

THE FIGHT AT RUAKITURI



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RUSSELL DUNCAN

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EPUB ISBN: 978-0-908328-07-9

PDF ISBN: 978-0-908331-03-1

The original publication details are as follows:

Title: The fight at Ruakituri

Author: Duncan, Russell

Published: A.H. & A.W. Reed, Dunedin, N.Z., 1939

THE
FIGHT AT RUAKITURI

by
RUSSELL DUNCAN

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BY WRIGHT AND CARMAN LTD., 177 VIVIAN STREET, WELLINGTON,
AND BOUND BY JOHN DICKINSON AND CO. (N.Z.) LTD., WELLINGTON,
FOR A. H. AND A. W. REED, PUBLISHERS, DUNEDIN AND WELLINGTON.

1929

993.1

A5269

20 FEB 1941



Scene of Ruakituri Engagement—middle distance on right of picture—taken, 1901.

FOREWORD

Mr. Russell Duncan is recognised as an authority in matters of N.Z. historical research, and this little book is an example of his careful clearing up of obscure points which previous writers had not the information to cover or had neglected, thus giving rise to misconceptions which he has set himself to remove. Such a service is by no means unimportant, and as the number of those who have both the knowledge of the past with the inclination and ability to carry out such work is small and fast lessening, we may deem ourselves fortunate to have thus put on record a true account of the fight at Ruakituri—a defeat of the Europeans under Colonel Whitmore which by encouraging Te Kooti and his allies paved the way for the Mohaka massacre,—fixing the correct locality of the engagement, with a hitherto unpublished account thereof by one who took part in it, and the story of Mr. Russell Duncan's own search for and curiously dramatic finding of the lost graves, by which means he was able to establish the true scene of the conflict.

And if one asks why thus delve into the almost forgotten past, it may be replied that no knowledge is unimportant which helps to give us a true picture of our own past, and thus maintain that continuity of tradition—"not as the beasts which perish"—that distinguishes civilized man.

J. A. ASHER,

Chairman Hawkes Bay's Centennial Historical
Committee.

4 Hadfield Terrace,
Napier.

The Fight at Ruakituri.

Away back in 1901 my interest in visiting and photographing historical places was sharpened on reading in the newspaper that Mr. Brooks, a Government surveyor, had come across the grave of Capt. Carr, who fell at the engagement against Te Kooti, at Ruakituri river, on the 8th August, 1868. The Survey Department at Gisborne could give me no information as to the site of the grave.

Mr. Brooks had left the district and the spot had not been officially marked on any map.

I thereupon made up my mind to try and get information and visit the scene of the fight.

The only surviving soldiers who had taken part in the engagement that I knew of were Mr. George Blake, of Tokaanu and Mr. Mark Rolls, of Port Ahuriri. These gentlemen told me what they could remember of the locality, but both admitted that they were too busy and hungry to take much notice of the scenery.

If anyone had mentioned that the enemy held a strong position on an island in mid-river, or if Gudgeon had written about the island in his book "War in New Zealand," the finding of the place would have been easy.

Colonel Whitmore's book on the Maori war and Mr. Cowan's on the same subject were published later.

Some people will ask, "Why rake up this old story after so many years"? but I think that there can be no question that if anything correct can be added to the history of the New Zealand war it should be recorded. Sergt. Major Thomas Withers' letter, copied further on, certainly does this.

Another reason why I should write this article is to explain that the title of the illustration on page 23 in Whitmore's book is not correct, but I will show later how this mistake occurred.

MY FIRST TRIP, FEBRUARY, 1901.

My companions on this expedition were Mr. Marshall Macfarlane, of Napier, and Mr. Tommy Downs (a half-caste), of Wairoa. We had with us provisions, tent, etc. and a full plate stand camera. We started from Wairoa and went by wheeled conveyance as far as Te Reinga, then crossed the Hangaroa river and called on Mr. Ross, the manager of Dalgety and Co's. sheep station. Mr. Ross could not give us any information about the site of the battle field we were to look for.

After hiring a pack-horse from the natives we proceeded on and that night camped on the roadside. Early next day we reached Mr. A. Mills' homestead where which was the outpost of civilisation, there being no settler further on. Mr. Mills did not know anything about the site of the fight, but indicated that we should climb the range in front of his homestead and find the track on the mountain which led to the Ruakituri river.

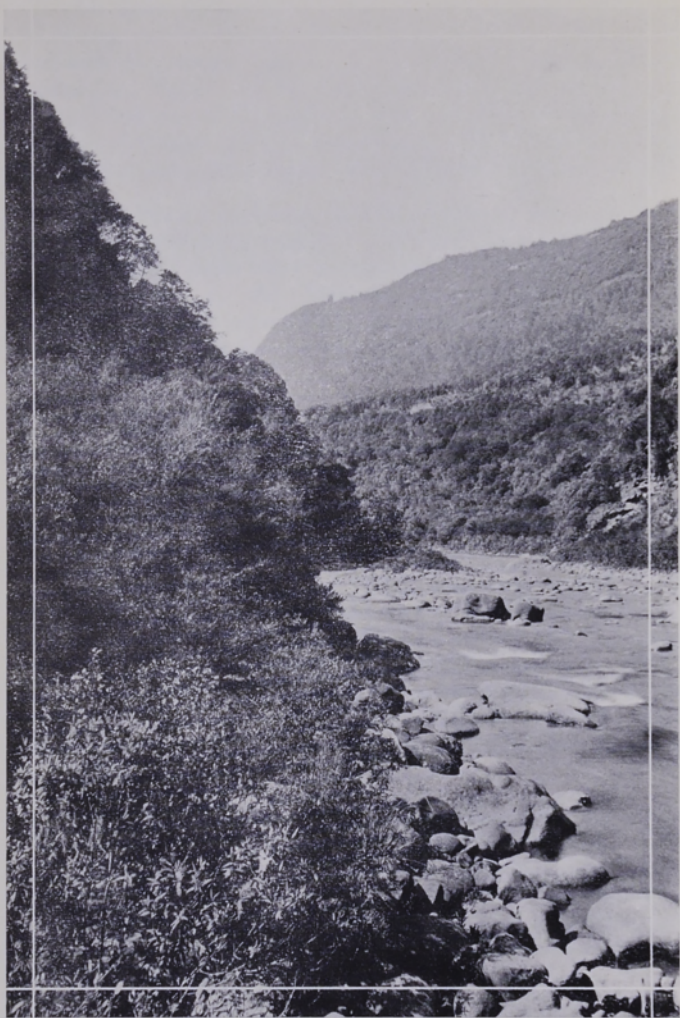
Mr. Mills accompanied us to the top of the range and left us after he had exacted a promise that we should stay at his house on our way back.

We pitched camp and rain began. It rained all that night and the next day.

The following morning my friends went away to look for the track, and on returning joyfully told me that they had found the track and also that the sun was shining down the valley. We had pitched camp in the rain, and as firewood was all wet Tommy had lit a fire in a hollow tree. The result was that just at the moment when we had packed up everything the old tree began to make a warning sound. Down it came, partly over our camp site. Moral—never light a fire in a hollow tree.

It did not take us long to reach the Ruakituri river, but now the time soon went in getting the pack-horse along the river bank. There was a native track, but a very bad one, and sometimes we had to ford the river, which had a bottom of large smooth boulders, which was rough travelling for the horse. At one bad corner the patient pack-horse lost his footing and slid down a fifteen foot bank and ended up on his side in the river.

Looking at the horse from above it seemed as if he was bleeding, but it was only the red leaves of the mako mako which he had carried down with him.



Ruakituri river-bed—Short distance below scene of fight—Taken, 1901.

The horse was not hurt, nor was the camera damaged. After this episode we soon found a level place and camped.

Here we were—but where was the battlefield we had come to see? It might be anywhere for aught we knew—and there was no friendly policeman to direct us.

The weather was beautifully fine and the native bush on either side of the sparkling river made a pretty picture. Even Tommy said it was pai rawa atu. The soldiers of 1868 thought otherwise.

We spent hours in looking in likely places for graves, but our search was fruitless.

Next day we spent in taking photographs up and down the river and on either side. In all six full plates were exposed in the hope that some day I might find someone who could identify the scene of the fight.

There were several islands in the river, and one at the top end of a reach looked likely, because here the track led away from the river and into the bush on the right. We went up this track and found a cleared plot of ground where there had been whares and plantations of potatoes. We afterwards learnt that this place was called Papuni.

In due course, without accident, we returned to the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. Mills and set their minds at rest that we had not been lost.

THE SIX PHOTOGRAPHS.

Shortly after my return to Napier, Lady Whitmore called on me and wished to have a photograph of the scene of the fight at Ruakituri to put in her husband's book which was nearly ready for publication.

I showed her the six photographs, but told her most distinctly that I did not know which one or if any would picture the scene of the fight, and that they were taken with the object of finding out the place.

She picked out one that she liked and said it would do well to show the river bed up which the troops went. I was very surprised to see this photograph in Colonel Whitmore's book "Last Maori War," page 23, labelled "Scene of Ruakituri fight."

This was an unfortunate error, for it turned out that the photograph portrayed the river nearly three quarters of a mile lower down. It was unfortunate also for Mr. T. Lambert, for he copied from Col. Whit-

more's book my photograph with the same title—"Scene of the Ruakituri fight," on page 664 "Old Wairoa."

SERGEANT MAJOR WITHERS.

At this stage I got into communication with Sergt. Major Thomas Withers, an old Napier man who had taken up his abode on the Coromandel Peninsula. He turned out to have a wonderful recollection of what happened at Ruakituri. From the six photographs he selected the one which enabled me, on a second visit, to find the scene of the fight, and also the brass plate in memory of Capt. Carr, who was killed there.

THOMAS WITHERS' REPORT.

During July, 1868, No. 1 Division Armed Constabulary was holding two positions in the Southern End of the Bay of Plenty—Opotiki and Whakatane, about 20 miles apart. On the afternoon of July 26, H.M.S. "Rosario" called at Opotiki conveying despatches from the Government to Colonel Fraser, informing him that Te Kooti had escaped from Chatham Island and landed at Poverty Bay and ordering Fraser with No. 1 to embark per S.S. "Waipara" and report to Colonel Whitmore at Turanganui, Poverty Bay.

July 28:—We left Opotiki during a very heavy easterly gale and, expecting to reach our destination on the following day, we took only one day's rations with us, but greatly to our discomfort the voyage—owing to bad weather—lasted four days, and the only food we had with the exception of the rations mentioned above during the protracted voyage was some sheep (three) presented to us by Mokena, of Hicks Bay.

August 1st:—We landed at Turanganui, Poverty Bay, and after inspection by Colonel Whitmore we marched out to the camp of the Poverty Bay Volunteers under the command of Captain Westrup.

On the following day, August 2, we marched to the camp of the so-called Napier Volunteers, commanded by Captain Herrick—distance about 3 miles.

It was at this camp that the farce of holding a Drum Head Court martial was enacted.

This force of Napier Volunteers was hastily raised by Major Withers for the occasion and mostly consisted of inexperienced men who had never previously handled a rifle.

August 2nd. The expedition consisting of the following corps:—No. 1 Armed Constabulary, Napier Volunteers, Poverty Bay Volunteers, and a contingent of Napier Friendly Maoris, started in pursuit of Te Kooti.

On reaching the boundary of the Poverty Bay district the Poverty Bay Volunteers refused to proceed further, making the excuse that it would be injudicious to leave Poverty Bay unprotected and intimating that they could not be compelled to march beyond the boundary of their district.

Losing the services of so many experienced fighters—they were all tried men—was a serious blow to Colonel Whitmore's hopes of success.

On leaving Poverty Bay four days' rations were served out to the men, but when only two days out No. 1 A.C. had to divide their rations with the Napier Volunteers as that force had consumed their supplies.

After several days' arduous marching we were close on the enemy, and on the morning of the 8th August orders were to leave all swags behind and proceed in light marching order. The swags were left on the Eastern side of a range and not at the clearing mentioned by you as Rautawiri.

This was our second day without food of any description.

I, who was then Sergeant-Major of No. 1 Armed Constabulary, was placed in charge of the scouts, consisting of 6 No. 1 men and six natives, with orders to feel my way carefully and report frequently. On gaining the top of the divide we could see smoke rising from the river bank, Ruakituri, and on reaching it, found that it was a camp that had been hastily evacuated by the enemy. The stones in the ovens (hangi) were still hot and they had left some of their dogs behind.

The boulders where the enemy had crossed the river were still wet.

(It being winter they would take some little while to dry. It is likewise not unworthy of note that the men suffered from bad boots with snow on the ground.)

After reporting to the Commanding Officer we again advanced, and after negotiating several crossings, we saw a native—one of the enemy—pretend to shoot at something up a tree, but as nothing fell or

flew away we decided it was a signal to the enemy of our near approach. We halted till joined by the Column and a consultation of Officers was held. Colonel Fraser asked me to find out the feelings of the men of No. 1 with regard to going into action. I reported the men's reply. "They felt more fit for a good feed than fighting, but where the officers went they would go."

Many of the officers, also Ned Hamlin, were opposed to going into action.

I heard Hamlin ask Whitmore. "How he could expect the men who had been without food for two days to fight well"?

Whitmore's reply was: "Well, there is no food behind us and the only thing to be done is to get food from the enemy."

After a short conference of the officers I was ordered to advance—feel my way very carefully and report all suspicious circumstances. On our reaching that part of the river-bed where the papa flat merges into the boulders, and where a small stream flows over the papa into the river, we located Te Kooti's position. It was on the right of the river (i.e., looking up) and on the river-bed among the boulders and tutu scrub, and about 300 yards in front of us. I immediately reported to Colonel Whitmore, who sent orders back, Captain Carr bringing the message.

The message was to advance on enemy and I would be supported.

We advanced in the face of a very strong fire and on reaching Te Kooti's position, but between him and the embankment of the river, we now discovered that our Native allies had deserted—the fire and their superstitious dread of Te Kooti had proved too much for their courage.

We were now, including Captain Carr, seven men within twenty yards of the enemy and without cover of any kind.

We made an attempt to retire by the river, but found it impossible, as our own men had opened fire from the rear which we would have had to face in addition to the fire of the Hau Haus in front.

Captain Carr, as brave a man as ever lived, proposed a rush on the enemy, but I pointed out to him that no advantage was to be gained, only a sacrifice of lives. We then decided to climb the river embankment and get into the bush and await reinforcements. Captain Carr was on the right when facing the embankment, Sergeant Green next to him, while I was on the extreme left. We made a simultaneous climb, and on reaching the bush Sergeant Green reported Captain Carr as

missing. Green said "that they got to the top of the bank together all right, but was afraid the Captain was then shot and rolled back on to the river bed." (Captain Carr's body was afterwards found at the foot of the embankment, on the river bed. It was a miracle that any of us reached the top alive as we were exposed to the fire of Te Kooti at point blank range.) Shortly after this the retire was sounded and we made an attempt to get to where Captain Carr was last seen, but failed, the firing at close quarters being too much for us to face. Again the retire was sounded, but all that we could do was to stick fast to our position. Constable B. Reed, one of my men, called out "Someone is coming towards us." I looked and saw Mr. Canning approaching us through the bush. I called out to him to go back, but he took not the slightest notice of our warning, but continued to advance, as if there wasn't the least danger. He was carrying his carbine at the support, and after a few more steps forward he was shot dead. We managed to reach his body and secure his carbine, and we found that he must have been shot through the heart, for the front of his jumper was partly blown away, so close was the shooting.

Captain Carr and Mr. Canning were volunteers and were not attached. They were friends of Colonel Whitmore and had gone with the troops to help things along.

The Hau Haus now charged us, and native-like commenced their charge with a volley, which gave us the opportunity we wanted. Using our revolvers we now retreated and met Colonel Fraser coming to our assistance with part of No. 1 Armed Constabulary.

I reported the loss of Carr and Canning, and although their bodies were not more than 100 yards distant, Fraser decided not to make an attempt to recover them as it would be sacrificing lives. As it was we were subjected to fire from seemingly several directions on our retreat to the main body. Colonel Whitmore, on hearing of the loss of Carr and Canning, resolved to make an effort to recover the bodies. Volunteers were called for and headed by Colonel Fraser proceeded some distance but were soon recalled.

After the scouts had advanced to locate the enemy, No. 1 Armed Constabulary was ordered to advance by the river-bed to support them. They proceeded some distance up the river bed and the Hau Hau bullets spluttering on the boulders caused a number of casualties. At this stage Captain Herrick was ordered to cross the river and open fire on Te Kooti's right flank so as to draw the fire from the Armed Constabulary. This manoeuvre was never carried out for Herrick's men bolted, leaving that officer in the river with two men, viz., J. Lewis, of Taupo, and H. Pierce.

The Napier Friendly Natives then also bolted, leaving Ned Hamlin to represent them.

It was after Herrick's men bolted that Colonel Fraser with a part of No. 1 made the attempt to reach the scouts via the bush on the river bank. We were now about 60 men facing three or four hundred Hau Haus equally as well armed as ourselves and far better off for food supplies. Colonel Whitmore now gave the order to prepare for a retiring movement. To get the wounded out was the first consideration, and they had to be carried out on men's backs while under a cross-fire—truly a fire from several directions. It was now, while conducting the removal of the wounded, that Sub-Inspector Tuke got his wound.

This was close to where your camera stood when taking photograph No. 1.

Tuke who was facing downstream . . . (some words were not visible through the mutilation of the manuscript) was . . . the left bank of the river.

Lewis, one of the men who stuck to Herrick, was the last casualty, he being wounded in the back a few yards down stream from where Tuke received his wound.

At this moment Constable Solomon Black (who afterwards won the N.Z. Cross) arrived from Poverty Bay with a despatch for Colonel Whitmore.

It was understood by all that the despatch contained orders for Colonel Whitmore to return to Poverty Bay and not to pursue Te Kooti further. It was understood that the opinion of the authorities was that if not further molested Te Kooti would settle down quietly.

(It appears that Colonel Whitmore on receipt of the despatch must have left the force on his way to Poverty Bay—for Withers continues.) Colonel Fraser, who was now left in charge of the retiring movement, decided to give his weary and hungry men a rest.

Halted at the first crossing when we made stretchers in the bush for the wounded. We broke camp after midnight—moon rise—and commenced our weary march out with the wounded.

I don't think any who were on that night march will ever forget it—it was winter time, frosty and bitterly cold, the snow lying in patches on the higher hills.

The heavy rains had swollen the river and at several of the crossings the water was very deep and the wounded had to be carried on

the men's heads. Truly this was a difficult task for hungry men to perform and not a grumble.

We marched all next day, not one of the other corps offering to assist.

That morning we had served out to us one pannikin of flour per man and tea and sugar sufficient for one meal.

The bugle call to retire when the scouts had advanced was from the enemy. The intention was to make us expose ourselves. Te Kooti's bugler was a Canadian half-caste Indian.

OUR LOSSES.

In the engagement we had 6 killed and 5 wounded, the names of the killed being Capt. Carr, R.A., Mr. Davis Canning, Constables Coates, Condon and Byrne and a friendly native named Rahira. Byrne, badly wounded, died while being carried and his body was left on an island a short way down the river.

The bodies of the other 5 were left on the field and were buried five months later by Capt. Preece, who travelled across country from Bay of Plenty for that purpose.

Later on again Capt. Preece made another journey to Ruakituri to erect two brass plates, one for Capt. Carr and the other for Mr. Canning.

The plate for Mr. Canning has never been seen since.

COPY OF LETTER FROM CAPT. PREECE TO MR. GEORGE MAYO.

Palmerston North,
February, 19th, 1903.

Dear Sir,

Re your telegram—Captains Carr and Canning and Constables Byrne, Condon, and Coates, and a Maori named Rawiri (I think) were killed on the 8th August, 1868. We buried them on, I think, the 29th of December, 1868.

You will recollect we buried Canning, Coates and Condon in one place, or two in one and one in another.

Byrne we buried some distance down the river and did not find the whole of his remains—they had been carried away by a flood. Carr we found on the right hand side, in the bush up a ridge, and buried him by a rimu tree (I think it was a Rīmu) where he fell.

In 1873, after some correspondence with Capt. Carr's father, I came over through Ruatahuna from Te Teko with three men, and went through from Waikaremoana to Ruakituri with the brass plates which I put up; the one for Canning we put up on a piece of dry Kowhai and the other for Carr on a tree, a rimu I think where we buried him. The place where we buried Canning had changed in appearance by a fresh, but I placed the plate as nearly as I could ascertain on the spot.

Major Mair has written to me on the subject. I have referred him to you as to the facts of how we buried them. I think you are the only European living besides myself who was with the party.

Yours truly,
(signed) G. A. PREECE.

MY SECOND AND DECISIVE TRIP, 1903.

On this, to be the decisive expedition, we started from Waikaremoana early in February, 1903, my companions being Mr. Arthur Herrick of Tautane, and Mr. Dan. Ferney, of Taupo. We went on foot as usual and took Dan's old Taupo horse to carry our equipment.

The track was good on the level until we reached the foot of Nga Pakira hill or mountain, over which our route lay.

A four foot track had been cut out years before, and I must say it looked well on the map, but otherwise on the ground.

Covered thickly with well-grown makomako and other shrubs it was difficult in places to get the horse through. About half way up the hill we found a large tree fallen right across the track and neither above it nor below was negotiable. Fortunately we had an axe and Arthur was able to demonstrate what could be done with that article.

This tree business delayed us considerably, and the top of the hill was only reached by nightfall.

Next morning on our plod down the hill our startling experience was not on the programme and led some of us to think we would have been safer at home by the fireside.

On emerging from the scrub on to a large clearing we suddenly were confronted by a mob of wild cattle drawn up in a semicircle and looking very surprised. The cattle had heard us coming as Dan was probably discoursing in a loud tone on his sea-faring experiences. A full-grown bull was nearest to us, about thirty yards away.



Ruakituri river-bed—Short distance below scene of fight—Taken, 1901.

He was looking very sinister and was murmuring as bulls do and advancing towards us. Arthur Herrick at once saved the situation: First he said "I wish we had an umbrella," then to me "Let's charge him."

We did so, waving our overcoats round and round like a windmill. The bull took fright at this and we were saved. The position at first was ominous, for there were no trees big enough to climb.

I have no idea how long it was after this event that some tourists returning from Waikare-iti to Waikaremoana were compelled to climb trees to escape the attentions of a bull. It was no doubt our friend of 1903. If so, that was his last exploit, for help was obtained on this occasion from Lake House, some three miles away, whence a party set out with rifles, and the "incident was then closed."

We made the Ruakituri river at a place where a wire rope and a cage had been installed at the time when the four foot track was made. Arthur Herrick got the cage into working order and to save the old horse took his load over in the cage. The river was forded without difficulty, and we proceeded up stream and made our camp at the same place as I had done two years before.

Following instructions from Mr. Tom. Withers, the search for the imagined locality of the grave proved very easy. Starting from the papa flat depicted on the right corner of the photograph No. 1, Withers' instructions were to follow along the bank of the river until reaching opposite the lower end of an island, then climb the bank when we were to find it breast high and then walk into the bush a few paces. This I did, my companions at the time being in the bush looking for the rimu tree mentioned by Capt. Preece.

While standing and calling out to know if they had found anything I was astonished to feel that I was standing on something level. Marvellous to relate, my feet were actually on the brass memorial plate first erected by Capt. Preece and afterwards by Mr. Brooks. The plate had been attached to a wooden cross and had fallen and was covered by leaves and silt.

It seems almost like fiction that Withers could be so accurate after a lapse of thirty-five years. The island does not show well in the photograph, but it appears in the distance immediately above the figure of a man standing on a rocky point. The papa flat on the right foreground is where Captain Tuke was wounded when retiring.

Private Byrne, badly wounded, only lived a short time and his body was left on an island lower down. The bodies of the other five persons killed had to be left where they fell.

EXTRACT FROM MR. ALEXANDER MILL'S LETTER— TE AHU RUAKITURI.

"I have seen most of the Maoris who were resident here at the time of the Ruakituri fight, but sorry to say none of them remember the spot where the soldiers were buried. The most of them were quite young at that time and did not take much notice.

"I understand Mr. Bertram Lambert surveyed this block over 20 years ago and I believe tried to locate the graves, but failed."

When Mr. Mills wrote the letter he was apparently unaware that I had already located the graves as far back as 1903.

Note—Mr. Bertram Lambert is not related to Mr. T. Lambert, who wrote the book "Old Wairoa".

Mr. Francis Logan, of Napier, a friend of the Carr family in England, succeeded in getting the Cook County Council to proclaim the small plot of ground where the men were killed a Cemetery Reserve, and for this paid £50. A sort of rough fence was once put up round Carr's grave, but had later partly fallen down.

The bush was not destroyed, but nothing had been done to mark the place. As years went by and civilisation extended up the river a Mr. Dickinson, the nearest settler to the scene of the fight, was asked by Mr. Logan to build a mound of concrete and rubble on the spot.

This was done and the brass plate was embedded in the structure.

After correspondence with the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr. Logan advised me in May, 1930, that the War Graves Division had undertake to erect a fence and concrete kerb round the Cemetery Reserve at Ruakituri.

The District Engineer suggested that the work could best be done the following summer when the shingle for the concrete work could be got reasonably near the site. Not having visited the place since January, 1930, I am not aware whether the work has been carried out.

Mr. Lambert in his book "Old Wairoa" no doubt took a lot of trouble to write his article on Ruakituri, but he has gone astray occasionally. For instance the "island" figuring so much in my notes he says is not there. Should Mr. Lambert visit this spot he will find that the island does exist.

Mr. Ellison, of Napier, is mentioned by Mr. Lambert as having requested Mr. Dickinson to find the grave and erect the concrete memorial.

Mr. Ellison was my partner in business and I am sure he was not at all interested in battlefields and did not know Mr. Dickinson.

THIRD AND FINAL TRIP, JANUARY, 1930.

After an interval of twenty-seven years I again visited the historic Ruakituri river, this time in a motor-car and accompanied by my friend Mr. Loudoun and a party of ladies. It took nine hours there and back from Wairoa, whereas in days gone by, it took a week on foot.

A great change had taken place, all the bush on the side of the river where the fight took place having been cleared away, except a small clump where the grave is.

A road was under construction and a number of men were at work.

The river seemed much deeper, having been washed out by floods, the heavy rush and scouring being caused by the denudation of the forest. I did not consider it was possible to wade about as we had done before.

This ends my series of visits to this charming and romantic area, and I hope thereby to have added some information not before recorded by the historians Gudgeon, Cowan, or Lambert.

Kua mutu.

APPENDIX.

CAPTAIN CARR'S GRAVE.

Napier,

29th May, 1930.

All is well that ends well. I have had some correspondence with the Government. I enclose you a copy of the Under-Secretary's letter to the firm of the 21st instant, from which you will see that the Government is behaving decently.

Yours sincerely,

F. LOGAN.

RE GRAVE OF THE LATE CAPT. CARR, RUAKITURI.

Department of Internal Affairs,
War Graves Division,
Wellington,

21st May, 1930.

Dear Sirs,—

Reference previous correspondence, a report has now been received from the District Engineer, Wairoa, with reference to the grave of the late Capt. Carr in the Cemetery Reserve on the Waimana-Ruakituri Road about 45 miles from Wairoa.

He states that the grave is situated on a dry rubble area about 50 ft. above the river level and is covered with a mortar rubble mound with a metal plate bearing the late Officer's name. There are two oak trees at the head and one rhododendron at the foot of the grave which should be enclosed in a fence 12 ft. x 14 ft. At present there is an old post and wire and netting fence round the grave.

The District Engineer has submitted proposals for cleaning the site, fixing the name plate and surrounding the grave as set out above with a concrete kerb carrying a fence of galvanised posts and rails (3 rails) painted, at a cost of £49, and I am pleased to be able to advise you that the Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs has approved of this. The District Engineer, suggests that the work could best be done next summer when shingle for the concrete work can be got from the Ruakituri River, reasonably near to the site. It is regretted therefore that there will be a little delay in having the work carried out, but the District Engineer, Wairoa, is being advised now to have it put in hand as soon as conditions are suitable.

Yours faithfully,

G. P. NEWTON,

Under Secretary.



Ruakituri river-bed—Short distance below scene of fight—Taken, 1901.

COPY OF LETTER RECEIVED FROM MR. H. C. NOLAN.

Otipi,
Gisborne,
22nd March, 1939.

Dear Sir,—

Some four or five years ago, some relations of the late Capt. Carr visited his grave at Ruakituri. They, I have been led to believe, left money and instructions to have the grave thoroughly renovated and done up.

This work was duly carried out and I photographed the grave and sent a print to them in England. The grave is now all in concrete with railing round it and is in splendid order.

Yours faithfully,

(signed) H. C. NOLAN.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER RECEIVED FROM
MR. A. W. REID.

Ruakituri Station,
Wairoa, H.B.,
April 5th, 1939.

Dear Sir,—

. . . I just got the information you asked for this morning from Mr. W. Bruce, manager of Papuni Station.

He said when the new road was being put into Papuni, the engineer surveyed through the cemetery, but when told of the graves of Captain Carr and Mr Canning, the survey was altered and the graves were then done up with a concrete kerbing and two-inch pipe railing round them . . .

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) ALEX W. REID.

WRIGHT & CARMAN, LTD.
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