**Hist316 Group Project – Commentary**

Our spreadsheet presents a section of H. E. Rice’s list of rebel Kingite Māori who surrendered on the 24th of July at Otenuoetae, a little over a month after their British defeat at Te Ranga. Rice was an agent of Governor Grey, and his presence was instrumental in the surrender of these warriors.[[1]](#footnote-1) The spreadsheet presents information regarding weapons or ammunition surrendered by each individual, their name, hapū or iwi and where relevant their fighting capacity, health and status.

It was essential to the utility of this spreadsheet that it enabled information to be easily accessible for researchers investigating specific iwi or hapū. With the evolution of written Māori over the last 150 years, the accepted spelling and punctuation of many Māori words has changed, however, the use of macrons and spacing has becoming standardized since the introduction of the Māori Language Commission and Māori Language Act 1987.[[2]](#footnote-2) An example can be seen with hapū ‘Ngaituwhiwhi’, the spelling of which is now officially accepted as ‘Ngāi Tū Whiwhia’.[[3]](#footnote-3) Acknowledging that researchers may be retrieving data through contemporary Māori spelling, as well as modern, we have provided both the original Māori spelling, and where possible, the accepted modern spelling alongside in brackets, for optimum retrieval. Over the last 150 years some hapū and iwi have faded into obscurity, in these cases it became difficult to verify an accepted modern spelling, so only the contemporary spelling has been used, as with ‘Ngatekahi’.

The detail presented on Rice’s chart are often incomplete, either due to being written in a hurry, political considerations of Māori, or, a lack of accuracy on the part of surveyors. An example is Hori Ngatai, who is listed as hailing from ‘Ngaiterangi’ (Ngāi Te Rangi), although this is correct it omits his origins with Ngāti Hē. Meanwhile, a number of Māori specifically come from the ‘Te Papanu Ahi’ hapū.

In constructing this database we decided to leave the categories as broad as possible, allowing researchers to address issues central to the conflict. The categories of those who were apparently unable to fight may have been condensed into one - a ‘non-combatant’ or ‘unfit’ column - but considering the surrender’s placing a month after Te Ranga, those who were sick or crippled could well have been involved in the fighting.

The most significant question with Rice’s list regards the surrendered weapons and ammunition. Many Māori are listed without guns, but with ammunition. Other Māori surrendered melee or potential ceremonial weapons such as the spear, taiaha and in one instance a ‘patu paora’ (patu parāoa) - an item which appears unusual both in its utility for the British and the value it might have held for Rawiri Pono of ‘Ngaiterangi’ (Ngāi Te Rangi). James Belich proposes that the surrender was a ceremonial one, and that many more weapons were hidden; he believed that after the campaigns of the Waikato war and the victory at Gate Pa, local Maori would have possessed far larger numbers of weapons than were surrendered. From Belich’s reports we would also expect to find a much larger proportion of melee weapons due to his claims of a predominance of hand-to-hand combat.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Hori Ngatai declared upon his surrender at Te Papa that all his guns lay before him, and he was unable to fight; this was to reflect his dedication to peace.[[5]](#footnote-5) The true nature of this surrender, and the reality of the manpower and weaponry possessed versus surrendered by Tauranga Moana iwi at this time, is an avenue worth revisiting, so we chose to present as much information on the subject as was available.

**Commentary Bibliography:**

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1. James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1986) p.196. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Rawinia Higgens and Basil Keane, ‘Te reo Maori - the Maori Language’, *Te Ara - The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, updated 10-sep-13. URL: http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/te-reo-maori-the-maori-language/sources. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. National Library of New Zealand, ‘Iwi Hapū Names List’, *National Library of New Zealand*,updated Sep-07. URL:http://iwihapu.natlib.govt.nz/. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Belich, pp.194-195. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. ‘Copy of Bishop of Waiapu’s Notes’, *Appendix to the Journals of the house of Representatives (AJHR)*, 1865, Vol. XXXVII, p. 85. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)