

father's parents were Perapunahamoā Ihimaera Smiler and Teria Pere. Through my grandfather's mother, Hine Te Ariki, I enter Te Whanau A Apanui; through my great-grandfather, Ihimaera Te Hanene, I am Tuhoe. On my grandmother's side, I am a descendant of Wi Pere. Our *marae* is the family house of the Pere family, Rongopai, earlier known as Eriopeta, in Waituhi, near Gisborne. My mother is Julia Keelan and through her my children have heritage into Ngāti Porou. My mother's home, where my grandfather Graeme and grandmother, Putiputi Babbington, lived, is Puketawai, near Tolaga Bay, on the East Coast. My family life has been, in the main, lived between the boundaries enclosing Mangatu to the west, Nuhaka to the south, Hikurangi in the north and the sea, Te Moana nui a Kiwa, to the east. It was a rural and small town life from which I began to make incursions into the wider New Zealand world round the early 1960s. These are my credentials, limited by language and culture disabilities, for talking about Māori life.

I went to school at Te Karaka District High School, now known as Waikohu College. I also attended the Mormon College near Hamilton, Gisborne Boys' High School, Auckland University and eventually Victoria University of Wellington. In 1968 I met Jane Cleghorn; we were married in 1970. Her father is Antony Cleghorn; his parents came from the north of England with several other members of the family and settled in and around Auckland. Jane's mother is Nancy Bridge. On the Bridge side the ties with New Zealand begin much earlier when Major Cyprian Bridge, Jane's great-great-grandfather, came out in the 52nd Regiment to fight against the Māori in the 1840s. His paintings of the encounters at Ruapekapeka and other parts of Northland may be found in the Turnbull Library, which in 1961 published two of them as part of the Turnbull's series of prints of historical paintings. Major Bridge settled in New Zealand; Jane's great-grandfather, Herbert Bowen Bridge, became assistant editor of the *Evening Post*. Jane herself is a Wellingtonian from Lyall Bay of four generations' standing. Her godmother, Aunt Peggy Smythe, is here today. It was through Jane that I began to write. I began to be published in 1970; for reasons that I will outline later, I made a conscious decision to stop. That was in December 1975. Except for one year at Otago, I wrote part time within that period. Again, as limited as they are by language and cultural disabilities in pakeha life, these are my credentials to speak on literature and particularly on Māori literature.

I am now in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I can look across to the Beehive building, and to the Māori Affairs room in Parliament Buildings for clues as to *why and how*. If I seek the direct *whakapapa*, I can look to Wi Pere, the forgotten Māori Member of Parliament