

Enclosure in No. 36.

Copy of a Letter from Captain HAWES to Lieut.-Colonel LYON.

SIR,—

Wairoa, 24th April, 1869.

I have the honor to report that, in accordance with your instructions, I started at 7 a.m. on the 20th instant from this post, with a party of thirty-four of the Wairoa Rifle Volunteers, and marched to the bank of the Whenuakura River, below Putahi, where I was met by No. 9 Division Armed Constabulary (Ngatiporou), under Captain Ferris, and the Patea Rifles, under Captain Gelling, together numbering ninety of all ranks. The two canoes brought up by Mr. Booth were much delayed by the unexpected bends and stoppages in the river between the mouth and Putahi. We remained, as the men were wet, at the old camp of Titokowaru's, on the slope beyond Putahi, having found foot-tracks a few days old of two or three Natives, about the clearings at that place.

We started early on the morning of the 21st, sending some men down to bring up the canoes. At the eel-weir above, both foot-tracks and the remains of a fire were seen, the latter still smouldering.

We continued up the left side of the river, but generally at a considerable distance from the bank, along which we could not travel, and came in the afternoon to a small kainga in a hollow, half a mile from the river, from which place we followed an old track over a high ridge overlooking the river for a great distance. We saw from this point what we supposed to be smoke, at a distance of two or three miles up the river; and as it was then too late to advance, we returned to the kainga that we had just left and encamped for the night. No Natives had apparently lived at or used this place for the last two years. I had been obliged to leave the canoes behind, not far above Putahi, as they could only be brought on at a very slow rate indeed, on account of the long bends and great number of snags in the river.

On the morning of the 22nd we started at daybreak, and, after leaving our swags at an old eel-weir, proceeded very cautiously up the river, over very rough broken country, densely covered with timber, scrub, and supplejack. Our progress here was very slow as we had scouts (Ngatiporou) out in advance constantly—without success, however, as they could find neither tracks nor signs of any Natives having been in the vicinity, nor were there any cultivations or even flats to be seen from the ridges and tree tops, the broken ranges coming close to the river everywhere. After searching for the place where the supposed smoke was seen, without success, we returned in the evening to our last camp, as the rations were getting short, and there was no probability of our finding anything in the shape of supplies.

On the 23rd we started at 7 a.m., and on our way to Putahi I went off with a few men, and found the road (a bad one) by which the Hauhaus had brought their horses from Moturoa when their main body went up the country.

The Ngatiporou and Rifles left us at Putahi for Patea, and the Wairoa Rifle Volunteers returned to Wairoa, arriving at 4 p.m.

I do not think that there are any Natives on the Whenuakura, or food for any; the tracks seen below Putahi probably having been those of a small party who most likely came from the direction of the Patea River to visit the place. There are no doubt some few canoes on the river; but as, of course, they are hidden, they cannot be found without searching the river banks, which can only be done by a tolerably strong party in canoes, and at a great expenditure of time and labour.

The Ngatiporou I must praise most highly, they being the best bushmen I have seen, and also most willing and obedient in every respect.

The Patea and Wairoa Rifles did their best, though on the first and second days some of the men did not march so well as afterwards.

I may mention that on my return to this post smoke was reported to me as having been seen in the afternoon, at the rear of Okatuku. Captain Bryce also reports having seen smoke from Nukumaru in the same direction.

I have, &c.,

ROBT. N. HAWES, Captain,
Commanding W.R.V.

Colonel Lyon, Commanding Patea Militia District.

No. 37.

Copy of a Letter from Major NOAKE to the Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

(No. 224.)

SIR,—

Militia Office, Wanganui, 29th April, 1869.

I have the honor to enclose you a copy of Captain Kells' report of his reconnoissance, by which you will perceive that although no signs of Natives have been observed recently, yet valuable knowledge of the country is obtained, as well as keeping the country free from marauding parties.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. Colonel Haultain, Defence Minister,
Wellington.

M. NOAKE, Major,
Commanding Wanganui Militia District.

Enclosure in No. 37.

Copy of a Letter from Captain KELLS to Major NOAKE.

SIR,—

Weraroa Redoubt, 28th April, 1869.

I have the honor to inform you that, in accordance with orders received, I proceeded with the