



DESPATCHES

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COLONIAL UNITS AT QUEEN'S REDOUBT

2nd, 3rd and 4th WAIKATO REGIMENTS

In the November 2021 issue of "Despatches" the topic was the First Waikato Regiment. Much of the information about the 1st Waikato in that article also applies to the other regiments raised in Australia. There were effectively five of these, because apart from the four Waikato Regiments, a fifth, was raised mainly in Victoria and South Australia, for service in Taranaki. This unit, consisting of about 550 men was usually known as the TMS or Taranaki Military Settlers, whose conditions of service and entitlement to land, were similar to those of the four Waikato Regiments. Unfortunately there appears to be very little published information about the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Waikato regiments and even less about the TMS. However Papers Past has proven to be a mine of newspaper information, albeit sometimes biased.

One might expect that articles about the Waikato Regiments in the settler newspapers, would be anti Maori, and sometimes they were; but the major gripe of the newspapers was with the settler government which, although it had promised the Australian recruits good pay and conditions and a land grant on discharge, did not generally deliver. This was because the NZ government had no money and colossal debts, incurred by the war with the Maori.

At first things seemed to go well, the following comments being examples of those appearing in the newspapers. The 2nd Waikato Regt will soon be settled on their own land (NZder 10/5/64) Some men were obviously thinking ahead, for W A Betis of the 2nd Waikato's, based at Kihikihi, advertised that he was seeking a wife. (Fig 1) Optimistically, his preference was for a lady with capital! (DSC 7 June 1864) On 12 October 1864 the New Zealander reported that men of the 3rd and 4th Waikato Regiments were settling in well, huts were being built and ploughing had commenced. Peach trees had been planted and officers and men appeared quite happy with the place & their prospects. Single men were

continuing to seek partners, as in November 1864 a man of the 2nd Waikato's, based at Esk Redoubt, advertised for a wife. (DSC 11/11/64) In this case no capital was sought! The last real sign of optimism appeared in the Herald on 2 February 1865 where it was reported that steps were being taken to establish the 2nd Regt on land between Orakau and Te Awamutu, with Von Tempsky's Company of Forest Rangers going onto land at Harapipi. Men of the 4th Regiment were working well in establishing themselves at Hamilton.

The first indication that there were problems, appeared when a correspondent at Cambridge complained that the men are not yet on their land and have no idea when they will be (NZder 7 Oct 1864) By the end of the year the Herald was reporting that the majority of men were dissatisfied and every steamer that arrived at Cambridge brought three or four substitutes. (Herald 21/12/64)

Substitution related to the Militia Act of 1845, which permitted any man in any NZ

Militia Unit (at their own expense) to find a substitute and so opt out of the unit. **1** Between April 1866 and September 1867 a large number of advertisements appeared in the Auckland newspapers, seeking substitutes. During 1864 there were 117 advertisements in the Auckland papers; most seeking substitutes but a few offering to be one. From April 1864 until February 1865 there was a steady stream, with an average of 14 advertisements each month. From February 1865 there was a marked drop, to under 2 each month, with a peak in July and August 1866 of 13 each month. No obvious reason has been found for these swings in substitute advertisement numbers, but they had virtually ceased by the end of 1866.

By March 1865 the number of complaints had become a flood. Two months later an article in the Daily Southern Cross alleged that it was the policy of the Weld administration to worry and harass the Waikato Regiments. **2** (DSC 29/5/65) The writer urged the men to remain on their land and insist on strict observance by the Government of their rights. A month

A CHANCE for the Fair Sex.— 50 acres, a town allotment, and a young man. He is good-looking, and also good-natured. Belongs to No 9 Company, 2nd Waikato Regiment. The lady must be very fascinating, and well up in the culinary department.—Applications to be made by letter to W. A. BETIS, 2nd Regiment Waikato Militia, Kihikihi.

P.S.—A lady with capital preferred.

Figure 1 Advertisement seeking a wife by member of the 2nd Waikato Regiment —as published in the Daily Southern Cross 7/6/1864

earlier there had been an inquest into the suicide of a married man, Josiah Freeman of 2nd Waikato Regt at Alexandra **3** and the mood of men there was anxious as they awaited the fall of the Weld Ministry (which did not occur until October. DSC 27/4/65) This was presaged by a letter to Editor of the Herald in July, which stated that the Waikato Regiments had been originally established to protect Waikato settlers but were now demoralized due to the vacillating policy of the Government. The letter concluded that the failure of Waikato scheme must be laid on shoulders of Weld administration. (but see FN 1 & Herald 11/8/65) Another letter to editor, about the non payment of backpay, quoted the NZ Gazette notice of 5/12/1865 and was actually signed by 5 members of the 3rd Waikato Regiment (DSC 6/1/66) A man of the 2nd Waikato regiment was so desperate for money that he walked from Kihikihi to Auckland seeking pay arrears from the Comptroller. **4** He was refused, presumably there was no money, and one assumes had to walk the 150 miles back again. (DSC 18/1/66) Other articles at this time stated that there were claims for support from wives and children of the Regiments because they were starving & nearly naked. And, for the first time, threats of legal action against the government appear (DSC 20/2/66.) Some men sought legal advice and a lawyer, T B Gillies, filed a petition from 3 soldiers claiming back pay and allowances (DSC 21/7/66.) Organised action also began at this time and there were reports that funds for support of the aggrieved men were building up and that delegates to represent them were being appointed. (DSC 16/3/66) The senior officers of the Waikato Regiments were not immune to criticism either as one letter to the editor stated that questions being put to him were being evaded by Col Pitt. (DSC 15/11/66)

The reason that this article does not give details about any military actions fought by the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Waikato Regiments is that there were none! Their presence at various places may have deterred Maori attacks but the only action seen by men in these regiments was that encountered by those who had transferred other units, which many of them did, or they were members of the T.M.S. **5** However some members of the 3rd Regiment did fight at Orakau in March 1864, and two were killed. But as far as is known these were third Regiment men who had been seconded to the Commissariat Transport Corps. **6** The most senior of them was Major W V Herford, who was a solicitor from Adelaide. He was, with his Adjutant Ensign Harrison, at the head of the sap which the British forces had dug close to the pa, when he was wounded. He survived until 28 June. (Glen pp 148-49, 155, 272)

So what did the men of these three Regiments do? Their main function was to garrison the large number of redoubts between Auckland and the front at Orakau. For instance, 211 officers and men of the 2nd Waikato Regiment, at Drury marched to Otahuhu to take part in the Thames expedition. (Herald 13/11/63) And in December a company of men under Capt Antrobus were stationed at Waikato Heads. (Herald 9/12/63)

But occasionally they got a little closer to the action, as happened when Captain Drury of the 2nd Waikatoes, leading a small group of men to collect canoes in order to build a pontoon bridge to cross the Punui River (a tributary of the Waipā River) came across a few Maori who were digging potatoes near the river bank. The Maori were quick to leave and were soon out of shooting range, leaving their spades and potatoes. (Herald 25/6/64)

There is an interesting link between the Waikato Regiments and the Forest Rangers. It began in November 1863 when the Forest Rangers, in accordance with their terms of engagement, were disbanded after three months service. (Stowers p 33) On 27 October 1863 both Jackson and Von Tempsky were re-engaged and promoted to Captain, each to lead a company. Because his promotion was backdated to one day before Von Tempsky, Jackson was commanding officer of both companies, much to Von Tempsky's disgust! It took some time for the two companies to reach their full strength of 60 men. Because this was a money saving exercise on the part of the Government, the rate of pay was set the same as the Waikato Regiments - a much lower rate of 5/- per day less rations deduction. Their original pay had been 8/- per day plus rations. The terms of engagement were also the same as the Waikato Regiments - 3 years plus a land grant. (Stowers 33-35) Morgan recorded that Von Tempsky's company was to be attached to the 1st Waikatoes and Jackson's to the 2nd (see also DSC 12/1/1863)

The difficulty of recruitment was largely overcome by enlisting men from the Waikato Regiments into the Forest Rangers. Stowers compiled a comprehensive list of men who served in the Rangers, an elite unit most of whom had previous military experience. Wherever possible he provided full details of their military careers. Analysis of these reveals that 94 men (26% of the total) had come from the four Waikato Regiments; almost half of these from the Second, with 30% from the First and 20% from the Third. Only 2 men of the fourth Waikato Regiment joined the Forest Rangers, possibly because the 4th was not formed until April 1864. Other Forest Rangers, probably between 10 and 20%, had come from one of the British Regiments, the Royal Navy or another Colonial unit. The records from Stowers reveal that, contrary to men who stayed in the Waikato Militia, those who transferred to the Forest Rangers saw plenty of action. One such was Robert Whitfield, a Sergeant in the 2nd Waikato Regiment, who transferred to the No. 1 Company, Forest Rangers on 12/12/1863. He was obviously well respected because his comrades of the 2nd Waikato

presented him with a compass and revolver at a farewell ceremony from the Waikato Regiment. (Stowers p 41). Von Tempsky spoke very highly of Whitfield's actions at Orakau and felt they should have been recognized. Whitfield was commissioned Ensign on 18/2/1864 after the skirmish at Mangapiko. He died of wounds on 13 May 1865 after the battle at Kakaramea earlier that day.

Because it was intended that they be allocated land after their three years of service, many recruits to the four Waikato Regiments arranged for their families to follow them. Some of the travails of these families have been described in detail by Vennell, who also noted that some men had also taken this opportunity to desert their Australian families and come to New Zealand - free of any encumbrances. On arrival in Auckland the families were accommodated in tents or unlined buildings at Onehunga, until they went to their new homes; by steamer to Port Waikato and then up the Waikato on "flats" - barges towed by either the Pioneer or Rangiriri. These were usually used to transport stores and were very basic, without guard rails. They were not really designed for people, especially young children, which many of these families would have had. Vennell recorded that one woman, after boarding the ship at Onehunga had rushed back down the gangway swearing that she would "never go to the Waikato". The remarkable thing about this incident was not that it occurred, but that the Herald huffed, on reporting it, that it was bad enough to have a rebellion amongst the Maoris but an insurrection amongst the wives of settlers was unnecessary and that the woman should be severely prosecuted. (Vennell p 31)

After a trip of about four days from Onehunga and up the Waikato River, the families of the 3rd Waikato arrived at Cambridge where they were housed in tents or raupo whares. But there were still dangers. The cool but treacherous waters of the Waikato River were most inviting on a hot day but after two men drowned in one incident, the C.O., Colonel Lyon, had to ban swimming. While the adults worked, young children roamed at will and were sometimes attracted to the dark berries of the tutu (*Coriaria arborea*). At the inquest into the death of a 4 year old child, one of the witnesses affirmed she knew of 11 cases of tutu poisoning in the wider area, 7 of which had been fatal. (Vennell p 34)

Overall, it does seem that Waikato Regiments 2, 3 and 4 may not have had much of an impact on the Waikato conflict, or the settlement of the frontier. Glen thought that fewer than 400, of the approximately 2,400 men originally recruited in Australia for the four Waikato Regiments, were still in New Zealand at the end of 1868 (Glen p 225). Most had either gone back to Australia

Friends of Queen's Redoubt

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

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.

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(cont from pg 2)
or to the goldfields of Thames or Westland. Many of the 400 joined the Armed Constabulary, so possibly only about 200 – 300 took up their land in the new settlements of Hamilton, Cambridge and Pirongia.

"Why" is the obvious question? It is likely that the main reason was lack of capital to turn forest or swamp into productive farm land. 7 Perhaps this was the reason for the advert of June 1864 placed by a man seeking a wife with capital! Newspaper accounts suggest that the Governments of the time felt that granting the land was as far as they had to go. Or did they set up the scheme to fail? Two of the architects of the Waikato Militia scheme were Frederick Whittaker and Thomas Russell, members of the government and noted land speculators. (Wolfe)

Another reason for failure was that many of the men were unsuited to pioneering life in New Zealand. A Daily Southern Cross reporter divided the 3rd Waikato men into three classes. Company 3, Captain Krippner's, were an example of the best type, almost to a man showing up as bona fide settlers. The bulk of the men were in the middle group; respectable and intelligent men who, if given a chance could make a go of it. At the bottom were a

large number of men who spent all their pay on drink and who would have no money at all when their pay was stopped. (DSC 6/12/1864)

It is difficult to determine how successful these three regiments were. The 1st Waikato did seem to make a sizeable contribution to New Zealand and, although the success of its men in developing their land was also quite low, they did play quite a major role in the NZ wars. But the impact of the other three does seem to have been minimal!

Ian Barton

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FOOT NOTES

1 In 1858 a Militia Act was passed by the New Zealand Parliament. In this, substitutes were allowed, and provision was made for forming special volunteer units <https://teara.govt.nz/en/1966/defence-armed-services-army-new-zealand/page-2>

2 But not only Weld was responsible. Prior to 1865 Maori affairs were the responsibility of the Governor (Gore-Browne and then Grey), not the settler government. 8 There were no political parties, government being led whichever politician could command allegiance by securing the most votes. Consequently between October 1863 and June 1969 there had been three governments; those of Whitaker, Weld and Stafford. Whitaker and Weld's governments each lasted only

12 months -from October 1863 to October 1865; but this was a critical time during the land war period. (Wolfe)

3 This may or may not have been triggered by Government actions; the inquest found that he was suffering from nervous debility.

4 Presumably this was the senior paymaster of the four Waikato Regiments.

5. Glen records that 22 members of Australian Units were killed in New Zealand. Of these 10 were members of the 1st Waikato Regt; 9 of the Taranaki Military Settlers unit: 1 of the Colonial Defence Force: 1 was an able seaman from HMCS Victoria and 1 an officer with the Commissariat Transport Corps. (Glenn 271 – 272.) The death of Ens. Robert Whiffeld, 2nd Waikato Regt, but attached to Forest Rangers, was recorded on 13 May 1865. (L Barton p 50.)

6 A total of 616 officers and men of the 3rd Waikato Regiment volunteered to transfer to the Commissariat Transport Corps.

7 Providing less than half the land in each section was swamp, they had to be accepted by militia. Although the Maori had apparently worked out how to develop swamp land, very few of the militia know how to do this, having come from much drier Australia. (L Barton p 49)

8 www.nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/treaty/treaty-timeline/treaty-events-1850-99

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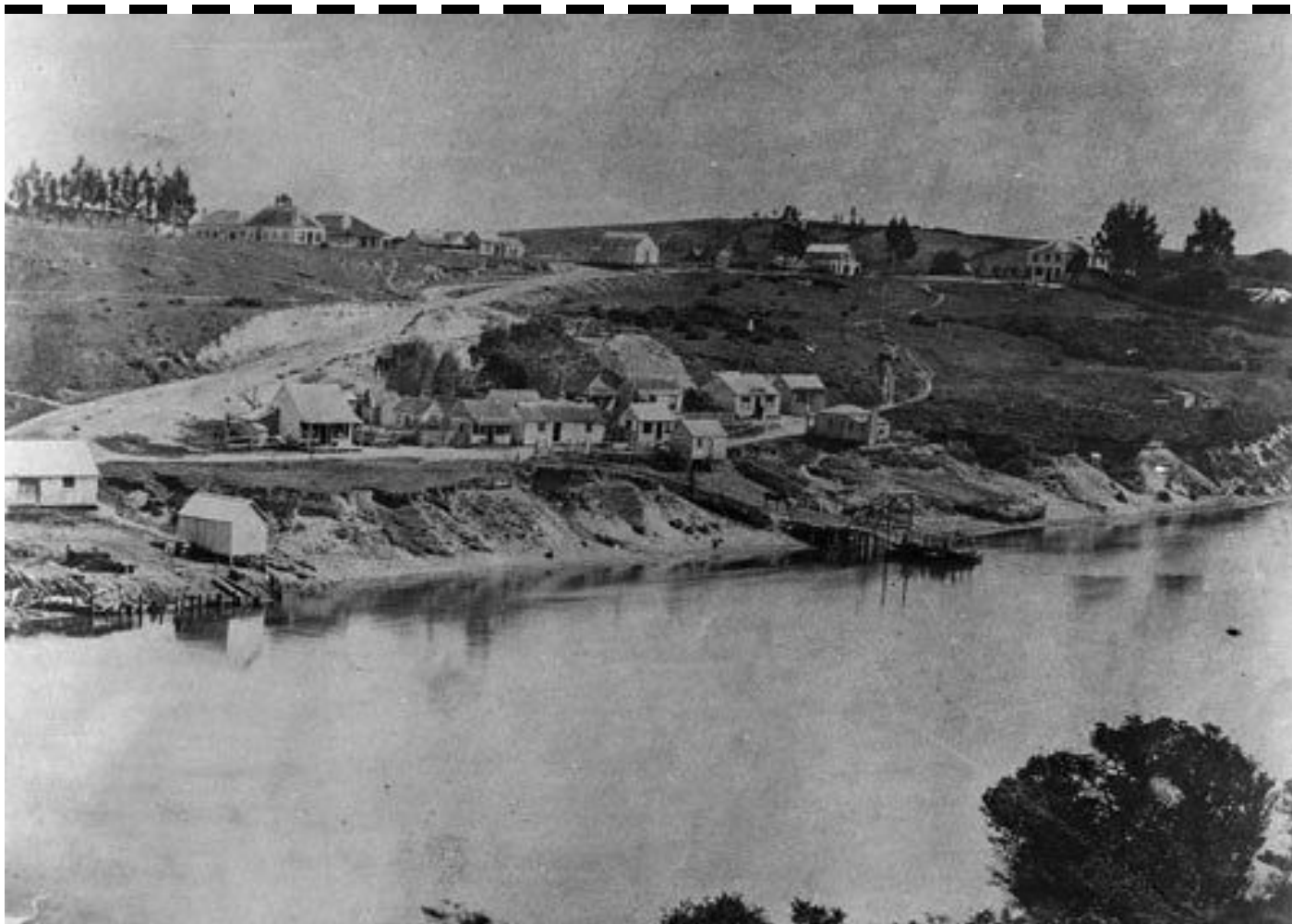
www.queensredoubt.co.nz/

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.

**WEST BANK HAMILTON 1866**

River crossed by punt (Centre right)

Hamilton or Kirikiriroa was originally settled by men of the 4th Waikato Regiment and their families.

(Hamilton, 1866 - Waikato places - Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand)