

up, and I hurried them on, fully expecting to hear firing at any moment. On my arrival at Pungarehu, Mr. Canning met me with a hasty message from Inspector Hunter, that I was to come up with all speed, that the Natives were all armed, and three prisoners had been taken. I lost not a moment: my men, with Captain Page, went almost at a run, till we met the Resident Magistrate returning with three prisoners, two of whom, Mr. Booth said, when he met me, were innocent men, and proposed to let them go; but I had them taken on to Waihi, as to have let them go in the bush would have been a weakness. For an account of what occurred in the village I refer you to copies of letters from Inspector Hunter and Mr. D. Canning. Captain Cumming, who was one of the last to leave the village, assured me also that evidently the Natives were determined to resist the apprehension of any more of their men. The last Native he spoke to had a rifle capped in one hand and a naked sword in the other; he however asked for and partook of a small drop of brandy which Captain Cumming had in his flask.

On arrival at Waihi, Mr. Booth proposed to let the three prisoners go, having nothing at all against them. Two of them were released next morning, and Ihaka (the third) was by my advice retained. I omitted to mention that the force brought back with them two more of the stolen horses. Tauke, to whom I lent my horse, caught up the party under Major Hunter, near a place called Maui-o-te-Whenua, about one mile from Te Ngutu-o-te-Manu, and entered the village in front with the men, and I firmly believe his presence saved bloodshed, for the Natives were evidently well prepared to receive the party. When the two men mentioned by me in a former part of this letter were released, I gave them a short note to Tauke, in which I told him to hasten back to Waihi and see me. No reply has as yet been received. Mr. Booth also sent a letter to the tribe, but I believe no answer has been returned.

I cannot now refrain from making a few remarks, being of opinion that the Government are anxious to avoid, if possible, any renewal of hostilities and unnecessary shedding of blood in this district, and at the same time equally anxious and determined that the law shall be carried out and the settlers be protected.

I would beg most respectfully to urge upon the Minister for Colonial Defence the necessity of the management of the district being placed in my hands. My long experience of Native character, my knowledge of all the tribes in this neighbourhood, and, let me add, the prestige that my name has among the Natives, will, I feel certain, enable me, if full power is given to me, to preserve tranquillity and order in the district without bloodshed; but if the power to act independently is not left with me, I will not be surprised any day to hear of or see fighting, and this through mismanagement. I do not at all care to be under the control or at the disposal of any Resident Magistrate where any Native affairs are concerned, nor am I at all inclined to lead officers and men into situations where their lives are not safe for a moment, when there is actually no necessity for the risk; if, therefore, the Government have sufficient confidence in me to carry out what I have asserted above, I trust to receive immediate notice of their approval; if not, I would much rather that some other officer should be appointed.

I dismissed the Patea Light Horse Volunteers yesterday, and Volunteer Militia this day; and, in conclusion, would beg to bring to the notice of the Government the conduct of the whole force. Inspector Hunter was most energetic in carrying out all my instructions. Captain Cumming's conduct in persisting to prevent me going into the pa by myself I admired, and have thanked him for it. Captain Page's conduct during the whole of the expedition was what I expected most praiseworthy. I also would mention Mr. Canning, who behaved extremely well. Captain O'Halloran and the Patea Light Horse Volunteers acted, both while mounted and on foot, in a most exemplary manner, and I have thanked them in orders. The men's conduct could not have been surpassed. The Armed Constabulary, although considered by Colonel Whitmore much too old, marched in one night from Patea to Waihi, twenty-four miles; next night to Te Ngutu-o-te-Manu, good twelve miles, and the principal part through the bush, and back in the morning; not a man fell out, not a man intoxicated. It will show they are serviceable men, though not all I could wish them, and I will weed them by degrees. Corporal Crichton's behaviour in sticking to Mr. Booth and Captain Cumming, I beg also to represent; he is an excellent non-commissioned officer, and I will take the first opportunity of promoting him.

I have left all the Armed Constabulary at Waihi, and intend to move some men to Waingongoro in a few days. I will also remove head-quarters to Waihi as soon as possible, in compliance with your letter, number and date as per margin.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS McDONNELL, Lieut.-Colonel,
Commanding Patea District.

Captain Holt, Under Secretary, Wellington.

16th May, 1868.

No. 53-2.
May 9, 1868.

I have just received enclosed letter from W. Katene, which he forwarded to me as the last news from Te Ngutu-o-te-Manu, consequently I will proceed early to-morrow to Waihi, and if I think it necessary, or that it will do any good, I will proceed to the same place again by myself.

THOS. McDONNELL.

Enclosure in No. 36.

Upper Wanganui R.M. District, }
Province of Taranaki, }
Colony of New Zealand. }

Warrant to Apprehend.

To LIEUT.-COLONEL McDONNELL, Inspector of Armed Constabulary, and to all other Peace Officers in the said Colony of New Zealand:

WHEREAS information has been laid before the undersigned, one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said Colony, for that Toi, Hau Whenua and other Aboriginal Natives of New Zealand,