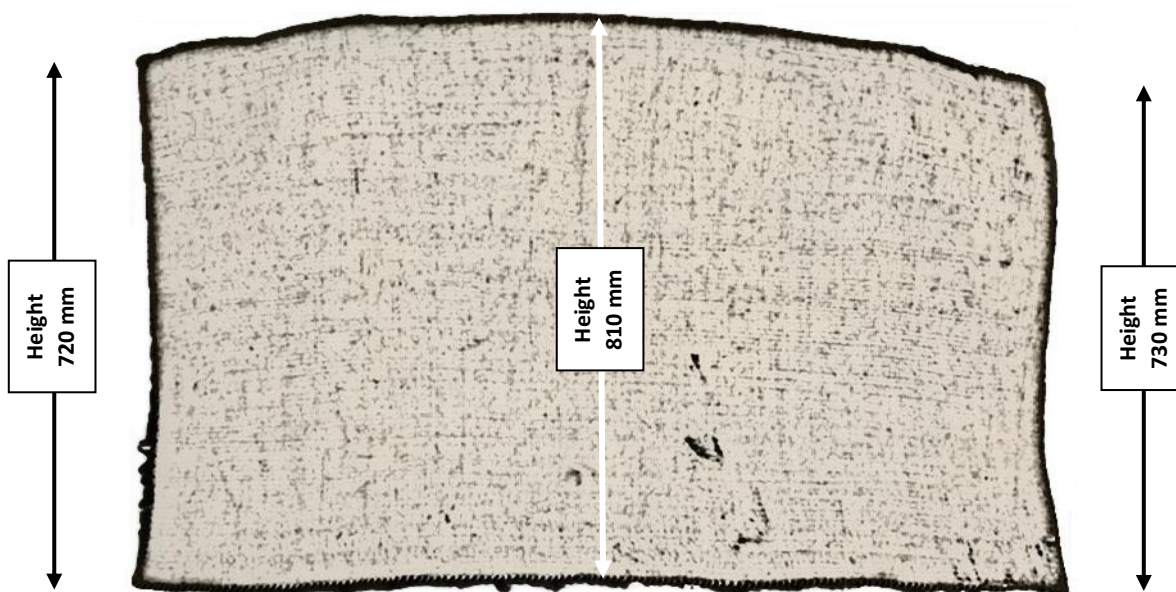
Width

The *kahu kiwi* measures 1350 mm across the *ua* (neckline), 1250 mm across the *waengapū* (centre), and 1240 mm along the *remu* (bottom edge).



Height

The *kahu kiwi* measures 720 mm down the left *kauko* (side edge), 810 mm down the midline, and 730 mm down the right *kauko*.



Kaupapa/Framework

The *kaupapa* (framework) is an irregular rectangular shape, that flares out toward the upper section, with a slightly convex-shaped *ua* (neckline); so, it is wider at the *ua* and narrows slightly at the *remu* (bottom edge).

The *kaupapa* consists of six (6) *whenu* (longitudinal/vertical threads) per centimetre and has spacings of 7 mm between each *aho* (horizontal row).



There are two sections of *aho poka* or *tihoi*/shaping segments, one in the upper portion and another smaller one in the lower portion – these will be examined in more detail in the Aho poka or Tihoi section below.

Ua/Neckline

The *ua* (neckline) consists of regular cast-off portions on each side measuring approximately 160 mm in length, with a thick, rolled section across the centre that measures 1040-1050 mm. This rolled is approximately 10 mm thick and comprises of natural, yellow, and dark brown threads, which appear to be the excess of the *whenu* (vertical threads) in that area.



A section of the outer *ua* on the interior surface of the *kaupapa*.



A section of the outer *ua* and the portion in which the rolled section begins on the exterior surface of the *kaupapa*.



A section of the rolled *ua* toward the centre of the exterior of the *kaupapa*, showing the *tanekaha* and *raurēkau* colours.

Aho poka or Tihoi/Shaping segments

There are two sections of *aho poka* or *tihoi* (shaping inserts), one in the upper portion of the *kaupapa* (framework) and another smaller one in the lower portion of the *kaupapa*.

The *aho poka* in these specific segments enable the *kahu kiwi* to achieve a comfortable drape and style around the shoulders, with a slight narrowing and conforming to the lower back, and a slight flare over the buttocks being custom-made for the wearer.



A view of the interior surface of the kaupapa showing a section of the *aho poka* (levels of increasing).

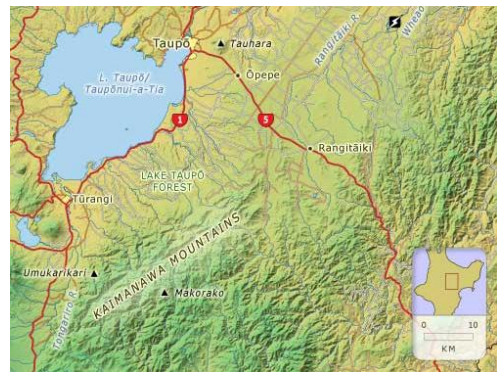
Remu/Bottom edge

The *remu* (bottom edge), where the construction of this *kahu kiwi* would have begun, has a border of dark brown coloured *muka* or *whitau* threads that have been woven or sewn along the bottom edge at regular intervals. These will be examined in more detail in the Whakanakonako section below.

Whakanakonako/Embellishments

Huruhuru/Feathers

The exterior surface of this *kahu kiwi* comprises of both dark brown, and greyish or off white *huruhuru* (feathers), measuring approximately 50 mm in length. The dark brown *huruhuru* sourced from the North Island brown *kiwi* (*Apteryx mantelli*) and the lighter coloured *huruhuru* possibly sourced from a rare white *kiwi* (caused by leucism), or either the Great Spotted *kiwi* (*Apteryx haastii*) or the Little Spotted *kiwi* (*Apteryx owenii*); the two latter species only being found in Te Waipounamu/The South Island. Museum documentation contains the following information: ‘made by a native woman of the mgatikahunganu [sic] tribe from birds caught on the Kaimanawa range in the Taupo district.’^{xxxvi}



Kaimanawa Ranges, Taupo.^{xxxvii}



North Island brown *kiwi*^{xxxviii}



Great Spotted *kiwi*^{xxxix}



An extremely rare white *kiwi*, caused by leucism.^{xl}



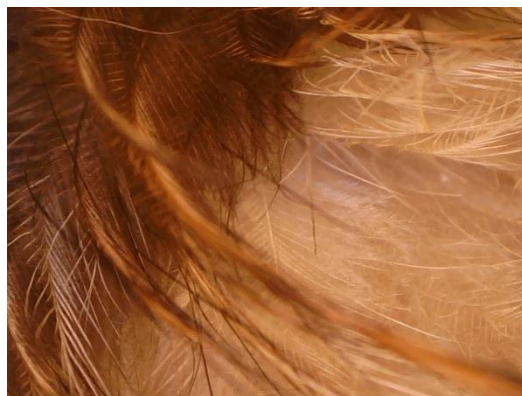
Little Spotted *kiwi*.^{xli}



The *ua*/neckline showing the alternate brown and white patches of *huru*, spaced regularly across the *taonga*.



Left: A section where the white border on the right begins and showing the lighter *huru* contrasted against the brown.
Centre: View of the exterior surface of the *kaupapa* showing where the *huru* are *whatu*/woven in.
Right: A view of the right *kauko*/side edge, showing the greyish (down) base of the white *huru*.



A magnified view of the area where the two coloured *huru* overlap.^{xiii}

Kauko/Side edges

These *kauko* (side edges) are created by beginning the left *kauko* (which becomes the right when turned upside down) with two *whenu* (vertical threads) of dark brown coloured *whitau* or *muka*, when casting on, and similar when casting off on the opposite *kauko*. The outer of the two dark brown *whenu* are twisted around a natural coloured *whenu* to display a spiral type of effect.



A section of the left *kauko* (external surface).



A section of the left *kauko* (interior surface).

Remu/Bottom edge

The *remu* (bottom edge) is the first *aho* (horizontal row) woven on a *kākahu*, with the *kaupapa* (framework) being suspended upside down, and the *kaupapa* worked until the *ua* (neckline) is ready to be completed; whereupon the *kaupapa* is then turned the opposite way, and the *ua* is created in whichever style is chosen.

This particular *remu* (which measures 1240 mm in width) displays a diagonal pattern (left to right) of both natural coloured *whitau* or *muka* and dark brown coloured *whitau* or *muka*, and measure between 5 mm – 7 mm in height. These diagonal lines appear to consist of pairs of *whenu* (vertical threads) woven in on a slight angle of approximately 45 degrees.



Kano/Dye or Pigment

The *kano* (pigments) or *tae* (dyes) used appear to be *raurēkau* (yellow) and *tanekaha* (dark brown), both natural substances produced by the boiling of tree bark from the *Coprosma robusta*, and *Phyllocladus trichomanoides* trees; with the latter's colour being intensified with the use of ash as a mordant, which acts as a fixer between the *kano* and the *whitau* or *muka* (*phormium tenax*) fibre.



The outer and inner bark from the *raurēkau* is scraped away to reveal a yellowy orange layer. This layer is stripped from the sapwood and boiled in water.^{xliii}



Muka is first soaked in boiled *tanekaha* bark and then rubbed in wood ash and washed. After the treatment of wood ash, *tanekaha* changes from a pale tan to a rich reddish brown.^{xliv}

Here/Ties

There are no clear evidence of here, however, there are four loose threads protruding from the *ua* (neckline) approximately 220 mm in from the right corner, that may be the remnants of a *here* (tie).



Pakarutanga/Damage – Exterior surface

As mentioned in the sections regarding the *kaupapa* (framework) and *huruhuru* (feathers), there is noticeable damage to the lower left corner and upper left corner of this *kahu kiwi*. There is a slight loss of *huruhuru* in the upper left area of the *kaupapa*, and more severe *huruhuru* loss in the bottom left area.



Pakarutanga/Condition – Interior surface

There are several small holes (circles in blue) in the lower right section near the corner of the *kaupapa* (framework) when looking at the interior surface, which Jade Hadfield believes has been caused by insects such as bugs/moths sometime during the past.



Magnified view of two holes^{xlv}



There are three small dark brown stains (circled in purple) on the interior surface of the *kaupapa* (framework), located approximately 490 mm in from the right *kauko* (side edge) and 300 mm up from the *remu* (bottom edge); 460 mm in from the right *kauko* and 180 mm up from the *remu*; and the third 410 mm in from the right *kauko* and slightly underneath the largest stain.



There is a small section of the *ua* (neckline) which appears to be looser than the rest of it, and there are also two small sections that appear to be unravelling. The loose threads on the right side could possibly be the remnants of a *here* (tie), however that cannot be confirmed at this time.



Tiakanga/Preservation

It is museum practice to preserve artefacts, however, only so much can be done with finite resources (funding and specialist personnel); which are measured against museum priorities i.e. historical significance, rarity, or whether they are expected to be exhibited in the future. *Taonga* (cultural treasures) like these were never intended to last forever and were exchanged and re-gifted numerous times until the end of their lifespan.

How do we ensure that this *kahukiwi* and its associated history lives on?

Physically, the optimal preservation conditions regarding preservation for textiles are temperatures between 18°-21° Celsius, with the main priority being consistency of temperature or slow fluctuations.

Regarding documentation, preservation can be achieved by ensuring that this *kahukiwi* is digitally recorded, and records created (this technical report is an example); because at some point, physical preservation and restoration efforts will no longer be possible.

Replication is also an option, with the weaving of a replica this would entail a consultation process with the Warbrick family, the Ngāti Rangitihi *iwi* (tribe) to which Joe Warbrick affiliates, and any prospective weaver/s.

Whakaaturanga, Whakahaumarutanga rānei/Display or Storage

This *kahu kiwi* is not currently on display in an exhibition and is covered by a large sheet of tyvek and stored in a large tote (a type of inert plastic) box, on open shelving in the Museums Victoria Merri Bek Facility in Moreland.



Photograph courtesy of Jade Hadfield (2026).

The name Merri Bek translates as ‘rocky country’ in the Woi-wurrung language, belonging to the traditional owners, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. ‘The word Wurundjeri is the combination of the Woiwurrung words ‘wurun’ meaning the Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) and ‘djeri’, the grub which is found in or near the tree. Wurundjeri are known as the ‘Manna Gum people’.



A possum skin cloak worn by the local people, might be viewed as an equivalent to a *kahu kiwi*.^{xlvi}

Ngā tuinga a te kaituhituhi/Author's notes

I felt that I had a responsibility to produce this report and share the *pūrākau* (story) of this *taonga* (cultural treasure), especially as I had done so with the *korowai* (tasselled cloak) that Warbrick had sold to the Australian Museum shortly after selling this *kahu kiwi* to the Victorian Museum some 136 years ago. How was I to leave this stunningly beautiful garment to lay in the darkness, its story unknown to most.



Image courtesy of Myles Maniapoto 2024.

I had always intended on examining and writing about this *taonga* the moment that I began doing so with the *korowai* (cloak with tassels), as I considered them as partners in the *haerenga* (journey). Their *pūrākau* (stories), once leaving New Zealand shores, are much the same; until their sales to institutions in different Australian cities.

To view, and examine such a striking feathered cloak, was an honour and a privilege, and I admire the standard of work evident by the *kairaranga whatu* (weaver). This opportunity has provided me with an appreciation for the time and efforts required to produce a garment such as this.

This delicate, yet sturdy *kākahu* is a balance between the aesthetic and the functional, of *mana* and necessity. The amount of *huru* (feathers) required would have seen several *kiwi* pelts sourced, and their *huru* plucked carefully to avoid breakage, and to select the best quality feathers.

I am humbled to have shared time and space with this *taonga*, and happy in the knowledge that both have Māori collections officers or curators as *kaitiaki* (custodians) at their respective locations, in Melbourne and Sydney.

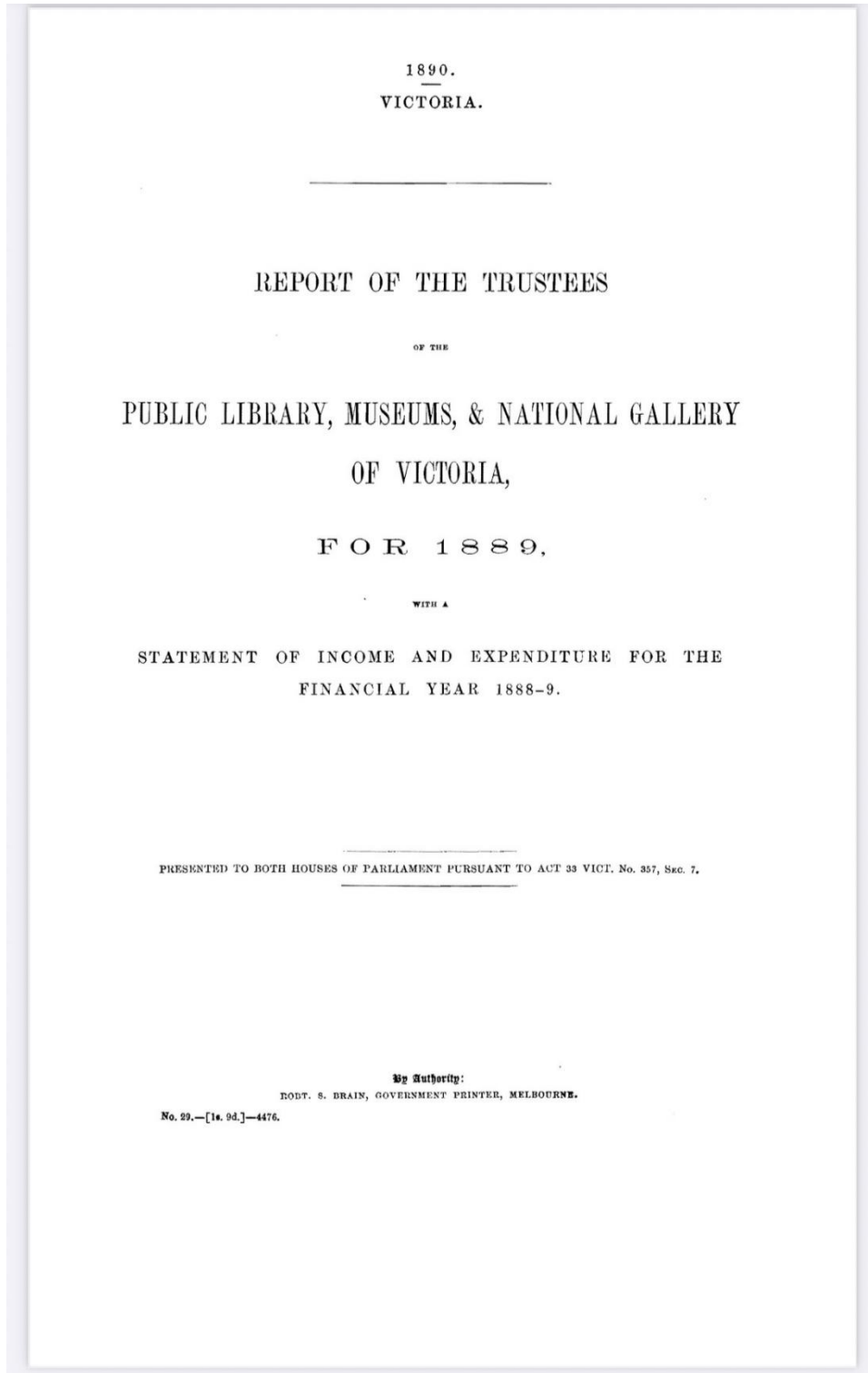
In August 2025, I took the opportunity to pay my respects to Joseph and some of his *whanau* (family) members, when I visited the Awakaponga Urupa (Cemetery) also known as the Matatā Cemetery in the Whakatāne *rohe* (region). It is my belief that if one is to tell the *pūrākau* (story) of another, you owe that person the honour of a visit (whether they are alive or deceased) to either seek permission or to inform them of your intentions. As the raindrops began falling (much like the tears shed by loved ones), I had a *kōrero* (discussion) with Joseph and then sang him a *waiata* (song) before saying my farewells.



Whakapapa/Provenance

Museums Victoria *Kaitiaki*/Custodian June 1889-Current

Museums Victoria is currently the *kaitiaki* (custodian) of this *taonga*, and has been since 12th June 1889, when this *kahu kiwi* was purchased from Joseph Warbrick for the sum of £15.



Report of the Trustees of the Public Library, Museums, & National Gallery of Victoria (1880).

PUBLIC LIBRARY, MUSEUMS, AND NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA.
Petty Cash Account for the Financial Year 1888-9.

DR.

1888.		£	s.	d.
July 1.	To Balance in the Bank of Australasia	477	15	1
"	" Fees, School of Painting	95	0	0
"	" Fees, School of Design	264	0	0
"	Cheques for lost books received from the—			
	Echuca Free Library	0	18	6
	Port Fairy Free Library	0	18	6
	Brunswick Free Library	1	6	6
"	Special prize, presented by Mr. R. Wallen... ..	5	5	0
"	Special prize, presented by Messrs. Carrington, James Smith, G. Gordon, G. F. Folingsby, and Herr Alquist	5	0	0
"	Cheque for insurance on case of books damaged by fire at Walhalla	2	19	0
"	Portion of insurance on the Industrial Museum	15	12	6
"	Insurance on National Museum	110	12	11
"	Sale of National Gallery Catalogues	14	18	0
		994	6	0

CR.

1889.		£	s.	d.
April 13.	By Bell, F. G., repairs to National Museum	77	12	0
May 14.	" Return to Echuca Free Library	0	5	9
June 12.	" Warbrick, J., Kiwi mat... ..	15	0	0
" 18.	" Amount placed on fixed deposit	500	0	0
" 30.	" Balance in the Bank of Australasia	398	7	3
" 30.	" Cash in hand	3	0	0
		994	6	0

(Signed) T. F. BRIDE,
 Librarian.

(Signed) JAMES SMITH,
 Treasurer.

We certify that the foregoing accounts of the Public Library, Museums, and National Gallery of Victoria have been examined and found correct, viz.—(1) Statement of Receipts and Expenditure; (2) Statement of Petty Cash.

(Signed) JOHN W. FOSBERY, }
 A. MORRAH, } Commissioners of Audit.

Audit Office,
 Melbourne, 29th April, 1890.

Joseph Warbrick *Kaitiaki*/Custodian June 1889

It is unclear which member of the touring side was the actual *kaitiaki* (custodian) of this *taonga*, however, the last person to whom had it in their possession prior to selling it to Museums Victoria was Joseph Warbrick.

Previous *kaitiaki*/custodian Pre-June 1889 – Unknown

The previous *kaitiaki* (custodian) of this *taonga* prior to Joseph Warbrick is unknown, and unfortunately, so too, is the *kairārangā* (weaver).

The author would like to acknowledge and thank Myles Maniapoto for his assistance in translating this report, without which this report would not be produced in a bilingual format.

Tūtohu/Sign Off

Ingoa/Name: Brent Kerehona Pukepuke-Ahitapu BA, MTeach
Historian | Author | Cultural Practitioner

Tohu/Signature:

Rā/Date: 25th January 2026

Rārangi Pukapuka/Bibliography-End Notes

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- ⁱⁱ Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa website. Rugby jersey [1884 replica]. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/1225978> (accessed 4 May 2024).
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- ^{xxvi} 'The New Zealand Natives before their match against Queensland in front of the United Tribes Flag [New Zealand's first recognised national flag, March 20, 1834] and the Union Jack' photo credit Edward Beauchamp Singleton Mercer (July 1889). Although the Union Jack had been flown since the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840, the United Tribes flag was still a symbol of New Zealand, and of its sporting teams and military forces right up to the early 1900s; where it was seen depicted on the Reverse side of the South African War medal, from the Boer War. <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/south-african-war-medal> (accessed 23 March 2025).
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- ^{xxxi} A massive geyser eruption at Waimangu, Rotorua Lakes region. The surrounding geothermal landscape is covered with toi toi grasses. Two men in suits and hats run towards the geyser, while other spectators watch from a hillside. OTHER ID 56226 (Presto content ID). DU436.185 W13(b) (Library of Congress Call Number). PH CNEG-C30291 (Copy negative number). 34848 (DBTextworks system ID).
- https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-research/collections/record/am_library-photography-56226 (accessed 7 May 2024).
- ^{xxxii} Personal correspondence between Orini Marr and the author. Email dated 4 June 2024.
- ^{xxxiii} Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai. Harakeke/flax. <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-plants/harakeke-flax/> and Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. Harakeke - New Zealand Flax. <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/topic/3623> (both accessed 24 January 2026).
- ^{xxxiv} Extracted from *harakeke (phormium tenax)* leaves at Tahanahana homestead above Waiotaha Beach in January 2025.
- ^{xxxv} Department of Conservation. Ever seen a kiwi feather up close?. 21 October 2021. Photograph by Sabine Bernert. <https://www.facebook.com/docgovtnz/posts/ever-seen-a-kiwi-feather-up-closejust-like-the-kiwi-itself-their-feathers-are-qu/1474834552882291/> (accessed 24 January 2026).
- ^{xxxvi} Museums Victoria Register, 1889 June 10 188.9 5404 Kiwi mat with border of white kiwi. Woman of the Ngati Kahungunu Tribe Kaimanawa Ranges in the Taupo District. Purchased from Mr J. Warbrick.
- ^{xxxvii} Wilderness magazine website. Wilderness Walk 12,000 km in 2025. Waipakihi Hut, Kaimanawa Forest Park. <https://www.wildernessmag.co.nz/trip/waipakihi-hut-kaimanawa-forest-park/?srsId=AfmBOoo5arl-HLpaEjggSncSf4Xw6oUGw3G8ptSVZlZl6URVMDtFQK3p> (accessed 17 July 2025).
- ^{xxxviii} Kaweka Hunting New Zealand website. The Endangered Kiwi Bird. 14 December 2021. <https://kawekahunting.com/the-endangered-kiwi-bird/> (accessed 17 July 2025).
- ^{xxxix} By Auckland War Memorial Museum - http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-research/collections/record/am_naturalsciences-object-133193, CC BY 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=71787031> (accessed 17 July 2025).
- ^{xl} BBC News website. New Zealand's plan to save the kiwi. 3 October 2016. Image originally sourced from Getty Images. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37538170> (accessed 17 July 2025). Image originally sourced from Getty Images.

^{xli} By Auckland War Memorial Museum - http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/collections-research/collections/record/am_naturalsciences-object-130615, CC BY 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=82370933> (accessed 17 July 2025).

^{xlii} This image was taken using the author's Digitech 5MP USB 2.0 Digital Microscope with professional stand – IC3199.

^{xliii} The Ministry of Education. The art of dyeing. <https://eng.keitemohiokoe.tki.org.nz/Overview-of-Chemistry/Dyeing-1/The-art-of-dyeing> (accessed 23 July 2025).

^{xliiv} The Ministry of Education. The art of dyeing. <https://eng.keitemohiokoe.tki.org.nz/Overview-of-Chemistry/Dyeing-1/The-art-of-dyeing> (accessed 23 July 2025).

^{xliv} This image was taken using the author's Digitech 5MP USB 2.0 Digital Microscope with professional stand – IC3199.

^{xlvi} AIATSIS. Possum skin cloak. <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/possum-skin-cloak> (accessed 24 January 2026).