



DESPATCHES

NEWSLETTER OF THE QUEEN'S REDOUBT TRUST

ISSN 2324-5271

SERIES ON BRITISH UNITS AT QUEEN'S REDOUBT

50TH (QUEEN'S OWN) REGIMENT OF FOOT (THE DIRTY HALF HUNDRED)*

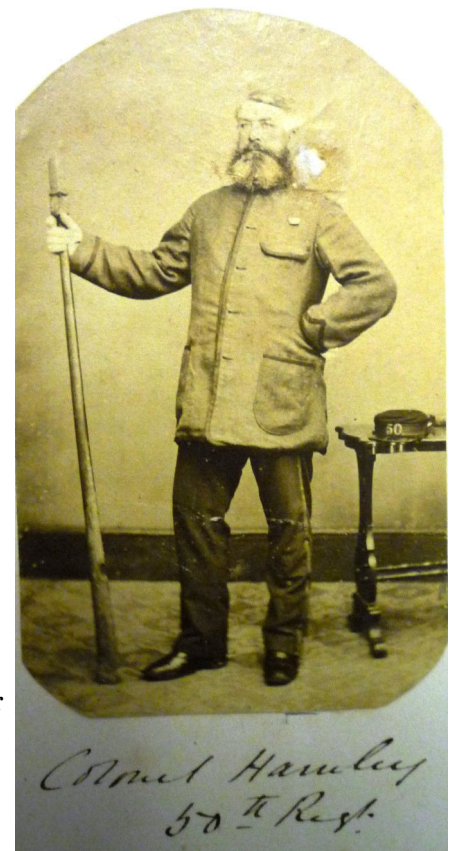
The 50th Regiment had the earliest British army connection with New Zealand for they were the first British troops to fight the Maori. Captain John (Jacky) Guard, a whaler operating out of the Marlborough Sounds, was returning from a trip to Sydney, with his wife and two children, in April 1834 when their ship, the *Harriet*, was driven ashore near Cape Egmont, Taranaki, in a southerly gale. They survived but were seized by the local Ngati Ruanui iwi who later released Jacky and several other men, on condition that they return to Sydney and bring back a cask of gunpowder as ransom for the rest of the party. Instead Guard secured support from N.S.W. Governor Bourke, for the rescue of those still held. In late September he returned with the man-of-war HMS *Alligator* and the colonial schooner *Isabella*, carrying two companies (60 men) from the 50th Regiment under Captain Johnstone. Captain Robert Lambert of the *Alligator* made it clear to Ngati Ruanui that there would be no ransom. The rescue party assaulted and burnt Te Namu pā, and attacked the nearby pā of Waimate, which was subjected to a three-hour bombardment and a full-scale assault. Much was made of the apparent Māori savagery associated with the event, by Sydney newspapers, but others were critical of the events surrounding the rescue, and in 1835 a Committee of the House of Commons condemned the excessive force used against Māori.

In 1863, the Regiment, commanded by Col Waddy CB, left Colombo, Ceylon, where they had been based, arrived in Auckland on 15 November 1863 and proceeded the next day to

Otahuhu. They took over the task of defending the Great South Road, and were distributed along it, with their headquarters and 3 companies at Drury, two companies at Queen's Redoubt and one company at each of Shepherds Bush, Martyn's Farm, Williamson's Clearing and Razorback Redoubts. (Gibson) This was short lived for, almost immediately, the Regiment was re-assembled at Otahuhu and on the 20 December marched to Onehunga from whence 5 companies departed to Raglan on 4 January, followed by the remaining companies two days later.

Once arrived in Raglan the regiment was engaged in building a road from there to Tuhikaramea, where they joined the force engaged in the invasion of the Waikato. Their first action was at Mangapiko where some of their soldiers, along with members of the 40th Regiment, were ambushed while bathing in the creek. A full scale engagement evolved when reinforcements from the 40th Regiment and the Forest Rangers came to their support and hand to hand fighting took place with two of the 50th being killed. This engagement is also notable as the first, and only, time that a colonial soldier, Captain Charles Heaphy of the Auckland Volunteers was awarded the Victoria Cross. Although wounded himself, he stayed to protect a wounded member of the 40th Regiment.

The 50th's next assignment was to Whanganui, where they went in December 1864. Here some of the regiment were involved in the battles with the Hau Hau at Nukumaru and Karkaramea. At Nukumaru the at-



Photographer Captain J F Daubeny

tacking force was led by Captain Noblett of the 18th regiment, who had encamped with his force in the centre and picquets of the 50th to the left and right. It was a hot January day when, at about 2pm the Hau Hau erupted from cover and attacked the two picquets. If it had not been for a counter-attack, led

* During the battle of Salamanca (1812) the Regiments facings, which were black, were not colour fast so that when the soldiers wiped their brows the dye was transferred to their faces which became slightly blackened; combine this with 50 being half of 100, the Regiment became known as the "Dirty Half Hundred".

by Captain Daubeny of the 18th, 1 the whole force could have been lost. As it was, the 50th lost both picquet commanders, Lt Wilson and Ensign Grant as well as 9 other ranks killed and 20 wounded. In the Kakaramea engagement, which followed, the HauHau forces suffered a severe defeat.

Apart from the very early (1834) association with New Zealand, another item makes this Regiment different. Soon after their arrival in November 1863, Private J Pigg, who must have been part of a detachment which made a regular patrols to the Maori village of Pokeno, found and took back to Queen's redoubt a small mongrel dog, to be named Pokeno, who soon became the regimental mascot. (QR Newsletter June 2013) As far as is known, Pokeno was the only regimental mascot with the British forces in New Zealand, and he survived to return with the Regiment to Ireland, where he died at Kinsale barracks on 20 October 1876.

Ian Barton

1. Captain Daubeny was also a keen photographer. His original album, which contains many photographs of 18th and other regiment officers, as well as other places and people of interest is held by the Auckland Museum Library. Ref. Auckland Institute and Museum PH-ALB-91.

categories may not have existed in 1863. He accompanied the Regiment to Whanganui in 1864 and returned with them to Sydney in 1866, remaining with the regiment until his death in 1876. We do not know what his other postings may have been. The engraving on the right was based on the photograph published in the Queen's Redoubt June 2013 newsletter. Proof of "Pokeno's" association with New Zealand can be seen in the New Zealand medal he wears around his neck.

Ian Barton

Pokeno, mascot of the 50th Regiment

Printed at the 50th, Queen's Own" Regimental Press, [1875?] Original in QR Newsletter 13

EDUCATION CENTRE

OPENING TIMES

Every Sunday 10 am until 2 pm.

OR by arrangement

Telephone Ian Barton 09 239 2049

Email ibtrees81@gmail.com

"POKENO" AND PRIVATE JOHN PIGG

One of the more notable things about the 50th Regiment's time in New Zealand was the acquisition of "Pokeno". At the beginning of the Waikato invasion, and after the local Maori had abandoned their kainga at Pokeno, some problems arose when members of the British forces at Queen's Redoubt decided to loot the abandoned village. The details are obscure but after it occurred, the army sent a daily picquet to the kainga as a check that all was well. (Gamble) A couple of companies of the 50th were stationed at Queen's Redoubt about November 1863, and it is likely that it was about this time that John Pigg, as a member of the picquet, found the little puppy and "Pokeno" joined the Regiment.

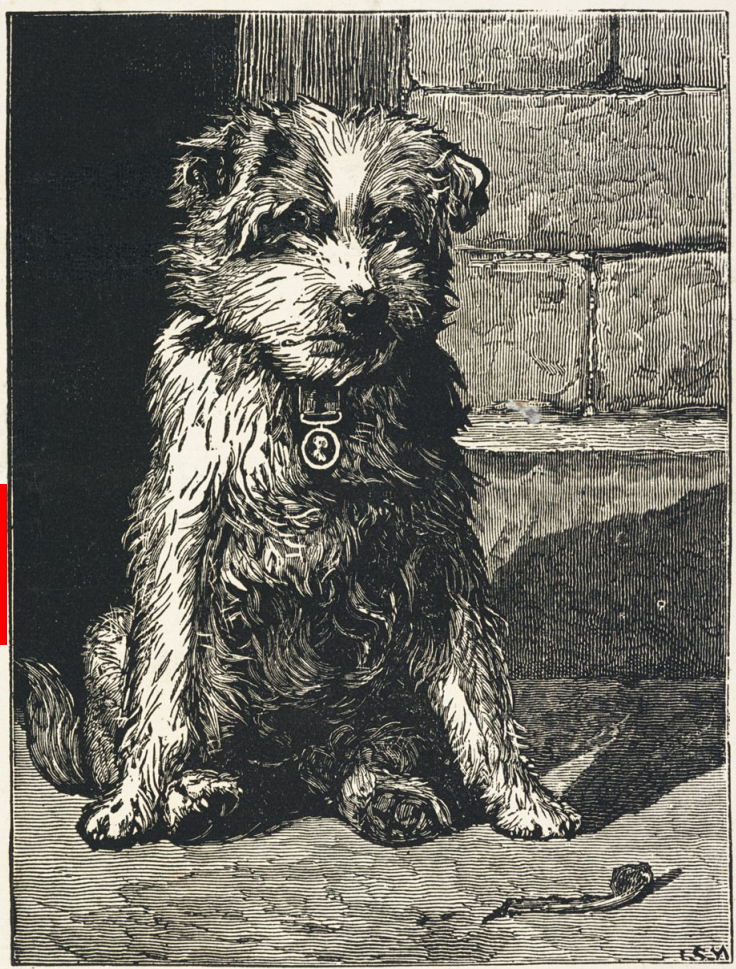
We know little about Private Pigg, although there is a record of him being in the 50th when they were in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in 1861 (WO 12/6154), and his New Zealand service medal is held by the Regimental museum in Maidstone, Kent. "Pokeno" on the other hand went on to long service with the Regiment and more details have been

discovered about his career, since we first published an article about him in the June 2013 newsletter (No 13).

Although not common to all regiments, many did have regimental mascots or pets. One of the earliest was a wild goat found on the battlefield at the Battle of Bunker Hill during the American War of Independence in 1775 and accompanied the Royal Welsh Fusiliers' colour party from the field after the battle. A goat has served with that regiment ever since.

Regimental Mascots are entitled to the services of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps, as well as quartering and food at public expense. It costs the Army roughly £40,000 a year for the upkeep of official mascots. They also have a regimental number and rank and, as with human soldiers, they can be promoted or demoted! There are also mascots whose upkeep are borne by the regiment or unit itself. They are unofficial mascots, more properly referred to as regimental pets.

We cannot be sure whether "Pokeno" was a pet or a mascot, in fact the rules separating the two



Friends of Queen's Redoubt

Early in 2013 the Trust resolved to formally set up a group to be known as the "Friends of Queen's Redoubt". A membership database has been set up and anyone with an interest in the work of the Trust is invited to join.

Current membership fees are \$25 for individuals, \$35 for families, \$40 for Historical organizations and \$60 for Commercial organizations; all inclusive of GST.

Please post a completed application form with a cheque or deposit the amount in our bank account:- **12 3022 0397102 00** with your Surname as reference. Note that , from the middle of next year, the use of cheques will no longer be possible.

**I Barton, Queen's Redoubt Trust
P O Box 26
POKENO 2440**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Given Name:

Surname:

Address:

Telephone:

Email address

Membership Category:

Individual \$25

Family \$35

Historic
Organization \$40

Commercial
Organization \$60

REFERENCES: (Both articles)

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CHAIRMAN'S AND SITE REPORTS October 2020

This year has been like no other because of the COVID19 pandemic and the lock-downs. It has had a major impact in three areas for us-

- We have had few meetings this year although Ian has been able to organise essential work by email.

- The Education Centre was closed for several months as part of the COVID spread containment measures.

- We had barely got the Education Centre displays completed and the first school groups coming through, when COVID appeared and the school's either cancelled or postponed their visits.

Fortunately, the second stage of the design and installation of interpretation material in the Education Centre was completed by Snapper Graphics just before the first lockdown. I would like to acknowledge the creative genius of Waiheke Island -based Snapper Graphics. We contracted them to come up with an overall

concept for the displays and worked with them to tell the story of the NZ Wars in an engaging way, whilst being scrupulous about maintaining balance and historical accuracy. It has been difficult to reduce the, often complex stories of the Wars down to virtual bullet points that people can readily understand.

It is imperative we continue our promotion campaign to encourage more school group visits and help them understand the impact and significance of the NZ Wars. Following discussion at the last AGM we are now calling our facility an Education Centre (to emphasise its educative role) rather than use the term Visitor Centre. Our focus must be on attracting groups (school or societies), rather than casual visitors, although they all count.

I acknowledge our partnership with the tangata whenua- Ngati Tamaoho, particularly through their representatives on the QRT- Hero Potini & Tamara Taka-Jones. Our final displays will make sure their story is adequately told in the final set of panels. While all our panels try to tell both sides of the NZ Wars, further work with Ngati Tamaoho is to come up with displays needed for the iwi to tell their own story.

The rental income from the house on the property covers our basic operating expenses, but for other larger one-off projects we must seek grants. This year our expenditure on the house has been relatively low but a recent audit has

told us the heat pump we had installed last year does not have sufficient capacity and we have until July 2021 to upgrade it. We will transfer the present heat pump into our work room in the Education Centre.

As our trustees know Ian and I have been working on a history of Queen's Redoubt. We now have a first draft of the 14 chapters and 4 appendices plus the bibliography and index. We have approached a publisher, Atuanui Press, who are keen to publish the book, and have received a grant of \$6,500, from the Waikato District Council's Heritage fund, to help pay the publishing and printing costs. Our research has revealed lots of new information about the redoubt and surrounding activities, which has not previously been published.

Last year, I indicated that on-going overseas commitments meant I cannot continue to chair the Trust after this year. So, we are looking at the appointment of a new Chairperson. I am prepared to stay on as a Committee member. Ian Barton, still continues to hold the Secretary/Treasurer role (along with Newsletter Editor and chief grant writer) but most of his Treasurer's role has been taken over by Jann Peachey of Pokeno. This is a paid position and Jann has the title of Executive Officer. As our finances permit she will take on more of Ian's duties. While, these will be big changes, they are also timely. For the survival and advancement of the project, we need to transition to increasing management by 'locals'.

I would like to thank all the trustees, volunteers and supporters of the Queen's Redoubt Trust for their work

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PURPOSE OF THE TRUST

The Queen's Redoubt Trust was established in February 1999 with the intention of acquiring this nationally significant historic place and ensuring its protection; with the long term vision to restore and develop the site into a nationally recognised visitor attraction and education centre. In February 2001 the Trust completed the first major phase of the project, raising the funds to acquire the property in Pokeno which contains much of the site of the Queen's Redoubt.

OBJECTIVES of the TRUST

1. To acquire the Queen's Redoubt site at Pokeno to preserve it for future generations.
2. To make Queen's Redoubt accessible to the public by development and interpretation of the site as appropriate.
3. To restore the massive earthwork 'ditch and bank' walls of the fort (they were leveled after the war) as a key interpretive feature.
4. To promote education about the Queen's Redoubt and all the New Zealand Wars between Maori and European.
5. To establish a premier visitor and educational facility on the Queen's Redoubt site. This will be carried out in conjunction with an archaeological excavation programme to maximize knowledge of the site for future exhibition and interpretation purposes, and to promote public participation in the project. At the same time, historical research will continue into Queen's Redoubt itself, the Pokeno District, the Waikato Campaign of 1863-64 and the New Zealand Wars as a whole.

in the 2019-20 year, despite it being a trying for all with the COVID lockdowns, constraints on travel and getting together with family and friends. Again, I must especially acknowledge Ian Barton's contribution. He probably puts more hours into the project than the rest of us combined. With increasing visitor numbers, we have appointed a safety officer and Les Vuletich has taken on that role.

Finally, I have enjoyed the company and support of the members of the Trust and the Friends Group. We had a vision to create a major historical education centre on one of the original sites, where New Zealanders and visitors can learn about the NZ Wars-increasingly being recognised as a seminal event in New Zealand's history and one the country is still coming to terms with through settlements and greater understanding.

SITE DEVELOPMENT REPORT

With the Education Centre displays nearly completed we resumed our traditional on-site working bees only to have them curtailed by the COVID pandemic. Among the jobs completed over the last year, was removal of the timber fence that divided the interior of the redoubt in two and beginning the removal of the barberry and privet hedge on the south side of the Education Centre to make it and the earthworks more visible to people entering Pokeno from the south.

The restored earthworks are fairly stable (the geo-grid gabions are working well) but some areas (notably the sides of the ditches) need remedial work. It includes repairing undercutting on sections of the east and south walls, trimming the east wall ditch to a lower angle especially on the outer edge, and completing geo-gridding round the bastion.

In the coming months we plan to relocate our second small workshop from its present location to beside the old stock loading ramp. Being closer to our work base in the Education Centre, we will make better use of the shed.

We will also intend doing further planning for a replica of the blockhouse which once stood on the SE bastion. Plans for this are being drawn up by Trustee Dave Pearson, who is a heritage architect.

Donna and Geoff Betts continue to graze three horses on the property and maintain good pasture management to keep the property looking presentable. As excess grass is now produced during spring, they will make hay from this, as they

have done in two previous years.

Louis and Shona Whiunui continue as tenants in our house. They have always been helpful when we have needed something- usually electricity, and contact us whenever the lights are inadvertently left on in the Education Centre. Over the past year we have done overdue maintenance, including repairs to the bathroom, the installation of a heat pump, repairs to the exterior walls and decks and a complete repaint of the exterior.

Increasing emphasis on Health and Safety in the work place (including volunteers) means we need to make sure we identify risks and do what we can to practically mitigate them. Trustee Les Vuletich is our site Safety Officer tasked with raising any H & S issues so we can address them.

We have enjoyed the more creative aspects of developing and setting up informative displays but if we are to be regarded as an active vital group, there is no more public way to do so than to be seen to be doing things on site -be it earthworks restoration, archaeological excavations, putting up outside signage and trying to involve the community in our project.

The formal opening of the Visitor Centre will not be held until all the displays are in place. Because we still have to complete the Ngati Tamaoho's section of the work, it is anticipated that this will not be until late 2021 or 2022. You will be advised when more information is available.