

ford, but a slight fresh renders it impassable from its great rapidity and large shingle, and it is often impassable for days in perfectly fine S.E. weather from rain having fallen in the interior.

Travelling along this coast depends much on the tide; some of the fords and some of the beaches being practically impassable near high water. The Natives are desirous of having the road improved and a mail established in continuation of that to Opotiki. The heavy beaches must prevent for many years the attainment of a good horse track; but it might be very much improved and the traveller made more independent of tide. A better line might be laid out for crossing Whakatane hill; ferries might be established at Ohiwa and Opotiki, especially at Ohiwa Heads. In illustration of the delay this plan occasions, I quote a page of my journal:—

Near the Heads a Maori met us on the beach who offered to put us across and had a canoe all ready, as he said. Arrived at the Heads at low water, and calm. Maori went for his canoe, was away nearly an hour, and returned with a very small leaky affair (a *kopapa*). Meantime a south-west breeze had sprung up and kicked up a bubble of a sea; the swim is fully a quarter of a mile long, and the canoe had to make three trips, one for each horse, and one for the saddles. When I crossed (so also for Mr. Fulloon) I had to hold my horse's rope with one hand, and bail out for dear life with a pannikin which luckily we had with us. Even then the canoe was half full between leak and spray before we got across, and but for that pannikin we could not have crossed. In this way that quarter of a mile of water cost us two hours' delay, although we arrived under the most favourable circumstances.

Te Kepa, an influential Chief of Ngatiawa, is willing to give a site for a ferryman's hut on the north-west head of Ohiwa. Other necessary improvements would be two or three posts to mark the way to the ford, and the position of the ford over the Waihou, a stream impassable on the beach at high tide but fordable a couple of miles higher up.

A different line may be laid out and cleared at least twelve feet wide, for crossing the three hills between Opape and Tunapahu and that between Whitianga and Omaio: also, one or two short spaces of fresh track cleared on this side of Whitianga to avoid a very bad bit of rock on leaving the beach, and also the present line of mud pits. At present a small horse rests his belly on the ground while his hind legs sound one mud-pit and his forelegs the next one! In descending the hill between Whitianga and Omaio the saddle has to be taken off a small horse, because the track has been worn into such a deep narrow trench in the soft sandstone that if not taken off the sides of the track will rub it off.

These improvements involving only labour and no materials, ought not to be very expensive. The bush requiring to be cleared is light bush. I see no remedy attainable at moderate expense for the Motu; owing to the width of the shifting shingle bed it is not fit for a ferry and would be exceedingly expensive to bridge.

In speaking of the people, their social condition and political temper, it will be more convenient to keep to the divisions of the tribes.

The Urewera claim the Upper Rangitaiki valley, nearly the whole of the Whakatane valley, the Waikaremoana basin, and part of Kaingaroa. Starting from the confluence of the Waimana and Whakatane, their boundary runs along the wooded range bounding the Waimana valley to its junction with a high range at the back of Poverty Bay over the Tauhou mountain, includes Papune and Waikare lakes, and joins the boundary of the Taupo Natives on the Kaingaroa plain. Starting again from the Whakatane river westerly, it strikes off to Waiohau on the Rangitaiki, up that river to Taoroa and out on to Kaingaroa. Speaking of the boundary on this side, Mokonui-a-rangi of Tapahoro, Tarawera lake, Chief of the Ngatirangitihi, observed that there would be some difficulty in fixing the boundary between Ngatirangitihi and the Ngatimanawa hapu of the Uremera, because the two tribes were so closely connected; illustrating his remark by dovetailing together the fingers of his two hands.

The above description may appear vague, but failing a map, or a visit to every part of the boundary, and in the present suspicious frame of mind of the Natives, it is as much as I thought it well to ask for.

The Maori estimates of the population of this Urewera country are as follows. The estimate in each division is that of the local Chief.

Te Whaiti (head of Rangitaiki)	100 men
Waikaremoana	80
Ruatahuna	400
Ruatoki (90 men and women) say	50
Waimana	90
	720 men

By "men" I understand men who can be mustered to fight.

My own impression is that this must be very considerably in excess. I am told by a Missionary that Maoris habitually over estimate the numerical strength of their tribe. Also Bishop Selwyn's detailed census in 1851 gives only 126 for the total population. They are not likely to have increased many, if any, since that time. I did indeed observe a larger proportion of children here than on the coast; but on the other hand Pairau, the Chief at Oputao at the head of the valley (having once consented to the introduction of the new policy), was urgent that a Doctor should be sent, speaking of the recent great mortality amongst the children, and saying: "make haste, that a *morehu* (remnant) may be preserved." I made no detailed inquiries as to population; conceiving that the explanation and recommendation of the Governor's new policy, and the ascertainment of the political temper of the people, were the main objects of this expedition, and that these would