

Despatch Enclosing Mr. Moreton's Report on Expedition Conducted by Him from Phillips Harbour, in Collingwood Bay, towards Mount Suckling. BNG, AR, 11-14. 1891-92

Moreton's report on ascending Mt. Suckling from Phillips Harbour.

15th July 1891 shipped out from Taupota with 41 carriers (11) for PH

"17th July, Friday -- Mr. Maitland and self landed with the remainder of the boys, and at 8 a.m. we started for a village called Yaumobi, about one mile westerly, carrying rations and camp gear in relays. Some six natives appeared on the sandspit ahead, so I went on and made friends until the carriers arrived. I then, accompanied by a Tauputa boy and a couple of natives, proceeded to Yaumobi, and waited there until Mr. Guise and Mr. Maitland came. The first relays arrived soon after, when Mr. Guise immediately went back to bring up the rest, Mr. Maitland remaining on the veranda of a house with me and eight or ten natives that I had already around; a few came down to the other side of the creek that divides the village, but would not cross. A short time after all our gear arrived, having been mostly carried through deepish water. The natives then began to carry off their effects, spear, &c., across the creek, but they and others came back afterwards, bringing bundles of spears. Mr. Maitland remained sitting on the veranda whilst I went back to the carriers. After a while Mr. Maitland joined us, reporting that the natives had come up shaking their spears at him. I could not find out, on account of bad interpretation, who was the chief; but at last dropped on the biggest and sulkiest-looking man, who kept passing by without looking at one -- Bogegi, by name. I therefore called him up and gave him a shirt. After some ten minutes' conversation through Ginger and a Tauputa boy, in which I explained our intention of going up Big Mountain, and had agreed with him that he should get some of his boys to give a hand for a couple of days, he went amongst the natives, who had then appeared fairly thick, and got those who would to come and sit down round about.

I estimated them at the time at about one-third; another third sat down further off; and the rest, whom I found in the majority, kept aloof, some with spears in their hands. I was suddenly astonished by hearing shouting, and looking up found the whole place disturbed, some of those who would not come near brandishing their spears, one in particular -- who seemed to be the leader; the other rushing off to get theirs (sic); and on our side some running forward with whatever they could lay their hands on. Bogegi and self got between them, and the former quietened the people on his side. After it was all settled, Bogegi and an oldish man, called Kaupori, to whom I then gave a shirt, as he had stood up for us, asked us in a very friendly manner not to go that way through their village, but to go back to the old camp No. 1, and make slight detour (sic). We immediately complied with this, as we saw we could not get through as peacefully as we could wish, and any disturbance would cause endless trouble to ourselves, at any rate. We started to get everything carried back had some trouble, as part of the Tauputa boys, seeing the natives in the bush lining the beach, would not move; but at last got everything back to No. 1, Bogegi and a few natives helping towards the end. After arriving as there was no time to shift camp, and not knowing how far we were from water, we arranged with Bogegi to bring a couple of buckets of water, which turned out to be very salt (sic). In the meantime we sent several parties out in search of water, whilst Mr. Maitland, three boys, and myself started to cut a track southerly, so as to get out of the mangrove swamp country as quickly as possible, as also to keep clear from coast villages until our return. If it had not been for Bogegi, there would have been great trouble. I found

afterwards that the men who started the disturbance did not belong to Yaumobi, but to other villages along the coast.

*18th July, Saturday.* -- Mr. Maitland started first thing in the morning with some boys to continue the track and try and get water, which he did some two miles from No. 1 Camp. Mr. Guise was laid up with fever. Ginger and self remained, intending to go back to the village of Yaumobi and make further friendly advances to the natives. As we were starting we saw in the distance a crowd of natives come out of the mangrove swamp from the direction of the village. I waited till I could see whether they had spears, and, finding they had only one, went to meet them; met them at some distance from the camp. In front there were two young men, who greeted me with the cry of "Waru;" some fifty yards behind I saw a highly-ornamented chief, carrying a spear decked out with streamers, with a club-bearer and some seventy or eighty natives behind. I wanted to go and meet him, but was signed to wait till he came up; he then handed his spear to another and came forward. Having a blue handkerchief, I put it around his neck, and he presented me with his neck ornament of seeds. We then walked to camp together. His name is Kitori, chief, from what I make out, of Awaki and head of the tribe living about Phillips Harbour. He is a fine-looking man and quite young, was accompanied by his father, which I suppose means uncle, two brothers, and some seventy or eighty men. There were a great many more lining the mangroves along the beach. These I found afterwards had their spears with them. Taking them altogether, there must have been at least 150 men, and all fine big men, the Tauputa carriers looking like pigmies alongside. They stayed for over two hours, and then went off. I accompanied them a short distance, until an oldish man close by looked up at me and gave a quiet wave to go back. As I was walking back with some five or six Yaumobi natives, there was a cry that Mr. Maitland's field-glasses had been stolen. I then called out to the natives, and they all started to run, except the boys with me. These promised to get the glasses back, but, of course, there was no sign of them before we left. "

-- headed out the next day with Bogegi, Kaupori and 6 or 7 natives helping to carry -- later discovered that there had been some addition "filching".

sketch map showing route along "Dori creek" as far as no. 4 camp at Fir Tree cr.