

Despatch No.31 Sir George Grey to Edward Cardwell**Government House, Auckland 10 July 1865**British Parliamentary Papers – The Affairs of New Zealand February 1866

Sir, I have the honour to enclose a copy of a Letter I have received from Sir D. Cameron, reporting that Colonel Warre, C.B., and Colonel Weare, 50th Regiment, on the 8th of June last, advanced from their respective posts, and formed a junction on the same day, without opposition, thus opening the whole distance between Taranaki and Whanganui.

I have also the honour to enclose the copy of a Report from Mr Parris on the same subject, from which you will see what an effect these proceedings have had on the minds of the Natives, and how strong their desire for peace now is.

In other Despatches I have reported that the posts it was proposed to occupy to the north of the Waitara have all been taken up without opposition. I trust that these events will all tend to satisfy you that I was right in declining to ask for further reinforcements from England of at least 2,000 men, to enable the General to advance as far as the Patea; and for still larger reinforcements for the purpose of occupying posts to the north of the Waitara River.

Enclosure No.1

Lieut.-General D. A. Cameron, Head Quarters, Auckland to Sir George Grey 27 Jun 1865

Sir, I have the honour to report that Colonel Warre, C.B., marched with a column from near Opunaki, and Colonel Weare from the Waingongoro on the 8th instant, and met about halfway between those two points, on the same day, without opposition. They returned to their respective stations on the 10th instant. The distance between Opunaki and the Waingongoro is reported to be 24 miles, and not 15, as supposed by your Excellency.

Enclosure No.2

Wellington 21 Jun 1865

Sir, For the information of His Excellency's Government, I have the honour to forward the following Report of the expedition under the command of Colonel Warre, C.B., from New Plymouth for the purpose of effecting a passage through the Taranaki and Ngatiruanui districts, which expedition I accompanied.

Report of Robert Parris, Assistant Native Secretary

1st. On Monday, the 5th instant, Colonel Warre, C.B., myself, and a company of bushrangers embarked on board the S.S. 'Ahuriri' and landed at Opunake the same evening. Captain Mace, with about 30 of the Mounted Corps and four mounted Natives, went overland, and met us at Opunake. The S.S. 'Ahuriri' was sent off from Opunake the morning of the 6th instant (after landing the commissariat stores brought from New Plymouth) to signal to the forces at Waingongoro, under the command of Colonel Weare of the 50th Regiment, to advance forward. On the 7th instant, a force composed of two companies of the 43rd Regiment, one company of the 70th Regiment, a company of bushrangers, and 30 of the Mounted Force, commanded by Colonel Warre, C.B., left Opunake, and marched as far as a river called Taungatara, which we found a heavy fresh in, and were not able to get the transport carts and the gun over; consequently we encamped on the north side that night, and started the next morning without any camp equipage or carts, taking only seven packhorses with us, with supplies for three days.

About 3 o'clock P.M. on the 8th instant, we met the advanced guard of the force under Colonel Weare, 50th Regiment, at a place called Taikata, where both forces were halted; and after a communication with Colonel Weare, which was effected by Colonel Warre riding on to meet him, the two forces were ordered to encamp for the night, about a mile apart, Colonel Warre's at Taikato, and Colonel Weare's at Kumupuhia. On the 9th instant Colonel Warre, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General Clark, myself, and about twenty of the Mounted Force, rode on to Waingongoro, leaving the troops where they were encamped. Before starting for Waingongoro, I sent a Native whom I had brought with me from New Plymouth, with a few lines to the young Ngatiruanui Chief, telling him that if he really wished to see me, I should be at Waingongoro that day, to which place Colonel Warre had consented for him to come; cautioning him at the same time to come with a white flag. As we rode very fast from Taikata to Waingongoro, where Colonel Warre remained only about three hours, there was not time enough for Hone Pihama to get in, and as Colonel Warre decided to return at once, after consulting with him, I deemed it advisable for the public service that I should remain in the district for a few days, in order to give the insurgents an opportunity of communicating with me, as they had previously expressed a wish to do so.

2nd. Colonel Warre left Waingongoro for the return march to New Plymouth about 3 o'clock P.M. the 9th instant, and as they were passing through the Waimate district, one of the mounted men, Richard Peed, accidentally fell from his horse, and his comrades left him (not intentionally I presume), when his horse ran inland, and he followed it, and whilst doing so was captured by the insurgents near a place called Te Kanae, where the Native I had sent to them fortunately was stopping, and the next day, 10th instant, he came into Waingongoro to report the capture of the European, who was armed with a sword and revolver. I sent him back with a request that they would send in the European and all his accoutrements, so that when we met, our talk might be marama (clear, unrestrained). The following day, the 11th instant (Sunday) R. Peed was sent in to me, together with his horse and accoutrements, and also a pocket-handkerchief with five shillings in it, which Peed insisted upon given them for their kindness to him, but they refused to keep it, stating that it might be said they had liberated him for money. Colonel Weare's force returned from the North, Saturday evening, and encamped at Waingongoro for the night. The following morning, Sunday, 11th instant, resumed the returned march to Patea.

3rd. On Monday, the 12th instant, the young chief Hone Pihama, and Rapata, a young man of the Ngatimaniapoto chiefs, Tikaokaos, together with four others, came in with a letter, signed by Te Ua, Tito Hanatawa, Tamati, Hone Oraukawa, and Tawhano (Tikaokao), which I herewith enclose, requesting me to go to Te Kanae, to meet the Natives of the district there. At first I had an objection to go there, in consequence of a recent occurrence at Watino, not more than 10 miles therefrom, when some of the mounted men stationed at Opunake, who went out with Lieut.-Colonel Colville on the 1st instant, about five miles in advance of that post, whilst in the act of riding after some cattle, inland of the village of Watino, where they had left Lieut.-Colonel Colville and three mounted men, fell in with five Natives, and engaged with them, when one of the mounted men was severely wounded, and died the following morning in camp. They left three of the Natives on the ground for dead, after taking their arms and a mere and tomahawk; and lest more Natives should come upon them, it was deemed advisable to return to camp at once, which they did, and then returned again with fifty men to where they left the Natives; but on their arrival there were only two Natives, the third having, as they supposed then, been taken away; but from information which I have obtained from the Natives, it appears he got away of his own accord, after the mounted men retired, with six bullet wounds and severe battering on the back part of his head (inflicted by R. Peed, who was made prisoner). The names of the two men who were killed were Totaea and Honiana, and the one that got away was a chief called Rewa Pura, all Taranaki Natives (that section of the tribe called Titais).

After a consultation with Lieut.-Colonel Butler, who was commanding at Waingongoro, I decided to go and meet the Natives at Te Kanae, and accordingly left the same day, accompanied by Captain Sir Robert Douglas and Lieutenant Tredennick. On arriving at Te Kanae we were received with the most friendly demonstrations of waving of blankets and salutations from the women. On entering the village we were received by a guard of honour of about thirty armed men, who presented arms, and then opened their lines, being in double file, and formed an avenue which conducted us to a small paling enclosure of about eight feet square, in which stood their Nui (post), around which stood four Natives facing outwards, and Te Ua himself stood at the entrance. We were marched around the Nui, and then requested to sit down. Te Ua then turned round and looked me steadfastly in the face for about two minutes, and turning to the Natives who were standing against the post, said to them "Did you see?" They replied, "Yes." Te Ua then said "The Spirit has alighted upon him." He then called upon the armed party to honour the visitors, when they presented arms, and were then dismissed. Te Ua then went among the other Natives, who were a short distance off, in number about 200 men, including all the leading men of the district, and among them were three Northern chiefs:- Tikaokao, a Ngatimaniapoto chief; Manuka, a Ngatiapakura chief; and Haurua, a Ngatihikairo chief.

Te Ua made the first speech, and was followed by the three chiefs before mentioned. After them Tamati, Hone Oraukawa, and other Ngatiruanui chiefs. The tenor of their speeches was most peaceful. In fact I have never witnessed a stronger desire for peace since the war began. They had not heard of the submission of William Thompson until I told them of it, but Te Ua stated in the presence of all, that they the people of the district were an independent tribe, and should settle their own affairs without reference to Waikato. He also repudiated the Maori King in the presence of all. He did the same when I met him the last time in 1862.

4th. In addressing them, I called upon them to return, and place themselves under the Government, and reminded them of a conversation I had with them in the year 1859 in the town of New Plymouth when on their way North to attend the first great King meeting held in Waikato, when I told them that they would regret ever moving in the question of a king for the Maori people. I asked them to show me how their ranks were filled up, and where many of the men were that I used to see among them; explaining to them that however many we lost, that loss was always filled up by others. They asked me to explain to them what would be required of them to make peace with the Government. I told them that the only terms I knew of was, for them to surrender unconditionally, and place everything they possessed under the protection of the Government, but as I had received no instructions from the Government with reference to their particular case, I considered that it would be better for me to communicate to the Government my interview with them before anything further was done in the matter.

5th. A native named Ritimana rose and said that if the troops were withdrawn from their district peace could be settled at once. In reply, I told them that I had not come to flatter them, or to make any definite proposal to them; but that I had come to hear what they wished to say. As to the removal of the troops, they must not expect that would be done until they had satisfied the Government with terms for a permanent peace. I told them other tribes had surrendered land as payment for going to war against the Government, and that they would have to do the same, but as to the quantity, that I was not prepared to say anything about. On returning from Te Kanae to Waingongoro, a party of about fifty young men were ordered to get their horses, and escort me to the redoubt. Some of them were mounted on very fleet horses, and rode exceedingly well; the whole were under the command of a young man named Watikingi, grandson of the old Ngatiruanui chief Te Rei Hanatawa, who was killed at Waireka in March 1860.

On the 13th instant, the chief Hone Pihama Te Rei Hanatawa brought in a cartload of potatoes, kumeras, pumpkins, and also a quantity of tobacco of New Zealand growth, and very creditably manufactured, a present to the troops at Waingongoro, which was thankfully received, the troops having been for some time without vegetables at this post.

At the request of Lieutenant-Colonel Butler, I instructed the Natives to keep away from the redoubts in my absence, until someone returned from the Government to see them, which they agreed to do, and promised to remain perfectly quiet in the interim, if the troops would do the same. I arranged for Te Ua and Hone Pihama to accompany me so far as Opunake, having intended to return direct to New Plymouth overland; but the following morning, the 14th instant, I received a message from Te Ua, telling me that he had just heard that the friends of the Natives who were killed in the engagement at Watino were assembled at that place; that he was therefore afraid it would not be safe for me to go that way; that if any injury was done to me while he was with me, he should be accused of being a party to it, the same as he had been to the murder of Mr Volkner; which conduct he had always been opposed to.

6th. Deeming it not advisable to risk too much my first interview with them, I decided at once to go by way of Whanganui, and just as I was leaving a native arrived with a white flag, wishing to see me. I went back to see him, and found he had been sent in from Weriwari and Kitemarae, to state that as Hone Pihama had been allowed to bring in a present for the troops, they wished to do the same; that they had six cartloads ready, and some pigs, which they were only waiting for leave to bring in. Lieut.-Colonel Butler consented for them to do so; and I again repeated his instructions to them to keep away after they had brought in their present of potatoes, &c., as there would be no one to speak to them after I had gone.

7th. Before closing this Report, it is only fair to the Natives to mention a few incidents which occurred during my short stay at Waingongoro. A great number of horses have been captured by the troops in that district, and on the occasion of going to Te Kanae to meet the natives, Lieut. Tredennick rode upon one of them, and just before we arrived at Te Kanae one of the young men who had come to the redoubt after me remarked "That is our horse." I felt it was a very injudicious thing to do, but it was too late to prevent it. However, on arriving at the village, some young men were ordered to take charge of our horses, which they did, and unsaddled them, and tethered them out to feed. On leaving the place the horse was brought to Lieut. Tredennick, without a word about its belonging to them. On the morning of the 13th instant, six young men came from Kitemarae to the redoubt, all on horseback. As I was talking to them Lieut. Down requested me to ask them if they had seen any horses on the track they had come; that a mare, a colt, and a foal of his had got away in that direction. I put the question to the Natives, and they replied that they saw some horses near the bush. I then requested two of them to go with Lieut. Down, to bring them back, which they agreed to do, and lent Lieut. Down one of their horses to ride with them. They recovered the horses and brought them back to the redoubt, when they informed me that they belonged to a Native named Edward (Emera), but never asked to have them returned to them. I have mentioned those circumstances to show the very good feeling which seemed to prevail among them.

8th. William King, Hukamu, and his brother Reihana, chiefs of the Kaopukunui district, requested me to supply them with a Government flag for their district; but I am of opinion it would be injudicious to do so as yet. I am of opinion that many could be drawn off, and brought back to their allegiance to the Government at once, which would have to be done quietly, without any defiant demonstrations while negotiations were being carried on.

9th. I left Waingongoro on the 14th instant, and arrived at Whanganui on the 15th, and after conferring with Brigadier Waddy, C.B., and Lieut.-Colonel Logan, I decided to come on to Wellington to report without delay the favourable interview I had had with the insurgents in the Ngatiruanui district, where I beg to submit, for the consideration of his Excellency's Government, the desirability of someone being sent as early as convenient, to make known the terms of the Government for the establishment of peace with that tribe.

10th. About 10 o'clock on Monday night, after I had gone on board the S.S. 'Whanganui,' I received a letter from Lieut.-Colonel Butler from Waingongoro, enclosing one for me from some Natives whom I had not seen, which I herewith also enclose. Those Natives belong to the Puketapu tribe, and were driven away from Mataitawa, when that place was taken by Colonel Warre.

Hune 16, 1865
Kia Parete,

E HOA, Iena kae, kanni to matan aroha atu kia kae i tenei I akewa, Kia rongo mai koe, kei au te whakaro kia kite ia kae, kua kite te eive ia kae inaianei, ka kite hoki maton ia kae. Ki wea ranei kite ai maton ia kae. Kia Parete, Waingongoro. Heai ano, Na Tamati Hana; Na le Hapimana Toke; Na Whikitoa; Na Hakopa

Translation

Friend Mr Parris, Greeting. Great is our aroha for you at the present time. Know you that I will fix the time (name the day) for seeing you. The tribe has seen you this day. When shall we also see you? Where shall we see you? To Mr Parris, Waingongoro (Signed) Tamihana; Hapimana Tokewa; Whikitoa; Hakopa. (Signed) William D. Baker, Translator, N.D.

Te Kanae, Hune 11, 1865

E HOA e Parete. Ko-rua ko Te Trauara. Tena ra Karua. Tenei te kupu kia kae e Parete, me kaere mai kae akuanei kia kite koe I to iwi, ki konei koe karero ai ki to matae whaka me te iwi kaki ki a kae. Kia Parete, Waingongoro. Heai, Na Te Ua Haumene; Na Pito Hanatana; Na Tamati Hone; Na Tawhana.

Translation

Friend Parris, You and the General I salute you (both). This is my message to you, o Parris. Come hither this day that you may see your people; that here you may address (the people of) our cause, and that the tribe may express its views to you. No more. To Mr Parris and the General, at Rangitoto Whangongoro (Signed) Te Ua Haumene; Pita Hanatana; Tamati Hone; Tawhana (Signed) William D. Baker, Translator, N.D.