

Ohariu Massacre because he was the brother of Puoho's latest wife, who also accompanied the party), set out on an expedition which had for its object an attack upon the Ngai Tahu people living at the southern end of New Zealand. It is recorded that this expedition proceeded by means of two canoes along the West Coast to the mouth of the Awarua (Haast River). Here the canoes were left, the party forcing its way up the Awarua River and "over the snowy ranges" by means of the Haast Pass to Lake Wanaka. The people living there were attacked, and the entire population of twelve were captured, two being subsequently killed. A similar fate was intended for the few who lived at Lake Hawea, but they were fortunate enough to receive early notice of the situation and fled before the raiders arrived. The exact route followed by Te Puoho's party has not been settled definitely, but there seems no reason to doubt that they availed themselves of the method generally used, by crossing Lake Wanaka and coming down the Matau (Molyneaux), a short distance on mokihi or rafts made from korari (flax sticks). It must be remembered that the invaders had the services of the local people as guides, and that they would therefore travel along one or a series of the many tracks used by the local Maoris, and would also avail themselves of any means available to avoid the fatigue of marching. It is possible also that they would try to keep inland and away from large settlements, owing to the danger of their whereabouts becoming known, the more so since the fugitives from Hawea had fled down the Waitaki towards the coast with knowledge of the fate of their Wanaka relations as a spur to their endeavours to escape a similar one.

54. The ascertainment of the exact route followed at this stage of the journey is immaterial to the inquiry, but it is not improbable that they used the waterway only a short distance from Wanaka, and from thereabouts by the main track via the Kawarau natural bridge and Hector Mountains to the Waikaia (Wai-o-Whakaea) Plains. They came across the Waikaia Plains to the confluence of the Waikaia and Mataura Rivers, where they fell in with a small eeling party of Tutarau Natives that had effected a good catch, capturing all except one. From there the party went on to Tutarau, where, fatigued to the point of collapse, they made camp in what constituted the buildings of an eeling and piharau station there.

55. The Ngai Tahu at this time were on the alert and were practically all congregated between Otakou (Dunedin) and Ruapuke Island. The Ruapuke contingent was under Tuhawaiti (Bloody Jack), and, while that able and astute warrior had not given a moment's consideration to the possibility of attack from the West Coast, he had made arrangements with Karetai at Otakou for early advice of any movement of Ngafi Toa people down the East Coast. The first information of the invasion was word of the situation at Tutarau. He hastily gathered a war party together and by fast travelling surprised Te Puoho and his party at dawn of what is said to have been a summer's day (February, 1837). Te Puoho was shot apparently while sleeping on the verandah of his whare, and the balance of the raiders with one exception were either killed or taken prisoner. Wahapiro, the stepson and nephew of Te Puoho was taken prisoner and held by Taiaroa, who was present at the fight and appears to have done what he could to crush the invasion with a minimum of bloodshed. The sole escapee, the Muaupoko warrior by the name of Ngawhakawa, carried news of the disaster back to the widow of Te Puoho at Parapara, informing her apparently that the whole party had been killed.

56. At the tangi which followed the receipt of news of the Tutarau disaster, a lament was composed by Kahoe in memory of her husband Puoho and son Wahapiro. Translated it runs somewhat as follows:—

In vain those southern rats with incantations
Prevent thy spirit from returning to me,
As I lie huddled (in grief) by the tide at Pa-Kawau⁽¹⁾
Lamenting thee as one of a spirit band
Gone with the fulfilment of the omens of Paua.

Beside me lie the sharp-edged pipi-shells
To score my forehead with deep gashes.

I must mourn thee my beloved spouse
Within the dwelling thou didst build
Patiently lining it with kakaho reeds
And covering it with a roof of tree bark.
Te Wahapiro⁽²⁾ indeed is lost,
But Ngamanu⁽³⁾ stands forth;
Te Matewhitu is ascending,
While Ngakopa passes by⁽⁴⁾.

Oh! Te Teke⁽⁵⁾ shall prepare the canoe of revenge,
Tungia⁽⁶⁾ and Te Hua⁽⁷⁾ shall render help,
The men of Kaiapohia⁽⁸⁾ shall occupy
The stern of the canoe of revenge
With Rauparaha standing in the bow.
Launch forth the canoe Tainui⁽⁹⁾,
Launch forth the canoe Arawa⁽⁹⁾,
Launch forth the canoe Tokomaru⁽⁹⁾,
And Matahourua⁽¹⁰⁾ drag down to the sea.
Let Raukawa and Whakatere arise
To carry thee on to Paremata
And by thy greatness overcome
The turns and twists in Taiari River.

(1) Pa-Kawau—near Parapara, Golden Bay.

(2) Te Wahapiro—Paremata Wahapiro.

(3) Ngamanu—Wi Katene te Puoho.

(4) Ngakopa—Harbinger of death—the ruru or morepork.

(5) Ngatitoea Chief—Father of the wife of Tipene Paremata.

(6) and (7) Noted Ngatitoea chiefs.

(8) Men of Kaiapohia—The expedition which avenged Te Pehi by destroying Kaiapoi in 1831-32.

(NOTE.—Te Pehi was probably a nephew of Kahoe.)

(9) Canoes in which her ancestors came to New Zealand.

(10) The canoe of Kupe, the first of the Polynesian circumnavigators to visit New Zealand.