

Nelson, 8th March, 1847.

SIR,—

In order to carry out the instructions which I received from your Excellency, at Wellington, on the 19th of last month, I have the honor to report that I proceeded in the "Victoria" brig, in company with Mr. Fox, the New Zealand Company's Agent at Nelson, to Port Underwood, where we arrived on the 20th; and made arrangements with some whalers to take us to the Wairau river.

In the course of the day I visited a party of Natives, some of whom had just returned from thence; and ascertained that I should not find any people residing there. They themselves were not in the habit of residing at the Wairau, but about six weeks previously twenty of their number went to cultivate potatoes, and had, as far as I could learn, planted from 3 to 4 acres. They also told me that no one had resided permanently in the district since the Rangitani Tribe was conquered and taken captive from it by Rauparaha and his people the Ngatitoo; except a party of fugitives, consisting of nine individuals of the conquered tribe. These concealed themselves after the fight, but have gradually emerged from their hiding places, and scattered themselves over the country. The Natives date the attack of Rauparaha about ten years back.

They likewise said that it had been the intention of the Natives to cultivate land at the Wairau at the time of the massacre; but that, after it had taken place, the district was considered as sacred.

To obtain permission to cultivate as much as they had lately done, they had sent messengers to Rauparaha, who failed in seeing him, in consequence of his being taken prisoner by the Government; but Puaha, in the absence of the other Chief, gave them the liberty of doing what they required.

Mr. Jenkins, a gentleman connected with the Wesleyan Mission, who assisted me at the interview with the Natives, informed me it was his own and the general impression in the neighbourhood, that these people had recently gone to cultivate at the Wairau, merely to strengthen, as they supposed, their claim to the land, having heard that the Europeans were again turning their attention to the district. Mr. Jenkins resides near the Pa, and would be likely to know the sentiments of the Natives.

Their former intention of cultivating, at the time of the massacre, had, it is supposed by Mr. Jenkins, the same object in view.

From all I could learn, it would appear that the Wairau district has been very little used or occupied since the expulsion of the Rangitane tribe.

The Natives residing at Port Underwood, and with whom I had communication, consist of 20 men, and about the same number of women, belonging to the Ngatitoo tribe; and 9 men and 1 woman of the Rangitane tribe.

The latter are the slaves, but one of their number, Kaikora, has acquired much influence, and may now be considered the head man of the little settlement, being referred to on all occasions; when I requested the people to tell me the boundaries of the Wairau district, he drew a plan of the coast on the ground—naming each place. I endeavoured to obtain the inland boundaries, or limits; but the Natives and Kaikora seemed never to have given them a thought, and looked upon my inquisitiveness on this point as useless and troublesome.

The boundaries of the Wairau district is described by Kaikora, and the Natives residing at Port Underwood.

The same people gave me the following list of the owners of the district as described above.

They are all of the Ngatitoo tribe. They have no particular portion set apart for each, but have a joint interest in the whole.

The consent required of

Puaka,	Puaha,
Nohoroa,	Rauparaha,
Martin, and	Nohoroa (Waterhouse)
Thompson,	Te Kanae,
	Rangihacata,
	Tamaihangia,
	Pukeko,
	Pukekowhatu, and
	Pikiwau (or Te Wawhanua, a rebel)

In addition to the above list there are many who have claims; but these are the chief.

I was informed by the Natives at Port Underwood that the Ngatiawa tribe from the Waitohi in the Sound have lately been cultivating on the Tuamarino, a branch of the Wairau river; and that they (the Port Underwood Natives) drove them off and destroyed their cultivations.

As the weather proved unfavorable for entering the Wairau river, and the men we had engaged to take us considered there might be no opportunity of doing so for some days, we abandoned the original intention of ascending the Valley of the Wairau from the sea, and determined on entering it from its inland extremity and following its course downwards to Cloudy Bay. For this purpose we proceeded to Nelson, and set out, accompanied by three Natives and one of the New Zealand Company's surveyors, Mr. Budge, who had lately been engaged in cutting a line from the Nelson District into the Wairau. We followed his route, which keeps on the west side of a range of mountains stretching to the south of Nelson, and separating the Wairau from the Waimea. A walk of 40 miles brought us to