

Against him his enemies once launched a great amphibious operation. Two thousand fighting men drove their war canoes into the tide that rips and eddies round Kapiti. And the tide had an important effect on the outcome of the battle. According to one account, an extra large wave overturned the leading canoe and others crashed into it. Seizing the opportunity offered in the confusion which followed, the defenders rushed in and routed the invaders.

Another story of the time would seem to make Hinemoa's swim from Mokoia Island, in Lake Rotorua, look like child's play. A Maori woman is said to have swum four miles from Kapiti to north of Waikanae. And, as if that were not enough, one narrator adds that she carried a child on her back! Any one who has watched a launch leave Paraparaumu for Kapiti will understand what that swim meant. The boat is first caught in a strong rip which carries it northwards. Then, in the middle of the channel and again near Kapiti, the current changes.

Europeans came to Kapiti early. And this, perhaps, was one of the reasons why Te Rauparaha chose it as a stronghold. Here he could obtain from traders the muskets he needed to keep his supremacy over the surrounding tribes. Cook saw Kapiti as he came out of Queen Charlotte Sound in 1770. "About nine leagues to the north of Cape Tierawitte and under the same shore," he wrote, "is a high and remarkable island . . . This island . . . I have called Entry Isle."

Not many years after Cook, traders and whalers were calling at Kapiti. The traders wanted flax and also dried human heads, which were worth as much as twenty guineas each to them. The whalers had at least two shore stations on Kapiti and others on the nearby islands. One, on the island

called Tokomapuna, seems to have been noted for the discipline and efficiency with which it was conducted, in sharp contrast with the freedom in which most of the whalers lived. The whaling was very profitable in the early "thirties," but the whales soon became less plentiful and the number of ships fewer. Relics of those days, however, can still be seen. Rusted trypots lie upturned on the beach at Rangatira and on the small islands off the coast and there are still signs of the houses the whalers lived in.

When Colonel Wakefield arrived in New Zealand in 1839 to bargain with the Natives for the sale of land to the New Zealand Company, his ship, the "Tory," anchored off Kapiti, and Te Rauparaha was one of the chiefs who boarded the "Tory" for the negotiations. Colonel Wakefield gives this description of him:—

"In person Raupero is not conspicuous among his countrymen, his height being rather under the average. His years sit lightly on him; he is hale and stout and his hair but lightly touched with grey. His countenance expresses keenness and vivacity, whilst a receding forehead and deep eyelids, in raising which his eyebrows are elevated to the furrows of his brow, give a resemblance to the ape in the upper part of his face, which I have remarked



This, too, is on Fisherman's Island.