

29th.—I took the Kai Iwi men and ten of the Native Contingent through Otapawa about three miles, and found the village of Te Wanganui, which I destroyed, with a little other property. The Veterans under Captain Kells struck in behind Keteonatea about seven miles, destroyed a village, cultivations, and a quantity of seed potatoes.

30th.—The Cavalry made a reconnaissance along the Waingongoro River to its mouth, thence to Mokoia. The Veterans and a portion of Wanganui Natives left camp to find a village I had seen the day before, but could not reach owing to the Tangahoe Stream being impassable. They succeeded in finding it after a twelve miles' walk. It proved to be Turangariri, an important village; the whares, capable of accommodating 400 families, were very large and well kept. No crops left in the large cultivations. Numbers of very fine and well-bred pigs. The pa was destroyed. The track leading to it was broad and well beaten, and protected by earthworks. This is the place the rebels retreated to when driven out of Otapawa by General Chute.

31st.—Mr. Booth and party returned after a very fatiguing march, judging from the appearance of the men. They were successful. I have much pleasure in appending Mr. Booth's Report, which will speak for itself. The Veterans marched for Manawapou, and the Kai Iwi Cavalry to Patea.

1st June.—The Cavalry marched to Waitotara; Veterans to Patea; No. 3 Division Armed Constabulary and Carlyle Volunteers to Manawapou; the Wanganui Native Contingent to Patea.

On the 2nd the Armed Constabulary returned to Patea under the command of Lieutenant Smith, of the Wanganui Militia, that officer being a volunteer. I placed him on duty, there being no officer left with the division. During the time the force was out they experienced most inclement weather. Mr. Booth's party in the bush were wet the whole of the time they were out. Nevertheless they did their work cheerfully and well.

I have, &c.,
M. NOAKE,
Major Commanding.

The Hon. Colonel Haultain.

Enclosure in No. 40.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. J. BOOTH, R.M., to Major NOAKE.

SIR,—

Patea, 1st June, 1869.

I have the honor to report for your information, that the expedition which left Matangarara on Friday, the 28th ultimo, with three days' provisions, and of which I went in charge, after passing through Taiporohenui, crossed a stream called Mangemange. We left Otapawa on our left, and entered the bush at a village called Te Wanganui, directly opposite Turangarere. On entering the bush we found an apparently well-worn though not recent track, leading directly inland, and I at once concluded that it led to the Patea River south of Te Ngaire, and to which place Tukino and others of the Tangahoe hapu had retreated after they, with Titokowaru, had left Whakarama. We followed the track, therefore, which led us in a north-easterly direction; and after a rather laborious march, owing to the supple-jack, fallen trees, &c., we halted at about 3 p.m. at a stream, the name of which I do not know. The men at once commenced to put up their "maimais," and to collect firewood for the night; and at sundown, after the sentries had been posted, the fires were lighted, and we were able to dry our clothes, which had become saturated in passing through the wet bush. At daylight next morning (29th), after having breakfasted, we again marched. We had occasional hills to ascend, the road at times leading along a ridge for miles; then descending again, we came on to a large extent of perfectly flat country. On this day we passed the source of the Tangahoe River, a large lake called Rotokare. The marching here was very arduous, as we had to cross a great number of streams; the rest being swampy, the path soon became a mass of mud, intersected by roots of trees, the men going up to their knees in mud at each step. After about a mile of this work, we got on to higher ground, and continued the march until half an hour before dark, when we encamped, observing the same order about fires, &c., as on the previous night. Our second day's journey was much longer than the first, and as yet we had seen nothing to lead us to suppose we were near the Patea River. Old sleeping-camps had been seen at intervals on the road, and on this day we saw one apparently only a few weeks old.

Next morning the Sergeant-Major reported that twenty men were knocked up, and not able to go further. As our provisions were nearly exhausted, I gave orders that the twenty tired men, together with five Natives, should at once start on their journey homeward. I then took twenty Volunteers, together with fifteen Natives, accompanied by Lieut. Blake and Ensign Hiscox, of the Carlyle Rifles, Mr. Monroe, surveyor, and Lieutenant Pehira Turei, Native Contingent, and left the rest of the men in camp under charge of Lieutenant Smith. My proposition was to go in light marching order, walk as far as we could for an hour and a half, and then return to camp, if we did not in that time strike the Patea River. We started accordingly, and in less than an hour we reached the river, which at this point is about 100 yards wide.

Lieut. Blake and myself, with two Native scouts, went a mile or two up the bank of the river; we came upon old encampments. We noticed some recently broken twigs, showing the track, which was here very difficult to find. On climbing a tree we saw an old clearing on the opposite (left) side of the river, but no signs of any recent occupation. As we had no means of getting up a further supply of provisions, we could not explore the country.

The country here is perfectly flat, apparently for many miles, and is thickly covered with magnificent timber trees—rimu, matai, kahikatea, &c. The river is rather rapid, but it has a good depth of water. After exploring the river for some time, we returned to our camp of the previous night, and after a fatiguing day's march we arrived at our first night's camping ground. Our provisions were here quite exhausted.