

request that your Excellency will be good enough to inform me on what authority the prisoners referred to are to be tried by courts martial.

I have, &c.,

D. A. CAMERON,  
Lieut.-General.

His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B., &c., &c.

No. 50.

Lieut.-General Sir D. A. CAMERON to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,—

Camp Manutahi, 17th March, 1865.

Since I wrote to you the day before yesterday we have been fortunate enough to discover a line practicable for carts between Kakaramea and Manawapou, which does not pass through this place or near the bush, so that I hope no post will be necessary between Kakaramea and Manawapou. I rode to the latter place this morning, and I think that we shall be able to land supplies there by surf boats in calm weather, which will save convoys. Cadell is to bring the "Sandfly" and surf boats off Manawapou to-morrow, in order to ascertain this point.

The quantity of food here is surprising,—greater than we found at Rangiawhia. This is the third day we have been digging up potatoes and cutting maize, and we have not yet finished. It is very strange that I never heard of the existence of this settlement when I was at Wanganui.

I send a detachment of three hundred men to Manawapou to-morrow to form a post, and to make a road for us to advance towards Waimate,—that is if your instructions do not oblige me to move the whole force back to the Waitotara.

I have, &c.,

D. A. CAMERON,  
Lieut.-General.

His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

No. 51.

Lieut.-General Sir D. A. CAMERON to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,—

Camp, Manutahi, 17th March, 1865.

A passage in one of your letters of the 13th (that relating to reinforcements from England) seems to me to be at variance with the views you expressed the morning you were at my head quarters on the Patea, in regard to operations in this part of the country. On that occasion I explained to you why I had refrained from attacking the Wereroa Pa when I was at Nukumaru, namely, that the position was so formidable, and at that time occupied in such strength by the rebels that I considered it could not be taken without serious loss to us, uncompensated by any corresponding loss on the side of the rebels, who could at any time escape into the bush with impunity. I stated that this was the reason why I had advanced to the Waitotara, afterwards to the Patea, and why I thought it necessary to consult you as to future operations. You expressed your approval of my proceedings, and requested that I should continue to advance, and occupy the line of coast between the Patea and Taranaki—if possible meeting Colonel Warre, who you suggested should advance towards me from Taranaki. I pointed out to you that Colonel Warre's force being barely sufficient to hold all the country it was then occupying he could not move towards me; but I promised to advance myself towards Taranaki as far as the force at my disposal would permit. My recent movements have been regulated accordingly.

I now refer you to the fifth paragraph of your letter of the 13th, and I would observe that the country north of Wanganui to the Patea can not be subdued without taking possession of the Wereroa Pa; indeed I believe that the capture of that position is all that is necessary to give us possession of the whole country between the Kai-iwi and the Patea, for between the Waitotara and the Patea the country is perfectly open, and not likely to be defended. I wish, therefore, you would inform me whether you consider the immediate possession of the Waitotara block of such consequence that you wish me to attack the Wereroa Pa at once notwithstanding the risk to which I have referred; or whether you wish me to continue my advance towards Taranaki.

I need not tell you that both operations can not be carried on at the same time. My first impulse on receiving your letter of the 13th was to remove back at once to the Waitotara, and make preparations for attacking the Wereroa Pa; but on reflection I thought it better to continue advancing until I heard from you, and I trust that you will let me know your wishes so clearly that I may be enabled to act without the embarrassment which I have continually felt during this war from the want of definite instructions.

I have, &c.,

D. A. CAMERON,  
Lieut.-General.

His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

No. 52.

Lieut.-General Sir D. A. CAMERON to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,—

Camp Manutahi, 17th March, 1865.

I have received your letter of yesterday's date, from which I learn that you consider small bodies of men in small stockades the best arrangement for a post. I should have thought it the best plan to leave these matters of detail to myself and the Officer Commanding Royal Engineers. The number of men at a post depends upon the object for which that post is established. When the object is merely to command the ground in its immediate vicinity,—as for instance a post at the mouth of a river for the protection of boats entering it, a few men are sufficient; but when a post has to furnish escorts to large convoys, &c., the case is different. We shall probably require posts of each description. Those of the first will be chiefly on the coast where no timber is to be procured. Some of the second description may be necessary in the neighbourhood of bush, but even in that case I know from experience that it takes a long time to construct a stockade of any size, and during that time a strong detachment would be necessary to protect the men at work. Notwithstanding, therefore, what the Government may think,