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No. 30—Tamaikoha

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Descent of Tira-mate, mother of Tamaikoha, from the original people of the Bay of Plenty:—

Toi-kai-rakau
 |
 Hatonga
 |
 Hine-ruarangi
 |
 Te Maunga
 |
 Potiki
 |
 Tuhouli
 |
 Tane-te-kohurangi
 |
 Te Rangi-tiriao
 |
 Puhou
 |
 Pou-te-aniwaniwa
 |
 Tama-urupa
 |
 Tongaraunui
 |
 Tawhaki
 |
 Tutonga
 |
 Tu-manawa-pohatu
 |
 Taokaki
 |
 Te Rangi-tuke
 |
 Uenuku
 |
 Tiramate=Te Ariari
 |
 TAMAIKOHA
 |
 Hakeke
 |
 Ronoro
 |
 Hinechori

Major Ropata Wahawaha, N.Z.C.

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A REMARKABLE figure in the history of New Zealand's wars with the Hauhau rebel Maoris was the late Major Ropata Wahawaha, the warrior-chief of the Ngati-Porou tribe, East Cape. A fearless and determined, even ruthless, soldier, he took the side of the Government at the outbreak of the Hauhau wars, on the East Coast, and the story of his stubborn chase after the notorious leader Te Kooti reads like some wild romance. Ropata (Robert) Wahawaha was born in the old cannibal days, and in his boyhood he was taken prisoner by the Rongo-Whakaata tribe, of Poverty Bay, and kept as a captive for some years, a number of his people being killed and eaten in the raid in which he was captured.

and much heathenism, they drew largely on the faith of their followers, and greatly diminished their fear of British balls, bombs, rockets and other missiles of civilised warfare; and at the same time by their horrid yells and incantations, exercised a kind of fascinating influence even over our men, as many instances might be brought forward to prove. But all this must be viewed as the efforts of a bold and determined race, to preserve their nationality in face of the formidable foe they had to contend with."

Te Ua made the Maoris fancy that by making passes they could draw their enemies into their hands and compel ships to run on shore.

Tamaikoha

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THIS stern old warrior, Eru Tamaikoha (or Tama-i-kowha) te Ariari, was a remarkable link with the wild days of the past. He had the mien and the heart of the old-time savage toa. Not only was he a warrior but he was a cannibal, and that as lately as the Hauhau War of the Sixties. He was partly tattooed. His wide-nostrilled nose had a suspicion of a Hibernian tilt upwards; this, combined with his favourite headgear—an old and bashed-in billycock hat—and his custom of smoking his pipe with the bowl turned upside down, tempted the writer to liken him to a sunburnt Irishman—very sunburnt—with a dash of blue moko added.

Tamaikoha was the head chief of the Ngati-Tama, a small sub-tribe of the Urewera, connected also with the Ngati-Awa, of the Whakatane Valley. His home was at Waimana, a valley through which the Waimana River flows down to the Whakatane from the Urewera mountains. He was born about the year 1835 or 1836. Early in the Hauhau wars in the Bay of Plenty he became an energetic and daring leader of the rebels. His delight was in ambuscades, a method of guerilla warfare in which the Urewera forest-dwellers were expert. He fought against the Government troops and their native allies at Maketu and Kaokaoroa in 1864. Thereafter his fighting was done in the Whakatane and Opotiki Valleys, and on the northern borders of the Urewera country. In February, 1866, he and his Ngai-Tama had a brisk skirmish with Colonel Lyon's force at the Kopani village, up the Waioeka Gorge, inland from Opotiki. Here the Patea Rangers killed five of the Hauhaus in a running fight. Another fight took place in the same district a month or so later, when Capt. Newland and his men carried the Hauhau position at Kairakau, under a sharp fire, killed several Ngai-Tama Hauhaus, and took a very large quantity of loot, much of which the Maoris had plundered from the Opotiki settlers. After the return of this expedition to Opotiki, Tamaikoha and his tribesmen went on in

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the warpath in quest of utu (revenge). They laid an ambush at the Waiotaha River, and killed Wi Popata, a Maori of the Arawa tribe, who was carrying mails for the Government. Capt. Newland had a narrow escape from the same war-party. Wi Popata's heart was cut out, and Tamaikoha cooked and ate a portion of it, after offering part in the sacrifice of the Whangai-hau, or Whangai-atua, to the war-gods Hukita and Te Rehu-o-Tainui; he professed to be the medium and priest of these deities. The Hauhaus revived the ancient savage practices of beheading and mutilation of bodies, and in this war were also occasionally cannibals.

In May of the following year (1867) Tamaikoha and his tribe made a murderous raid on a homestead occupied by four pioneer military settlers—Messrs G. T. Wilkinson (afterwards Government Native Agent in the King Country), Livingstone, Moore, and Gags, who lived near the Government redoubt (temporarily unoccupied) near the entrance to the Waioeka Gorge. They surrounded the house on a very wet day, and completely surprised the unfortunate settlers, who had rifles but no ammunition. Dashing out through the back of the house the white men made for the bush. Only two of them gained it, Wilkinson and Livingstone; the other two were shot and tomahawked, and their hearts and livers cut out by the savages. Wilkinson and Livingstone escaped to Opotiki, after a terrible flight through the bush. The Hauhaus burned the house, and they cooked and ate their trophies. Tamaikoha again ate a portion of one of the hearts, after offering portion in oblation to the gods of war. On another occasion he similarly mutilated the body of Bennett White, a murdered settler of Opotiki, and ate part of the white man's heart.

Numerous skirmishes occurred in the Whakatane, Waimana and adjacent valleys and gorges between the Government troops and Tamaikoha's men, in 1868. On one occasion the Hauhaus received information that Major Fraser, who was stationed at Whakatane, was in the habit of sending out a working party of his men every day to improve the roads about his post. Tamaikoha and Heteraka te Whakaunua led a party of Hauhaus to surprise these men, but at the Puketi Hill, near Taneatua, in the Whakatane valley, they encountered an armed party of the Ngati-Pukeko tribe, who were friendly to the whites. In the skirmish which resulted the Ngati-Pukeko lost six of their guns and had one man wounded, and one of the Hauhaus was killed. Colonel St. John, on hearing the news of this raid, started from Opotiki and, joining Major Fraser at Whakatane, marched up the Whakatane valley with a strong punitive force in pursuit of the Hauhaus, but the river flooding its narrow bed in the gorges, the chase had to be abandoned.

In 1869 and 1870, Tamaikoha was on the war-path again against the Government forces, which during those years scoured the Urewera mountains in search of Te Kooti and his band. He made peace with Major Kemp (Kepa Te Rangihwinui) and the Government in 1870.

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The old chief exercised a masterful influence over his hapu. He was a determined autocrat in his barbaric way. In his last years an instance of this occurred. He wished his people to remove from their Waimana village to a new site. As they hesitated and seemed indisposed to obey him, he promptly went out and set fire to their raupo whares, which were quickly burned down. The hapu shifted. He had numerous wives to uphold the dignity of his name and whare. Tamaikoha sturdily eschewed the trousers of the pakeha. He always wore the rapaki, a shawl or mat or piece of blanket worn kilt-fashion. When the writer last saw him, in 1901, he was parading Rotorua attired in a shirt and a shawl rapaki, a flax korowai mat thrown over his shoulders, and an old billycock hat decorated with a feather of the kohoperoa, the long-tailed cuckoo. He adhered stubbornly to the ways of his fathers and he died as he had lived—a Maori of the Maoris, a savage warrior who had led his tribesmen in many a raid and ambush, and who to his last days revered the ancient gods of his race.

