

No. 3.

Captain PREECE to Inspector ROBERTS.

SIR,—

Te Teko, 19th June, 1873.

In accordance with instructions contained in your memo. A.C., 208-73, I have the honor to forward the following report of the duties performed by the Company of Native Contingent under my command from the 1st June, 1872, to the 31st of May, 1873, for the information of the Hon. the Defence Minister :—

MILITARY DUTIES.

Average Strength.—The average strength of the Native Contingent under my command was, until the 31st December, 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Sub-Lieutenant, 1 Sergt.-Major, 4 Sergeants, 4 Corporals, 4 mounted and 77 foot Privates.

On the 31st of December Sub-Lieutenant Bluett was transferred to Captain Mair's Company, and the force was reduced to its present strength, viz.—1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 1 Sergt.-Major, 2 Sergeants, 2 Corporals, 3 mounted and 42 foot Privates.

Parades and Drills.—Parades at 8 a.m. for fatigues, viz., road work, fencing, and other camp duties. Inspection parades at each post every Sunday (weather permitting), and monthly muster parade on the last day in each month. Drill with arms and accoutrements in Company and skirmishing drill at each post when not engaged on road work.

The Company was put through aiming drill and class firing in January last at this post and Fort Galatea.

Operations in the Field.—The force has not been engaged in any operations in the field since the escape of Te Kooti to Waikato in May, 1872.

Mails and Despatches.—A mounted orderly leaves Te Teko every Thursday at 4 p.m., to meet the Armed Constabulary orderly at Matata, and waits there until 11 a.m. the next day, in order to bring despatches or telegrams that come by mail from Tauranga. Communication is also kept up between Te Teko and Tauranga, and Te Teko and Fort Galatea, Kaiteriria, and Opepe, by mounted men of the force. One mounted man is stationed regularly at Fort Galatea. There is also one foot private stationed at Ahikereru to convey letters to, and bring letters from the Uriwera. He acts in conjunction with other Uriwera messengers.

Escorts and Guards.—One escort was furnished on the 5th of December in charge of civil prisoner to Tauranga.

A guard of one non-commissioned officer and 3 privates mount daily at each post.

Target Ranges.—Good ranges with markers butts have been made at Te Teko and Fort Galatea; wooden targets have been made at each post; timber sawn by Native Contingent.

Erection of Redoubts and Stockades.—From the 27th of December to the 14th of January, the men at Te Teko were engaged in forming a new redoubt, eighty feet (80) square, with two flanking angles; walls six feet high; ditch eight feet wide, and banquette two feet wide; inside supported by sawn slabs.

Timber has been cut by members of the Native Contingent for buildings in new redoubt, part of which had to be carted 32 miles, and the remainder 10 miles; shingles and house blocks have also been split and carted down by Native Contingent.

Two men were engaged in squaring pumice for chimnies in redoubt from 7th of April to 10th of May. Tables, shelves, doors, and pigeon holes, have been made for raupo house which is at present used as an orderly room. Kitchens have been made for the men, at a distance of 100 yards from the redoubt, in order to lessen the danger of fire in the raupo houses, which are still in use.

The redoubt at Fort Galatea has been repaired, new raupo houses built, and a kitchen has been erected outside the redoubt.

CIVIL DUTIES.

Information was laid against a Native named Rawiri, for selling spirits without a license. Sergeant-Major Hall attended the Resident Magistrate's Court at Maketu to prosecute.

On the 1st of December a Native, named Hepeta Tuki Kauri, broke into Mr. Jacobson's store at this post. He was apprehended, and escaped twice, but was captured at Kokohenau by members of the force, and sent to Tauranga for trial.

PUBLIC AND USEFUL WORKS.

The following road work has been completed, as per annexed schedule :—Te Teko and Otekiri Road, 15,968 cubic yards of embankment, road 20 feet wide through swamp, formation 110 chains through light fern and heavy manuka land; on Te Teko and Fort Galatea Road 1026 cubic yards embankment, 15,965 cubic yards side cutting, 1101 cubic yards block cutting, and 427 chains formation; Te Teko and Richmond Road, 528 cubic yards embankment; Te Teko and Whakatane, 12 chains formation and 49 chains of road 10 feet wide, was made through bush at Ohui to saw-pit. The total number of chain completed during the year is 937, and the total number of cubic yards, of earth removed is 34,588.

During the months of January, February, and March very little road work was done, owing to the men being engaged in building new redoubt, being put through class firing, fencing Government paddock and other camp duties.

In addition to the work shown in the Schedule, 40 dray loads of manuka fascines were cut for repairing the Titinara swamp road, which had sunk, and required to be raised.

On Te Teko and Fort Galatea Road one box culvert has been made, 18 inches by 12, and 26 feet long. At Te Umuhika a bridge has been made across the Waikamihī Stream, which had become dangerous to travellers, owing to a quicksand in the centre of the ford. A substantial bridge has been built; 4 heart of puriri piles, 14 feet long, 12 x 12; 4 stringers, 27 feet long, 12 x 9, fastened to piles and sills with 20-inch iron bolts; planking, heart of totara;—the material, except the planking (which was sawn by the Native Contingent) was supplied by the Public Works Department, the labour only being done by members of the Native Contingent. A quantity of timber has also been sawn for bridges and culverts that has not yet been used.