

Appendix A. Despatch Reporting Inspection of the North-east Coast of the Possession. BNG, AR, 1-8., 1893-94.

Pg. 6

5 Oct at Cape Nelson after visit to boundary "near Hardy Is."

King and Armit went out to meet some of the natives

6 Oct. — went from Hardy Is. To Phillips Harbour by boat & launch
— at a bay at the foot of Trafalgar landed and met a large number of people with large canoes who had built temporary houses there

- Maisina up to visit the Kaierra district southwest of Hardy

"They were very friendly, and keen traders. Like most of the tribes in this part of the country they usually made their ornaments of Job's tears. Of these this particular tribe had necklaces and earrings with long graceful pendants, that recall to mind similar Indian jewelry made of silver. They had stone clubs, of the disc form, with axes of jade. Two of them had some red cloth, and spoke a few words of Kappi Kappi tongue, and insisted on shaking hands... [passed 3 or 4 villages before Maisina. All friendly, offering food.]

"Early in the afternoon we come in sight of Makimaki, the first of the Maisina villages on the north. This large old place I had visited before, nearly two years ago. As I had the launch at my first visit, and approached now in a rowing boat only, the launch having been left behind, they did not recognize me, and did not seem quite at ease as we neared them. A body of men were posted on the south side of the creek, feathered, painted, and armed to the teeth with spears, shields, stone clubs, and mouth-pieces made of boars' tusks and red seeds. When they understood that we were friends, the armed band melted and disappeared as quietly and as quickly as if it had been made of snow. A large body of natives, unarmed, met us at the mouth of the creek. To one man who seemed of superior intelligence I gave a shirt, and took particular notice of him. It turned out afterwards that the selection was a happy one, for it appears he is the principal chief of the whole of Maisina. He conducted me to the village, which they were not quite willing that we should visit, and he supervised things generally. He evidently was afraid his people would steal and get into trouble. When I bought anything he took possession of it, and put it at once into the trade bag. This put me more carefully on my guard against pilfering, but my eye was taken for a moment from one of the Job's tears earrings with pendants which I had purchased. I laid it on my knee as I sat until I took out a few beads to pay for something else offered, and in the twinkling of an eye it was gone. I looked for it and found it in the ear of the chief himself, in the ear that was farthest away from me as he sat near me. Another man had abstracted it and put it in his ear. Probably the chief would have kept it had I not noticed it, but I quietly took it out of his ear and put it in the bag, no one taking any notice of this.

From Makimaki we went to the large village in the district, that of Viaku. I had on two previous occasions been to this place and had always found the people friendly; but Mr. Hely reported that at a subsequent visit by him a man was noticed to get behind him with hostile intentions. As the people are very numerous I was prepared for some disturbance there, but I was agreeably surprised at being met in the most friendly manner by a great unarmed crowd. These people are the most lively and the most spirited on the coast. They are also the most wealthy,

possessing great store of clubs, jade axes, and other property. They had now discovered the full value of iron, and are extremely keen on buying it in any form. Never have I seen natives so eager to purchase plane-irons. They fought and struggled with each other for the possession of a stone club or jade axe with which they could buy a plane-iron; and they fought and scrambled over the plane-iron when it was given to them. Even the women could not keep out of it. Towards us they were perfectly friendly in every way.

page 8

As I was anxious that Mr. King should make the acquaintance of this great tribe, the most powerful and the most enterprising in the whole of the district, I sent Mr. Armit and him in the boat and launch to visit them the next morning. They were received similarly, and there was still the same unquenchable thirst for iron. They were welcomed by the chief to whom I had given the shirt at Makimaki. Mr. Armit says that he has great influence and authority at Viaku, and that he was very kind and hospitable there. By these people iron will no doubt soon find its way to the inland tribes.

The steamer anchored in Phillips Harbour. The position of the little island forming its eastern boundary was found to be latitude 9 degrees 29 minutes 45 seconds south, bearing 323 degrees to the top of Mount Victory. Many natives who are now quite well acquainted with us, visited the steamer from the villages near, bringing food, pigs, weapons and utensils for sale. They understand there a good deal of the language of Kappi Kappi (Cape Vogel). I have been under the impression hitherto that the Government would probably be challenged by Maisina to fight for supremacy, but it seems now as if that powerful community already admitted their inferiority and accepted the Government authority. But of course the first real test will be when some native has to be arrested there."