WHAT’S IN A NAME? THE HOUSE CARVINGS THAT DR HOCKEN GAVE TO THE OTAGO MUSEUM

DIMITRI ANSON

Otago Museum

In 1890 Dr Thomas Morland Hocken gave and, 20 years later, bequeathed a large collection of Māori artefacts to the Otago Museum. Included in this collection were 61 Ngāti Porou house carvings that were subsequently attributed to a meeting house (wharenui) called “Tumoana-Kotore”. In 1989 the Museum was planning a new display of the Māori Collection and contacted the Ngāti Porou people, in particular the people of Hicks Bay where, according to tribal history, a meeting house stood until 1865, which possibly had the name “Tumoana-Kotore”. Recent research in archival records, concerning Dr Hocken as a historian and collector of Māori material, strongly suggests, however, that these carvings were made after 1865, that they were given the name “Tumoana-Kotore” in error and, therefore, that they have a quite different history from what was previously assumed. These findings, and some implications and consequences, are discussed herein.

The “Tumoana-Kotore” Carvings in the Otago Museum

The carvings first came to Dunedin in 1889 as exhibits for the New Zealand & South Seas Exhibition 1889-1890. The Official Catalogue of the Exhibits in Dunedin records that the items were contributed to the display by Mr A. Hamilton (Museum of the Hawke’s Bay Philosophical Institute), Napier (Figure 1) and labelled: “54. Carved House (80 X 22) This magnificent specimen of Maori workmanship was presented by the Ngatiporou tribe to a late chief of Hawke’s Bay” (N.Z. & S.S. Exhibition 1889:176-77).

At the conclusion of this exhibition the carvings were purchased by T.M. Hocken and gifted to the Otago Museum, which at that time only had a small collection of anthropological objects. Early in the 20th century the Otago Museum exchanged some of these carvings for material in museums in the United States and Europe to broaden the Museum’s anthropological collections. Seven other carvings from this house were used to replace some of the missing carvings in the wharenui Mataatua, then on display in the Museum’s Māori Court. Carvings from the Hocken house were also used to make the moulds for the Tamatea meeting house at Otakou.
The House Carvings that Dr Hocken gave to the Otago Museum

Figure 1: Augustus Hamilton standing next to the poutokomanawa and to five of the Hocken collection poupo. Photograph taken by S. Carnell in 1889. The poutokomanawa, and first and fourth poupo from the left currently on display at the Otago Museum Tangata Whenua gallery. (Te Papa Museum photograph B13149.)

The Tangata Whenua Gallery Project at the Otago Museum

Early in 1989 when the Otago Museum began planning for its new sesquicentennial Tangata Whenua gallery, the suggestion was made that the Hocken carvings still in the Museum should be brought together and erected in such a way as to form a notional meeting house in the centre of the new gallery. To this end it was decided to seek the blessing and involvement of the Ngāti Porou people who were believed to be connected to the carvings. The matter was put before the Museum’s Kai Tahu Māori Hall Committee who agreed to help. The Committee approached the carver and artist Cliff Whiting, then Chairperson of the Māori and South Pacific Arts Council, and he undertook to establish contact between the Otago Museum and the Ngāti Porou Runanga and the Kawa Kawa Tribal Committee. Cliff Whiting also approached Rose Stainton, whose husband Manu was a descendent of the original owners of the wharenui Tumoana-Kitore in Hicks Bay.
As a result representatives of the Museum were invited to go to Hicks Bay and discuss the proposed display (Anson 1993:57-71, n.1). The visit took place on 8 October 1989. The visiting party consisted of Mrs Mori Pickering, an Otakou Marae elder, Mr Martin Haua of Ngāti Porou, who was connected to the Hicks Bay marae but resident in Dunedin, and myself, then Head of Humanities at the Otago Museum. Mr Cliff Whiting was unable to join the group as originally planned. The Otago party was welcomed onto the marae by Mr Manu Stainton. On the following afternoon a hui was held inside the meeting house Tuwhakairiora. The visit had been well publicised and the hui was well attended. Aside from the Otago party and Mr and Mrs Stainton, others present included Mr and Mrs Totoro, Mrs Campbell, Marlu and Lovey Jensen, Mr Pierre Henare and Mr Lloyd Lawson, a local historian.

The Otago party presented the Museum’s display proposal, but some people at the hui wanted to know more about the carvings and their movements through the museum world: how they had been acquired and where all of the extant pieces could be found today. They also asked questions about the return of the pieces to Hicks Bay. I answered by saying that these carvings existed long before any of the people present and that they will go on existing after we were all gone. While this country would one day decide where Maori cultural property belonged, Otago Museum and people of Hicks Bay now had an opportunity to bring these carvings together, tell their story and make the house live again. I was then asked to leave the meeting and after at protracted discussion the party emerged to say that the Museum could go ahead with the display proposal. The comment was also made that the Otago Museum should do its utmost to bring together and display in Dunedin as many of the pieces as it could borrow back from other museums around the country. The Museum undertook and proceeded to do just this.

In the evening after the meeting, Lloyd Lawson presented the Museum with a copy of Wharekahika: A History, a local history that he had written of Hicks Bay. In a section on the regions whare runanga he had written:

Five Whare-runanga or as they are commonly called, Meeting houses, including the present one are known to have existed in Hicks Bay during the last one hundred and fifty years or so. Mystery surrounds the earliest of these. This building was called Tumoana-Kotore (the first of this name) and was carved by Hoani Tahu, possibly assisted by his nephew Hone Ngatoto, between 1860 and 1865. For some reason this house was dismantled and the carvings later sold to Augustus Hamilton and then to Dr. Hocken in Dunedin… (Lawson 1987:161).
This seemed to be the accepted version of the history of “Tumoana-Kotore” and of the carvings in the Otago Museum.

At the end of the proceedings, the Otago Museum extended an invitation to the elders of the Hicks Bay’s Mamaku Marae to come down to Dunedin and join the Museum and Kai Tahu on the occasion of the opening of the new Māori Hall. They accepted the invitation, and on 23 June 1990 Mr and Mrs Manu Stainton and Mr Pierre Henare, Chairperson of the Kawa Kawa Tribal Committee, attended the opening of the new gallery by the then Governor General Paul Reeves. The carvings from “Tumoana-Kotore” took pride of place in the centre of the new hall (Figure 2). Since then the Otago Museum and the people of Mamaku Marae have maintained a joint kaitiaki (‘guardian’ [Cultural Conservation Advisory Council 1991:177]) relationship focused on the care of these carvings.

Figure 2: “Tumoana-Kotore” exhibit in the Tangata Whenua Gallery of the Otago Museum. Note that the inner sides of the one piece, three-sided, left hand amo (see Appendix for definitions of meeting house elements) are not carved at all while the outer side of shows only basic under-carving. An inner panel of the right hand amo is also partly incomplete.
Research on Hocken’s Collecting

Recently the Otago Museum and Hocken Library have begun work on an exhibition that addresses a largely unexplored aspect of Dr Hocken's collecting activities, namely his interest in Māori artefacts.

The research carried out for this exhibition included examining records in the Hocken Library and Te Papa, and these records have increased the Museum staff’s knowledge of the “Tumoana-Kotore” carvings and helped us to piece together more of their story and the background of their acquisition. The story that emerges from this research sheds doubt on Hicks Bays as the origin for these carvings. I discuss these findings in detail below.

The first piece of evidence is an annotation by Hocken to a letter dated 4 December 1890 from D. Harris Hastings of the New Zealand Exhibition 1889-1890 Company Ltd, which states that the carvings were made near Napier. Further, Hocken identifies the owner of the house mentioned in the exhibition catalogue (N.Z. and S.S. Exhibition 1889:176-77) as Karaitiana, late chief of Hawke’s Bay. Hocken explains that Karaitiana had intended to erect these as a whare-runanga, but that he died in the late 1880s. Subsequently, Hocken had secured their loan for the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition of 1889-90. At the closing of the exhibition, when the carvings were offered for sale at a price of £200 (Hocken 1890:3), Hocken purchased them and donated them to the Museum. The note also indicates that he attempted first to pay for the carvings by starting a subscription, but that he was forced to purchase them largely out of his own pocket to forestall other interested buyers trying to obtain them for Paris (Hastings MS. 1890).

Chief Karaitiana, whose Māori name was Takamoana, was a leader and politician of Ngāti Te Whatu-i-Apiti and Ngāti Kahungunu descent in Hawke’s Bay (Ballara 1990a:418-20). There are additional indications for a connection between Karaitiana and the “Tumoana-Kotore” carvings. Firstly, in the entry for Friday 28 February 1879 in his Travel Diary, Hocken describes his attendance at the tangi of chief Karaitiana at Pukowai [Pakowhai] Pā (Hocken MS. 1879:6). Secondly, a letter written by Hocken to Augustus Hamilton, who was acting as his agent, reveals some of the tensions and difficulties associated with the purchase and collection of Māori material during the run up to the New Zealand & South Seas Exhibition. Hocken, who wanted to purchase the house associated with Karaitiana, asks whether Hamilton had asked Karaitiana’s trustees to assist and if there was anyone who would have influence to whom he (Hocken) could apply because “we must if possible get the house” (Hocken MS. 1889a:67, Pishief 1998:66-67). Eventually the house was acquired and Hocken wrote
to Hamilton: “After all it is a great satisfaction to know... [this] splendid specimen of Māori art has been secured by you” (Hocken 1889b:155, ellipses mark undecipherable word).

There also seems to be corroboration of the Hocken version of events from within Hawke’s Bay. In his writings about Heretaunga, a “Māori House at Pakowhai”, Phillipps mentions in passing carvings “prepared by Karaitiana Takamonana for a new house which he intended to build and the carvings for which cannot now be traced” (1944:76-77).

Further indication of dealings between Hocken, Hamilton and people from Hawke’s Bay is revealed in another letter from Hocken to Hamilton: “I wish you would find time to go to Nuhaka [a village in northern Hawke’s Bay] and elsewhere to pick up something else” (Hocken MS. 1889c:235), and in an undated entry in one of Hamilton’s notebooks falling between two unrelated items dated 7 and 19 August 1889: “Saw a lot of tahas at Tamaonas, some of them very good ones but without the circular mouthpieces” (Hamilton MS.1889:12).1

The Tamaona mentioned at this time is Henare Tamaona, half brother of Karaitiana Takamoana, and a military leader, newspaper publisher and politician (Ballara 1990b:544-46).

As the research on Hocken’s collecting progressed, it became evident that in all the early records of the Otago Museum the “Tamoana-Kotore” carvings are simply referred to as carvings of a “Ngati Porou house”, even as late as 1931 when the last of the carvings were catalogued into the collection (Reg. D Vol. 2 p. 571-572 nos. E 31.1342-1357). H.D. Skinner, even when trading some of Hocken’s carvings overseas in 1921, simply calls them “fine pieces of Maori workmanship” (Otago Museum, Annual Report 1921:10). Also, in an unpublished manuscript of personal recollections, written sometime between 1967 and 1978, Skinner refers to Hocken and these carvings as: “the not quite complete carvings of a Ngati-Porou whare-puni given in 1890 by Thomas Morland Hocken” (Skinner MS. a), and as “carvings, uncompleted, of what, completed, would have been an unusually fine Ngati Porou carved house” (Skinner MS. b).

Surely Skinner, who was very knowledgeable and meticulous about such things, would not have failed to call these carvings by their name if he knew it. Also, Skinner’s observation that the house was not completed is correct (see Figure 2) and lends credence to Hocken’s account that Karaitina’s house was never erected (Hastings MS. 1890 [see below], Hocken 1890:3).

Indeed, the first mention of the “Tamoana-Kotore” name in the Otago Museum’s records and display labels does not occur until 1989 when the Hocken carvings were erected as a house within the new Tangata Whenua gallery (but see below).3
The “Tumoana-Kotore” name is also a late addition to the records of the Taranaki Museum, in respect of an Otago Museum Hocken carving held there on exchange since 1918. In this instance the piece was recatalogued in 1973 as a “Tumoana-Kotore” giving D.R. Simmons, Keeper of Anthropology at Otago Museum between 1962 and 1968, and the Ethnologist at the Auckland Institute and Museum until 1986, as the authority.

Tumoana-Kotare [sic] piece probably carved by Hone Taahu at Mamaku Marae in c. 1860. House stood between 1860-1868 when it was taken down. Replaced by Tumoana Kotore which now stands as Tuwhakairiora at Hicks Bay (Taranaki Museum catalogue card no.A77.392).

More of these carvings are held in the Museum of New Zealand, presumably since the tenure of Hamilton as Director from 1903 to 1913. The catalogue entries describe them as having come from “Tumoana-Kotore” in Hicks Bay, again referring to Simmons and also Phillipps (1944) as the authorities (Museum of New Zealand catalogue cards ME.4490 A, ME.8199 & ME. 8200).

Other Simmons’ references linking the Otago Museum’s Hocken collection carvings to the “Tumoana-Kotore” story include a number of catalogues of Māori collections held in overseas museums. Here, carvings donated by Hocken and exchanged by the Otago Museum were in each case attributed to “Tumoana-Kotore”, Hone Taahu and Hicks Bay (Simmons 1982:29, Fig.14a-d, 249, Fig.166 a-b, 264, Fig.177c-2; Simmons MS. 1987a:171; Simmons MS. 1987b:102; Simmons MS. 1987c:4). The Hicks Bay-“Tumoana-Kotore” connection has also been reproduced (Simmons 1985:150-51, Fig.125) or has found its way into international publications dealing with New Zealand Māori art (Kaeppler 1993:417, Figs 326-28; Mead 1984:27, Fig.6; Neich 1996:108-9, Fig.71) and into a local history (Lawson 1987 above), in each case with reference to the work of Simmons.

The “Tumoana-Kotore” Hypothesis

The “Tumoana-Kotore” hypothesis appears to rest on Simmons’ interpretation of a photograph, copied from a print in the possession of Mrs Stainton at Hicks Bay and catalogued into in the Te Papa/National Museum collection (photo B13376). This depicts a group of people at a wedding ceremony standing before a meeting house. Simmons says this is a wedding in Hicks Bay at which the Rev. Waitoa officiated in 1865 and that the house is the one on Makeronia Pā, the earliest of the Hicks Bay houses (see Lawson 1987:161). He calls this house “Tumoana-Kotore 1” (Simmons MS. n.d.:35, Fig.42) (Figure 3).
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This is at odds with what I was told in 1989 by the late Manu Stainton, whose family were the original owners of the early house on Makeronia Pa. He told me that the name of this first house was not known (Anson MS. 1989). Stainton’s story essentially is the same as the story given by Lawson (1987). While beginning with what is essentially a repetition of Simmons’ version of the “Tumoana-Kitore” story, Lawson goes on to say:

The circumstances leading to the sale of these carvings are not known. However, a story told to the author by Te Rangiuaia Houkamau may shed some light on the mystery. He said that a carved house stood near Makeronia Pa and was dismantled prior to an attack and the carvings placed in a cave. A Tohunga then induced a landslide to conceal the entrance. He said that he believed the carvings remained hidden (Lawson 1987:161).

Indeed, even Simmons’ own local informant on the matter also gives no name to this early house: “A house, stood on Makeronia pa, Hicks Bay, belonging to Houkama [sic.]. It was taken down and hidden from Ngapuhi in 1820 (pers com Heu Tihore)” (Simmons MS. n.d.).
Manu Stainton’s story contradicts Simmons also with regard to the subject matter of the photo. According to Manu, this is not a picture of the early missing house at Makeronia Pā but rather of the *whare* Tumoana-Kotore that was erected at Mamaku Marae later, in 1872 (Anson MS. 1989:3).

The critical point is, however, that irrespective of whether the photograph is of the house that stood on Makeronia Pā or of the later Tumoana-Kotore that stood on Mamaku Marae in 1872, there seems to be no evidence that the Hocken carvings were part of this house. While the photograph is faded and shows only little of the house, the left
amo in the photograph also differs from the corresponding piece in the Hocken collection both in its style and shape (Figures 4a & b). For one thing, the outer side of the unusual, one piece, three-sided, left amo in the Otago Museum shows only basic under-carving and is mostly blank bare wood, while the inner two sides are not carved at all.

The artist Cliff Whiting who looked into the matter agrees, “… the amo you have are not those that appear in the photo” (Whiting MS. 1989).

The Hocken carvings also seem to be made for a bigger house than the ones in the picture. Working from the photograph, Simmons (MS. n.d.:35) estimated that the pouwhahu in the picture were about 15ft (4.57m), smaller than the potahahu of the Hocken house whose height is 5.35m. The height of the Hocken pouwhu is also considerable. This ranges between 2.2 and 2.5m. reflecting the increase that occurred in the size of later meeting houses (Neich 1996:108, Fig.71). This suggests that the Hocken house is too tall to be identical with the one in the photo, dated by Simmons to the 1860s.

Judging from the number and size of the pouwhu, Hocken’s house was also of considerable length. I am aware of at least 43 Hocken pouwhu (Ellis MS. 1999:1-4). On average these are 60 cm wide. Allowing for equal sized tukutuku the house would have been about 22m long. Large houses up to 30m long were mainly built in the years leading up to the 1870s (Neich 1996:108). In this regard, the Hocken house appears to be similar in its dimensions to the Ngāti Awa wharenui Mataatua as it is erected in the Otago Museum, albeit with fewer (32) but wider (80 cm) pouwhu. This house was completed in 1874 (Phillipps and Wadmore 1956:3). It appears that at least one of the Hocken pouwhu may also be of a later style than carvings typical of the 1860s, incorporating as it does naturalistic animals beside the ancestor figure (Neich 1996:108-9, Fig.71).

The “Tumoana-Kotore” hypothesis also rests partly on Simmons assertion that “Tumoana-Kotore” was carved by Hoani Taahu (Simmons MS. n.d.:50-51, 72-73, Figs 304-9), but in fact he produces no reference for the assertion that “Taahu is certainly the carver of Tumoana Kotore No.1” (MS. n.d.:72-73). It appears that there is no direct documentation that he carved this house and that this assertion is an attribution of the Hocken carvings to this artist solely on the grounds of style analysis. Even without taking into account the merits of this attribution, it needs to be stated that Hoani Taahu was one of a number of artists active in the period from the 1870s to the 1890s (Mead 1986:82,193; Neich 1993:55,198,269,271; Phillipps 1944:111-12) and that it is therefore possible for him to have made these carvings later than in the 1860s.
The Names “Tumoana” and “Tomoana”

An additional piece of evidence presented by Simmons to explain his attribution of the carvings to “Tumoana-Kotore” is as follows: “According to information with the Hocken collection notes in the Hocken Library, this house was Tumoana, which was carved but not erected about 1882” (Simmons MS. n.d.:35-36). This reference to the house being carved but not erected in about 1882 agrees with Hocken’s information that the slabs were carved near Napier for the Hawke’s Bay chief, Karatiana, who died before they could be erected as a whare-runanga. In addition, a systematic search through Hocken’s papers at the Hocken Library has failed to uncover any mention of the name Tumoana.

Use of the name “Tumoana” and of the later 1882 date does occur, however, in the records of the Otago Museum itself. Here, sometime between 1959 and 1960, references to 15 of these “Ngati Porou” carvings in the Museum’s 1931 D register were modified by the Museum’s Keeper in Anthropology to include: “Tumoana House 1882 Gisborne”. The Tumoana name and 1882 date were later taken up and used in the Museum’s card system in 1986, where some of these carvings were described by one of the Museum’s anthropologists. Here the provenance is given variously as East Coast or Tauranga (Otago Museum catalogue card nos. D15.7, D15.8, D31.1343, D31.1344 and D31.1346).

The earliest published use of the name “Tumoana” in connection with these carvings is in Phillipps (1944:118-19). In describing four of these pieces held in the Dominion Museum, Phillipps gives Tumoana as their place of origin. But, while he attributes their carving styles to the East Coast and to the East Cape, he does not state the whereabouts of Tumoana. The name Tumoana also turns up on a hand-written note on the back of a Te Papa photograph (N.M. Number B13149). This is the photograph of Hamilton standing next to the poutokomanawa and to five of the Hocken collection poupo in question (see Figure 1). The note is in the handwriting of W.J. Phillipps who worked as the Museum’s ethnologist and ornithologist from 1917 until 1958. Here he refers to the carvings as “[s]labs of a large house which A. Hamilton purchased at Tumoana in 1889 and erected at the N.Z. and South Seas Exhib. at Dunedin”.'\(^\text{5}\) Phillipps’ third reference to the Hocken collection carvings is in his guide to the wharenui Mataatua at the Otago Museum published in the early 1960s. In referring to the five Hocken panels incorporated into the interior front and back walls he calls them “Ngati Porou carvings from ‘Tumoana’” (Phillipps and Wadmore 1956:118, Fig. 13) and “Ngati Porou work from ‘Tumoana’” (Phillipps, W.J. and J.C. Wadmore 1956:19, Fig. 14).
Was ambiguity about the carvings’ origins starting to occur? Had it become less clear that carvings “from ‘Tumoana’” referred to a place and not a house of that name? Did Phillipps’ attribution of Hamilton’s house carvings to the East Cape-style and from a “Carved House at Tumoana” lead to haziness in the Otago Museum records, altered in 1959-60 so that they suggest that Tumoana was the name of a house sited at some place in Gisborne? Was it such ambiguities that spurred Simmons to connect the Hocken carvings “from ‘Tumoana’” with a missing house from Makeronia Pä that was succeeded by a house called Tumoana-Kotore?

Looking more closely at Phillipps’ Tumoana place-name reference, the only Tumoana on the NZMS I maps is that of a Tumoana Point on the south bank of Lake Rotoiti at Rotorua, a location not in keeping with Ngāti Porou carvers or with a Ngāti Kahungunu owner.

However, we know from Hamilton, who acted as Hocken’s agent, that Henare Tomoana, the brother of Chief Karaitiana, was a trader of Māori objects at Hawke’s Bay. Might Tomoana have been his brother’s executor for the sale of the unfinished meeting house to Hocken? We also know that at about this time both brothers found themselves deeply in debt and were forced to sell some of their lands (Ballara 1990a:418-20, 1990b:544-46). Correspondence from Hocken (MS. 1989d:105) speaking of Hamilton strongly suggests that this was so:

After much negotiation the chief to whom this house belongs—Tomoana—has definitely refused us its loan. He has however offered to sell it for £200, a price not at all exorbitant for such a specimen of Maori workmanship & Mr Hamilton is making every effort to purchase it on his own behalf.

Is it possible that Phillipps confused the place-name Tumoana with the name of Henare Tomoana? The house after all appears to have been known as Tomoana’s house.

I cannot gather from it [Mr. Kootangi’s letter?] whether he refers to Tomoana’s house in the concluding paragraphs or to some other house though after again carefully reading... I fancy it must be Tomoana’s... (Hocken MS. 1989e:101).

Or is it likely that in saying that the carvings were “purchased at Tumoana” that what the place-name meant was Tomoana? Tomoana, after all, is situated north of Hastings, “near Napier” as Hocken said (Hastings MS. 1890) and within five kilometres of Pakowai and the marae where Karaitiana’s tangi was held (Hocken MS. 1879).
Could it be that the mix-up and amalgamation of the Hicks Bay and Hawke’s Bay stories has its roots in Phillipps’ mixing up of the names Tomoana and Tumoana? Was this erroneous use of names then taken up and compounded by Simmons? Did Simmons take up the Tumoana name and transpose it to a meeting house possibly called Tumoana-Kotore?

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The weight of evidence is that Hocken’s Karaitiana carvings and the houses on Makeronia Pā are unrelated. The “Tumoana-Kotore” story in respect of a house on Makeronia Pā, a house after all that was dismantled and buried 20 years before the date of Hocken’s carvings, appears to be based on primary evidence. Conversely, there seems to be no evidence that this house was ever found again, exhumed and sold. That aspect of the story seems to be conjectural rationalisation ensuing from Simmons’ assertion that Karaitiana’s carvings and the missing house from Hicks Bay were one and the same. Indeed, as far as one can tell, Karaitiana’s carvings are unlike those of the house depicted in the Stainton photograph, the picture that Simmons purports is of the Makeronia Pā wharenui, which has not been seen since 1865.

Hocken’s story seems more credible. Documentation from a number of sources, as well as other circumstantial evidence, agrees that this house was built but not completed for Karaitiana at Hawke’s Bay in the late 1870s, when it was purchased through the actions of Hamilton and Hocken. Rather than seeking their origins in Hicks Bay, it seems more realistic to assume that these carvings were the work of itinerant Ngāti Porou carvers who are known to have been engaged in building houses for other tribes during this period (Neich 1996:109-12).

When issues concerning cultural identity and the ownership of objects of the past need to be resolved today by having to pass judgement between competing histories (Anson MSS 1994 and 1995, Mead 1990), the accuracy of the recording of basic facts of history, such as place names, is of more than academic importance. The situation is particularly ironic given the pains Hocken took, being an annalist and antiquarian rather than a modern scientific historian (McCormick 1961:35), to get the record straight. The story of “Tumoana-Kotore” is about more than just a bungling of facts. It is also an example of how a misleading reinterpretation of Māori traditional history in Hicks Bay, a Pākehā constructed tradition (Tau 2003:9-10), has been believed and perpetuated by Pākehā and Māori alike.
The Museum now has to amend its records, make changes to labels in the Tangata Whenua gallery and alter the content of its visitor catalogue and public programmes concerning these carvings. Likewise, other museums, both in New Zealand and abroad, holding “Tumoana-Kotore” carvings will now need to change their records as well. The Otago Museum has now established contact with the great great granddaughter of chief Karaitiana. Information and photographs relating to Karaitiana have been exchanged and she has expressed the wish to come down to Dunedin for the T.M. Hocken exhibition opening.

To my regret, our findings came as a shocking surprise to most people in Hicks Bay. Their ancestor Tumoana-Kortore has in a sense disappeared. A letter written by Ani Pahuru-Huriwai (MS. 2004) gives expression to their feelings.

We have always believed that the carvings of Tumoanakotore were in the Otago Museum, and took comfort knowing that they were being well cared for. We have even composed waiata about them being there, and it has been part of the telling of his story over the years, as per the Wharekahika book [Lawson 1987]. However, having shared the report with our master carver, Jack Brooking, your discoveries came as no surprise to him, as he always believed that they were not from here.

The conclusions you have drawn regarding confusion over the names of Tomoana vs Tumoana and Hawkes Bay vs Hicks Bay make sense. However, the question remains with us, “If they aren’t there, then where are the carvings from Tumoanakotore?” And how do we go about finding them?

In 1989, before the re-display of the Ngāti Porou house carvings bequeathed to it by T.M. Hocken, the Otago Museum established contact with the people then thought to be associated with these carvings. Since that time there has developed a valued relationship of goodwill and friendship between the Museum staff and the Hicks Bay people concerned with caring for the whare “Tumoana-Kotore”. It is the Museum’s sincere hope that this relationship will continue.

APPENDIX

(From Neich 1993:246-47)

*Amo*  ‘front side post supporting the bargeboards’.

*Poupou*  ‘side wall panel on the porch and inside... supporting a rafter’.

*Poutahuhu*  ‘central post of the interior front wall... supporting the ridgepole’.

*Tukutuku*  ‘decorative knotted latticework panels’.
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NOTES

1. This notebook also makes two mentions of Dr Hocken: one on page 8 “Interview with Dr Hocken. April 8th. 1889 and memo of long conversation with re Dunedin Exhibition”, and another on p.12 “Purchased carving (Whakapokoko), from Norton of Taupo, a very curious one for Dr. Hocken 5 pound. Paid 1 pound cartage by the Taupo Coach”.

2. H.D. Skinner, ethnologist, university lecturer, museum curator, director and librarian, was associated with Otago Museum from 1919 until his death in 1978. He had a profound influence on the development of anthropology and ethnology in New Zealand. His pioneer work in applying scientific methods of classification to the study of artefacts was to bring Otago Museum and its collections and displays to the forefront of this new field (Anderson 1998:479-80, Anson 1998:259-60).

3. While the date when “Tumoana-Kotore” is mentioned in the records of the Otago Museum is quite late in the development of this interpretation, Simmons was referring to these carvings in various collections, in conversation and personal communications, as “Tumoana-Kotore” house carvings from as early as the mid-1970s (Neich, pers.comm.)

4. From internal evidence this manuscript was written after 1968. Simmons calls this first house “Tumoana-Kotore no. 1” presumably to distinguish it from Tumoana-Kotore, the 1872 Mamaku Marae house, which he calls “Tumoana-Kotore No.2”.

5. Hamilton’s Notebooks (MS13A-Z Subject Notes Indexed, Auckland Museum Library), p.12 indicates that the photo was taken 19 August 1889.

6. Another consequence of Simmons assertion that Karaitiana’s carvings and the missing carvings from Hicks Bay were one and the same is the belief that variations in the style of the carvings suggests that “some of them may have become mixed with Tumoana-Kotore carvings” (Whiting 1989). Variations in the style of the carvings are being investigated. It seems, however, that there may as easily be many other simpler explanations for this variation having nothing to do with the houses of Hicks Bay.

7. Details of the transaction involving the purchase of the house are not entirely clear. The exhibition catalogue states that Hamilton loaned the house to the exhibition (N.Z. & S.S Exhibition… 1889:176-77). While he purchased the
The House Carvings that Dr Hocken gave to the Otago Museum

house at Hawke’s Bay for £200.00, this sum was advanced to him by the New Zealand & South Seas Exhibition Company (Hocken MS. 1889f:187).

Hocken’s first attempt to purchase the house for the Otago Museum by starting up a subscription was unsuccessful (Hocken 1890). Many of the promised contributions were not paid. To secure the carvings Hocken says he was obliged to pay £160 (Hocken MS. 1890a). There is also, however, a letter from Hocken to Harris Hastings of the New Zealand & South Seas Exhibition Company (Hocken MS. 1890b), wherein Hocken agrees to “purchase for £100 the slabs of the Maori House lately at the Exhibition”. Later that year when the Company was to be wound up, Hastings wrote to Hocken asking for payment of the £100.00 so that the Company might use this to pay Hamilton for the house! (Hastings MS. 1890).

REFERENCES


——MS. 1987c. Catalogue of Maori Material in European Museums in Belgium, France, Austria, Germany, Holland, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Tartary, Hungary. Auckland Institute and Museum. [Recorded in 1987 and compiled in 1997.]


