

Ngauruhoe. Particularly feared was the Ngatitama chief Te Hau Paimarire of Moawhango (again with Tuwharetoa ties) 'a bellicose Hauhau chief' whom Nicholls had been told to avoid at all costs, although in later life a valued friend and informant of R. T. Batley. Another American, David Manson, in March 1882, only twelve months before Nicholls's incursion, claimed to have been the first to have ascended Ngauruhoe with Maori permission, which statement if not strictly correct did mark the easing of restrictions which disappeared after the acceptance of the Amnesty. Such authority meant that he had to pay the chiefs £10 for the privilege and take five Maori guides who also needed their reward. More importantly, his European companions were Ernest Lys who years earlier had accompanied William Collie, Ngauruhoe's first summit photographer, and John Turner. Turner knew the mountain and something of its European history but little about Ruapehu their present problem. Nicholls describes in the *Herald* how he and Turner made their way cautiously down to where their horses were tethered, quickly mounted and swung south in a wide arc but still within gunshot of Te Hau's camp fires. The almost certain reason for the omission of this section from the book comes from a story by R. B. Maunsell, one time stock-manager for Grace Brothers and with Roderick Gray one of a number of other self-appointed guides to the region. Maunsell's first ascent of Ngauruhoe was in 1879—he was to make 13 or 14 in the next eleven years and had accompanied Cussen up Paretaitonga in March 1883. As he delighted to recount later, when Nicholls thought he was being pursued by Maoris over the Onetapu desert and saw the gleam of the moonlight on Te Hau's muskets and was even sniffed about the ankles by their dogs, what he really saw was the camp fire, of Cussen his partner Simms (and Maunsell) while the moonlight could only have gleamed from the brass bands on their tripods.²⁵

To Kerry-Nicholls this discovery was doubtless only a trifle in his preoccupation to assure the success of the book. In September 1883 he visited Wellington to press his case in person.²⁶ He had doubtless come south by the then tedious indirect link with Auckland by sea from Onehunga to New Plymouth and thence by rail and coach to the capital and was lucky enough to share the tedium of the journey with a friendly Parliamentarian James P. Joyce, Member for Awarua. Joyce introduced him to Atkinson and probably Rolleston,²⁷ to whom he wrote formally asking for assistance. The reply a fortnight later, was a little cool: the Government 'after looking carefully into the printed matter which you forwarded' (not, it will be noted, a manuscript as he told Grey, but clearly *Herald* clippings) did not think they could accept any responsibility, although 'when it has undergone the revision