

to Waikato. They give, as their reason for not assisting in his capture, "That they have been some years, more or less, engaged in warfare, and that they now wish to settle down quietly."

The Natives at Ruatahuna treated the force very well, giving the men the few potatoes they had. Owing to the snow on Huiaarau we were compelled to stay at Tata Hoata until the 4th of June, when we started for Waikare-Moana. The road from Ruatahuna to Waikare has never been travelled before by Government troops. The distance is about twenty miles, through dense bush, and over the Huiaarau range, and thence over a succession of small ranges to Here Heretangi, on the Waikare-Moana Lake.

I omitted to mention that we sent a messenger to Waikare to get canoes ready to cross forces to the kainga. On arrival, we found them at the landing, and crossed over the same evening to Te Waitohi, near Tikitiki, where we were met by Te Makarini and about forty men, who expressed great pleasure at seeing us. They stated that they knew nothing of Te Kooti's movements, and had not had communication with him for several months. Six Chatham Island prisoners had been at Waikare a short time before our arrival, but were then absent catching birds. Te Makarini, however, promised to escort them to Wairoa on their return.

Being quite out of rations, both Captain Mair and myself deemed it advisable that one of us should go to Wairoa for food. Having a good knowledge of the country, I decided on going myself. I accordingly started on the night of the 6th, with fifteen men, and reached Clyde the following evening. I obtained rations, but was detained on my way back by fresh in the Waiau river and heavy sea on the lake, and did not get to Waitohi till evening of 14th.

I would beg respectfully to suggest that Government send authority and assistance to Te Makarini to raise the two Government boats that are now sunk in the lake. I am quite confident that if Te Kooti is driven out of Te Wera country he will seek shelter at Waikareiti, a lake situated between Te Papuni and Waikare-Moana. This lake abounds with birds and fish, and is the best and most secure hiding place for him. In case of his so doing the said boats would be of great service at Waikare, where they would be required to cross forces. The boats at present on the lake are in charge of Te Makirini, but are too small to be of much use. I may further state for your information, that Te Kooti has been heard to state, that should he leave Te Wera district he will either go to Matakuhia range or Waikareiti.

On the 16th of June, we moved the force to Whanganui, by boats, and commenced march for Maungapowhatu. The track leads up the bed of the Hapurū-Wahine river for ten miles, and then over undulating bush country for about three miles, when it crosses the Putaehinu range to Maungapowhatu. The distance from Waikare is about twenty-one miles.

At Te Kakari (Mangapowhatu), we surprised the Ngatihuri in their kainga. They had heard we were on our way, but expected us to come out at another village (Toreatai).

The day after our arrival the Natives, under the chiefs Renata, Te Purewa, and Te Puehu, held a meeting, and told us to return *viâ* Ruatahuna, as Te Kooti was not with them. Captain Mair and myself told them we should not interfere with peaceably disposed Natives; that we were in search of Te Kooti, Kereopa, and their followers, whom they (Ngatihuri) had sheltered and assisted, and that we had no intention of going back, that if they resisted us they must stand the consequences. They then promised to give information of Te Kooti should he again visit their place, and stated that they had not seen Kereopa for two months. (This I do not believe).

At Tauaki we met three Arawas, from Ohiwa, who had come up for the purpose of getting information about Kereopa. The chief Kereru was at this settlement, but on hearing of our approach left for Ruatahuna. It seems he is not anxious to be seen by Europeans in his own country, and is also ashamed of having given to Te Kooti the Spencer rifle presented by Wi Maihi to Tamaikowha.

Finding that our provisions were getting short, we determined to lose no time in getting to Te Wera and Te Houapapa, but on arrival at Opokere found it impossible to reach there, owing to the snow at Te Kahihatea and Kahunui, and also that no food could be obtained for the road. We then decided on going out to Opotiki, *viâ* Waimana.

The chief Tamaikowha accompanied us to Opotiki, where we arrived on the 25th ultimo.

I would beg to propose that a good reward be offered to Tamaikowha for the capture of both Te Kooti and Kereopa. I believe he would undertake it. His knowledge of the country, and influence with Ngatihuri, would give him a great advantage. He states he has never received instructions to apprehend Kereopa, but has merely been told to send him away should he visit his kainga.

I beg to bring to notice of the Government the conduct of the chief Hapurona Kohi, who volunteered to accompany the expedition, and was invaluable among the Urewera.

I cannot speak too highly of the men under command of Captain Mair and myself. During the whole expedition there was not one instance of bad behaviour. My thanks are also due to Sergeant Bluett, Armed Constabulary, for the energy and activity he displayed on all occasions.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE PREECE, Captain,  
Commanding Native Contingent.

Major Roberts, Commanding District,  
Tauranga.

No. 43.

Captain PREECE to His Honor J. D. ORMOND,

SIR,—

Te Wairoa, 8th June, 1871.

I have the honor to report for your information that I left Ruatahuna on 4th instant, crossed Huiaarau range, and arrived at Waikare on the following day. We were well received by Urewera, but the Chatham Islanders were not present; Makarini has, however, promised to get them and escort them here.