

I may state that I do not think that the return will prove to be an accurate one for the reason that during the month of April, when it was in course of preparation, the Natives in this part of the colony were all on the move to attend the Native Land Court at Cambridge, and Tawhiao's meeting at Hikurangi, and added to this the growing disinclination on the part of the Maoris to have their numbers recorded. I think, therefore, that in all probability there are instances where a double return has been made, and others where travelling parties have altogether escaped enumeration. Under these circumstances it will be almost impossible to institute comparisons for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is an increase or a decrease in any one hapu or tribe. Speaking generally, I should say that there is a steady decrease, but that it is slower in the case of the Upper Waikato or Kingite Natives than in the other portion of the district. Unfortunately the numbers of these people can only be estimated, as free access to all parts of their country is not permitted.

Since the last census was prepared in 1878, no serious diseases or epidemics have visited the Natives in these districts, and the general health has been better than usual.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
W. G. MAIR.

No. 5

Mr. G. T. WILKINSON, Native Agent, Thames, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Thames, 3rd May, 1881.

In accordance with instructions contained in Circular No. 14, 9th February, 1881, appointing me an enumerator for the purpose of taking a census of the Maori and half-caste population in the Thames and Cape Colville Districts, I have the honor to forward herewith the returns (supplied to me) filled up, showing the numbers of male and female adults, and male and female children under fifteen years of age, belonging to each tribe, sub-tribe, and hapu within the Hauraki District; also, those of other tribes who are either permanently located, or are at present sojourning in this district, as well as the number of half-castes, male and female.

This information has been compiled by me, partly with the assistance of the Native Assessor of this district, and one or two other Natives (from whom I obtained written lists of the numbers of people of different sexes living in their particular districts), but principally from information in my possession, obtained through my lengthened residence and intimate acquaintance with the Natives of the whole of this district—information which I found to be more reliable than that which is to be obtained by sending people to assess the Maori population of a given settlement at a given time, as, on account of the scattered way of living that the Natives have at this season of the year, it is almost certain that information obtained in that way would be faulty. But by reference to office documents, to grantees of blocks already through the Court, to information got by enquiry from Natives, and private knowledge of my own, I have been enabled to compile a schedule for present census purposes and for future office use, that contains, I believe (with a few exceptions hereafter referred to), the name of every man, woman, and child within the Hauraki District, and also shows the particular tribe, sub-tribe, or hapu to which each one belongs, and the settlement where each one resides.

In order to make this list as complete as possible it has been necessary for me to make more use of clerical than Native assistance. I have, however, through working over-time myself, been able to get the work done without exceeding the limit of expenditure mentioned by me in my telegram of the 14th of March.

The census returns now forwarded show an increase of 186 over that furnished by Mr. E. W. Puckey for the year 1878; but it must not be understood from that that the population of this district has increased to such an extent during the last three years, or that the births have out-numbered the deaths in such a proportion during that period, although it is a fact that the Upper Piako District has received considerable additions from Natives of the King Country during the last two or three years. I can, therefore, only account for the difference in numbers from the fact that Mr. Puckey had not at that time the material at his command from which to compile a strictly accurate return, and therefore in several cases the returns were given as estimated. I have myself had in two cases (namely, that of the gum-digging population and some of the residents of Upper Piako) to give the numbers as estimated, on account of the great difficulty of getting information regarding some of the latter, through their reticence in supplying particulars regarding themselves, and in consequence of the nomadic habits of the former.

The general state of health amongst the Natives in this district has, during the last three years, been good, they not having suffered from any particular disease or epidemic, the mortality occurring principally amongst the very young and the aged, and not so much amongst those of middle age, the cause of which I attribute to the fact that drunkenness has not been so prevalent as in past years. The sickness that has proved most fatal to Natives in this district has been consumption and disease of the lungs in the elder ones; and simple childhood diseases, accelerated by want of proper care and nourishment, in the younger ones.

The Under-Secretary, Native Department,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,
GEORGE T. WILKINSON,
Native Agent.

No. 6.

Mr. H. W. BRABANT, R.M., Tauranga, to the UNDER-SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Office, Tauranga, 17th May, 1881.

In accordance with the instructions contained in your Circular Letter No. 14, 9th February, 1881, I have the honor to transmit herewith the census of the Maori population of the Bay of Plenty and Rotorua Districts, exclusive of that portion of the former which has been entrusted to Mr. Bush, viz., the country to the east of the Tarawera River.