

as long as they remained quiet. Colonel Haultain kindly placed the "Sturt" at my disposal. The result of my visit, and the information I obtained, is contained in the enclosed copy of a report to the Honorable the Minister for Colonial Defence.

Immediately on my return from the coast I received a letter from the Roturua Runanga (translation enclosed), conveying the startling intelligence that hostilities had been commenced by the Hauhaus in that direction, and begging that the Arawas might be allowed to return to their own district to assist in punishing our common enemy. It is reported that the old chief Ngahuruhuru narrowly escaped being shot; fortunately, the gun pointed at him missed fire, and he with difficulty made his escape. It is a remarkable fact that this disturbance has arisen from the capture of a deserter named Peter Grant, a young man who has been living amongst the Hauhaus for more than six months, and has, during the whole of that time, been engaged in stealing horses. Peter Grant was not captured in any pa, nor were there any Natives interfered with; he was taken while travelling alone, so that I cannot but believe that this circumstance has been seized upon as a pretext for commencing hostilities. Hans Tapsall, who effected the capture, is deserving of great praise. Peter Grant has been doing much mischief amongst the Natives. It is reported that he has stolen and supplied rifles to the Patetere Natives. I believe it is true, but some difficulty will be experienced in obtaining evidence against him, as the witnesses are now open enemies against us.

On account of the reported disturbances at Rotorua about one-half the Arawa force have returned to watch the course of events in that district. It has been discovered within the last day or two that the enemy have again returned to Whakamarama, the Natives report, with strong reinforcements from the Thames District.

I have, &c.,

H. T. CLARKE,

Civil Commissioner.

The Honorable the Native Minister.

Enclosure 1 in No. 52.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. H. T. CLARKE to the Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

(D. 313.)

Civil Commissioner's Office,

Tauranga, 25th February, 1867.

SIR,— I have the honor to report, for your information, that in accordance with your instructions I left this in the Colonial steamer "Sturt," on the night of the 22nd instant, for Tairua, for the purpose of personally communicating with the Native chief Ropata, and also of ascertaining the present temper of the Natives in that direction.

Ropata had written to me previously stating that he had left Mataora, the head quarters of the Ngatiporou Hauhaus, for Tairua, on account of a rumour that had reached him that it was the intention of the Arawas to destroy Mataora.

We arrived at Tairua at daylight, and I at once communicated with the principal Natives of the place. From them I learned that Ropata had not arrived at Tairua, but would most probably be found at Otahu, a place about two miles to the south of Whangamata.

I also gathered from both Natives and Europeans that most extravagant rumours were in circulation as to the intentions of the Arawas, and great alarm was the consequence. It was stated that the Arawas were going to take advantage of the present disturbances to revenge some old grievances, and that it was their intention to sweep the whole coast as far as the Thames.

I traced these reports to some Tauranga Natives (Te Ninihi and Hamiora Tupaea), who visited their relatives residing at Otahu, and I have little doubt in my own mind they were put in circulation with a mischievous intent.

From the Europeans I learned that the Otahu Natives, the Urunguwera, a branch of the Ngaite-rangi, had been to Tairua to endeavour to sell off their boats. Mr. George Graham, jun., informed me that he had been in treaty with the Natives for the purchase of some of these boats.

That he offered them part in cash, and the balance by promissory notes, which should only hold good if they remained peaceable; that if they went to fight the promissory notes should be void. They did not object to take promissory notes, but they would not agree to the proviso.

I told the Natives of Tairua that the Arawas were the servants of the Government; that the Government had not the remotest intention of molesting them in any way as they had not, as far as we knew, identified themselves with the Ngatiporou insurgents.

They were quite satisfied with this assurance, and Rawiri, their chief, volunteered with another man to accompany me to Otahu to see Ropata and Wi Koteru, the principal men of the Urungawera.

We left Tairua about ten o'clock a.m. for Otahu, arriving there at noon. I immediately despatched a messenger to Parakiwai, a kainga three or four miles up the Otahu River, with letters to Ropata and Wi Koteru, requesting them to come down to their own pa and confer with me. The messenger returned a little after four p.m., accompanied by one man only, Wi Koteru's uncle.

From this man I learned that Ropata had left Otahu two days before for Tauranga to see me, and that Wi Koteru and a large party of his people had gone to the Thames the day before.

I gathered from him that they were in a state of great alarm; that when he visited Tauranga about two weeks ago Te Ninihi and his other friends reported to him that I had in my possession a letter, discovered in one of the rebel kaingas from some person at Otahu; that the Government were greatly incensed with the writer, and intended punishing the hapu for it.

I would remark in passing, that it is quite correct that at Akeake I discovered a letter to Hakaraia from an Otahu Native, and that the Tauranga Natives were aware of the fact. Te Ninihi and others have repeatedly pressed me to divulge the name of the writer. Although the letter is of little consequence, I have always refused to do this. I went so far as to tell them that the letter was written from Otahu. The consequence is that they have taxed their memories to remember what letters they had written, and their own guilty consciences have led them to fix upon one written by the Otahu Runanga to their friends in Tauranga, in which, according to their own account, certain objectionable expressions