

I therefore gave Captain St. George instructions to use his best endeavour to prevent by all means Te Kooti's passage into the Waikato, and render any other assistance to Major Mair in his power.

Captain St. George had only left a few hours when a special messenger arrived from Major Mair announcing Te Kooti's escape into Ahikereru. I immediately wrote a note to Captain St. George, telling him of what had occurred, and requested that all our arrangements might be held in abeyance.

On Tuesday evening (23rd) another special messenger arrived from Rotokakahi, with a letter from Rewi Tereanuku, supported by notes from Captain St. George and Dr. Nesbitt, stating that Te Kooti had returned in strong force to Motumako, and requiring immediate support. I was staggered at the conflicting nature of the accounts, especially as I was assured by Major Mair that Mr. Gilbert Mair, with the Ngatipikiao, was occupying Motumako at the very time the other party stated it was in the possession of Te Kooti.

After consultation with Colonel Harrington, I decided to start for Maketu and Matata overland, and see for myself the position of matters, and act as emergency required. On reaching Maketu, I met two gentlemen on their return from Major Mair's expedition. They informed me, as Major Mair had done, that Motumako was occupied by Ngatipikiao. I therefore immediately returned to Tauranga.

Copies of correspondence between myself and Captain St. George are herewith enclosed.

It is hard for me to explain the reason why the Arawa, especially that branch under Te Pokiha, at the last moment declined to respond to Major Mair's wishes. I am afraid that petty jealousies had much to do with it. But another fact ought to be stated which may have, in a great measure, caused the Ngatipikiao to pause. It appears that it was currently reported that a young chief, named Te Rupe, a man of great note belonging to the Ngatipikiao, was a prisoner in Te Kooti's hands. That they feared he would be shot down in an attack upon the pa.

I am aware that it is a matter of great difficulty to get the Arawa to act harmoniously together. And I am led to believe that had I been present to assist Major Mair, as I have done on several previous occasions, matters would have gone on more smoothly, and a different result arrived at. Unfortunately, it was physically impossible for me to be present.

The present position of Te Kooti's party at Ahikereru will be a matter for serious consideration of the Government. With his head-quarters at Ahikereru, Te Kooti could fall upon any of our settlements in the Bay of Plenty, choosing his own time; he is only a day and a half's march from Rotorua, or should he choose to cross over the Waikato he can do so in the same time. He can fall on Napier and Wairoa. The fact of his having such a large body of men mounted will enable him to move with rapidity and secrecy.

In my opinion no time should be lost in attacking Te Kooti, and destroying the Uriwera settlements in detail. The season is fast passing away; in a few weeks it will be impracticable.

I would beg of the Government to suspend their judgment with regard to the Arawa. There must be some cause for their conduct.

Should the Government decide upon making a combined movement to attack Te Kooti, I will pledge my word to raise such a force of Arawa as will give a satisfactory account of themselves. I very much regret that my physical state has rendered it impossible for me to accompany a force into the field, but I hope to be able to do so soon, should it be necessary.

Major Mair can raise such a force of Natives, composed of Ngaitai, Ngatipukeko, and Ngatiawa, as can be depended upon.

Major Mair has given orders for Rakuraku's pa, at Ohiwa, to be destroyed, and I proceed to Ohiwa to-morrow, in the "Clyde," to send the Arawa stationed at Ohiwa to remove all the crops in that neighbourhood.

I have, &c.,

H. T. CLARKE,
Civil Commissioner.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 30.

Copy of a Letter from Major MAIR to Mr. H. T. CLARKE.

SIR,—

Te Awa-o-te-Atua, 23rd March, 1869.

I have the honor to lay before you a detailed account of the late operations consequent upon the attack by Te Kooti on Whakatane.

On the 10th instant, at noon, I received information that the Ngatipukeko, at Rauporoa, had been attacked on the previous day at about 2 p.m. by Te Kooti, and during the afternoon I learned that the stores of Messrs. Simpkins and Milburn had been sacked and burnt. I immediately sent a messenger down the coast, to the eastward, for Natives, and, as soon as the tide permitted (8 p.m.), despatched Captain Mair with eighty men of the Armed Constabulary and Local Forces, for Whakatane. At 7 a.m. on the 11th instant, I followed with a like number of Natives of the Whakatohea and Ngaitai Tribes, and, upon reaching Whakatane at 2 p.m., found that the Ngatipukeko having expended all their ammunition and lost two of their leading chiefs, made a sort of treaty with Te Kooti, and evacuated their pa at about 8 a.m. that day, retiring towards Te Awa-o-te-Atua. The enemy were in pursuit, but, upon discovering the presence of a European force, they fell back and occupied a strong position called the Gate.

Hearing that reinforcements were coming up from Tauranga and Te Awa-o-te-Atua, I decided not to attack, as the enemy appeared to be not less than from 250 to 300 strong, and had the advantage of position. On the morning of the 12th instant, I sent twenty-five men up the Oringi River to look up the fugitives, and leaving a like number in camp, I moved out on the flat with the remainder to have a look at Te Kooti's force; they soon showed in great numbers at the Gate, and as we retired, they followed, marching in order, with cavalry on their flanks, to within 1,000 yards of our position, where they halted for a short time, and then ascending the heights, endeavoured to turn our left and get possession of the Opotiki Road; this, however, was prevented by the Ngaitai and Whakatohea, who