

3. The memorial was left in the hands of my Responsible Advisers, in order that a report might be made on these two points, and I have not since seen it.

4. I am anxious that your Grace should be acquainted with these facts, lest you should think I had delayed the transmission of this memorial.

I have, &c.,

G. GREY.

His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, K.G.

No. 14.

COPY OF DESPATCH [FROM GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE GREY, K.C.B. TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF
NEWCASTLE, K.G.

Taranaki, May 5, 1863.

No. 41.

MY LORD DUKE,—

I have the honor to transmit for your Grace's information the copy of a note from the Native Minister of the 28th of April, telling me that he had heard from a native named Patara that three ambuscades had been planted by the Natives upon the previous day (Monday the 27th of April,) on the road between Poutoko and Tataraimaka, and that Tamati One, a Ngatiruanui Chief, when he heard of it, sent down and ordered the men forming the ambuscades to go home.

2. In this note was enclosed a letter from another Native Chief, informing Mr. Bell that ambushes had been planted to capture the General or myself, that they had not meant to capture Europeans of no great rank, but only the chief men, so that they might gain renown.

3. On the morning of the 29th of April, I received a memorandum from the Assistant Native Secretary stating that the Native Patara, alluded to by Mr. Bell, reported that the ambuscades had been planted for the purpose of murdering any European they might see passing, and that the Ngatiruanui Chief Tamati One was not aware of the plot until after the ambuscades were planted, on hearing of which he sent immediately and ordered them to retire, which they did.

4. I was in New Plymouth when Patara gave the information alluded to by the Assistant Native Secretary, but the man was not brought to me that I might hear so important a story from him, if true; nor was the alleged intention of the ambushes to murder, mentioned to me until Tuesday night. This made me think lightly of the matter. On the Wednesday morning when the written report reached me, I had enquiries made amongst the Natives. The result of these was that the Natives asserted that the Natives by whom these ambushes were laid, had on Sunday, the 26th, heard the soldiers at Tataraimaka discharging their rifles in volleys, and had seen the smoke of two fires, apparently signal fires near the Town; that they supposed that the Troops were firing on the Natives, and therefore planted these ambuscades to capture or kill passers by out of revenge; and that when the mistake was discovered, they were at once withdrawn.

5. Upon enquiries it appeared that the soldiers had as usual discharged their rifles to re-load them, and that the fires alluded to had been lighted. These circumstances, this difference between the Native stories, the fact of no one having been fired at, and hurt, and the small number of men said to have formed these ambuscades, and their having retired, if ever planted, by the order of their chief, made me doubt the truth of the story. I also believed that the Natives would not fire the first shot and bring on a war, for they have a superstitious feeling against doing so. We also had travelled the road which led from one piece of our own land to another in perfect security for a month, and the only message I had ever received from them regarding the road, which reached me on the 21st April, distinctly intimated that although they did not wish a regular road to be constructed across their land at present, still, that when matters were finally settled with me there would no longer be any objection to road making. I thought this letter of so favourable a character that in compliance with their wish, all attempts at improving the road over their land were suspended, in the hope that the other arrangements which were going on would close the matter in a few days, and that we could then make the road as we pleased. I was thus led into a degree of confidence which I ought not to have indulged, and I thought that small escorts with a good look out would be sufficient protection for travellers. The sad event which has since taken place has shown that even if in the case now reported, the Natives had no intention of committing deliberate murder, they are quite capable of doing so, as well as of firing the first shot with the intention of bringing on a war.

I have, &c.,

G. GREY.

His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, K.G.

Enclosure 1 to No. 14.

Taranaki, April 28th, 1863.

DEAR SIR GEORGE GREY,—

Three ambuscades were planted yesterday on the road to Tatara. Patara has just given me particulars of them, which Mr. Parris is to write down at once. Tamati One sent down and desired the