



DESPATCHES

NEWSLETTER OF THE QUEEN'S REDOUBT TRUST

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SERIES ON COLONIAL UNITS AT QUEEN'S REDOUBT

1st WAIKATO REGIMENT

In 1860 the Australian states, like New Zealand, were all independent Colonies of Great Britain. During the first Taranaki War, beginning in March 1861, three years before the invasion of the Waikato, young men in Australia had begun enquiring as to how they could enlist to fight in New Zealand. One month after the Taranaki conflict began the Victorian Government sent HMCS * Victoria, Australia's first naval vessel, to New Zealand to assist in 1st Taranaki War. This was the first commitment by any Australian colony to the NZ Wars and, no doubt urged on the Melbourne and Sydney newspapers, did a great deal to excite the interest of the young men of the Australian colonies. (*HMCS is Her Majesties Colonial Ship)

By the following year the Australian press was advocating the adoption of a military settlement scheme by the NZ government, the objective being to build up numbers for a settler militia. It was this publicity which no doubt encouraged the NZ Government two years later to pass legislation enabling it to begin recruiting military settlers in Australia. Three weeks after the invasion of the Waikato began, the New Zealand government sent a recruiting delegation to Sydney. It was led by Francis Dillon Bell, Minister of Native Affairs and comprised of Lt Colonel George Pitt, Captain J. Harrison and John Gorst.

All men enlisting in the Waikato Militia regiments were to be given free passage to New Zealand and promised farms in the settlements that would be established on land to be confiscated from the 'rebellious' Maori. At the conclusion of the Waikato war, in June 1864, sites were selected for the four Waikato Regiments. The 1st Waikato Regiment, of 822 men and mostly raised in Melbourne, was to be sent to the Bay of Plenty, but it was not until 1866 that the final decisions about their land were made.

Early in September the first Australian volunteers to be recruited, and known initially as Pitt's Militia, arrived from Sydney

& Melbourne and went into training camp at Otahuhu. The first four companies of Pitt's Militia plus six companies of N Z volunteers and some early local enlistments made up the 1st Waikato Regiment of Military settlers. After a month's basic training they were deemed ready for active service. Even before this, the first action in which this new militia was engaged, occurred on 14 September. It involved 27 of these recruits, commanded by Captain W Moir. They left Drury on 13 September tasked to deliver seven days of rations and ammunition to the Pukekohe East Church stockade.

On the 17 October, Lt John Perceval with 20 men of the 1st Waikato Regiment, left their camp near Otahuhu and moved to reinforce N.Z. Militia officer Lt Daniel Lusk who was based at a satellite stockade 3 km east of the Mauku stockade at St Brides Church. Their job was to patrol the area and seek Maori parties who were raiding settler farms and attacking settler's cattle on Titi Hill. Lusk ordered to Perceval to take half of his men to St Brides. Enroute Perceval heard gunfire from Titi Hill and diverted there to attack the Maori force. He made contact but soon realized that his tiny force was outnumbered 20 to 1. Lusk, realizing Perceval was in trouble, went to his aid and managed to withdraw most of the men. This was not without loss, since Perceval and 5 of his men were killed, along with Lt Norman of the 1st Waikato pay section who had followed Lusk into the affray. The pay in Norman's satchel, resurfaced in 1913 when the blood-stained notes were presented to local banks by some Maori. The banks honoured the notes. Lieutenants Percival and Norman, along with their men were buried by Bishop Selwyn in the Anglican cemetery at Drury.

In diverting to Titi Hill Perceval had, in effect, disobeyed the orders of his superior officer and he was not the only

Australian militia officer to fall foul of the system during this period. There were several other instances of Australian officers (ie Waikato Regiments) failing to obey orders from more senior officers. * Glen attributed this to the fact that, during the first year following the establishment of the Waikato regiments, discipline was much laxer than in the British regular army and more like that which had evolved in the Australian volunteering context which embodied quite a lot of the "wild colonial boy" culture. Only when the Australian and New Zealand militias realized that their Maori opponents, far from being inferior to them were opponents with bravery and physical strength who could not be taken for granted, did discipline begin to tighten up. (* Most Waikato Regt officers and NCO's were probably Australian.)

By October 1863 it was reported that the Waikato Militia, comprising 2069 men, was distributed around 15 posts between Howick and Whangamarino. Presumably these were the 1st, 2nd & possibly 3rd Waikato Regiments. 100 Waikato's were also attached to the Moveable Column and were based at Mauku and on the Wairoa Road. In mid November the Thames Expedition was formed, included were 198 men of the 1st Waikato Regiment. 100 of these being located at the Miranda Redoubt.

The war in New Zealand was well reported in the Sydney, and especially Melbourne newspapers. This was mainly because the Argus newspaper in Melbourne had sent a special correspondent, Howard Willoughby, to NZ as early as November 1863. By the beginning of December he was effectively embedded into Gen Cameron's HQ. He was a very competent journalist, able to accurately explain Cameron's overall strategy to the Argus readers. This was in contrast to the two Auckland papers of the time, whose journalistic accounts were often superficial and occasionally quite

inaccurate. By 8 December 1863 Willoughby was based at Queen's Redoubt and sent a lively account back to Melbourne with full details of Cameron's slow movement forward toward Ngaruawahia. He explained this as being caused by the Transport Corps, solely dependent upon the paddle steamers Avon and the newly arrived Pioneer, being unable to barely supply the army with more than one day's rations at a time.

None of the Waikato Regiments were involved at Rangiriri, but the end of 1863 saw the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Waikato Regiments deployed at various sites south of Auckland. Units of the 1st Waikato were responsible for garrisoning various supply depots and redoubts.

Five companies of the 1st Waikato Regiment, Companies 1, 3, 5, 6 and 10. were allocated land near Tauranga. The other five companies, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 9 were allocated land near Opotiki, at the east end of the Bay of Plenty. Cholwell Dean Pitt was an officer in 1 Company

On 26 January 1864 a company of the 1st Waikato Regiment was sent to Tauranga with 43rd and 68th Regiments to commence building redoubts. At the same time the Argus correspondent, Willoughby, reported that Bishop Selwyn, who strenuously promoted the welfare of the Maori people and was also, in effect, the senior military chaplain to the forces, was well liked by the troops, including the Australian volunteers. But, said Willoughby, Selwyn was not liked by the settlers because of his opposition to their hard-line opinions on Maori issues.

On 21 April a detachment of 1st Waikato commanded by Ensign H F Way, were included in the garrison at Maketu under the overall command of Major Coleville of the 43rd Regiment. They were involved in a skirmish with about 50 Maori, who withdrew after about 6 hours of firing. During this action the Australians proved they could perform as well as the British regulars, showing more awareness for individual safety, especially when crossing rivers. Anecdotally, it was very probable that more Australians could swim, although Glen provides no reference for this. Glen comments that, in this engagement, the Maori forces suffered from a fault that was consistent through the whole war - they fired too high. Although he gave no reference for this comment, one has been found in the AJHR.

On 28 April the 1st Waikato's played a small part in the battle at Gate Pa, positioned as riflemen at the rear of the British line. It was about this time that Lt Colonel Phillip Harington replaced Colonel Pitt as Commanding Officer of 1st Waikato Regiment. About three weeks later, on 21 June, the incomplete Maori entrenchments at Te Ranga, manned by about 600 Maori were attacked by Colonel H Greer. His force comprised 600 British troops and about 200 men of the

1st Waikato Regiment who, under the command of Captain R R Moore, were on the extreme right of the attack line. Nine British troops were killed and many wounded, but the 1st Waikato suffered no casualties.

It should be noted that, until mid-June 1864, Gamble in his Journal referred to the men recruited from Australia as the Waikato Militia. But from the 18th June- they were referred to the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Waikato Militia Regiments. After the battle at Te Ranga (21 June), the word militia seemed to have been dropped altogether.

During the next three years the 1st Waikato were based in the Bay of Plenty area fighting the hauhau. Their final activity was to patrol, with the 12th Regt, the heavy bush country inland and west of Tauranga (Kaimai Ranges). Their task was to evict the hauhau from their strongholds in the area by destroying crops and villages and capturing weapons. On 22 January 1867 the 1st Waikato & 12th Regt attacked Te Irihanga village, a known hauhau haven. They drove hauhau out and burnt the village. A second village was burnt later in the day but early on the 23 Jan, their Maori guide apparently led them into a Hauhau ambush in which two of the 1st Waikato were killed. This was the Regiment's last battle.

In October 1867 the four Waikato Regiments were disbanded. A total of ten Australians serving in the 1st Waikato Regiment were killed in the NZ Wars, most at Wheeler's Farm, Titi Hill.

As outlined above the men of this regiment, largely recruited in Australia, were offered confiscated 'rebel' Māori land in frontier areas across the North Island, in exchange for a few years colonial military service. This was mainly done via the New Zealand Settlement Act (1863) and they were offered areas of land, relative to the soldier's rank.

Field Officer	400 acres
Captain	300 "
Surgeon	250 "
Junior officer	200 "
Sergeant	80 "
Corporal	60 "
Private	50 "

While some officers did well with their farms, most rank and file soldier settlers did not. There were several reasons for this, mainly that they had insufficient access to capital, equipment, knowledge, and labour to develop their, usually bush, sections into viable farms. As well, the land areas granted to the lower ranks were too small and markets too distant to make viable economic units. There were some successes, but most grants were deserted or sold cheaply, mainly benefiting land speculators.

Ian Barton

REFERENCES (Both Articles)

The account of the 1st Waikato Regiment is based largely on the 2011 book by Frank Glen. "Australians at war in New Zealand"

Supporting information comes from:

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The East Coast Electoral roll of 1877

TRUST ACTIVITIES OVER A MESSED UP YEAR.

2021 has been considerably upset by the Delta variant of Covid, which has effectively put a stop to all activities over the last five months of the year

There was a short lockdown in February, from about 14th to 28th. Then a normal year until 17 August. The Education centre was closed from then until 14 November when we have re-opened, cautiously. So closed for about 19 months. Several school visits had to be cancelled, as was one from a group of army officers.

A major find, in February was the remains of the cobbled roadway inside the fence & opposite the west gate. A short section about 3 metres long was uncovered in March and it is intended that it will remain so as part of the display. (See June 2021 newsletter) At mid year construction began on the replica blockhouse on the SE caponiere but covid put a stop to that when only the base and minimal framing was in place. It is hoped that work will re-commence before Christmas.

We were very lucky to be able to hold our AGM on 28 July, just before the lockdown. It went well and was well attended. The Trustees have not been able to meet since then but are hoping to have a meeting before Christmas as there are a lot of matters needing attention. In fact we have had only three meetings this year; one in February, one in March and one in May.

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 this year, the use of cheques will no longer be possible.

**I Barton, Queen's Redoubt Trust
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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Given Name:

Surname:

Address:

Telephone:

Email address

Membership Category:

Individual \$25

Family \$35

Historic
Organization \$40

Commercial
Organization \$60

LT CHOLWELL DEAN PITT No. 1 Coy, 1st Waikato Regiment

Cholwell Dean Pitt was born at Clifton, Bristol, 26 October 1844 and went to India with his family when he was two. A year later his father was appointed A.D.C to his grandfather Maj. Gen George Dean Pitt, who had been appointed Lt Governor of the short lived province of New Ulster in New Zealand. When his grandfather died on 8 January 1851, Cholwell went back to England with his family. They returned in 1863, his father having obtained a commission in the Auckland Militia. In July 1863, Cholwell was also commissioned into the Militia, as an ensign. At this time his father had been tasked to accompany a delegation led by the Colonial Treasurer, Francis Bell, to Sydney to recruit Australian volunteers to be part of the Colonial Militia to fight alongside the British army in New Zealand. Soon to become known as 'Pitt's Militia', these first volunteers became the nucleus of the 1st Waikato Regiment. After Lt. Norman was killed in action at Titi Hill on 23 October 1863. Ensign Pitt was promoted Lieutenant and for a while commanded the 4th Company of what was to become the 1st Waikato Regiment.

When the Waikato Regiments were disbanded in 1867 the 1st Waikato Regiment were in Tauranga where they were to be allocated land. Although he apparently kept his land, at this point Pitt decided on a professional soldier's career and enlisted in the newly formed Armed Constabulary, initially as a Sub inspector but promoted to full Inspector after two years. It soon became evident that Cholwell Pitt was particularly skilled at training and organizing the kūpapa who were employed fighting the Hauhau. This soon saw him in Gis-

borne where he remained with the Armed Constabulary as senior officer, until his retirement in 1874.

Cholwell Dean Pitt's private life seems to have been somewhat complicated. His first wife was Maata Te Owai, reputed to have been born abt. 1839, daughter of Te Kooti. The only Maata te Owai discovered was, in fact the second wife of Te Kooti, who he had married on the Chatham Islands in 1867. She left Te Kooti after the siege at Nga Tapa in January 1869 and turned against him, giving evidence at the trials of two of his men. She died in 1917, being referred to in her obituary as Maata te Owai (Mrs Pitt). There is no record of her marriage to Cholwell so presumably she was his common law wife. They had two sons; Charles Paku Pitt, born 5/6/1873 and William Tutepuaki Pitt, born 30/5/1877. The latter went on to have a notable career in the NZ Army, serving in the Boer War, as an N.C.O, and the First World War as an officer in the Maori Pioneer Battalion. So was Maata, Te Kooti's wife or his daughter? There is no record of him having a daughter with his first wife, or any of his at least 7 later wives, and the timing suggests it is most likely that Cholwell Pitt married a woman who had been one of Te Kooti's wives.

In October 1911 Cholwell Pitt married Emily Innes in Auckland's St Paul's Church. They had no children. He died in July 1926, aged 82.

Ian Barton



CHOLWELL DEAN PITT

EDUCATION CENTRE OPENING TIMES

Every Sunday 10 am until
2 pm.

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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.

A NEW BOOK ABOUT QUEEN'S REDOUBT and the INVASION OF THE WAIKATO"

Published this year, the book is an up to date history of Queen's Redoubt and its role as a base for the Invasion of the Waikato in 1863. But it covers much more, dealing with the history of building the Great South Road, the surrounding places associated with the redoubt, the British Regiments involved and how they were supplied and lived. There is also detail of early Maori settlements in the area and early European farms. Finally there is a detailed description of medical services of the time, the hospital at Queen's Redoubt and the Soldiers Cemetery established nearby.

The book is hardback with 314 pages, is fully referenced and has a comprehensive bibliography, timeline and index. There are over 80 illustrations, some never before published, and 8 maps.

You can purchase your copy of this very informative book from the Trust for \$58, including GST and P & P. Income from sales of the book will be used by the Queen's Redoubt Trust to further its objectives.

There is a substantial price reduction available for paid up members of the Queen's Redoubt Friends group. Request copies from Ian Barton (ibtrees81@gmail.com) Please make payment into our bank - 123022 0397102 00.

