

them, as his whole European force had orders to march at daylight same morning, and were just starting, at 8 a.m., when Natives came in sight. They did not start till Wednesday, and took three days to march fifteen miles. Herrick had sent back to Ropata he had tested his patience beyond endurance, and he would go on without him. Ropata is said to be in a most sulky state, and displeased with Richmond from some cause, probably only a pretext for his political bias. 100 Wairoa Natives, who joined contingent, seemed altogether led by Ropata. Herrick expected to reach Te Kiwi on 23rd, within two miles of lake. Boat was to start on 4th on a sleigh from Tukurangi, and if any luck, should get to lake in two days. Weather looking threatening. If pontoons not up in time, Herrick would make a raft on the spot with split stuff. He heard there was plenty of timber on lake. Natives seemed good deal influenced by superstition about the autumn always sending down rain and snow to protect the Ureweras. Ensign Witty, with Mohaka party, sixty men in all, expected to join that day. I am sending despatches to St. George, Whitmore, and Herrick, at 10 p.m. this evening. Telegraph if you wish anything sent. In a P.S., dated 23rd, 11 a.m., I observe Herrick says Natives, 100 altogether, have at last arrived, and men in good spirits, and ready to go on. The last bugle has gone, so good bye. I will reach the Kiwi to-night.

RUSSELL.

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Hon. Mr. RUSSELL to Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

Napier, 27th May, 1869.

SPLENDID morning—sea smooth as glass. "St. Kilda" arrived at anchorage last night, 9. Immediately I heard her gun I went to Spit, got pontoons on board with Mohi, Maori prisoner, and twenty-five Mohaka Natives, with two boat loads of potatoes and other provisions, given them by Tareha, and got steamer off again for Wairoa by 11.30. I went on board and saw the Ngatiporou chiefs, who are in good spirits.

RUSSELL.

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Hon. Mr. RUSSELL to Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

Napier, 27th May, 1869.

DESPATCHES have just arrived from Major Herrick, dated 24th May, from Onepoto, on the lake. He left there at 6 a.m., Tuesday. He had at last reached Onepoto about noon that day, without any opposition. He could see the enemy's fires and their pa across the lake at Tiki Tiki, which appears to be about three miles off. He thinks distance can be considerably shortened by cutting a track round Panekeri Bluff, and getting opposite to it, but had not yet had time to reconnoitre. By the new and uneven appearance of the palisading round the pa at Tiki Tiki, the enemy is now evidently busy fortifying. Ropata and the Natives are now in good humour. Tiki Tiki Pa appears to be built on a spur or tongue of land running from one of the ranges down into the lake, which is about 200 yards from it. The palisading seems to connect the pah with water. This is probably to cover the approach to it. There is little doubt they intend making a stand there. Herrick regrets not having pontoons up. The road is precipitous and very bad in places, but can be made practicable for a sleigh with a little work. He hopes to have the boat up on Monday. The Naval Brigade is to commence sawing up timber as soon as they arrive with the punt. The pah being a strong one, it will be a great point to land as many men at the same time as possible. There is plenty of splendid timber here, chiefly Rimu. We are chiefly dependent on canoe navigation. The Natives have been more expeditious lately with their trips. Major Herrick describes the lake as most picturesque, but the country is of the most black and wretched kind; the soil is miserably poor. They found about a dozen horses, which were quickly secured. The road to Maungapohatu seems a succession of wooded ranges and ravines. Ensign Tupper had arrived with twenty-three men of the Armed Constabulary from Napier; they were rather foot-sore. Ihaka Whanga had also reached Wairoa with fifty picked men, and was to leave for the front with a force of Armed Constabulary to-day (Thursday).

RUSSELL.

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Hon. Mr. RUSSELL to Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

Napier, 29th May, 1869.

HERRICK writes from Waikare-Moana, 27th May, 1869:—"Ropata goes back to get more Natives. Please send the 'St. Kilda' up as soon as possible to Wairoa, where he will await her. Unless he is permitted to do this, he will, I fear, return with the men he has here at present. It will take me a fortnight before I can have my flotilla arrangements complete. I am going to build two boats 40 x 10, capable of holding each fifty men, and if I can get pontoons up I will thus be enabled to land 200 men at once. That will be of immense advantage. The canoe transport is now getting on well, but I fear much a good many of the pack-horses will break down, the food is so bad. The 'St. Kilda' will have to take Ropata to Tuparoa and bring him and his men back. I think he over-estimates the strength and capabilities of the enemy, but I suppose we must humour him if we wish to retain his services at all.—HERRICK."

Captain Deighton writes me that the "St. Kilda" succeeded in landing all her pontoons safely, and part of her goods on the 27th. Bar a little rough, but expected to be all right yesterday. She would complete it at an early hour.

RUSSELL.

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Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN to Hon. Mr. RUSSELL.

Wellington, 29th May, 1869.

THE "Ahuriri" is only just signalled, 4.30 p.m., and will not therefore start till to-morrow at earliest.