8. POUTŪTERANGI MARAE

TAKURUA

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TAKURUA

Raropua was a pā at Te Puna at the end of Tangitu Road. This was the pā of Tūtereinga, son of Ranginui.

Once, a man named Takurua lived at this pā. He was a huge man: strong and powerful. He was also known as a very hairy man too; perhaps this added to his strength. He was well known as the fighting chief of Raropua.

One day a war party came to Raropua pā. In spite of the strength of Takurua and his men, the pā fell to the attackers and Takurua and his med had to flee. Fortunately, it was low tide and Takurua was able to run across the Waikaraka estuary. However, three of the attacking war party saw him, and ran swiftly after him. On the other side of the estuary, Takurua saw a canoe pulled up on the beach. In his haste, he had dropped his weapons at Raropua.

He thought that a sharp pointed paddle from the canoe would do as a weapon to fight off these three who were gaining on him.

Unfortunately, it was certainly not a lucky day for Takurua. There was no paddle in the canoe; only a bailer had been left. Nevertheless, Takurua grabbed the bailer and climbed quickly up the steep slope above the shore with his attackers following close behind.

At the top of the slope, Takurua turned to face the three men in pursuit of him. As the first climbed the slope toward him, Takurua hit him on the head with a great sweeping stroke of the bailer. As he swung his arm back again, he hit the second man and felled him. He then grabbed the taiaha of this man and attacked the third. After a brief fight, he too lay dead on the ground.

This is how Takurua, the warrior ancestor of Pirirakau, got his reputation for fighting strength.