

No.4 – Interpreter’s Report of Information Obtained During a Visit to Kaiaua, Pelorus, Kaituna, Wairau and Queen Charlotte Sound, &c., 1854-1855

A Compendium of Official Documents relative to Native Affairs in the South Island, Vol. One

Tuesday, 28 November 1854

Started from Nelson, and proceeded direct to Kaiaua. Found a few of the principal Natives there; explained our object of our visit, and had a long korero with the chiefs. They were quite willing to part with the whole of the land, provided they get a fair share of the payment direct from the Government. They pointed out the places they would wish to be reserved, and Mr Brunner proceeded to lay off the greater part of two bays, Whangarae and Anakiwi, as Native Reserves. They wanted another bay called Whangamoa, but we considered they had sufficient without it, particularly as they have a claim to Rangitoto, whither they pupose removing some time hence. The name of the tribe is Ngatikoata; the principal chiefs are Maka and Ruka.

Sunday, 03 December 1854

The weather being fair, we started, and pulled on to the French Pass, where we slept, and started early next morning, making the best of our way to the Pelorus, which we reached on Tuesday; went up a few miles, and stayed at the house of Hakiana, a Ngatitua chief, who was on a visit across the Straits. The Ngatikua Natives soon flocked in on all sides, and, after a preliminary conversation, messengers were despatched to muster the people for a korero. The next day, Wednesday, we assembled and had a korero, which lasted till late in the evening. Each speaker strongly opposed the selling the whole of their land. They said, “Although we were once conquered by Ngatitua and Ngatiawa, we have never been driven from the land of our fathers. We consider that we are yet a people, a living people, and have a right to speak when our land is being sold without our consent, and no payment is received by us. Our conquerers did as they pleased before we became British subjects, but now we think we ought to have half of the talking about it, and half of the payment for it; and therefore we now positively say that unless the Government pay into our hands a fair share of the payment, we will not give it up, neither will we allow it to be surveyed; but if we are dealt fairly with by the Government, we shall be glad to see the white men come and cultivate the ground.” The next day they pointed out the boundary of what they intended to reserve, including nearly all their burial-grounds. This they said we may mark off, and the rest they were willing to give up on receiving payment for it. The few Ngatitua who were present said that Rawiri Pua had not included the districts called Kenepuru and Mahakipawa in the sale of these lands, but intended to keep them for their own use. I distinctly told them that the whole of the land was sold by Rawiri, and that as those places were some of the best in the district, we could not think of reserving them for their use. We spent the rest of the week in cutting a line at each end of the reserve pointed out, which we consider is amply sufficient for all the Natives in the district. After procuring all the information I required, we left them and proceeded to Kaituna.

Monday, 11 December 1854

Was spent in conversing with Hura (Kopapa), the Rangitane chief, and the next day we had a general korero. Like the Pelorus Natives, they are not disposed to give up the land until they have received payment for it; but in the meantime they allowed us to lay off a reserve at the lower end of the valley, by cutting a line across the valley about two miles up. Hura said he would not agree to sell the Motu... flat, which lies between the Pelorus and the Kaituna Rivers, and which was spoken of by Mr Barnicoat as a site for a township. All the Natives here appear anxious for the white man to settle amongst them, and the chief Hura is a well-behaved and very good-natured man, and treated us with great kindness. He appears very anxious to see Mr McLean at Nelson, that he may speak his mind. Having finished our

business here we sent the boat round to Queen Charlotte Sound, and started through the Pass for the Wairau, accompanied by two Native lads. We got through to the banks of the Wairau in eight hours, and finding a fresh in the river, we remained at the house of Mr Maher all night.

Friday 15 December 1854

The river being passable we crossed, and proceeded to Robinson's station on our way to the Native pa. Slept there, and on Saturday I went down and conversed with the few Natives who were present, and requested them to muster the people for a korero on Monday. Returned and spent the Sunday at Robinson's, and were hospitably treated.

Monday 18 December 1854

We went to the pa and found all the Natives present, and were at once informed by them that Rawiri (Puaha) had been there a few months ago, and had distinctly told them that he had not sold the reserve in the Wairau, nor yet several of the bays in Port Underwood, among which were Otawira (Robin Hood's Bay), and Ngakuta, the old mission station, Rawiri also said to them that he intended to settle at Wairau shortly, and he should require all the land for cultivation. Kanae, the brother of Puaha, was on the other side of the Straits, and the Natives were expecting his return daily, and wished us to wait and see him. As we could not do so, we obtained all the information respecting the different tribes, and the boundaries of their land, &c., &c., and left the matter to be settled when they met at Nelson. The poor Rangitane Natives there say that the Government does not treat them well in these matters, but they will speak when they see Mr McLean.

Tuesday 19 December 1854

We started for the Tuamarina River, and finding some of the Natives already there, we hired a canoe, and proceeded as far as we could go up the river to the edge of the bush, where we encamped for the night. The rain aroused us at daybreak next morning, so we hastily tied up our blankets and started at once through the Pass to the Waitohi settlement in Queen Charlotte Sound, where we arrived after seven hours' heavy walking, thoroughly drenched by the rain and the underbrush, which has grown so much as greatly to increase the labour of the traveller. We found out boat had arrived only the day before our arrival, having been detained in Gore Bay by contrary winds. As only a few Natives were there, we started on Friday morning for the head of the south-west arm, Anakiwa; saw some of the Ngatirahiri Natives, and told them to get their people together, and we would visit them as soon as convenient after Christmas Day. Mr Brunner and I then went through the Anakiwa Pass to Mahakipawa, in order that he might report upon that district, not having had an opportunity of seeing it while in the Pelorus. This will become a valuable place on account of its proximity to Queen Charlotte Sound, and there is a good deal of available land there, and should by all means be secured by the Government. We again got well drenched from the rain and the underbrush in the Pass, and on returning to Anakiwa at dusk found the tide up, so we had to wade through it for half a mile to our boat. Being very cold we stripped, and wrapping our blankets around us started in the boat for Waikawa, where we arrived in two hours, and retired for the night.

Saturday 23 December 1854

As the Natives had not arrived, and hearing that many of them were in Tory Channel in search of Christmas cheer, we set off in expectation of meeting with some of the people from the north entrance. On arriving we heard that a great many from different settlements had returned home that morning, having heard of our arrival in the Sound, and would therefore be expecting our visit. We stayed at Te Awaiti and spent a "merry Christmas." Abundance of good fare was provided by all hands, and a general welcome was found for both white man and Maori.

Tuesday 26 December 1854

I went to see an old Ngatiawa chief, residing in Tory Channel and owning a greater part of it, named Ngawheua or Whitikau. Had a long conversation with him, and found that he was not willing to part with any land in the Channel: He said he required it all for his own people, and never thought of parting with it. I told him that the whole of the Sound was sold to the Government. He replied, "My land is not sold, nor has any one but myself a right to sell it; and I have never been asked to do so by the Government. When I sell it I shall make my own bargain and receive the money for it into my own hand, or it shall never go." On my reminding him that Rawiri Puaha on the part of the Ngatitooa, and Hoani Tuwhata, Heremaia Te Matenga, and Aminarapa and others of the Ngatiawas resident in the Sound, had signed the deed of sale and agreed to the terms of payment for the whole of the land in the district, he replied that Rawiri had been with him a few months back, and told him that he had not sold if – that Tory Channel was not in the block sold by him; that if the Government wanted it, he (Ngawheua) of course was at liberty to make his own bargain. Before I left he agreed to accompany me to Waikana, to meet the Natives and hear what they were going to do.

Wednesday 27 December 1854

Started for Te Awaiti at 6 o'clock and went on to Ngawheua's to breakfast, after which he and his people took boat and accompanied us up the Sound. Soon after our arrival a goodly number of Natives mustered, and the same evening we had a long korero on the subject of land-selling. Several chiefs present were willing to sell the major part of the land, should the Government offer them a fair price for it; but at the same time they would reserve unsold certain places of their own choosing for their own use. Further than this they would not go until they had seen Mr McLean at Nelson. They appeared very jealous of the proceedings of Ngatitooa and strongly asserted their individual right to the land they possessed, and to the payment for it should it be sold. The chief Aminarapa behaved very civilly in the matter: he was willing to sell all his land and to take a reserve from Government, after he had seen Mr McLean at Nelson. I believe him to be a very conscientious man, and upright in his dealing. Ropoama of Waikawa would reserve a large piece of his land, and only part with the remainder if he got well paid for it. Ngawheua is a fine fellow, high-spirited and independent, yet very friendly to white men. Though very quiet, he is an eloquent speaker, always commanding attention, and generally carries his point: he is one of the oldest residents in Queen Charlotte Sound.

Thursday 28 December 1854

We all proceeded to Ngakuta, a few miles higher up the arm, where we met the chiefs Tuwhata, Rawiri, Te Rouponga, Homi Kepa, and others, and at once commenced a very spirited korero. Matters were warmly and eloquently discussed. Hoani Tuwhata would give up all the land, so would Rawiri and Hemi, and Ropoama and Ngawheua were firm to their purpose, and would make no arrangement until they had seen Mr McLean. After obtaining the particulars I required, we went to the head of the arm Anakiwa, and met the Ngatirahiri Tribe. I found they had not a great deal of land, as the land claimed by the late Mr Joseph Toms, of Te Awaiti (1,160 acres), is a part of what they still claim and are offering for sale. They wished us to lay off a reserve within Mr Tom's boundary: of course we could do nothing until after the Nelson meeting. They appeared much annoyed at my alluding to Tom's claim, and declared it was only the timber and not the land that was sold. After taking down their names and the boundaries of their claims, we left them, feeling rather dissatisfied with the korero.

Friday 29 December 1854

Went to examine the small bays on the opposite shore, and crossed a low ridge into an arm of the Pelorus Sound. The distance from beach to beach not being more than half a mile, canoes have been dragged across by the Natives in war time. The ascent and descent is very gradual, and, if necessary, a dray road could be made with little expense. This crossing-place is directly opposite the township of Waitohi.

Saturday 30 December 1854

Went on to Watamango, the residence of Aminarapa and party, a very pretty spot only a short distance from Waikawa. There is a large quantity of good land and some excellent timber, and it is one of the best places in the Sound. As the wind was too fresh, we remained there until evening, and then set off for Tory Channel, where we spent a pleasant Sunday at the house of Mr Bowden, and were treated very hospitably.

Monday 01 January 1855

Left Te Awaiti and proceeded direct to Ship Cove, at the north entrance. Slept there, and at daybreak on Tuesday went across the Sound to Onamaru (Cabbage Beach), a large and favourite settlement of the Puketapu and Ngatirahiri Tribes. On our arrival, messengers were despatched over the hills to muster the Natives from the various cultivations, and before evening the place was swarming with men, women and children. A korero was held at night, and continued until nearly daybreak. The principal speakers were Heremaia, Te Matenga, Aminarapa, Tamati Waka, Hoani Koenaki, Wiremu Paratene, Hori Patene and Rihari.

Wednesday 03 January 1855

Being told that their "komiti" was over, and that they would be glad to hear my korero, I told them the object of our visit, reminding them that they had already signed a deed by which they agreed to sell the whole of the Sound, and that a price had been fixed by themselves, the Ngatitoo chiefs, and Mr McLean, and now all that remained to be done was the laying off certain reserves for their use, and the surveying of the district, and then it would be sold to whoever chose to purchase. They said in reply, "This is all very good, but we now tell you that you and the Government are playing with us. Mr McLean has broken faith with us, and instead of paying the remaining instalments in Nelson, as agreed upon when we signed the document you refer to, he has actually only a few days since paid into the hands of Ngatitoo the sum of £2,000, without asking our consent, or even acquainting us with his intention of doing so." I told them I thought they were mistaken – that Mr McLean would certainly fulfil his engagement with them, and act fairly towards them; when a young chief name Rihari rose and said, "No; we are not mistaken; I saw the money paid into the hands of Ngatitoo only a few days before I left Te Rawiti. Those Ngatitoo appear to do as they please with the Government: they ask for the loaf and it is given them without a word, but we have to beg for the crumbs, and wait a long time before they are thrown to us. However we will let them (the Ngatitoo) see that this land is our own and not theirs, and that the money they received the other day shall not be considered by us as any part of the payment for Arapawa. The money for this land shall be paid into our own hands, as it was into the hands of our friend Tamati Ngarewa the other day at Nelson. 'Tis true we signed the deed to which you refer, but we are not compelled to adhere to it, since Mr McLean and the Ngatitoo have violated its conditions." The speaker then turned to the company and asked, "Do approve of these words spoken by me?" when every voice responded loudly and heartily, "Ae, ae, tika rawa, - Yes, yes, it's quite correct." After this I left them for a time, and towards evening they resumed the conversation, and said they would not accept of a reserve from the Government at present, until things were placed on a better footing. They were quite willing to sell the greater part of the land, but would reserve unsold a certain portion for their own use. They then pointed out what they would sell, and told me what they wanted it for. I wrote all their names and hapus, and collected other information, and thus ended the korero.

Thursday 04 January 1855

Returned to Ship Cove. Visited Anahau, the residence of Mr Elmslie. Had a korero with Tamati Ngarewa respecting the reserve we were about setting off from him, and agreed that it should be in Gore Harbour.

Friday 05 January 1855

Sent the boat round Gore Harbour. Myself and Mr Brunner, accompanied by most of the Natives, crossed the hills where boat met us, and we crossed the harbour at Te Maka Whiu, a small bay occupied by a white man named Smith. Slept there, and on Saturday laid off the reserve for the Ngatihinetuhi and Ngatiapa people. Spent Sunday there, and on Monday proceeded to the mouth of the Pelorus.

Thursday 09 January 1855

Started at 5 a.m., had a slight breeze, and went through the French Pass at 10 a.m. Finding the wind fair we determined to proceed direct to Nelson, and after a fine run we entered Nelson Harbour at 4 p.m. The Natives are all anxious to meet Mr McLean at Nelson, but wish to get in their harvest first. At the end of February they will be ready to come. I told them we would send a messenger over the hills when Mr McLean arrived, and they were to start immediately for Nelson.

Natives residing in the several districts

District	Tribe	Adults	Children
Kaiaua and Rangitoto	Ngatikoata	72	22
Pelorus	Ngatikua	40	17
Pelorus	Ngatitua	18	01
Kaituna	Rangitane	18	05
Wairau	Ngatiraua	(not ascertained)	
Wairau	Ngatitua*	(not ascertained)	
Queen Charlotte Sound	Ngatirahiri	75	10
Queen Charlotte Sound	Puketapu	66	05
Queen Charlotte Sound	Other hapus	78	16
Gore Harbour	Ngatihinetuhi	52	13
Gore Harbour	Ngatiapa	08	03
		478	100

* The Ngatitua at Wairau would not allow their names to be taken until the return of Te Kanae.

William Jenkins
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