

NEW ZEALAND FOLK * SONG

E Papā Waiari

Traditional Whanganui song

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This tītī tōrea is sung while playing tī rakau, the Maori stick game. [In olden times](#), stick games trained young men in spear fighting, and [traditional tītī tōrea](#) were chanted.

In the USA it has sometimes been taught to Girl Scouts as "lemmi sticks," confusing it with a traditional gambling game of the Lummi and other North-western tribes in which similar sticks are used. [See below](#)

E Papa Waiari



E hine, hoki mai ra.

Oh darling, come back to me.

1. E pāpā Waiari,
Taku nei mahi
Taku nei mahi,
He tuku roimata

1. O Uncle Waiari,
All I've been doing
All I've been doing
Is shedding tears

Chorus:

Ē aue, ka mate au;
E hine hoki mai rā
Ē aue, ka mate au;
E hine hoki mai rā

Chorus:

Alas I will die;
Oh darling, return to me
Alas I will die;
Oh darling, return to me

2. Māku e kaute
Ō hīkoitanga
Māku e kaute
Ō hīkoitanga

Chorus:

2. I will count
Your footsteps
I will count
Your footsteps

Chorus:

Chords

G E hine, **D7** hoki mai **G** ra.

1. E papā Waiari,
Taku nei mahi
D7 Taku nei mahi,
He **G** tuku roimata

Chorus:

Ē aue, ka **C** mate **G** au;
E hine **D7** hoki mai **G** rā
Ē aue, ka **C** mate **G** au;
E hine **D7** hoki mai **G** rā

2. Māku e kaute
Ō **D7** hīkoitanga
Māku e kaute
Ō **G** hīkoitanga

E Papā Waiari *titi tōrea*

E papā waiari, ta - ku nei ma - hi, ta - ku nei ma - hi, he tu - ku roi ma - ta. ... tu - ku roi ma - ta

E au - e ka ma - te au E hi - ne ho - ki mai rā.

Mā - ku e kau - te ō hī koi - ta - nga mā - ku e kau - te ō hī - koi - ta - nga! ... hī - koi - ta - nga!

E au - e ka ma - te au E hi - ne ho - ki mai rā.

Origins of this song

In 2011 an informant, *Foxyfaye*, told me

"I asked an elderly friend about it, and her reply was that it was an old Whanganui River song.

Each marae up the river used to write their own words to the tune and perform them in local competitions.

She can remember her mother and aunties telling her that this happened when they were small.

So that would be around the 1900's or a bit earlier."

- Waiari Te Patu was a Whanganui chief who died of wounds in June 1864 after a battle against Pai Marire forces at Moutoa.

- Another man named Waiari was a scout for the Whanganui forces during the invasion of Taranaki in

1865.

- Tapa Te Waiari was a chief at Waitotara in 1872.

In the 1920s, Alfred Hill and his (second) wife Mirrie collected a version of it from some Maori girls who sang it in their honour as "*E Hira, e Mori, taku nei mahi...*"

Tī Rākau Stick Games

These games consist of the rhythmic throwing and catching of sticks from person to person.

In olden times:

- served as a way of training young warriors to catch enemies' spears in battle.
- the players stood or knelt in a circle
- as the tempo of the chant increased, those who dropped their sticks dropped out of the game
- last person in was the winner
- sticks 3 feet (90 cm) long were used
- was known as *tītī touretua* in Tūhoe country, and *tītī tourea* in Northland.
(*tītī to-ure-tua* has phallic connotations, *ure*; penis)
- Ngāti Porou called it *poi rākau*

In more recent times:

- they have been an entertainment at concerts
- sticks one foot long (30 cm) are used
- players usually sit on the ground facing each other
- but they do stand in the stick dance *Hoea te Waka*.

Stick game songs are called *waiata poi rākau* or *tītī tōrea*. The game and song, "Titi-Torea" can be found on pages 74-77 in *Games for Girl Scouts*, published by Girl Scouts of the USA.

Another well-known *tītī tōrea* on this website is [Hurihuri](#)

Here is part of a traditional *tītī tōrea*, recorded by Mervyn McLean (McL 805A)

Traditional Tūhourangi tītī tōrea *McL 805A*

Pā tō hau ki te hau - ā - u - ru e ha - ri - a ma - i nei ē,
nā te a - ro - ha i a - hau. Kei hea ko - ē. Hu - ru ē?

Ma koo way

The words of the second verse of this song are sometimes used in the USA, in a phonetic form as [Ma koo ay, ko tay o, ay koo ee tah-nah](#), or [Ma ko way, ko tay oh, way koey tanna](#).

[Ma koo ay, ko tay o, ay koo ee tah nah](#)

Ma ku e, kau te o, hi ko i ta nga

Ma-ku e, kau-te o, hi-ko-i-ta-nga

Māku e, kaute ō, hīkoitanga

Please note that this American pronunciation is incorrect.

This is closer to the correct Maori pronunciation.

Ma ku e, kau te o, hi ko i ta nga

Ma koo air, kow tair or, hi koo ee tah ngah

[Ma koo ay](#) Instructions for playing the game can be found here also.

Lemmi Sticks

The song E Papa Waiari, and its stick game directions, can be found on pages 74-77 as "Titi-Torea" in *Games for Girl Scouts*, published by Girl Scouts of the USA. But this game is sometimes wrongly called "Lemmi sticks" by USA Girl Scouts. This name is derived from the term **Lummi sticks** which is the name given by whites to the traditional American gambling game of **Slahal** played by Lummi and other Salishan tribes on the Washington-Vancouver border.

In her excellent [1975 monograph](#), ethnomusicologist **Wendy B. Stuart** says gambling songs have an integral part of the Salishan tribal tradition since aboriginal times and have been maintained and preserved by oral means. *Slahal*, or *the bone game*, is of interest because of the ancient music which accompanies it.

Slahal requires two pairs of cylindrical bone sections to be concealed in the hands. Each pair of bones consists of one marked and one unmarked bone. During the game, the bones are hidden in the hands while being mixed by two



[Click for full-size picture](#) - [Full details](#)

aspects of slahal lift it from the realm of an ordinary gambling game into something far more exciting.

There is an excellent brief explanation on how to teach children the guessing game of **Slahal** [here](#). And instructions for teaching the rhythmic stick-beating chant are [here](#).

A note to leaders of Girl Scouts in the USA

The Lummi Nation

Abbreviated from *Nuglummi* = 'us people.'



The Lummi people form the principal tribe of more than twenty small Salishan tribes originally holding the lower shores of Puget Sound, Washington.

They occupied several villages about the mouth of Lummi river, Whatcom County. Their language and culture is the approximately the same as that of other tribes on the Washington-Vancouver border, the Samish, Klalam, Semiamu, Songish, Sanetch, and Sooke.

different individuals from one team, each manipulating one pair. The object of the game is that the opposite team guess the position of the unmarked bones.

Large amounts of money may be bet on the outcome of the game. There are 11 chopstick-sized twigs used as counters. And batons similar to those used in the Maori stick game are used by other team members to beat a rhythm on a long plank. In this 1946 photo, you can see one of the game bones in the open hand of one player. Click on it to see the original photo. You can also see women playing the stick game in 1925 by clicking [here](#).

Wendy B. Stuart says that on the average, slahal songs have about 4 beats per second, which after some hours produce a trance-like state. In other words, the musical

It is great to see that so many of you are teaching Maori stick games. But please do not teach your girls the mangled version of E Papa Waiari that is on some internet pages and tell them it is a Red Indian/Native American tune from the "Lemmi tribe." Here is the score of some real Lummi stick music.

Handwritten musical score for "E Papa" (stick game). The score is written on two systems of staves. The top system is marked with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a tempo of 120. It features a melody line with notes and rests, and a percussion line with 'x' marks. The melody is divided into sections A and B. Section A starts with a 4/4 time signature and a half note 'ho'. Section B starts with a 3/4 time signature and a half note 'ha'. The bottom system continues the melody and percussion. It includes a bridge section marked with a 3/4 time signature and a half note 'he'. The melody ends with a 4/4 time signature and a half note 'ho'. The percussion line consists of a series of 'x' marks indicating the rhythm of the stick game.

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