

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

EVIDENCE TAKEN BEFORE THE POKAIKAI COMMISSION.

CAMP PATEA, TUESDAY, 17TH MARCH, 1868.

Octavius Carrington called in, and having been duly sworn, was examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your name and occupation?—My name is Octavius Carrington, and I am Chief Surveyor of the Province of Taranaki. I am now engaged in the survey of the Patea District for the purpose of enabling the Military Settlers to take possession of their lands.

Mr. O. Carrington.
17th March, 1868.

2. Were you travelling in company with Lieut.-Colonel McDonnell in the middle of the year, 1866, and did anything peculiar occur on the occasion?—I have no papers with me at this moment, and I speak from memory. Some date in the month of June, 1866, Lieut.-Colonel McDonnell, myself, Lieut. Wirihana of the Native Contingent, Mr. Percy Smith, and two mounted Orderlies, about 11 o'clock a.m. started from Waingongoro on our return to Patea. When we had reached a spot south of the River Waihi, about four or five miles from Waingongoro, we fell into an ambushade. The Natives were concealed in some low fern on the right or sea side of the track, and they had covered their heads with fern. This fact was mentioned to us Europeans by Lieut. Wirihana. We were about twenty-seven yards distant from the spot where the Natives were lying hid. We were proceeding in single file, Lieut. Wirihana leading. All at once he caught a glimpse of a gun-barrel and cried out "Hauhaus." The Natives then stood up, and we in pulling up got jammed together. The Natives poured a volley into us before we had time to turn, the bullets cutting the fern at our feet. We had gone purposely unarmed, because two Natives (one of them is named Luke), told us at Patea, two or three days before we started for Waingongoro (the object of our going to Waingongoro from Patea was to select sites for blockhouses), that if we went unarmed and did not quit the track, no Natives would fire at us or molest us. We wheeled round, and turned our horses heads towards the River Waihi and Waingongoro. There was another ambushade on the left or inland side of the road, a short distance south of the first ambushade, and the Natives from both ambushades kept up a constant fire upon us until we were out of range. As we neared the Waihi Stream, Lieut. Wirihana pointed out some more Natives inland of the road, who were apparently running down to cut us off from the ford of the Waihi. Two mounted Orderlies had left Waingongoro the same morning at about 9 o'clock a.m., that is to say about two hours before our party, and they had passed the spot where the ambushades were placed unmolested. I cannot say to what hapu these Natives belonged.

3. Did you report the circumstance to Government?—Yes; I reported the whole affair shortly after the event to the Honorable the Defence Minister, Colonel Haultain.

The witness then withdrew.

CAMP MATANGARARA, WEDNESDAY, 18TH MARCH, 1868.

Robert Parris having been duly sworn was examined.

4. *The Chairman.*] What is your name and profession?—My name is Robert Parris, and I am Civil Commissioner for the district extending from Waitotara to Mokau.

Mr. R. Parris.
18th March, 1868.

5. Do you know anything with regard to the attack upon Pokaikai in August, 1866?—In July, 1866, I was ordered to Wellington, to attend and give evidence before the Confiscation Committee of the House of Representatives. While I was in Wellington two or three Native messengers arrived from Wanganui, and reported that they had been sent by Hori Kingi, the Native Chief of Wanganui, to inform the Governor that something had occurred in the Ngatiruanui District, viz., an attack upon the village of Pokaikai. I was at the Native Hostelry staying with William Thompson Tarapipi. The Governor sent for me and explained to me what the above mentioned messengers had reported to him, and asked me if I would go to the Ngatiruanui District. I replied in the affirmative. The Governor then said, "I will hold a meeting of the Ministers, and afterwards they will in all probability wish to see you." The same day, in the afternoon, Mr. Stafford the Colonial Secretary, sent for me to his office. I went there, and I found the Colonial Secretary, Colonel Russell, Native Minister; Colonel Haultain, Defence Minister; and Mr. Paterson, Postmaster-General, assembled. They explained to me the nature of the information brought by the messengers, and they asked me if I had any objection to go to the Ngatiruanui District. I said I had no objection whatever. The following morning a steamer was starting for Taranaki, and I sailed on board her for that place. I proceeded thence overland towards the Ngatiruanui District, and I arrived at the camp of the local forces at Hawera, my object being to see Lieut.-Colonel McDonnell before I took any steps, having been instructed to inquire into the matter of the attack upon Pokaikai. On arriving at the Camp, I was informed that Lieut.-Colonel McDonnell had gone to Wanganui. I slept at the Camp that night, and the following morning I proceeded to this very village (Matangarara). After having a conversation with the Natives who were present in the village (I think the day was Saturday), I arranged for a meeting to be held on the following Monday, in order that those Natives who were absent from the village might attend. I then went to the Camp at Waingongoro, and on the following Monday morning I returned to Matangarara and heard all that the Natives had to say. Lieut.-Colonel McDonnell was not present, and the Natives can make their own statements before the Commission. They complained of the whole affair of