

# A TRADER IN CANNIBAL LAND

The Life and Adventures  
——— of Captain Tapsell



A WHALESHIP OF TAPSELL'S PERIOD.  
The *New Zealander*, of London, approaching the  
Bay of Islands.

(FROM A PAINTING BY A. H. MESSENGER.)

# A TRADER IN CANNIBAL LAND

The Life and Adventures  
of Captain Tapsell

BY  
JAMES COWAN



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## Preface

THIS memoir of a boldly dramatic figure in New Zealand's history is an authentic Odyssey of sea-roving and shore-trading adventure. No fiction enters into the narrative.

The temptation to expand the biography into an historical novel was hard to resist, but it was felt that the plain story was sufficiently vivid to arouse and hold the interest of the reader. It is a record of quite extraordinary range, with the Seven Seas, the Old World and the New for its theatre.

Philip (Hans) Tapsell was a Danish sailor who early in his seagoing career took a Manx name to enable him to sail in English ships. While retaining his pride in his Danish blood and ancestry, he became a thorough-going British seaman. For thirty-five years he was at sea, most of the time in whaleships; for the next forty years he was a trader among the Maoris. He was in the Mediterranean when Moorish and Levantine pirates sailed the sea; he served in the Danish war against the British and the Swedes, he commanded privateer vessels, suffered a grievous wound, was a prisoner of war in Sweden. He witnessed the battle of Copenhagen of which Campbell wrote, the battle "of Nelson and the North," when the "gallant good Riou" fell on his vessel's deck. He sailed the Pacific and the Southern Ocean chasing whales; and his last sea-going command was an Australian whaleship.

He saw the transformation of New Zealand from a land of cannibal warfare into a British colony of peace and comfort and wealth. It is strange indeed to think that this sea-patriarch who lived to see the Eighteen-seventies was at St. Helena when Napoleon was in captivity there. The principal scene of Tapsell's long life as a trader in New Zealand was the village of Maketu, on the Bay of Plenty coast. There he married a young Maori chieftainess, and the pair were the founders of a small half-caste sub-tribe of the Arawa. To-day the "Whanau-a-Tapihana" ("Tapsell's Children") are more than a hundred in number.

My notes of the whaler-trader's career were begun in 1903, when some of the old trader's contemporaries were still living. Exploring one day with a veteran of the Maori Wars the historic Maketu Pa on its grassy cliff above the long curving sands, we came upon a relic of Tapsell's twelve-gun battery which once upon a time helped to defend this fortification of the Ngati-Pikiao tribe. It was a nine-pounder carronade, dismounted but still in workable firing order. On the beach below we saw another gun. And in the tangled old Pakeha-Maori cemetery in the valley, near the mission station of Wharekahu, we had to push away the thick growth of flowering fuchsia, overhung by the sweet prickly acacia before we could read the inscription on the pioneer trader's gravestone.

HANS HOMMAN FELK  
KNOWN AS  
PHILIP TAPSELL  
A NATIVE OF DENMARK WHO DISTINGUISHED  
HIMSELF AS A NAVAL OFFICER.  
DIED AT THE AGE OF 94 YEARS ON THE  
6th of august, 1873.

The principal part of this narrative was contained in a packet of manuscript, much faded, which a great-grandson of Tapsell, Sergeant John McAlister, of Auckland, sent to me in 1920.

The statements contained in it were written down in 1869 from Tapsell's lips, by E. Little, of the Armed Constabulary, who was Clerk of the Magistrate's Court at Maketu. Portions of this were published in serial form in the "Auckland Star" in 1874. Some additional matter was taken down in 1873 by Mr. F. E. Hamlin, the magistrate; this I obtained at Whakatane. The narrative in Little's MS. required reconstruction; historical data — names, dates, places — needed much correction, in the light of a more complete knowledge of early events in New Zealand and the Pacific.

From the late Captain Gilbert Mair, N.Z.C., who knew Tapsell and his family in the 'Sixties, I heard much of the old man and the events at Maketu. Others of his contemporaries who gave information were Maori veterans of the Wars: the aged chief Kiharoa and his fellow-soldiers Te Rangituakoha and Te Whanarere, of Ngati Pikiao; Te Araki te Pohu, of Ngati Tu; and several other old acquaintances of mine, long since dead, all of whom had known Tapsell, and with whom his half-caste sons had served in the wars of the 'Sixties. It was difficult to unearth a portrait of the old man. At last, at Taneatua, in 1921, I obtained a small photograph taken at Auckland about the year 1870; this is here reproduced as an illustration. It is an index to the character of the Viking-like sailor. The late Mrs. C. Garlick, of Taneatua, showed me a treasured family relic, Tapsell's sea-chest or ditty-box, inlaid with ivory-like whalebone, after the manner of the old-time whalers' scrimshaw art craft.

Tapsell's life was a succession of dramatic, often thrilling episodes, and his end was in heroic keeping with his long and wild career. A parting speech he made to his children and other kinsfolk in 1873 is in my belief the most touching farewell in our history. The grand old sailor requested that his children should assemble at his bedside, with the Rev. Seymour Spencer, the Maketu missionary, and the resident magistrate, Mr. Hamlin. He then addressed them in these words:

"Listen carefully to what I am about to say. If it please God to take me now, which I think He will, do not put me in a coffin, but sew me up in a blanket. Do not cry for me after the manner of the Maoris, but I should like two guns to be fired, one to be fired at the moment I die, and the other when I am lowered into my grave. Let that be the only mourning for Tapsell. Bear well in mind my word to you all that you do not enclose me in a coffin, for men whom I consider far greater than myself, my brothers and fellow seamen, when they died had no coffin. My last wishes are that I be buried in the same manner.

I wish you all to consent to this before I go so that I may die happy. Had it not been for my daughter Toti being buried here my wish would have been to be sewed in a piece of canvas and with a shot at my feet to be lowered into the sea, the grave of all my former comrades."

Written down by Mr. Hamlin at the time, and received by the author, 1903.

That last speech of Tapsell to his assembled family has a remarkable parallel in a famous passage of fiction, Commodore Trunnion's dying speech in Smollett's "Peregrine Pickle."

"As soon as the breath is out of my body," said Trunnion, "let minute guns be fired, till I am safe underground. I would also be buried in the red jacket I had on when I boarded and took the 'Renummy.' Let my pistols, cutlass, and pocket compass be laid in the coffin along with me. Let me be carried to the grave by my own men rigged in the black caps and white shirts which my barge's crew were wont to wear; and they must keep a good look-out that none of your pilfering rascallions may come and heave me up again for the lucre of what they can get, until the carcase is belayed by a tombstone. As for the motto, or what you call

it, I do desire that it may not be engraved in the Greek or Latin lingos, and much less in the French, which I abominate, but in plain English, so that when the angel comes to pipe all hands at the great day, he may know that I am a British man, and speak to me in my mother-tongue. And now I have no more to say but God in heaven have mercy upon my soul and send you all fair weather wheresoever you are bound."

And there is this to be told before we leave Tapsell's flower-hung grave, that twenty-seven of his descendants served in the Great War, fighting as valorously there as their patriarchal ancestor had fought on his blood-stained deck in the Baltic. One of the grandsons who joined the Maori Battalion of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force took two sons with him, and all three fought side by side in the bayonet charge upon the Turks at Sari Bair, on Gallipoli. There was not a man or a well-grown youth among the offspring of "Tapihana" who failed to answer Britain's war call in 1914-1918.

JAMES COWAN.

Wellington, N.Z., 1935

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## **PART ONE**

# **TAPSELL THE SAILOR**

# CHAPTER I

## THE FIRST ADVENTURE

In the city of Copenhagen, in the year 1779, there was born to one Jans Hansen Falk (or Felk), an official of the Danish Government, a boy who was christened by the name Hans Homman. When he was eight years old his mother died, and the grandparents, who lived in Jutland, sent to the father offering to take charge of the little boy and bring him up and attend to his education. To this Jans Falk agreed, and the son was put on board a cutter sailing for Jutland. This coasting voyage was the beginning of a life-long series of perilous adventures for Hans of Copenhagen.

The cutter was nearing Jutland, when the boy, lying in his bunk in the midnight hours, was awakened by dense suffocating fumes of smoke which filled the cabin. Struggling with difficulty up the companionway, he reached the deck. The vessel was on fire. All the forepart was in flames; the bulwarks, rigging and sails were blazing. The terrified boy looked frantically around for the crew.

Not one of the men was to be seen. The one boat was gone, too. They had all pulled away and forgotten him. Before him were the blazing planks and rigging, and a cruel death by fire. He ran to the side. The cool water, glistening in the moonlight, seemed the easier end. He resigned his little heart to death by drowning, and he was just about to plunge into the sea when he heard a voice hailing him. It was the captain in the boat. He had suddenly remembered his child passenger. The boat was soon alongside, and strong arms stretched out to receive him as he dropped over the side to safety.

The boat was small and very leaky. There were, beside the crew, three or four passengers, and they had no provisions with them. For three days they were out at sea in their boat, without food; they baled continually. At last they were picked up by a coasting vessel from Jutland and landed safely at Copenhagen.

The boy Hans was persuaded to sail in another vessel for Jutland, by the assurance that she could not burn because she was "made of copper." She was sheathed with copper, an unusual thing with coasting vessels at that era. This time the young voyager was landed safely in Jutland. There he lived with his grandfather and grandmother for two years and went to school. Then the two, old people died, and Hans was sent by an uncle back to Copenhagen. Once more with his father, his education was continued, but at fourteen the lad had had enough of school.

His short coasting voyages, the sights and sounds of sailing, filled him with a longing to get aboard some far-roving craft and sail away to foreign parts. That wish his father gratified by binding him apprentice to a shipowner, and he served that hard but ever-enchanting mistress, the sea, for more than half his lifetime.

Young Hans made his first deep-sea passage in a Danish brig trading to the Mediterranean. Voyage after voyage he sailed, each one teaching him more of sea-lore, of ships and their handling, of rigging and sails, and of men. By the time he was verging on his twenties he was a well-schooled seaman. As for navigation, he was mastering its theory and its practical application and could find the latitude and longitude and work out the ship's position and course on the chart.

## CHAPTER II

# TAPSELL GOES WHALING

### Jonathan from Nantucket

A brig from Boston in which Hans Falk was serving before the mast went into London, where the vessel and cargo were sold, and our young Dane engaged as boatswain and boatsteerer in a whaling ship commanded by Captain Jonathan Clarke, bound for Timor, in the East Indies.

At this period, England being at war with most of the European powers, no foreigner was permitted to sail as an officer in her merchant service, and as the great demand for men in the Navy rendered it impossible to procure an entirely English crew, the foremast hands in most vessels consisted of men of all nations. Falk, therefore, in engaging as a petty officer on board the whaling vessel, found it necessary to adopt English nationality. He assumed the name of Philip Tapsell, passing as a Manxman, under which character the slight accent in his speech was not noticed.

Though the ship was English, Captain Jonathan Clarke was an American of Nantucket. Until the vessel went to sea, the Yankee mariner gave his crew no opportunity of becoming acquainted with his real character. On shore he adopted a meek and mild behaviour that proved a most effectual disguise. While the vessel was taking in stores he occasionally came on board, formally dressed in a suit of black, with all the appearance of a preacher. This character his gentle demeanour and subdued tone of voice well supported. No one could imagine that the clerical-looking and lamb-like person stepping diffidently about the deck, and only occasionally exchanging a remark with those around, was one of the most profane and tyrannical reprobates that disgraced the merchant service, even at a time when humane captains were the exception.

By the time the vessel reached the Eastern Seas and commenced whaling, the brutal character of the captain had been manifested many a time. It was misery for Tapsell and his comrades. Differences between the captain and the first mate were so frequent that at last, falling in with an English frigate, Clarke sent the officer, whose name was McGuinness, on board her on the ground that he did not consider his (Clarke's) life safe while they were in the same ship. Clarke was a man of great physical strength. He used his fist, his boot, and weapons until there was not a man on board who had not been knocked about and wounded by him.

This treatment at length became unendurable, and seven of the crew, including Tapsell, determined to leave the vessel at the first opportunity. They packed up their gear for removal at a moment's notice. When at sea about two hundred miles from Boru, in Timor, the opportunity for escape arrived unexpectedly. Mr. Shaddock, the new chief mate, who had succeeded McGuinness, and who, like the captain, was an American of Nantucket, one night during his watch on deck, told Tapsell that he was sleepy, and requested the Dane to keep a look-out while he lay down for a short time. When the coast was clear, the conspirators got their chests into the waist-boat which hung in the davits. The tackle was well greased, so that it ran without creaking, and the boat was noiselessly lowered into the

water. Some of the hands had been aloft and "racked" the braces, so that they could not be worked from below nor the yards moved in any direction.

As Tapsell was about to leave the deck for the boat, he encountered one of the ship's boys. "I know what you are going to do," said the youngster. "Be quiet," said Tapsell, "say nothing till we are well clear of the ship."

The boat was at a considerable distance before the alarm was given. Lights could be seen moving about on board. The surprise and anger of Captain Clarke when he found that the braces could not be handled may be imagined. Before the gear was running clear again the boat and crew were well beyond reach.

Next morning, the vessel fell in with the Grand Sachem, also out on a whaling voyage. To the commander Captain Clarke related his misfortune, adding that he did not know where to look for his missing boat. The captain of the Grand Sachem, being familiar with the geography of that neighbourhood, suggested Boru as the place for which the runaways would most likely steer and offered to accompany Captain Clarke and pilot him there.

Meanwhile the boat's crew, well provisioned and provided with navigation instruments, compass and chart, taken from the ship, were steering for Boru. They were three nights at sea. When they reached Boru they pulled into a cove between two mangrove swamps, hauled the boat up, and spread their wet clothes out on the bushes to dry.

Unfortunately for the runaways, among the garments so displayed was a new shirt of a bright scarlet colour. When the two whaleships hove in sight, the sailors conjectured them to be East Indiamen putting in for food and water, and they agreed that they would all ship in them if the opportunity offered.

The two captains landed at Boru, and went to the Sultan, to whom Captain Clarke made his complaint, offering a large reward for the capture of the men. Accordingly, a party of soldiers were sent in search. Marching along the beach they saw the red shirt hanging out to dry. They advanced on the place and came suddenly upon the party of sailors.

One of the soldiers addressed the deserters in broken English, informing them that the two ships which had arrived were East Indiamen who were short of hands, and willing to give very high wages. This was just what the men wanted, yet, for fear of treachery, it was arranged that one of the number was to go first, and if everything was right, to hasten back again. The man was so long in returning that Tapsell and another man walked towards the point from which the two vessels could be seen.

Looking through a telescope, Tapsell gave a gasp of amazement. "Why, there's our ship!" he said. A few moments later he saw the whaleboat with the remainder of the crew approaching.

He cursed their stupidity for thus exposing themselves to the view of the ships. The boat came to the beach, and a Malay, one of the guards, jumped out, armed with a musket, and called on them to surrender. Resistance was useless; the captors were all armed. The captured men now learned that a strong party of Malays had surrounded the camp, remaining concealed, while a number came forward bringing wine, which they offered the sailors. The ruse succeeded; very soon the deserters were drunk, and were easily overpowered and tied up.

When the sailors were brought before the captain, in the presence of the Sultan, Captain Jonathan Clarke, addressing them, said: "I suppose you know what I can do to you? I can take you on board of a man-of-war and have every man of you hanged for piracy on the high seas. But I am willing to overlook everything that has taken place, if you will go on board again, and do your duty as before."

This offer they all refused. They told their grievances to the Sultan and showed the wounds they had received from the captain.

The Sultan informed them that the captain could not take them away against their will, and that they might remain with him on shore if they chose. He treated them with great kindness, put them under no restraint, and furnished them with a house and plenty of food. Indeed, he tried to persuade Tapsell to remain there and take up his abode with him.

Captain Clarke, who knew that he could not continue his whale-chasing voyage without the men, came daily to urge them to come on board. He had dropped his bullying tactics and fairly cried when they told him they would see him damned first. But at last, they yielded to his coaxing and consented to go on board, Clarke giving a written undertaking not to punish them. This was signed in the presence of the Sultan and witnessed by Captain Donovan of the whaling ship Grand Sachem.

Several of Clarke's men on board the ship were laid up with scurvy. The inhuman captain had four or five of the worst sufferers taken on shore and buried up to the middle in the earth, for the purpose, as he said, of "drawing the scurvy out of them." In their position the poor devils were left for a night; their screams were heard from the vessel; to Tapsell they sounded like the despairing cries from a wrecked ship. They were not long afflicted with scurvy after their treatment; they died in two or three days.

The vessel had not been long at sea when Jonathan Clarke unmasked himself once more. His brutality more than once almost caused open mutiny. Once when out in the boats the captain made fast to a whale, which rose suddenly, and striking the boat tilted it up, and threw Tapsell over the gunwale into the sea. The captain left him swimming for his life amongst the tiger sharks. So numerous were the sharks that he touched them at every stroke as they swam by his side and followed in his wake. He was seen by one of the boats belonging to another ship and was rescued, and presently when a boat from his own vessel approached, he jumped into the water and was taken in.

When the ship was full and about to sail for England, the captain put five of his men on board the Echo, a British vessel carrying a letter-of-marque commission, insisting that they should be taken home for trial. The captain of the Echo, however, put into Table Bay, and not wishing to carry the whalemens further, gave them a quiet hint to escape. They were soon after picked up by the Navy press-gang and lodged on board the Lion, a 74-gun ship, then in the Bay.

There was now only Tapsell remaining on board out of the seven who had run away with the boat in the East Indies. One of his mates had taken the opportunity of a man-of-war brig speaking the vessel to hail her and ask to enter the Navy. A lieutenant came off in a boat and took him away, having first compelled Captain Clarke to give the sailor an order for his share of the profits of the voyage.

When the captain heard that five of his men were on board H.M.S. Lion he made sure of hanging them all, besides Tapsell, and went off at once to the Admiral for that amiable

purpose. But he met with a reception he did not expect. The Admiral, after hearing what he had to say, replied: "Had you brought them confined to me at first, they would have been punished, but you coaxed them on board to fill your ship, and now you want to get rid of them." Calling his steward he said: "Open the door," and Captain Clarke retired, baffled. Men for the Navy were at that time very scarce, and the five sailors being all good seamen, were too valuable to be given up lightly.

When the whaleship reached London after her cruise of three years and seven months Captain Clarke at first refused to pay Tapsell his lay or share of the earnings of the voyage. The young Dane went to a lawyer, and Jonathan was forced to disgorge, besides having to pay all the law expenses. So ended that chapter in a sailor's life.

## CHAPTER III

# PRIVATEERING IN THE BALTIC

Young Hans the sailor visited his relatives in Copenhagen, in an interval between voyages, in 1801, when Britain and Denmark were at war. He was a spectator at the battle of Copenhagen on April 2nd, 1801, when the British bombarded the city and captured the Danish fleet. Admiral Sir Hyde Parker was in command of the British expedition, with Horatio Nelson second in command. Hans presently shipped as boatswain in a Hamburg vessel, and next as mate in an American brig for Boston. On his return to his native land after long voyaging he found Denmark still involved in war. The British had taken the side of Sweden against Denmark and Russia. He must have a hand in this, so he looked around for a chance of striking a blow against the foe as commander of a fighting ship. He was by this time thoroughly well qualified seaman and navigator, in the pride of young manhood, a frame hard as iron and tough as leather; tall, broad-shouldered, very thick through of chest. With his red beard, his knife-keen blue eyes, his great tall figure, he looked a very proper descendant of the Vikings.

In his homeland he dropped the "Philip Tapsell" he had assumed in London, and reverted to his proper name for the time, but in this narrative, it will be more convenient to call him Tapsell throughout.

Many Danish privateers were fitted out to rove the Baltic and deal with the enemy mercantile craft, and Tapsell soon obtained his first command. He was appointed master of a large cutter, carrying twenty men and well-armed: a stern-chaser and bow-chaser, with four swivel guns on each side. He had been out only a week when he fell in with and captured an English brig loaded with linseed. When bringing her to Copenhagen he was chased by a man-of-war brig, which gained on him. He ran his prize ashore near Drago. The man-of-war following stuck fast in the shallows; on getting off she sailed away. Hans refloated the brig and brought her into Copenhagen. The prize was profitably sold, and the crew were detained as prisoners of war.

Having made such a successful beginning in the thrilling game of sea-war and prize-capturing, he was rewarded by promotion to a bigger craft. He was given command of the Cortadla, a large privateer ship, well-armed with guns and carrying a strong crew. When he had fitted out, he lay for some time under the batteries at Elsinore. The English fleet lay at anchor within sight on the opposite side at Helsingfors. The Cortadla was provided with boarding-nets, which were always triced up after dark to prevent surprise. This boarding-net was made of strong stout rope and when raised it enclosed the deck of the vessel and the lower part of the rigging as high as halfway to the tops, thus preventing a surprise. The netting barred access to the deck from outside; cutting through it would delay any boarding party.

One moonlight night about twelve o'clock, the sound of oars was heard by the watch on the Cortadla. Three boats full of men, a cutting-out party, were seen approaching. These boats were challenged. As they did not answer satisfactorily, the alarm was given, and the call went for all hands. By the time the crew had rushed on deck from below, the enemy were up at the boarding nets, attempting to cut their way through. They offered an easy target for cutlass and pistol, and the defenders cut down or shot many of them.

Five or six succeeded in gaining the forecastle but were quickly overpowered. One of the Cortadla's crew, standing beside the captain on the quarterdeck, was shot in the shoulder, and fell.

The captain, in a hand-to-hand fight with a foeman, received a deep sword slash across the abdomen, and he fell to the deck. The boarders were beaten off with heavy loss, and retired, after the order had been given "Into the boats." Tapsell was carried below, and his wound was dressed by the two surgeons of the ship. The operation was so agonising, without anaesthetics, that he begged one of the surgeons to put a pistol to his ear and blow his brains out. The doctor smiled and told him it would be all right soon.

It was not considered safe for the Cortadla to remain another night in the same place, as in all probability she might be visited by a stronger party, who would not be so easily repulsed; so at daybreak next morning, she was got under way, and in a few hours was out of sight of the fleet.

The captain lay on his back for some weeks without being permitted to stir, but his wound mended well, and he had completely recovered when the ship fell in with three prizes. One of these was Russian and the other Dutch, all large ships, loaded with hemp and tallow, on their way to Karlskronen to wait for an English convoy.

The Cortadla was in possession of her prizes two or three days and in the East Sea on the way to Denmark, with other ships in company, when the first winter frost set in. Three nights later she was hard and fast, in a sea of ice. The three prizes, all similarly frozen in, were in sight on different parts of the horizon. In this situation they all remained a month, sending down the topmasts and making snug to winter there. At the end of the month the ice gave signs of breaking up. Tapsell had a hole broken in the ice alongside, for the purpose of taking soundings. At first they got eight, and shortly after, seven fathoms of water. Tapsell knew by this that the ice was setting in for the shore, so he ordered the boats to be got out, away from the side of the vessel, and filled with necessary gear, food and arms.

Presently the ship touched the ground, and heeled over with the pressure of the advancing ice, which smashed the timbers so that when she righted again, she was half-full of water. The ice was now breaking up rapidly and it was judged necessary to make for the Swedish coast, which was then just visible in the distance. All hands therefore set to to haul the boats over the ice, which broke up behind them. Now they had to abandon the boats and race for their lives.

## APPENDIX

# THE DANISH PRIVATEERS

There is a description of the privateers in the Baltic in a recently-published book of stories, "Seven Gothic Tales" by a Danish writer, Isak Dinesen. One of these stories, "The Supper at Elsinore," contains an account of an attack by the British on a privateer ship, the Fortuna 11, which tallies closely with Captain Tapsell's narrative of the desperate fight on the Cortadla. In his reference to that greatly adventurous period, after the surrender of the Danish fleet to Britain, the writer says:

"The proud British frigates had led the warships of Denmark—the apples, of her eye, a string of pearls, a flight of captive swans—up through the Sound. The empty ports cried to heaven, and shame and hatred were in all hearts. It was in the course of the struggles and great events of the following years of 1807 and 1808 that the flotilla of privateers sprang up, like live sparks from a smoking ruin. Driven forth by patriotism, thirst of revenge, and hope of gain, the privateers came from all the coasts and little islands of Denmark. It was a great time for brave men. There were cannon singing once more in the Danish fairways, here and there, and where they were least expected, for the privateers very rarely worked together; every one of them was out on its own. Incredible, heroic deeds were performed; great prizes were snatched away under the very guns of the convoying frigates and brought into port, by the triumphant wild little boats with their rigging hanging down in rags, amid shouts of exultation. Songs were made about it all. There can rarely have been a class of heroes who appealed more highly and deeply to the heart and imagination of the common people, and to all the boys of a nation.

Soon there shot up, like new comets, the names of popular heroes and their boats, around whose fame myths gathered daily. There was Jens Lind, of the Cort Adder, the one they called 'Velvet' Lind because he was such a swell. ... In the summer of 1808 the Fortuna II had a life and death fight off Elsinore. Two big British launches with wood-bound tholes attacked with 35 men. Few shots were fired; she was boarded with pikes, axes, broadswords and knives. The British swarmed the deck from all sides. But in twenty minutes the British were cleared off, leaving twelve dead and wounded men on the privateer's deck." All the netting from stern to the main-chains was soaked with blood. (The Fortuna had a crew of twelve, and four swivel guns.)

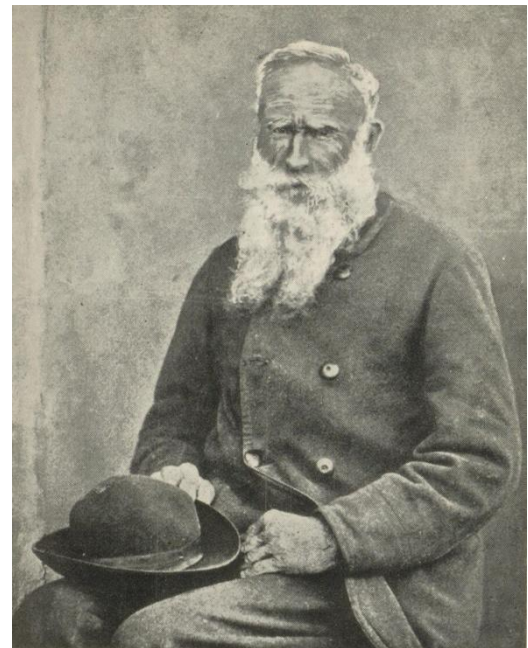
Every man on board was wounded. Privateering ceased in the autumn of 1808.

The vessel whose name is given as Cort Adder by Dinesen is apparently identical with the Cortadla of Tapsell's narrative. Probably the vessel had more than one commander during her privateering career.

# CAPTAIN TAPSELL

(HANS HOMMAN FELK)

(FROM A PHOTOGRAPH ABOUT 1870.)



CAPTAIN TAPSELL  
(HANS HOMMAN FELK)

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(FROM THE PICTURE BY J. P. SERRES.)

THE BATTLE OF COPENHAGEN, 1801. The *Dannebrog* on Fire.

The British first landed troops and bombarded the City of Copenhagen; and then seized the Danish fleet. The captured ships, most of which were in the docks, were towed out to sea. The removal was to prevent Denmark joining the other powers against Britain. Tapsell witnessed the battle.

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## CHAPTER IV

# IMPRISONMENT AND CHAINS

When they reached the shore, the Danes found a strong body of Swedish troops waiting to receive them. They were immediately made prisoners and taken to an old castle at Karlskronen. There they were detained for a week. Many civilian Swedes came to see them, and left presents of money to enable the prisoners to send out for better food than the gaol supplied. The conduct of the gaoler and his son was harsh and cruel. The latter often struck the sailors with a whip.

The Danes were next removed into a prison in the country at Gluckstadt, forty miles from Karlskronen, where they fared rather better than before. They were allowed to walk outside the walls in view of the sentry. Tapsell was permitted to extend his walks through the town in company with a soldier. One night, with two fellow prisoners, he gave the sentry the slip, and got away into the fields. The three fugitives travelled to the coast, lying in hiding during the day, and making on again at night. They lived on a small stock of food they had saved from their prison allowance. When they had come nearly to Karlskronen they saw a small ship lying at anchor, and a boat moored to the beach. Tapsell proposed that they should board the vessel, cut the cable, and make sail for the Danish coast, which was not very far away. Accordingly, when the night was well advanced, they crept from their hiding place and stole down to the water's edge, where the boat was lying. One of the party had knocked up on the hard journey from Gluckstadt and had to be supported by his companions.

They reached the boat. Not a person was to be seen. All was still; the moment of escape seemed at hand. Tapsell, with one foot on the gunwale, was about to step into the boat, when the beach was suddenly alive with galloping troopers. A watch had been set for them when the news of their escape spread.

Prisoners once more, Tapsell and his two companions were lodged in the guardhouse at Karlskronen in which the captain of the troop had his quarters. The prisoners were brought before the officer.

"I am sorry that I have got you," he said, "but now that I have I must keep you." After which they were dismissed, the captain sending Tapsell a good supper and a glass of grog.

Next morning, the three Danes were brought before the Governor, who addressed them sternly. "Do you know what your people do with ours when they take them ? " he asked.

"Treat them well," was Tapsell's answer. "No, they cut their heads off," said the Governor.

"I think you are mistaken," was the Dane's reply.

"What!" thundered the Governor, "do you say that I am a liar?" To the guard: "Take him away, and give him nothing to eat."

Tapsell was removed, and kept without food till the following morning. He heard the sound of cart wheels in the street. Mr. Tapsell thought he could hear the rattle of chains. "I think there is something for us," said he to his companions.

And there was; they were to be removed to Gluckstadt, and in chains. A great crowd of sailors in the street cried out so loudly against such treatment of brave prisoners of war that

the Governor was shamed into ordering that they go away unshackled. But this was only a blind. At the next halting place, the chains were fastened on them, and there were no sailors to interfere in their behalf.

From there they were taken to Gluckstadt, where instead of being put amongst their companions as before, they were thrust into a most filthy dungeon with the worst of criminals. They did not remain long here, however, for the inhabitants of the town petitioned the authorities on their behalf and they were removed to better quarters, though the prison fare was still bad.

There was an old Swedish woman who visited the gaol selling tobacco and other small luxuries to the prisoners, besides whisky on the sly. She took a great liking to Tapsell. She told him she had two daughters at service in Copenhagen and a son at sea, and the circumstance of the goodlooking frankly-spoken Tapsell being a sailor, a Dane, and a prisoner excited her compassion.

This kind old body, on seeing how coarse the fare of the prisoners was, regularly brought Tapsell a good breakfast, dinner and supper, with a glass of grog at night. So punctual were her visits, that the soldiers on guard, when they saw her coming used to call out: "Hans, here is your mother coming."

"Ah, indeed she is a mother to me!" said Tapsell.

This imprisonment lasted about eleven months, until there was an exchange of prisoners. Before this, however, Tapsell had written to his father at Copenhagen for money. The answer, with a remittance, arrived the day after the exchange was made, and the prisoners were on their way to the coast. Before they left Gluckstadt, the good dame came to take farewell of her protege, presenting him at parting with a large bottle of whisky for his refreshment on the road, and entrusting to his care two letters to her daughters in Copenhagen.

The liberated prisoners were taken in wagons to Helsingfors, where they were shipped across to Elsinore. From there they travelled by coach to Copenhagen, and Tapsell once more was in the enjoyment of liberty, home and the loving care of his family.

Hans was content in the quiet home life for a few weeks, but presently he was ready for the deepsea road once more. At Copenhagen he shipped as mate in a Dutch ship bound to Riga, where hemp and flax were loaded for London. At Karlskronen the ship waited for a convoy to run through the Belt to the North Sea. After the convoy started, under the protection of English men-of-war, several vessels were cut out of the fleet by Danish gunboats, and some of them were set on fire. It was a curious change this for Tapsell, to have to run the gauntlet of his own country's ships.

Back in London, he sailed as mate in a brig loaded with Government stores for the English troops stationed at Malta. The brig arrived off the island, and was within a few hours' sail of the harbour of Valetta, when a long, low-sided craft, looking a perfect pirate, with a row of brass swivels on each gunwale, and full of men, came suddenly alongside. She was rigged with lateen sails, and slipped through the water like an eel, so noiselessly that she was under the brig's side before the crew were aware of her approach. She was crowded with villainous cut-throat looking rascals who, to judge from appearances, were ready for any deed of atrocity. The chief of the gang hailed the brig in broken English, asking her name, destination, and cargo. His desperadoes glared ferociously at the merchantmen.

Whatever they intended was interrupted by the sight of an English frigate at the mouth of the harbour.

The ill-favoured craft slipped away as she had come, passing by the brig as if the latter had been at anchor. When the brig got inside the harbour, her people were told that the man-of-war had observed the pirate and was ready to come out immediately at the first sign of attack.

## CHAPTER V

# ON THE NEW ZEALAND COAST: THE MASSACRE OF THE BOYD, AND THE WHALERS' REVENGE.

The British whaling ship *New Zealander*, commanded by a Captain Parker, was Tapsell's next sea home. He shipped at London in 1809 as boatswain and boat-steerer for a three years' voyage to the South Seas, hunting the great sperm whale.

The voyage out to the Pacific round the Cape of Good Hope was without stirring incident, and the whaleship presently was on the much-frequented waters off the East Cape of New Zealand, where several other ships were also cruising. All were busy catching whales when a vessel from the Bay of Islands brought the news of a massacre of the passengers and crew of a vessel called the *Boyd*. This tragedy, as will be narrated, stopped the whaling operations for a time, while the crews dealt out vengeance to the Maoris, but unfortunately to the wrong tribe.

The *Boyd* was a ship of some 600 tons, commanded by Captain John Thompson, and had been hired by the British Government to transport convicts from Ireland to Botany Bay. She sailed from the River Thames on March 10th, 1809, and after discharging her human freight loaded up at Sydney with a valuable cargo of sealskins, oil, coal and timber, sailing for Cape Town and England on November 8th, 1809. As it was the intention to make a call at the north of New Zealand to procure a cargo of kauri spars for the Royal Navy, four Maoris embarked in her for their homes. Among them was a young chief named Tara, called George by the whites. He was a son of the head chief Te Puhi at Whangaroa. These natives were expected to work their passage across the then unnamed Tasman Sea, but owing to seasickness or some other cause the chief was accused of laziness. Captain Thompson—who seems to have been a bully who deserved all he got a little later—had Tara triced up and flogged. This was not all, for the Maoris were maltreated throughout the voyage; it was related later that the chief was again flogged while the ship was at anchor at Whangaroa.

On board the vessel were a soldier's wife and child on their way to India. The woman earned the gratitude of Tara by little acts of kindness which he did not forget.

On the vessel's arrival at the Bay, Te Puhi went on board to welcome his son, and after a long cry over him, questioned him about his treatment while away. The lad answered that Mr. Marsden had used him well, and the soldier's wife had been very kind to him. He showed his lacerated back and told of the captain's cruelty.

Plans were laid to take a fearful revenge, and they were easily carried out.

The captain's object being known, the chief offered to take him to a place where good spars could be obtained, and Thompson with a boat's crew, well-armed, went on shore for the purpose. Te Puhi led them some distance into the forest where the captain saw some large kauri trees. With the appearance of these he was satisfied, but the Maoris assured him that much better could be found in another place, and led them deeper into the bush. The trail he took them was an unnecessarily circuitous route, on purpose to tire out the Pakehas, so that at last when they came to the spot, they were glad to seat themselves on a fallen

log to rest. This had all been arranged beforehand by Te Puhi, who stood in front of them, engaging their attention by conversation while a Maori armed with a tomahawk stood near the back of each white man, waiting for a signal from the chief. When he gave this signal, by bringing down his hand edgewise, the heads of the strangers were almost simultaneously cleft open.

The bodies were stripped, the savages put the sailors' clothes on, and thus attired they returned to the beach. They could see that the ship was crowded with Maoris. The natives on board, observing their chief with his party clothed in the dress of Europeans, knew that the murder of the boat's crew had been accomplished, and the massacre began. All those on deck were dispatched. Some of the crew took to the rigging, where they remained until Te Puhi, who had come on board and stood on the quarterdeck, called out to them to unbend the sails and come down, and he would protect them. They obeyed, and went aft to claim his protection, and were instantly tomahawked. The woman and her child were spared. The number of the killed is uncertain; European accounts give it as seventy; the Maori accounts make it about forty.

The prize ship Boyd drifted farther up the harbour and grounded in shoal water near Kaeo. She was plundered by her captors, and while they were busy looting a Maori discharged a musket over an opened barrel of gunpowder. There followed a tremendous explosion which killed this man and several others. The survivors leaped overboard in terror. The ship, catching fire, burned down to her copper sheathing.

Four of the white people were spared: Mrs. Morley and infant daughter, Miss Betty Broughton, the young daughter of William Broughton, Commissary for New South Wales, and Thomas Davies, aged 15, an apprentice in the Boyd. In January, 1810, these survivors were rescued by Mr. Alexander Berry, supercargo of the ship City of Edinburgh, and her commander, Captain I. Pattison. Young Davies had a clubfoot, and the Maoris' superstitious ideas prevented them from taking his life. (A club-footed man has often been made a tohunga, or priest.)

One passenger in the Boyd was Captain Burnsides, late of the Honorable East India Company, who, having made a fortune of £30,000 in New South Wales, was returning to his old home in Ireland, where, on the banks of the Liffey, he had hoped to pass the rest of his days. The Maoris disposed of him otherwise.

The after vengeance of the whites did not fall on Te Puhi, but on Te Pahi, of the Bay of Islands, who, with his tribe, was mistakenly attacked by the whalers.

Here we resume Tapsell's story. The news of the atrocity, in a garbled form, had been taken to the cruising ground by a whaling ship. The report was that the Bay of Islands was the scene of the massacre, and that Te Pahi, who was known to some of the whaling captains, was the leader of the slaughter. The captains of the fleet conferred, and it was agreed that seven or eight of the ships should leave the ground and sail at once for the Bay. This they did, abandoning the whales they had caught, and crowding on all sail arrived together and came to anchor off one of the larger islands of the Bay of Islands, Te Pahi's home.

Three boats from each ship were manned with full crews, well-armed, and pulled for the island on which Te Pahi and his tribe lived, surrounding it on every side. There were about two hundred men in the expedition. The sailors landed, Tapsell among them, and attacked

the natives wherever they could be seen. They shot many of them, burned their houses and destroyed their crops.

A few made their escape in canoes. Te Pahi, though wounded by a shot fired by Captain Parker, swam to the mainland with the assistance of two women. He died from his wound some months later. Most of the island dwellers were killed.

*\* Most of these details were obtained from authentic New South Wales records. Tapsell and his fellow-whalers did not know the full facts about the Boyd, and he never was aware that the wrong tribe had been attacked in revenge.*

This piece of business transacted, the ships returned to their cruising ground where, as Tapsell narrated, they were very successful, and whales very plentiful.

This tragic mistake, caused by the similarity of the names of the two chiefs, resulted in the death of many innocent people and the destruction of the homes of a tribe. Te Pahi of the Bay of Islands had no part in the Whangaroa massacre, carried out by Te Puhi, but the whalers thought they were dealing out righteous punishment.

The whalers' massacre of the Maoris in wrongful retaliation for the Boyd cutting-off did not end there. It led to a war, which lasted for several years, between Te Pahi's tribe of the Bay and the Ngati Pou, of Whangaroa, of whom Te Puhi and his son Tara were the principal chiefs.

Te Pahi's people naturally sought utu for the white men's murderous attack on them, and as they could not attack the whalers, who had sailed away after their surprise raid, they sought vengeance on the tribe who had been the cause of the trouble. They fought Ngati Pou, and the war went on until 1815, when the Rev. Samuel Marsden, on his visit from Sydney, contrived to bring the chiefs of the contending tribes together and induced them to make peace.

## CHAPTER VI

# CARRYING CONVICTS AND CATCHING WHALES

The ship *New Zealander* returned to London from the South Seas in 1815, landed her valuable cargo of whale-oil and bone, and paid off her crew. Tapsell presently looked about for another ship. Walking around the docks, where great numbers of sailing vessels from all parts of the world lay discharging or loading cargo, he went aboard a ship called the *Catherine* which her owner, a London merchant named Burnett, was fitting out for a voyage to Australia and the South Pacific. The Government had chartered the ship to take a load of Irish convicts out to the penal station in New South Wales; thence she was at liberty to go whaling or trading in the Pacific. Mr. Tapsell was engaged as chief mate and sailed in the *Catherine* for Cork, where the convicts were taken on board. They were all women and girls. The offences for which many of them were sentenced were very trivial. One of the women declared that she had been sent to prison and sentenced to transportation for being late out in the streets because she had accidentally been shut out of her dwelling. There were even children in the sad company; the mothers sentenced were allowed to take their young children with them. This was regarded as quite a kind concession in those callously brutal times. Some of the women had committed murder; some were mere vagrants.

After taking in the prisoners, who, with the children, numbered about a hundred and twenty, the *Catherine* lay sometime in the Cove of Cork waiting for a convoy. England being still at war with France, a naval escort was necessary. Near the *Catherine* there lay another ship, a whaler called the *Three Bees*. She, too, was carrying Irish convicts to Sydney; these were all male prisoners. When the convoy was at last ready, with the escort of two frigates, a very large fleet of vessels sailed out of the Cove of Cork.

When the *Catherine* reached Sydney, the *Three Bees* was already there, and had landed her prisoners. The women were still on board the *Catherine* when the other ship caught fire below.

Some of the *Catherine's* crew went at once to the ship's assistance. The officers removed the hatches; the hold was a sheet of flame. Nothing could be done to save the vessel, and she was left to her fate. All the other ships in the harbour slipped their cables and moved around into Watson's Bay, where they were safe in the event of an explosion. The guns of the *Three Bees* happened to be loaded, and the flames fired them.

One of the cannon balls passed through a room in the dwelling-house of Captain Piper and knocked off the corner of a desk at which the owner was writing. Presently the fire reached the magazine, which blew up with a terrific explosion. Some heavy shears used in stepping a new mast were hurled high in the air over the shore, and then driven deeply into the ground, where they stood as firmly as if they had been planted there.

The *Catherine*, having rid herself of her cargo of unfortunates, went from Sydney to the Bay of Islands, where she refitted and provisioned. She then sailed for the whaling grounds. Sperm whales were plentiful, and she returned a full ship to London in three years from the time of her departure.

Mr. Tapsell sailed in the *Catherine* on another voyage. When the New Zealand coast was reached the ship visited the Bay of Islands as before and took in a stock of wood, water and

potatoes. From Kororareka the vessel sailed for the Middle Ground, between Lord Howe Island and Australia, and afterwards touched at Norfolk Island. This famous island had some time before this been occupied by free settlers from New South Wales; they had been removed by order of the Government. They had been shipped away in such a hurry that they were not permitted to take with them their implements, furniture or household goods, great quantities of which lay in piles on the beach. Their houses were destroyed, and the Governor's house was partly broken down.

The Catherine's captain made a rich haul here. He sent his boats on shore and took away several loads of tools, grindstones, nails, spades, hoes and all kinds of implements. These presently proved of value for trade in the Bay of Islands and enabled him to lay in a supply of pigs and other provisions required.

## CHAPTER VII

# HONGI'S WARRIORS AND THE SAILORS

From Norfolk Island the Catherine sailed for the New Zealand coast. As she lay at anchor in the Bay of Islands, off Kororareka, a canoe came alongside with a number of flax kits containing freshly killed meat from which blood was streaming. Mr. Tapsell enquired from one of the warriors what the kits contained. "Tangata ("man"), said the Maori in a confidential whisper.

There were some touch-and-go adventures in the waters of Cannibal Land. One of the sailors one day missed a jacket, which had been hanging up in the rigging. He complained to Mr. Tapsell, who asked the man whom he suspected of taking it. The sailor pointed to a Maori in a canoe alongside. "Overhaul the canoe," said the mate. The Maori showed fight and brandished a weapon. "He's got your jacket, douse him," ordered Tapsell. The Catherine's man straightway punched the Maori's nose and drew blood.

This was serious; bloodletting called for retaliation. A party of warriors began to scramble up on the quarter, some on each side.

A cry from the men in the rigging, "They are boarding us!"

"Out with your muskets!" was Tapsell's answer. At that time it was customary to have arms' chests in all three tops; the muskets were kept always loaded. The men seized the guns and presented them. It was enough for the savages; they, all jumped overboard. Mr. Kendall, the missionary, happened to be below at the time. Kendall came on deck, and told Tapsell that he was afraid the natives would now go and plunder his house

"I hope not" said Tapsell; "but I'm not going to let them take the vessel and murder us all."

Kendall then requested to be put ashore at his own place. To this Mr. Tapsell objected, as endangering the boat and crew, but offered to land him a short distance off whence he could walk over to his home. With this he had to be content, and being landed crossed the hill and found a crowd of Maoris busy pulling down his fence.

The missionary immediately took off his coat, and mixing with the crowd began to pull down the fence too. The astonished natives said, "What are you doing?" "Why, you have begun, let us all finish it," replied Kendall. The Maoris, struck with the novelty of the idea, immediately set to work and restored the fence.

In the meantime, the great chief Hongi Hika, who had been in the cabin of the Catherine, had seized the carpenter's adze and threatened to split the head of any of his men who came on board.

He picked up the end of a rope and flogged the offending Maori in thorough sea-fashion. Then he made the line fast to a fat pig which the man had brought in his canoe, and told the sailors to haul it on board, utu for the stolen jacket.

This was the land of splendid kauri trees, in so much demand for ships' spars. The Catherine required a new mainmast, and a suitable tree was got from the Ngapuhi, who brought down a spar about seventy feet long. The payment was a musket.

On her voyage to England with her oil, the Catherine made a call at St. Helena. The captain received a message from the British Admiral there that, as the ex-emperor Napoleon Bonaparte was a prisoner on the island, vessels were not allowed to approach within gun-shot; whatever they required would be taken to them from the shore. The Catherine needed fresh water, and a supply was quickly brought off in the man-of-war boats. Provisions were secured by signalling to the agent on shore. The rigorous precautions against communication with the outer world were said to have been made necessary as the result of an attempt to rescue Napoleon by an American vessel.

The Catherine returned to London, where Tapsell and the crew were paid off.

The Danish sailor's next voyage was as mate in the Asp, another whaling ship commanded by Captain Brind. After a South Sea cruise in her he arrived at the Bay of Islands in 1823 just as the victorious Ngapuhi in their great war-canoes were sailing in from an expedition to the south. \*

*\* This was Hongi's famous expedition to the Bay of Plenty and his successful raid on the Arawa tribe.*

The fleet drew in line up abreast of Kerikeri, at a place known as "Hongi's dockyard" (at Kororipo Pa) and all ran ashore together. Tapsell got out a boat and rowed across the Bay to watch them. The warriors' first act, after leaping ashore, was to knock off the figureheads of the canoes. They landed forty prisoners of war they had captured in their inland raid on Mokoia Island, Lake Rotorua, which they had attacked by taking some of their canoes up the Pongakawa River and hauling them across the portages. These captives were stationed in a row and at a signal all were tomahawked. They met their fate with stoic courage, and never betrayed uneasiness or suffering by the movement of a muscle. Some were killed with one blow, and others required several cuts to despatch them. The bodies were cleaned, cut up, and put into ovens, which soon sent up a steam having the odour of roasted pork. Cooking done, the warriors fell to upon their meal, with greedy delight. The women kept aloof; they were not allowed to eat human flesh.

A sacrifice was required as utu for the loss of Ifongi's two sons. A blind woman, a great chieftainess, who was one of Hongi's wives, called for her slave boy. He approached, expecting to receive protection from his mistress in that scene of slaughter. But she seized him by his hair and thrust him under water, putting her foot on him and keeping him down till he was drowned.

This was enough for Tapsell; he did not wait for anymore, but pulled back to the ship.

## CHAPTER VIII

# THE FIRST MARRIAGE OF TAPSELL.

It was on this visit to the Bay of Islands that Tapsell met a very handsome Maori girl whom he resolved to marry. The girl was Maria Ringa. She was of high birth in the Ngapuhi tribe, and Tapsell set out to make the wedding a ceremonial after the Pakeha fashion, in compliment to the bride and her people. He told his captain of his intention to seek benefit of clergy, whereupon that less scrupulous mariner remonstrated with him on the ridiculous notion of "churching" a savage woman. In the language the departing tar used to his weeping sweetheart in Dibdin's old song, the skipper exclaimed, "Why, what a damned fool you must be!" What vexed the "Old Man" more than anything else was the advance of pay Tapsell requested for the purpose of buying wedding garments for the bride.

To his scornful skipper the big chief mate made reply, prophetically: "I tell you, sir, the day will come when these New Zealand Maori women will wear their silks and satins, and they'll be as worthy of them as any English women."

All the vessels in the Bay dressed ship in honour of the churching. The date was June 23rd, 1823. The wedding was a convivial affair, after Mr. Thomas Kendall had pronounced the couple man and wife. The ships thundered a salute as the signal went up that the splicing had been finished (every merchant ship of those perilous days carried broadside batteries), and the mainbrace, too, was spliced royally.

Captain Brind of the *Asp*, having failed to turn his conscientious and generous officer from the regular marriage-path, entered like a sportsman into the spirit of the day, and "turned it on" liberally for all hands. A rum cask was tapped, and the crew and their guests toasted Mr. Tapsell and his bride in pannikins of neat grog, after a wedding-feast embracing all available luxuries, from roast pork to plum duff, and roaring choruses went up from the merry tarrybreeks.

Tapsell and his new-made wife stayed ashore and dined with the missionary, who produced a bottle or two of wine. After dinner the proud and happy chief mate took his pretty bride out, arrayed in her finery, to display her to the admiring Maoris, who were gathered round the house.

They strolled on to the edge of the bush. The missionary's wine—and maybe there was a flask in the bridegroom's best pea-jacket—presently produced a blissful doze, and Tapsell sank to slumber.

When he awoke his bride had disappeared. He ran into the bush calling her name; he ran back to the missionary's house; she was not there. He went aboard the *Asp*, but she had not been to the ship. And never again did he catch sight of his bride of an hour. She had vanished, new clothes and all, and why or where no one knew, or at any rate no one would tell.

The ship hove up anchor, made sail, and was leaving the Bay for the whaling grounds when Maria Ringa's brother came on board in a canoe. He had believed his sister was aboard the ship all the time. But when some Maori sailors confirmed Tapsell's complaint that she had run away, he bounded furiously about the poop, vowing to tomahawk her

when he found her. Tapsell persuaded him to his own point of view that tomahawking was perhaps an excessive punishment. "Well, I'll take the new clothes from her!" yelled the indignant chief.

Well might he be angry, that Ngapuhi stalwart, for he was losing a permanent source of profit and perquisite, a generous Pakeha brother-in-law. He dropped into his canoe and ordered his men to give way, and the driving power of thirty paddles sent the long craft shooting like an arrow towards the shore.

*\* This marriage of Philip Tapsell to Maria Ringa was the first English Church marriage ceremony performed in New Zealand. Mr. Kendall entered it in the register of the Church Mission, at the Mission House, Matahui.*

## CHAPTER IX

# ANOTHER WHALING VOYAGE, AND SUNDRY ADVENTURES

The Asp, after a long whaling voyage, sailed for London, a full ship; and Mr. Tapsell found agreeable relaxation in the great city after his years of strenuous toil on the deep. His next berth was that of chief mate in a whaling ship called *The Sisters*, commanded by Captain Duke.

This gentleman presently gave Tapsell cause to regret that he had ever shipped with him. They had not long sailed for the South Seas before Duke took to the brandy bottle, and he was in a maudlin condition for the greater part of the voyage out, except when they were actually among the whales, then he bestirred himself. Sometimes he had a bout of delirium tremens.

At last Tapsell—who practically was master of the ship and had the responsibility of navigation on his shoulders—had to confiscate Duke's store of liquor and put him on a ration.

In January, 1827, *The Sisters* was lying in the Bay of Islands, filling the water-casks and shipping fresh provisions. Another whaling vessel, the barque *Harriet*, was at anchor near her. One day a strange brig sailed in and anchored. She proved to be a pirated vessel, the brig *Wellington*, of Sydney. She had been chartered by the Government, and had sailed from Sydney for Norfolk Island with sixty-five convicts. Some of the prisoners contrived to get free and secure arms, and they overpowered the captain (Harwood) and crew and the guard, whom they transfer led in irons to the hold. The ringleader was a fellow named Walton. It was the intention of himself and his gang to sail for the South Sea Islands, land the rightful crew somewhere, and then go cruising eastward ho! perhaps as far as South America, in search of pleasure and plunder.

As the *Wellington* was short of water, Walton decided to run for the New Zealand coast and water at the Bay of Islands before making for the tropic seas. When this became known at the Bay, through the missionaries, Mr. Tapsell boldly resolved to capture the pirate crew. He loaded his guns all whalers and other merchant craft were armed in those days—and, aided by the *Harriet*, bombarded the brig. After a short cannonade, in which the masts and rigging of the *Wellington* were disabled, the brig was captured, and the captain and crew and military guard were released. Captain Duke appears to have sympathised with the convicts; he was too timid, at any rate, to support his chief officer.

The prisoners were taken back to Sydney in *The Sisters* and the *Wellington*. They were tried for piracy, and five of the ringleaders were hanged, the others were shipped once more to Norfolk Island for "rigorous treatment."

About that period, when convicts were frequently transferred from New South Wales to the penal station of Norfolk Island—a notoriously cruel establishment, dreaded by even the hardest of hard cases in the chain gangs several vessels besides the *Wellington* carrying convicts under guard were seized by the prisoners.

One of these, a schooner, was taken by a gang of men who disposed of the guards and most of the crew to their satisfaction, and made off with the vessel to Samoa. There, headed by a ruffian known as "Tom the Devil," they lived a roaring life for a while, taking their pick of the girls and all the other delectable things of Savaii Island, they gradually killed each other off in drunken quarrels.

The plucky mate of The Sisters was presently at a loose end in Sydney, awaiting another ship. His mean-spirited captain called the crew aft one day and "broke" Tapsell, dismissed him from his position as chief officer.

Captain Rous (later Admiral) was a good friend of his, and wrote on his behalf to Governor Darling of New South Wales. The result was that Captain Nicholson, who was in charge of Naval affairs in the Colony, came on board to ascertain if Tapsell were qualified to take charge of a Government vessel. The examination proving satisfactory, he promised him command of the warship Alligator then at Hobart Town; on her return her captain was to be displaced in his favour. Meanwhile Captain Rous, being about to sail round New Zealand, requested him to act as pilot in H.M.S. Rainbow. The offer was accepted, and Tapsell sailed on a pleasant voyage with his friend.

On the return of the Rainbow to Sydney, Tapsell learned that the Alligator had been in and another captain appointed. Captain Rous then offered him the situation of sailing-master in the Rainbow. This offer he felt compelled to decline, as he knew that the pay would not enable him to keep on a footing of equality with the other officers of the mess, many of whom were members of English titled families with ample money to support an expensive mode of living. So the Rainbow sailed for India without him.

The 60-ton schooner Darling was lying in Sydney harbour, about to sail for Tongatabu for the missionaries, and as she wanted a captain, Mr. Tapsell applied for and obtained the appointment. A Wesleyan missionary and his wife and child were passengers for the Friendly Islands.

A north-east gale setting in, the vessel made very little headway and was blown to the coast of New Zealand and obliged to put into the Bay of Islands for wood and water. .

After she had sailed again Captain Tapsell was below in the cabin one day working his reckoning, when he overheard the missionary address the man at the wheel: .

"Well, my man, how are you steering now?"

The sailor told him the course.

"Dear me," said the missionary, "that is not the course for Tongatabu."

This was too much for the fiery Tapsell, who made two bounds up the companion ladder, seized the parson by the coat collar, and flung him forward, saying:

"How dare you question my course? Don't you know that it is mutiny? You had better not repeat such conduct or I shall lock you up."

On arrival at Tongatabu several of the missionaries living there came on board and wished to take passage to Sydney, declaring that if they remained they would all be murdered by the islanders. However, a chief who came on board assured Captain Tapsell that the natives would not molest any missionary; and in the end only one of the brethren returned to Sydney in the Darling, and that man was the one who had just come in the

schooner. He did not attempt to break again the old sea commandment, "Don't talk to the man at the wheel."

Mr. Street, the owner of the Darling, next gave Tapsell command of a large schooner called the Samuel, in the New Zealand trade. The schooner took a gang of sealers and their boat to Codfish Island, on the west side of Stewart Island, and also clothing and provisions to trade with other sealers engaged there. The Samuel rode out a heavy gale at Codfish Island, and lost an anchor. Returning northward, she made for Port Nicholson (now Wellington Harbour) in order to land a number of Maoris belonging to that place who had been seal-hunting.

At the entrance to Port Nicholson Tapsell found a strong ebb tide running out, and there being no wind he could not go in, but was obliged to anchor. During the night, a very heavy gale set in. The cable parted, and the vessel was in great danger of going ashore. The captain sent down his topmasts. The ebb tide running out, and the wind blowing in, kept the vessel stationary, so that there was time to get a gun up from below, and bend it on to the chain for moorings.

When the tide turned, Tapsell was able to run in to a sheltered part of the harbour. In the morning the gale had moderated sufficiently to permit of the Maoris being landed, and Tapsell made all haste to get the vessel under way. He feared that they would go away and say that the vessel was disabled, come down in numbers, strip her and perhaps murder the crew, so little were they to be depended upon in those lawless days.

From Port Nicholson Tapsell sailed for the Bay of Islands where he remained on shore to purchase whaling gear for another vessel he had been promised, sending the Samuel back to Sydney in charge of the mate.

At the Bay of Islands Tapsell discovered that Maria Ringa, his bride of six years previously, was dead. He had never seen her after she ran away in 1823. The Rev. Samuel Marsden, that great pioneer of the Church in New Zealand, was on a visit from Sydney, and Tapsell sought his advice as to taking another wife and settling on the coast as a trader, after his coming whaling cruise. He told Mr. Marsden he had asked the missionaries at Paihia to let him have one of the girls from their school, and they had refused him.

The sensible old missionary said: "I'll recommend you a young woman, who has been for some years with the mission, and I'll marry the pair of you myself if the missionaries won't." And so it was done. Marsden married Tapsell to a handsome young chieftainess, of singularly fair complexion, sister of the chief Waikato, who had visited England with Hongi Hika in 1820.

## CHAPTER X

# WHALE-CHASING IN THE MINERVA

A vessel named the Minerva was Tapsell's next command. He sailed for Sydney and found the ship waiting for him there to go South Sea whaling. He fitted her out and sailed for the Bay of Islands, bringing a missionary and his wife as passengers. Shipping a supply of water, and potatoes and pork, he was ready for his cruise.

His new Maori wife came with him, and she brought with her about a dozen men, to help work the ship. These Maoris were her slaves. By the time Tapsell reached his old cruising ground near the Gilbert Group, not far south of the Equator, the Minerva was so leaky that on one occasion, the boats' crews, after returning from an all-day chase, found over four feet of water in the hold. All hands were set to work the pumps, which after this were kept almost constantly going, mostly worked by the Maori slaves.

These strong fellows were capital workers, very willing though they were captives in Maoridom. They were mostly young men who had been taken prisoners in Hongi's raids on the Southern tribes. Some were Arawa men from the Rotorua country.

Although slaves they did not work unrewarded. Tapsell paid them all in presents of tobacco and clothing and other goods at the end of the cruise.

But the white hands before the mast were not so willing or so loyal to the captain. There were some ex-convicts there, as there were in most of the ships of that period sailing out of Sydney.

These old "lags" presently infected the rest of the Pakeha sailors with their discontent and they told Tapsell they objected to continue fishing in such a leaky old basket. But Tapsell was determined not to go back without oil. So the fishing went on for several months, the men grumbling all the time. It would have been a profitable voyage, for whales were plentiful, but there was another cause of trouble besides the growling crew. Having been unable to procure gear from other whaling vessels at Sydney, when fitting out, Tapsell had had to get his harpoons made in the town, where no one knew how to temper the iron.

Harpoons require to be of the finest possible quality, but when any strain was put on the Minerva's irons they broke, so that many whales were lost.

At last, having procured nearly fifty tons of oil, Tapsell bore away south for the Bay of Islands. In his course there was a very dangerous reef where the frigate Pandora had been wrecked.

He found himself in a gale of wind close to this peril; the surf-beaten rocks were under his lee. It was an all-hands job, working for life, to 'bout ship and try to weather the reef. Tapsell set all sail, though it blew so hard; it was necessary to press the ship to the utmost to keep to windward of the long-stretching jagged teeth of death.\*

*\* The British frigate Pandora, commanded by Captain Edwards, was wrecked on this reef off the coast of Queensland in 1791, when returning from Tahiti to England with fourteen of the mutineers of the Bounty. Thirty-one of the crew were drowned, and four of the prisoners sank in their irons.*

The crew growled as usual, as they were driven to their jobs. Tapsell asked them if they wanted to drown. They had either to carry on sail till the ship had passed the reef, or shorten sail and strike on the rocks.

When by his reckoning he knew that he had passed the danger he shortened sail, close-reefed the topsails, and under easy canvas saw the gale through.

It was a wild, strange picture, that crew of semi-savages at the pumps. The Maoris, more than half-stripped, tattooed, bushy-headed, some of them almost gigantic of form, worked with desperate energy. The whites, shaggy-whiskered, toiled like the sullen men of the chain-gangs; blaspheming the captain, the ship, the gale. The Viking figure of the captain on the quarterdeck, conning his ship through the tumult of weather, his long beard whipping his breast, his voice lifted now and again in a command that penetrated the howling of the gale like a bell.

Back at last in the shelter of the Bay of Islands, Tapsell found a quiet anchorage at Rangihoua. There he put the ship on the beach for careening and repairs. She was heeled over, and a search was made for the leak. Two carpenters at work stopped several places, but at sea the old ship leaked still.

One day when the captain was on the beach repairing one of the boats, he sent the mate across the bay to Kororareka to borrow a nautical almanac. When the officer returned he had some bottles of grog, which he gave to the hands. Soon most of the sailors were drunk, and many of the Maoriis coming on board, the deck became a scene of rowdy confusion. The quarrelsome sailors set to pushing the natives over the side into the canoes, but there were too many Maoris for them.

So next some of the crew broke into the captain's cabin, got out the muskets and fired on the natives, wounding one or two of them. The carpenter, very drunk, ran about the deck flourishing his axe. All this would without a doubt have ended in a terrible fight and a massacre but for the intervention of Tapsell's wife and one of her brothers, Wharepoaka. They and Tapsell himself made for the ship as soon as they heard the shooting, and set things to rights.

Two days later a British frigate sailed into the Bay and anchored off Kororareka. Captain Tapsell ordered the anchor to be hove up. This the crew did very cheerfully, supposing the vessel was about to go to sea; the sight of the man-of-war made them rather anxious to get away. But Tapsell, as soon as the topsails were set, instead of putting to sea, sailed his ship close up to the warship. He shouted to the officers on the quarterdeck, and in a jiffy an officer, with an armed boat's crew, came on board.

"What is your complaint?" asked the Navy officer.

"Mutinous hands, who have given me trouble ever since I left Sydney." And he told of the touch-and-go episode at Rangihoua. "I'd like the worst of them taken out of the ship for punishment," he said.

"Point them out," said the officer.

Tapsell mustered the crew and pointed out five men, all former convicts. Some had served their time; others were escapees from the penal gangs.

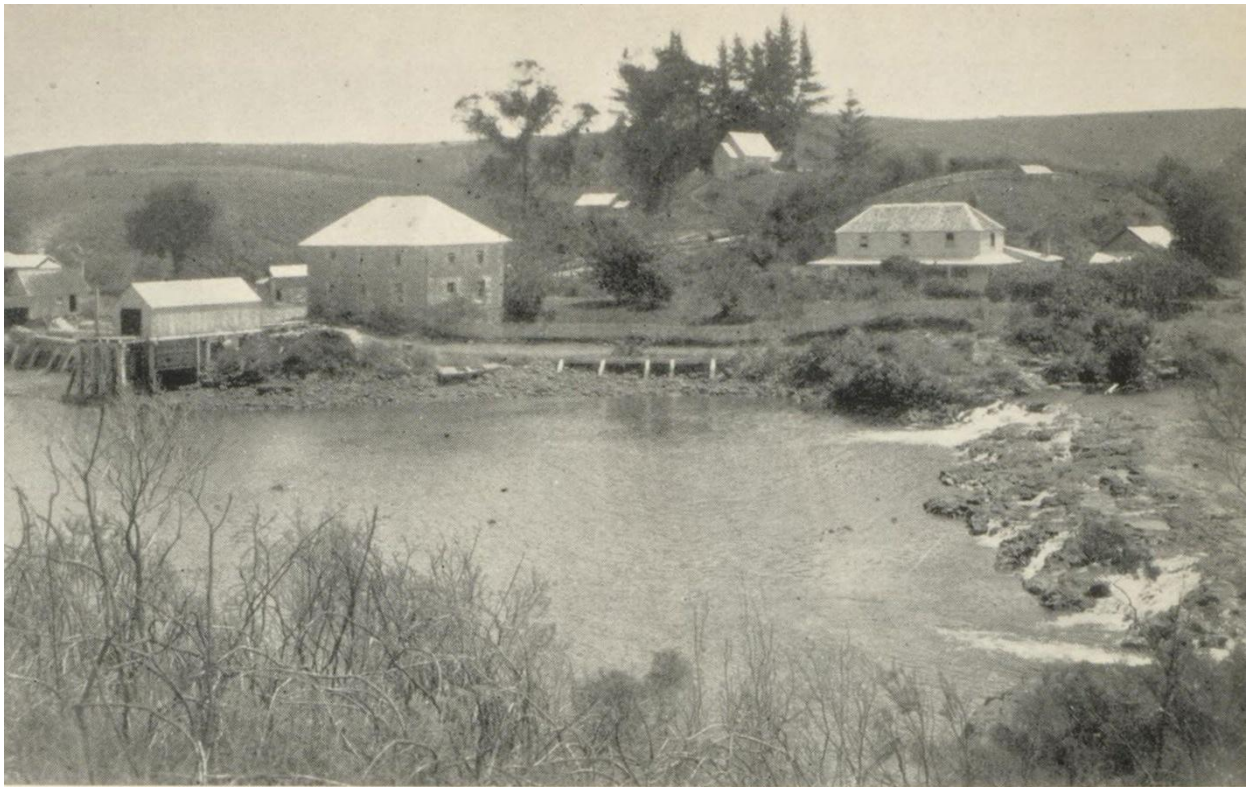
"Get your dunnage and into the boat," was the order to these ringleaders. Off they were taken, and they went as prisoners to Sydney.

The old ship now being fairly seaworthy again, Tapsell set sail on a short cruise to the whaling grounds off the North Cape. There he captured a large, sperm whale, which considerably increased the quantity of oil under hatches. With this, he sailed for Sydney, and discharged cargo.

When the ship's business was finished, Tapsell decided that he had had enough of whaling for a time. He resigned his command, and sailed as a passenger in the schooner New Zealander (Captain Stewart) for the Bay of Islands. His idea was to get a passage there in some ship that had secured her full cargo of oil, and make his way to London, thence to his Danish homeland and his people whom he had not seen for many a year.\*

*\*The whaling vessel Minerva was described by E. Little in his MS. as ship-rigged, but apparently she was identical with the brig Minerva, of Sydney, which was wrecked on September 9, 1829, on Nicholson Shoal, now charted as Minerva Reefs, large coral reefs in atoll form in 23° south lat. and 179° west long., to the south of the Friendly Islands. The brig sailed from Sydney on August 16, 1829, on a whaling voyage, under the command of Captain Lewis, with Peter Bays as sailing master. The crew, numbering twenty-three, reached Nukualofa, Tonga, in their whaleboats.*

*Bays wrote a narrative of the wreck of the Minerva,. which was published in England in 1831. Apparently. this last voyage of the Minerva was begun soon after Captain Tapsell left her in Sydney as narrated above. Bays' narrative says she was leaking badly before the wreck.*



### THE OLDEST BUILDINGS IN NEW ZEALAND

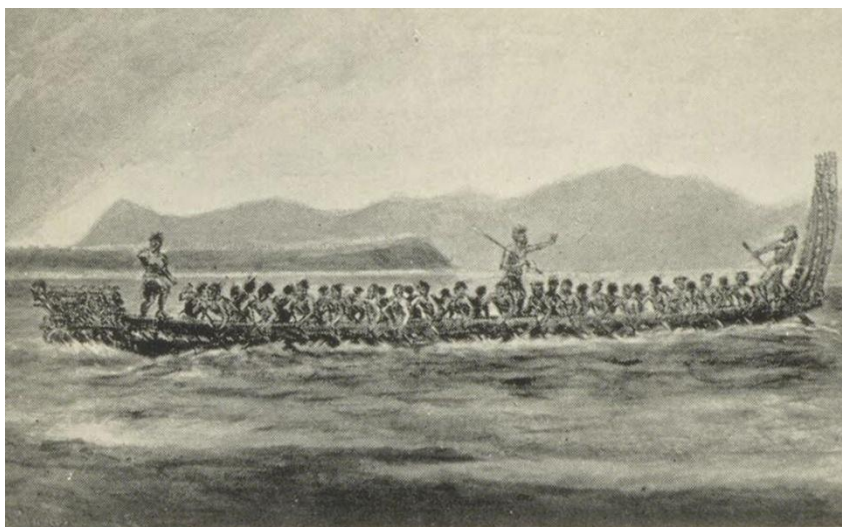
The Mission Station at Kerikeri, Bay of Islands, where Tapsell and a Maori chieftainess were married by the Rev. Samuel Marsden. The two-storeyed wooden house in the garden on the right is the C.M.S. mission-house built in 1819, and still occupied by descendants of the mission pioneer James Kemp. The large square stone building near the landing place is the storehouse built for the Mission in 1833. Bishop Selwyn's library was in the upper storey.

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A WAR CANOE IN A RACE  
ON TAURANGA HARBOUR,  
1864.

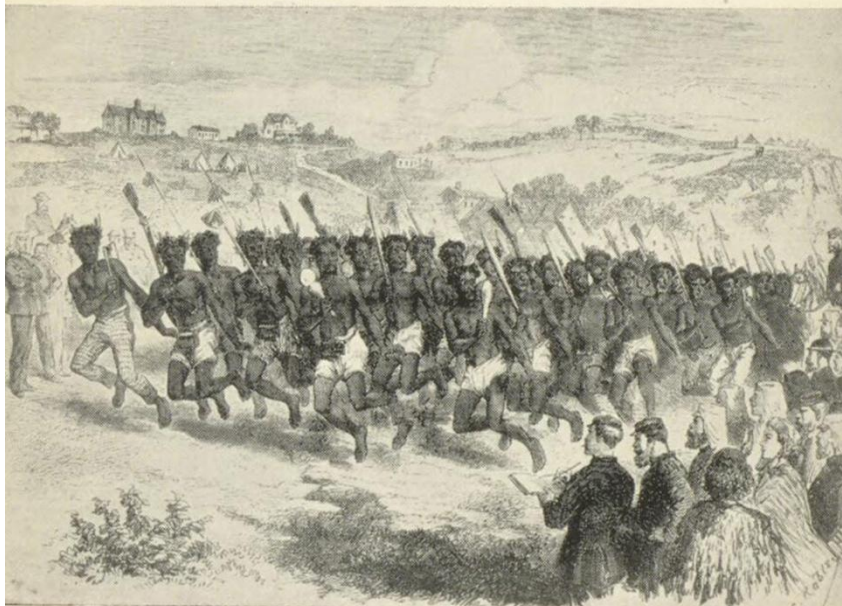
These two pictures are from drawings by Lieut, (afterwards Major-General) Gordon Robley, of the 68th Regiment, stationed at Tauranga, 1864-65.



A WAR CANOE IN A RACE ON TAURANGA HARBOUR, 1864.

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A WAR DANCE AT  
TAURANGA BY THE NGAI-  
TE-RANGI TRIBE, 1864.



A WAR DANCE AT TAURANGA BY THE NGAI-TE-RANGI  
TRIBE, 1864.

## **PART TWO**

# **TAPSELL THE TRADER**

## CHAPTER XI

# TAPSELL SETTLES AT MAKETU

At the Bay of Islands, Captain Tapsell made application to the captain of the only whaler in harbour for a passage, offering to pay for it, but was refused. The reason given was that the owner of the ship had given orders that she should take no passengers.

Tapsell, however, believed this was only an excuse, and that it was a plan arranged between his old enemy Captain Duke and the other whaling captains to refuse him a passage to England, so that Duke might get home first and tell his story of the Wellington brig in his own way.

Duke had asked for compensation for his services in capturing the convict vessel in 1827.

Under these circumstances Tapsell wrote to a Sydney firm, Jones and Walker, who had a Government contract for dressed flax, the fibre phormium tenax, explaining to them the opportunity that existed for a profitable trade with the Maoris. It was in the sailor's mind now to anchor on the New Zealand coast for good.

His offer was at once accepted, and the schooner New Zealander, on her return to the Bay of Islands, brought him a large quantity of muskets, powder, and other articles suitable for the trade, with instructions to the captain to land Tapsell at any part of the coast he considered suitable for the store station. He selected Maketu, on the Bay of Plenty.

On the advice of his Ngapuhi brother-in-law, Wharepoaka, he went first to Tauranga, where he purchased from the chief Hori Tupaea for four muskets a fine new canoe, eighty feet long.

Wharepoaka, whose wife was the daughter of a chief at Rotorua, sent messages to her relatives there, letting them know that Tapsell had arrived, and for what purpose, and asking them to come and see him. Tapsell's party were six or seven Ngapuhi, and ten or twelve women from Rotorua who had been taken prisoners in Hongi's great expedition to the Lakes Country in 1823.

On receiving this invitation the Arawa chiefs Tohi te Ururangi, Wharetuhi, Pipi, Tipitipi and Hori Haupapa came out to Tauranga and met the Pakeha captain. They were eloquent on the advantages offered by Maketu as a home and trading place, and it was agreed that he should settle there. The large canoe and two or three others were loaded with his goods and the crews started off. When opposite the island of Motiti, Hori Tupaea was desirous of landing Mr. Tapsell, so that he might secure his trade all to himself, and some time was spent in vainly attempting to induce him to go to Maketu, as agreed upon.

At last Tapsell, very angry, presented a pistol at his head. This argument ended the dispute, and the canoes went on their way to their destination.

Maketu was a different place in 1830 from the busy little port it afterwards became. The mouth of the river was deep and so narrow that not more than two or three canoes abreast could enter at one time. In the 'Sixties small coasting vessels could easily sail in and out.

Although it was the ancient cradle of the Arawa tribe, there were no inhabitants in 1830, because it was a debatable ground, for which many tribes had fought and the right of none was acknowledged.

When the party arrived at Maketu they camped the first night in the bush about the place where Tapsell's first store afterwards stood, and the next day a hut was erected for his accommodation, the rest sleeping in the open air. In two or three days the people from Tauranga and Waikato began to arrive, those from Tauranga first, as they had followed the canoes along the beach, and in four or five days they had all mustered, several thousands in numbers. The Rotorua people were at first afraid to come, for jealousy existed between them and the other tribes.

When they were all assembled and Tapsell had made known his object, the chiefs went into committee to decide the ownership of the place.

The deliberations were continued day and night for two or three days, with no appearance of an amicable termination, and at one time Wharepoaka told Mr. Tapsell he was afraid it would end in a fight, in which case he and the few Ngapuhi men with him would fare very badly. But at last he brought the news that it was all settled and given in Tupaea's favour, and that Tapsell had nothing now to do but buy the place from him.

Tupaea was asked what value he set upon it. He said he did not know, and Tapsell laid out what goods he considered a fair payment — a case of muskets, a cask of powder, part of a case of tobacco, some cartridge-boxes, and a quantity of pig-lead for bullets. With this Tupaea was well satisfied; the bargain was completed, and the goods divided amongst the principal chiefs.

## CHAPTER XII

# THE MAORI FLAX TRADE

When they had been a few weeks at Maketu, Tapsell, his wife and Wharepoaka went in to Rotorua, taking with them the slaves they had brought from the Bay of Islands. These people, who had been captured in the 1823 expedition of the Ngapuhi under Hongi, they delivered up to their friends. The object of Tapsell's visit was explained to the natives gathered at Ohinemutu.

They were informed that he wished to trade with them for flax. Meetings were immediately held, resulting in an agreement to commence scraping flax at once, and for this purpose to live at Maketu. The rush to prepare flax for the market arose from the craze for muskets and gunpowder, a matter of life and death to the people. They possessed very few muskets before Tapsell came, and so were all but defenceless. Just as among civilised nations, bigger and better armaments and munitions were ever the tribal aim.

Soon the diplomatic Wharepoaka had established friendly relations with the tribes against whom he had previously fought, so that the trader was welcomed by the Tauranga people and those of Waikato, Rotorua, Taupo, Tarawera and many another inland district, and they began to scrape flax for him in all directions. Hori Tupaea, who proved an excellent friend, and most honourable in his dealings, built a palisaded village at Te Tumu, half-way between Maketu and Tauranga, in order to be nearer the growing flax and nearer Tapsell than at his Tauranga home.

The Rotorua and Tarawera people came down and settled in great numbers. Their huts stretched along the beach and up the river Kaituna. All hands set to work to scrape flax, and the musselshell with which the operation was performed was heard going all day, and sometimes all night, so eager were the people to prepare a commodity which they might exchange for the immensely prized muskets and ammunition.

Hundreds of natives set to work making flax nets to obtain a supply of fish for the great numbers engaged in preparing flax. The quantity of fish caught was enormous. Tons and tons of fish were taken every day, and Tapsell's share set apart for him was an immense pile, infinitely more than he could consume, from which he used to select what he required, and give back the rest, which was then cured and sent to the Rotorua tribes. They in return, sent large quantities of potatoes, carried by hundreds of women, like a string of packhorses, who also brought the lake koura or crayfish, of which a Lascar whom Tapsell employed as cook, made a capital curry.\*

*\* This Lascar was a man with a curious history. Soon after the sailor-trader had settled at Maketu as his headquarters, the chief Te Heuheu Tukino, of the Taupo country, sent to him three sailor captives who had been brought to him from Wanganui. These fellows were an American negro, an Englishman and an Indian Lascar. They had formed part of a crew sent by a man named Ferguson to trade in flax. All had been murdered and eaten at Wanganui but these three, whom Mr. Tapsell was now called upon to ransom. He bought the negro for a cask of powder; the Englishman and the Lascar for a musket each. They said that when the natives cooked the bodies of their companions they offered them a portion to eat. The Englishman and negro stayed*

*with Tapsell for some time, until a vessel arrived from Sydney and took them away. The Lascar remained for several years, as Tapsell's cook.*

At that time there were no plantations in Maketu, and, except for the potatoes obtained from Rotorua, the natives had no vegetable other than the fern-root ( *aruhe*, or *roi* ) which they prepared by beating, and made into a kind of bread. Mr. Tapsell had brought with him a supply of flour, tea and sugar, and other articles of diet, so that his table was always well provided.

Besides a store and house at the foot of the cliff, Tapsell had a dwelling-house on the flat top of Maketu Pa. It was fitted around with cedar lockers carved all over. There was a store 120 feet long, which sometimes was crammed full of dressed flax, awaiting shipment to Sydney. Moreover, Tapsell procured from Sydney and from various vessels a battery of twelve guns which he mounted in the pa; the places where they were set are pointed out to this day. One gun still lies on the cliff-top and another on the beach below.

## CHAPTER XIII

# "PIG-STY" AND "THE WHITE WOMAN"

Tapsell's second wife, whom he had married at the Bay of Islands, the sister of Waikato and Wharepoaka, was a real helpmate, a brave and devoted woman. She was often his interpreter in his dealings with the natives; she had a good working knowledge of English, the result of her stay with the missionaries. She was of very fair complexion, so fair that at Maketu she came to be called the "White Woman." This light complexion and fair hair ( urukehu ) was a characteristic of all her relatives. Wharepoaka had the complete tattoo, covering the whole of his face, but his skin between the blue lines was as white as that of Europeans. He was a far pleasanter fellow than was indicated by his curious name, which means simply "Pig-Sty," from some incident in tribal history.

Wharepoaka was from the beginning a firm and dependable friend to Tapsell. He was free from those traits of greed which characterised so many of the Maori race. He never begged, but was generous and liberal. He would call at Tapsell's home every now and again and enquire how the "harness-cask " was filled.

If only two or three pieces of pork remained, he would depart, and presently return with a couple of pigs which some of the people would kill and cut up for the brine-tub.

It was Wharepoaka's brother, Waikato, who went with Hongi Hika to England in 1820 for the purpose of obtaining muskets and gunpowder to make war on the enemies of Ngapuhi. The pair of tattooed New Zealanders were presented to King George IV with whom they shook hands;

"How do you do, Mr. King George ?" said Hongi.

"How do you do, Mr. King Hongi?" replied the good-natured monarch.

The King gave them titles of nobility. Wharepoaka's brother was styled "Prince Waikato." He was given a gold-mounted double-barrel gun on which his name was engraved. This interview with Royalty did not tend to promote humility in the two chiefs. They frequently let Tapsell know that they had attained a dignity to which he might aspire in vain. "Who are you ?" one would say. "I have shaken hands with the King, and you would not be allowed even to see him."

In the year 1830 a band of Ngapuhi, who had committed murders in the Bay of Islands and were to all intent outlawed by the tribes, determined on a warlike expedition against the tribes on the East Coast. Some of the high chiefs warned them against so foolish a raid.

"Consider," said their advisers, "that Wharepoaka is living there, and if you attack the other tribes they will kill him; and, moreover, you will be slaughtered too, and serve you right."

But off the rovers sailed from the Bay, in five large canoes, full of men, with a swivel gun in the bows of one or two of them. They first landed at Mayor Island (Tuhua), off Tauranga, where they massacred all they could find. One man escaped to Tauranga and spread the news of the raid.

Messengers were sent to Waikato and presently there was a great muster in Tauranga of fighting men of several tribes.

Meanwhile the brown pirates from the North had gone to Motiti, that flat-topped island off Maketu. There they slaughtered the people as they had elsewhere. Only a few escaped. The army at Tauranga launched their canoes, and set sail to besiege the victors of Motiti. They surrounded the island and attacked the invaders.

Ngapuhi, though far outnumbered, fought with great bravery. They stood their ground and were shot down where they stood, all but one, a son of Rewa, a chief in the Bay of Islands. This man was taken prisoner. Tapsell ransomed him by payment of a musket, from his captor, Tupaea's relative Hikareia.

There was great grief in Maketu when the news of the battle of Motiti became known. Most of the people killed were relatives of Tapsell's wife and Wharepoaka. The chief became very uneasy and anxious to return to the Bay of Islands to his own tribe, as he knew that vengeance would be exacted for the people slain. So, when Tapsell's cutter, a vessel of forty tons, which collected flax on the coast, arrived at Maketu, she was sent to the Bay of Islands with Wharepoaka on board.

Now the Bay tribes were ablaze for war in revenge for the extermination of their foolish but brave kinsfolk. Five hundred fighting men embarked in canoes for Tauranga. They pitched their camp about a gunshot from the Ngai-te-Rangi Pa at Otumoetai, within Tauranga harbour.

When the Ngapuhi were at Tauranga a strong force went from Rotorua and Tarawera, taking up their positions on the side of the pa opposite to that occupied by the Ngapuhi. Fighting lasted nearly all the summer, without heavy loss to the besieged.

Just at this time Tapsell's wife became very ill, and as she longed to see her brother before she died, Tapsell took her in his boat to the battlefield at Otumoetai. Wharepoaka had come down from the North with his tribe. He put her on shore to greet her brother, and went himself into the besieged pa with Tupaea.

There were then two white men trading for flax, who lived near the Tauranga warriors' pa at Otumoetai. A chief coming into the whare where they were, a whispered conversation was carried on between him and one of the Europeans. Tapsell was annoyed at this and said as much to the man, who excused himself. "We were just talking about trade," he said. Immediately after this, the trader became profuse in his offers of hospitality and pressed Tapsell to occupy his bed, making his own on the floor. This invitation Tapsell at first resolutely declined, but afterwards, yielding to the trader's urgent request, he consented to stay.

The singularity of the invitation, after the whispered conversation, excited Tapsell's distrust. His suspicions were confirmed. In the midnight hours he was startled by the bang of a musket. A bullet passed through the wall a little above his bed. Without doubt it was intended for him.

There was only the one shot. Tapsell remained in his uneasy bed till morning. At breakfast his host said he could not imagine who had been guilty of such an act. Tapsell knew better. The scoundrelly beachcomber was jealous of his trade; that was sufficient motive.

Tapsell had brought some kegs of gunpowder for the Ngapuhi and Arawa, in payment for flax prepared by them. With feelings of relief, he took his wife on board again and returned safely to Maketu.

The Ngapuhi and Arawa, finding that they made no impression on the fortress at Otumoetai, raised the siege and came to Maketu in their canoes, which they hauled up on the beach. Thence they marched to Te Tumu, midway to Tauranga, to engage the Tauranga warriors in Tupaea's pa, "where they killed a good many," as Tapsell related.

One afternoon Tapsell, from his look-out post on Maketu hill saw the Ngapuhi warriors returning, dragging what he at first supposed to be posts of the pa which they had been attacking. As they came nearer, these posts, he saw, were human bodies. They brought them across the Kaituna River to Maketu fort. One of the slain was a chief of the Ngai-te-Rangi, a near relative of Tupaea and a great favourite of Tapsell's. He was the first of the victims who was cooked and eaten. His head was severed from the body, the body cut open, and put into the oven to roast.

The victim was a tall thin man. After the cannibals had begun their meal they jumped up and danced, yelling a song derisive of the leanness of their victim. The skin of a portion of the body which was elaborately tattooed they made into covers for their cartridge boxes. The other bodies, ten of them, went into the oven later. After this scarcely a day passed without one or two Tauranga men being killed, cooked and eaten.

In the midst of all this turmoil and horror Tapsell's wife died. On her deathbed she entreated her husband to take her body home to her birthplace at the Bay of Islands. There was a disturbance among the Ngapuhi because the chieftainess had been permitted to die in the house and had not been brought outside during her last moments. They threatened to plunder the tradehouse in punishment of Tapsell for this breach of an ancient custom. But Wharepoaka forbade this.

The tribe and its law had nothing to do with her, said he, since she had married a white man. With these arguments they were at length pacified, and they entered the house and made great lamentation. Before the coffin was closed down each relative took his ornaments from his ear, shark's teeth and greenstone pendants, and laid them on the dead, as farewell offerings. Some of them deposited there their greenstone meres, and Tapsell took a Turkish kereese which he wore, and placed it with the rest. (This weapon had been of service to him on one occasion, when he was landing some kegs of gunpowder. He gave orders for the kegs to be carried up from the beach to the store, but an old chief named Pango declared they should not be carried up; he wanted them all placed in a row so that he might count them.

Tapsell, however, insisted on his orders being obeyed. This offended the old warrior, who, standing behind the trader, shook his mere menacingly over his head. Tapsell, turning suddenly, saw the gesture, whipped out his kereese in an instant, and with a sweep of his arm gave the chief a cut on the stomach. Pango started back, crying out that he was murdered. It was but a slight flesh wound, however. In dead silence, the kegs were speedily carried into the store, neither the chief nor the people uttering a word. It was not profitable to threaten Tapsell the trader.)

The case containing the body of the chieftainess was kept in the flax house until the arrival of the trading cutter. Tapsell took it on board, and himself took charge of the little

funeral ship and sailed up to the Bay of Islands. "The White Woman " was buried at Rangihoua. A missionary, Mr. King, said the prayers of the Rongo-pai over her.

Before the burial all the relatives of the deceased took their ornaments out of the coffin. Tapsell's kreese was buried with his wife.

The grave was on the top of a very high hill. At that time this pa was crowded with people, but it was soon deserted, for Wharepoaka made known his wish that his sister should have the place all to herself. His affection for his sister was great, and his solicitude during her last illness extreme.

At the moment she died he ran out to a hill-top at Maketu and called aloud to the Atua, praying the gods to direct the spirit of his departed sister on the right road to the land of departed souls, to the Maori heaven — "Kia tika ai te haere ki te Rangi."

## CHAPTER XIV

# ATRADER'S LIFE ASHORE AND AFLOAT

In the heart of the country, especially on the upper Waihou plains, about Matamata, there were vast areas of low-lying land covered with phormium tenax. There were promising fields for trade so far untapped. A chief of Waikato, named Murupara, asked Tapsell to send him a white man to trade for flax. This Tapsell promised to do.

The opportunity occurred on the arrival of a vessel consigned to him from Sydney, which had come by way of Cook Strait, bringing as passenger a man named Clementson. This man Tapsell induced to undertake the flax-buying agency at Matamata.

Clementson had sailed from England to Sydney as chief mate in a brig commanded by a Captain Stewart, which sailed thence for New Zealand, on a trading voyage for flax. This vessel, the Elizabeth, presently became notorious as the vessel in which Te Rauparaha and his warriors were taken from Kapiti Island on a voyage of cannibal conquest to the South Island in 1830.

Stewart and Clementson both ran a narrow escape of being prosecuted and hanged in Sydney for their share in this murderous piece of business, the capture of the chief Tamaiharanui and his wife, and the slaughter of his people. Clementson, after this semi-piratical voyage, went to Hobart Town, where he shipped as mate of the brig Bee, chartered by a man known as "Lincoln Bill," an old convict; his name was William Cuthbert. Over some shady commercial transaction Cuthbert was arrested. But he got the vessel under way and sailed off for New Zealand, taking the constable with him, and also three runaway convicts. He made for Cook Strait and Port Underwood, in C loudy Bay. At another place he visited he presented a pistol at Clementson's head and ordered him to go ashore. Clementson remained with a man named Ferguson, trading for flax, until the arrival of the vessel consigned to Tapsell, by which he came as passenger to Maketu, and landed there.

"Lincoln Bill" took the Bee to Tahiti and Honolulu; the story came later that he was hanged in Peru. He shipped his stolen constable aboard a whaleship at Tahiti.

Tapsell took Clementson and another trader, one White, to Matamata, to gain knowledge of the prospects of a trade there. They travelled overland by way of Rotorua, taking several Maoris as guides and to carry provisions for the road. It was a rough bush journey over a succession of steep ranges, up and down precipices, and through the forest of Patetere, dense and jungly with undergrowth and supplejack. It was a vast relief to emerge on the beautiful fertile plains of the headquarters of the great Ngati Haua tribe.

A feast was prepared on the arrival of the Maketu party. Pigs were killed and roasted, baskets of eels prepared, and stacks of potatoes sufficient for a hundred men; in addition a lot of pigs were sent for the party to kill for themselves.

The arrangement with Murupara was satisfactory, and Clementson was left behind to trade; the rest of the party returned to Maketu.

In Tapsell's absence, a chief of Tauranga had collected a war-party of about two hundred men, and these warriors were preparing to march on Maketu and plunder the store. The opportunity was favourable as most of the people were scattered at some distance,

scraping flax. Tapsell would have been ruined but for the intervention of his friend Tupaea, who sternly forbade the expedition.

Tapsell's cutter was not quite suitable for the large trade, and he sent her to Sydney to be sold. A little later he set out in an open whaleboat with a crew of five for the Bay of Islands, on a business run. Off Motiti Island a strong gale set in with thick, hazy weather; it was impossible to see far through the spume-filled air. The trader's Maoris became frightened, lay down in the bottom of the boat, and refused to stir, making sure that they were all about to be drowned. The step of the mast gave way and the sail came down; this increased the terror of the crew, and Tapsell, unassisted, had to rig a new step for the mast.

While the boat was without canvas to keep her on her course, she shipped a sea, which spoiled all the biscuit and provisions of the Maoris. When Tapsell succeeded in hoisting the sail again, they declared they would all be lost, but the old sailor laughed at their fears, and made for Mayor Island (Tuhua). There was a great surf breaking on the usual landing place at the beach, but Tapsell sailed round under the lee of the island where the sea was smooth. There they beached the boat, hauling her up, turning her over and lighting a fire. A good tot of brandy all round soon reanimated the drenched crew.

Some Maoris of Mayor Island, who had seen the boat approaching, came clambering down the hills. In those days everyone was afraid of his neighbour. Tapsell, when he saw them coming, told his crew that he would make the strangers drunk. This he did, with generous pannikins of brandy, and before they had slept it off, he and his men had launched the boat and were under way out to sea.

The wind continued to blow a gale. The whaleboat ran before it under small sail for the north. When Tapsell was off the Hauraki Gulf islands he thought it advisable to put in for shelter. He found a large cave, in which the crew took up their quarters, for about three weeks.

Their provisions being wet with sea water, they would have fared very badly but for finding great numbers of pigeons, which they shot. At last the weather cleared, and they ventured on their way and sailed into the Bay of Islands in the nighttime after well-nigh a month's voyage over a passage which in fair weather would not have taken more than three or four days. At the Bay Tapsell chartered a schooner to take him and his lads to Tauranga and load dressed flax for Sydney.

## CHAPTER XV

# TAPSELL'S GUNS; AND THE TOHUNGAS OF MAKETU

Wars, as the years went on, greatly disturbed trade. The Arawa and the Ngai-te-Rangi fought each other fiercely. Numbers were killed on both sides, each party taking the slain bodies of the enemy for cannibal feasts. So frequent were the battles in the early 'Thirties that scarcely a week passed over without a meal of human flesh. The custom was for the Ngai-te-Rangi enemy to come from Te Tumu Pa and give the challenge to those at Maketu, advancing within short musket range so near that the balls used to whistle about Tapsell as he walked round his battery. There were pits dug in the top of the hill where the women and children usually sheltered when the firing commenced. On such occasions, Tapsell took his station at the battery and watched the fight through his telescope. His guns were loaded with five hundred musket balls each, besides large shot.

One gun was placed at the foot of the hill facing the swamp, and the left bank of the river, by which the place could be approached; the main battery did not command that side. On inspecting this gun one day, Tapsell found that all the bullets had been drawn. He took the people to task for this, saying that he had placed the gun there for their protection. "Well," was the reply, "you could only have fired once with it, and see how many times we could fire with the muskets loaded with those bullets!"

Battles between the Arawa and the Ngai-te-Rangi tribes were now very frequent. Scarcely a week passed without a skirmish. Tipitipi, a chief of the Arawa, was killed. His body was placed in state on a platform erected at the foot of the cliff, and a group of tohungas (priests) commenced their incantations. When the spirit of prophecy came upon them, or, as they had it, when the Atua was in them, which was very often, the people would sit in a circle round them and listen reverently to their oracular sayings. Now and then the listeners interrupted them with questions, which they answered in a tone different from their natural voices. The voice of the Atua as uttered by them was a sort of high whine, and the words were often artfully arranged like the sayings of the Delphic oracle, and made to cut both ways. But in many cases, Tapsell said, the prophecies resembled those of professed clairvoyants amongst white people.

Sometimes an eager enquirer would ask: "Where have you been?"

The tohunga's reply was, "I have been into the fortress of the enemy at Te Tumu."

"And what did you see there?"

The answer was a play of the imagination in which the wizard would tax his invention and keep as near probabilities as possible. Presently he would say, "I am going to Tauranga," or some such place, and he would to all appearance pass into a trance.

The body of Tipitipi, having been placed ceremoniously on the staging (*atamira*), became the object of mysterious rites performed by the wizards. Occasionally one exclaimed, "He'll turn soon! He'll turn soon!" They had prophesied that if the body should turn towards Te Tumu victory would be on the side of the people at Maketu; if it turned the other way, the fate of war would be against them. At last, by some sleight of hand, or by knocking away

some previously arranged support, which Tapsell was not near enough to see, the corpse turned partly round towards Te Tumu. The exulting crowd shouted aloud with joy at the miracle. It happened that the Maketu people were victorious in the skirmish, and so the prophets' infallibility was established.

After these battles Tapsell was often called on to exercise his skill in medicine and surgery. Some of the wounds were of a very curious kind. In one case a bullet entered at one ear and passed out at the other. Tapsell stopped the holes with cotton dipped in Riga balsam. The man was taken away to Rotorua, and some months afterwards returned to Maketu quite recovered. The ball had just missed the brain. Tareha, a Ngapuhi, had his hand nearly blown off by the bursting of a gun. This was dressed daily till he recovered.

Once Tapsell was cutting a bullet out of a wounded man when the ball bounded out and fell on the ground. A relative of the patient standing by picked it up and chewed it savagely till the lead was reduced to powder.

It was about this time that the Rev. Henry Williams arrived from the Bay of Islands, and being anxious to end the fighting requested Mr. Tapsell to make overtures of peace to the enemy at Te Tumu. Tapsell went to the Ngai-te-Rangi Pa, accompanied by his wife. He first hoisted the British ensign on Maketu hill, and asked Mr. Williams to watch through the telescope and observe if any ambush were prepared for him, and in that case to haul it down as a signal of warning.

When the people in the pa saw him approaching they all cried out, "Haere mai, haere mat," and waved their blankets in token of welcome. When he entered the stockade one of the leading chiefs seized his wife, Hine-i-turama, round the neck, pressed noses with her, cried mournfully, and ordered the best musket in the pa to be given to her as a present. But Tapsell's mission was not altogether successful. He was told that his people, the Arawa, were exceedingly treacherous and deceitful, and only wanted an opportunity to commit murder. They assured him, however, that they (Ngai-te-Rangi) would not be the first to fire.

When Tapsell returned with these tidings, most of the Ngapuhi warriors went to Rotorua on a visit, considering that Maketu was safe. About a week later a canoe loaded with provisions for Te Tumu from the eastward made its appearance off Maketu Heads under sail. The wind fell away and it was becalmed; it contained only three men. No sooner did the Maoris on shore perceive the situation of the craft, than they launched their canoes to attack the crew, in spite of the urgent pleas of the trader. They soon overtook the strangers, who were now paddling frantically, shot and tomahawked the three of them, and brought their bodies on shore. They were cooked and eaten in Maketu Pa that afternoon.

The suicide of the widow of a chief was a custom in those days. One of the victims of the war was a chief of the Ngapuhi. When he died at Maketu, his wife stole away to a neighbour's house, and procured a strong fishing line. Tapsell tried to prevent her, but his efforts were frustrated by those around him. She hanged herself in one of the historic clumps of angiangi trees near the mouth of the river at Maketu. A little later Tapsell went to that sacred grove, and found her hanging from a branch which had given way; she was on her knees on the ground, and there was a smile on her face. She had joined her chieftain in the Spiritland.

## CHAPTER XVI

# THE BATTLE ON THE BEACH

The last great fight before the departure of the Ngapuhi war-party for the Bay of Islands (1833) very nearly resulted in the defeat of the allied forces of the Arawa and Ngapuhi. The white trader of Maketu saved the day. His people had set out along the shore for Te Tumu Pa. All the warriors had gone on the expedition, and none but women and children were left in Maketu. Tapsell, from his battery on the hill, watched the progress of events through his telescope. Early in the day, an old prophet came running in great haste from the direction of Waihi, to the east of Maketu, and called out to the women, "Put me across the river. This day is ours, I have had a dream!" They paddled a canoe across, landed him, and he disappeared in the distance, running at his best speed along the ocean beach.

Later on the day Tapsell saw his people retreating on Maketu, and exchanging occasional shots with the enemy as they fell back along the shore. The shots were few and far between, and it was clear to Tapsell that this was because their ammunition was all but exhausted. Some of the retreating party had already arrived at the bank of the Kaituna, and were preparing to cross to the pa.

Tapsell took a white man, who was living with him, into the trade-house magazine. The two hurriedly opened a case of ammunition, and sent women off with flax baskets filled with cartridges, as fast as they could run. Six or seven stalwart women were loaded with as much as they could carry, and they paddled across the river and rushed off to meet the retiring force. The ammunition was quickly distributed, the firing suddenly became rapid, and the enemy, who had reckoned on a victory, soon turned to the right-about and retreated along the sands to Te Tumu stockade.

The now victorious Arawa and Ngapuhi, racing after their foes, entered the pa with Ngai-te-Rangi rearguard, killing many scores, and took possession of the fort. The Ngai-te-Rangi fled from the pa, and raced in terror along the beach towards Tauranga. So the people of Maketu were victorious, as the old prophet had foretold; but for their victory they had to thank Tapsell and his timely supply of ammunition.

The Arawa and their allies returned in triumph to Maketu laden with the bodies of their foes. Legs and arms were cut off, and bodies chopped up, and thrust into ovens for the banquet. If a chief were amongst the slain, the body was decapitated and the tattooed head was preserved as a trophy. The operation of "curing" the head consisted in placing it for some hours in an oven till the flesh became set, then oiling it and placing it in the sun to dry, after which it was deposited with other precious relics in one of the tapu'd houses.

After the battle of Te Tumu, the Ngapuhi returned to the Bay of Islands, and with them went Tapsell's staunch friend Wharepoaka.

After one of the battles along the beach with the Ngai-te-Kangi tribe, the Maketu warriors captured a pet dog belonging to Tupaea of Te Tumu. Its white hair had been clipped in patterns resembling the tattoo on a warrior's face and body. This poor animal they roasted alive, as a token their enmity to its owner. Its piteous outcry reached Tapsell's ears. He ran out and tried to save the dog or put it out of its agony, but the savages would not suffer any interference from him. They cooked and ate the dog. Late that night, when Tapsell was in

bed, he was aroused by shouts outside his door, calling him to get up as his house was on fire. Always suspicious of treachery he seized a loaded blunderbuss, and stood in the doorway ready to fire. The natives out of revenge for the scolding he had given them for their cruelty, had thrust a fire-stick into the thatch of his cook-house, expecting that on the alarm of fire he would rush out and leave his store unprotected, giving them an opportunity to plunder it. But when they saw that he was on his guard the fires were soon put out.

## CHAPTER XVII

# THE THIRD MARRIAGE OF TAPSELL

Tapsell's third wife was a great lady of the Arawa, a young chieftainess named Hine-i-turama. She was a handsome woman of high degree, of the ninth generation in direct descent from Hinemoa and Tutanekai of romantic memory. Her tribe was Ngati-Whakaue, the principal iwi of the Arawa; in fact the term Ngati-Whakaue was more generally used than Arawa a century ago.

When Hine-i-turama gave birth to her first child, her mother came out to Tapsell with the news that it was a girl. It was in those days regarded as a domestic misfortune if a woman became the mother of a girl, because girls were not considered of any value, while boys would become warriors and be a protection to their friends.

Said Tapsell, "That's very well, I am glad of it."

"Is it all right?" asked the woman eagerly.

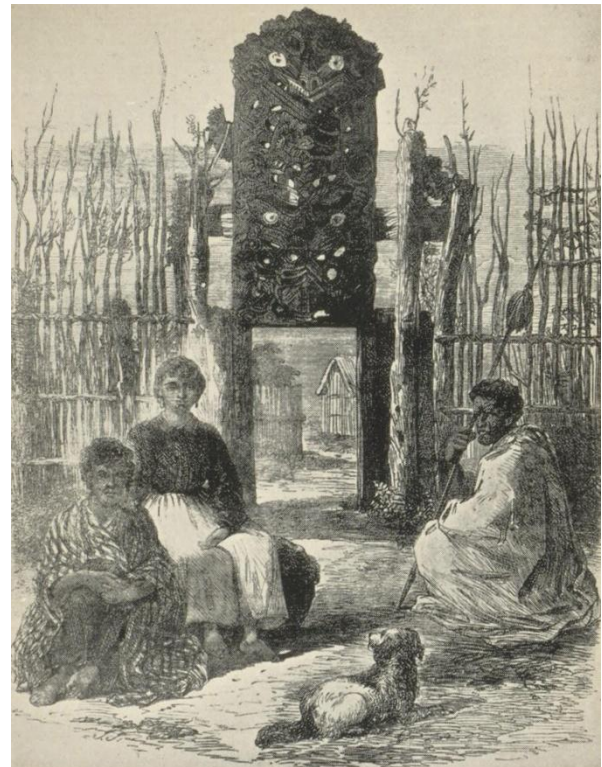
On being assured that it was so, her anxious expression cleared, and she went off cheerfully to tend the child.

It happened that this dame, the trader's mother-in-law, was then nursing a child of her own about two months old. Tapsell's wife being unable to suckle the newly-born infant, it was given to her mother to nurse. She considerably smothered her own child in order to enable her to rear her grandchild. This amiable lady had on previous occasions killed two or three of her children; indeed she had even attempted to destroy the daughter who became Mrs. Tapsell, while an infant, but the child was taken care of by neighbours and brought up safely.

This practice of infanticide was very general in those days, and no disgrace was felt to attach to it. A mother on one occasion tried to suffocate her baby, and believing she had succeeded, hung it in a basket on a fence, intending when night came on to throw the body away. Some people noticed the kit moving, and on looking into it discovered the child still alive. It was taken away and reared to womanhood.

## MAKETU PA, IN 1864.

This picture, from a drawing by Major-General G. Robley reproduced in the "Illustrated London News," shows the main entrance to Maketu Pa with the outer stockade and massive totara-slab carving.



MAKETU PA, IN 1864.

This picture, from a drawing by Major-General G. Robley, reproduced in the "Illustrated London News," shows the main entrance to Maketu Pa, with the outer stockade and massive totara-slab carving.

## TE ARAKITE POHU, OF OWHATIURA, ROTORUA.

This venerable Arawa warrior chief's narrative of the battle of Te Tumu, 1836, is given on page 124.

(PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES MCDONALD AT OWHATIURA, 1905.)



TE ARAKI TE POHU, OF OWHATIURA, ROTORUA.

This venerable Arawa warrior chief's narrative of the battle of Te Tumu, 1836, is given on page 124.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES MCDONALD AT OWHATIURA, 1905.)

The belief in wizardry was universal in the olden Maori life. Tapsell's wife, in a temperamental tantrum, ran away one night, and when found after a long search refused to return to Maketu. Her uncle's diagnosis of the trouble was that she had been bewitched. He applied to two or three makutu-men to remove the spell, but they failed to do so; they admitted that they were "not strong enough." At last, an old woman, a reputed witch, came forward and declared her ability to remove the spell. "First of all," she said to the uncle, "get me a potato from Tapsell's plate. It must be taken without his knowledge, while he is eating."

The old chief seated himself beside the trader at the meal. Tapsell, turning away for a moment, saw out of the corner of his eye the uncle stealthily snatch a potato from his plate. He rose angrily to ask what he meant, when the old man jumped up and ran out of the house. The witch-woman prayed over the potato. She took it to the fugitive wife, who ate it. Presently Hine returned to her husband, smiling and cheerful. The spell had been dispelled.

Soon afterwards the old wise woman asked Tapsell for a pair of blankets; she offered to pay him for them in flax "by-and-by." Not feeling quite sure of the payment, he declined to supply her. Angrily she said, as she left the store, "Oh, I don't want his blankets for nothing. I can scrape flax as well as others to pay him for them. Never mind, I shall make him sorry for this. He and his wife will have many children, but they will part for ever."

Tapsell, hearing of this prophecy, and not wishing to offend the prejudices of those amongst whom he lived, presently gave the old woman the blankets she wanted. She paid for them in flax as she had promised. But the prophecy held good; it was fulfilled at last, as will be seen.

The marriage of Tapsell and Hine-i-turama in the early 'Thirties was a Maori marriage — without benefit of clergy. But some years later they were wedded with the rites of the Pakeha Church.

In the 'Forties' the Tapsell's were living at Whakatane, close to the present steamer landing-place. All those years they had done without the services of parson or priest; in fact Tapsell, after having been denounced as a son of Belial by the missionaries at the Bay of Islands — though really he was a most upright and decent-living man — had conceived a dislike for the Churchmen, with the exception of Marsden and the ex-Navy officer, Henry Williams.

Now he gave the rival Church its chance. One day in 1841 Bishop Pompallier, head of the Roman Catholic Church in New Zealand, arrived at Whakatane. He was cruising along the coast in his small schooner the *Sancta Maria*. He visited Tapsell, and seeing a numerous family of little half-castes, asked if they had been christened.

"Oh, yes," said Tapsell, "I christened them myself. The missionaries refused to do it, so I had to christen them."

"Those missionaries," said the good Bishop, "did not know their duty. You have done well in christening them yourself, but if you like I will christen them myself now, and marry you afterwards."

"That is just what I want, sir," said Tapsell.

"Where will you have it done?" asked the Bishop.

"Not indoors, but out in the open air, where all hands can see it," was Tapsell's reply.

And there, in the garden in front of the thatched whare, with the tribe gathered round, the youngsters first were christened and then the parents were wedded, and such was the third marriage of Tapsell.

As the old witch had foretold, the trader and his wife parted, after many years. Hine-i-turama went to the Waikato to visit a daughter, Ewa, who was the wife of Dr. Hooper, a medical man who had "taken to the blanket" and who at the beginning of the 'Sixties was living among the Maoris at famous Orakau, receiving a small salary from the Government for attending to the people in sickness. When the Waikato War began Hine remained with her daughter, and when the Orakau Pa was built she went into it with the Ngati-Raukawa and other inhabitants of Orakau. By this time she had taken a new husband, a man named Ropata; he was killed during the siege of the pa.

On the fatal April 2nd, 1864, when the fort was evacuated by nearly all the defenders, Hine-i-turama and another woman were bayoneted to death by British soldiers when the place was rushed by the troops. The late Major William Mair told me that he attempted to save poor Hine from the maddened soldiers, but when he was attending to one fatally wounded woman the other was killed.

All who perished in the siege and the final attack, numbering about forty (another 120 were killed during the retreat) were buried in the trenches they had dug; there were several women among them. So perished Hine-i-turama, third wife of Tapsell of Maketu, and foremother of many a brave man and beautiful woman.\*

*\*The grave of Hine-i-turama and the others who were killed in Orakau Pa is in my earliest memories. The spot was on my father's farm which included the site of Orakau village and the old plantations of the Ngati-Raukawa and other people who owned the place up to the time of the war and the confiscation. The main road, Kihikihi to Maungatautari and Arapuni, bisects the exact site of the entrenchment, and the northern end of the pa is in the field just north of the road fence. When my father, W. A. Cowan, settled there in 1869, he fenced in that sacred bit of ground and planted some bluegums to mark the wahi tapu. But the farm has since passed through many hands; fence and trees have disappeared, and there is nothing to indicate the self-dug graves of the brave men and women who fell there except the uneven turf. A monument marking the site of Orakau Pa stands on the roadside near the south end of the pa, but the ground where the defenders were laid should be reserved and fenced and honoured with a memorial stone. —J.C*

## CHAPTER XVIII

# A NIGHT OF SUSPENSE

In narrating the circumstances of Tapsell's marriage to Hine-i-turama and of her tragic end, we have strayed ahead of events at Maketu in the 'Thirties. Tapsell was the chief figure in innumerable incidents of adventure and peril.

There was an Arawa chief named Haupapa, who had built Tapsell a house, the contract payment for which was to be a case of gunpowder. On settling accounts Haupapa insisted that the agreement was for a case of tobacco. Tapsell contradicted this. Haupapa repeated that it was tobacco he had agreed for, and tobacco he would have. To this Tapsell as firmly answered that he certainly should not. Haupapa then said that he would take it, and the trader told him that it was more than he dared to do. Upon which Haupapa gave him a push. Tapsell returned the push. A bulldog belonging to the trader seized the chief by the leg. His followers seeing the blood flow became fearfully excited, rushed tomahawk in hand into the store, stripped it of its contents, and carried them down to the beach. "In the morning," they yelled, "we'll kill you, Tapihana!"

At this time Tapsell was the only European in Maketu; the other white men usually there were away at Matata. When night came on, he paced the room backward and forward, deliberating on the course to pursue. His wife sat silently in a corner of the room. Presently a rap came at the door. The visitor was the uncle of Tupaea with whom the Maketu people, though not now at war, were not friendly. The old chief told Tapsell that Tupaea had heard of the intention of Haupapa's people to kill him, and now sent a message to say that he had two hundred men ready, and if Tapsell would only say the word he would bring them down from Tauranga at once.

Tapsell replied: "Tell Tupaea that I will fight my own battles, and that I do not need his help."

He sent the messenger away with a present of some tobacco and a belt as a reward for his trouble in coming. "Kill as many as you can," said the Maori as he left the house.

Tapsell stove open a cask of gunpowder, and laid a train to the cask. Then he drew a large table across the door. On this he placed a row of loaded muskets and two blunderbusses. Then, as he said afterwards, he felt easy in his mind. He now asked his wife to go out and sleep with her relatives at the far end of the pa.

"No," said she, "I shall stay with you." She knew the object of the preparations, and if the place were to be blown up, she was determined that they should all go together.

Tapsell did not sleep that night. Anxiously he looked for the first faint streaks of daylight. Hearing nothing he looked cautiously out, first at one window and then at another, but could see no one. Thinking it possible that his foes might be concealed under the ledge of the window, and were keeping out of sight in order to decoy him out, he cautiously raised one of the sashes. No Maori was visible. Broad daylight came. A woman appeared at the door with a message from Haupapa. He was very sorry for what he had done, and if Tapsell would not take the trade back, he would go away to Cook Strait for he would be ashamed to show his face again in the Rotorua country.

"Tell Haupapa to bring the goods back," said Tapsell.

Immediately the woman took the message down, a crowd of people came running back with everything they had taken away and placed the goods in the store. Haupapa came forward. "Will you shake hands with me," he asked. The trader consented and the quarrel was made up.

Tapsell took the chief into the house and showed him the preparations made to receive him. Haupapa ran out, and cried to his followers, "If we had come here, there was death for all of us!"

## CHAPTER XIX

# THE TRADERS OF MOKOIA ISLAND

Some time after the battle of Te Tumu, the Arawa chief Hikairo, who lived on Mokoia Island, in Lake Rotorua, invited Tapsell to send a white man there to trade for flax. Mokoia was a convenient spot, reached by canoe from many villages, and a large quantity of flax could be obtained from neighbouring parts of the mainland. Tapsell agreed to this and sent a man named Farrow with a quantity of trade goods to establish a station, with instructions to write every week and let him know how matters went on.

For the first few weeks the letters were very encouraging on the subject of flax purchases, but presently Farrow wrote to his employer to say that the Maoris had suddenly given up scraping flax, and had begun to look upon the goods sent as their own, which they could take when they pleased.

Tapsell, much disturbed by this news, sent a letter by a special messenger, an American negro, directing Farrow to pack up all the trade goods in the large baskets of dressed flax and bring them to Maketu. This the two men did very cleverly, the natives themselves unsuspectingly carrying the heavily laden baskets.

It happened that a trader, Scott, who was buying dressed flax at Tauranga, heard of the commencement of a new trade at Rotorua, and he too sent up a man with goods to open a rival store, but he was too late and did not succeed in doing any business.

Hikairo was an angry man indeed when he found that Tapsell had successfully smuggled all his goods away. Furious, he vowed vengeance on him, declaring that he was a robber and had removed his goods like a thief.

As for Scott, when he found that there was no trade to be done, he declared his intention of demanding his goods boldly and taking them away in the light of day. Accordingly he went to Rotorua with two of his men. All three were armed with muskets, pistols and cutlasses.

Taking a canoe across the lake to Mokoia, Scott asked the chief where his property was. The chief informed him that they were in a house, which he pointed out. Scott went in; no trade articles were to be seen. He returned to the chief and told him that his goods were not there. "Oh,"

said the Maori, pointing out another house, "they are in that whare." But this house, too, was empty. Scott angrily rated the chief for making a fool of him. "You shall have your goods presently," he said, and the stuff was brought down, and placed in a canoe.

Scott stationed a man with a drawn cutlass in the canoe to guard the goods while he talked with the chiefs on shore; but while he was thus engaged, a canoe full of Maoris stole alongside. Scott's sentry was seized, dragged into the water, his throat cut, and his body quartered for the oven.

That sight of blood excited all the evil passions of the Maoris and whetted their appetite for more. They would have made short work of Scott and his companion but for the timely arrival of the chiefs Haupapa and Tangaroa, from Maketu. These men pulled them into a

tapu'd house and protected them until the yelling savages had at last dispersed; then they were allowed to depart in peace. They were only too glad to go with their lives, and without the goods they had come to remove.

Such was the fortune of trading enterprise in the Rotorua country in the cannibal *'Thirties.'*

## CHAPTER XX

# THE CAPTURE AND SACK OF MAKETU

It was Tapsell's custom to give trade goods to a number of chiefs, who supplied him with flax in payment. When the payment for the first lot of goods was completed, he gave them a fresh supply. It usually happened that several chiefs settled accounts in this way all at the same time. Early in the year 1835 all the chiefs had paid off their old debts and received more goods to trade with except Haerehuka, a warrior of Rotorua.\* In spite of his indebtedness he applied for more goods. Tapsell refused, saying there were six muskets for which he had not paid, and that all the others had squared up honorably. Haerehuka went off angrily, threatening, "I will stop this flax scraping."

*\* Grandfather of the chief and tohunga Taua Tutanekai Haerehuka, who died at Rotorua, 1934.*

The trader and the other chiefs laughed, but that the threat was no idle one was soon proved.

Haerehuka went home, and crossing Rotorua Lake climbed the hills to Tarukenga with a party of followers and deliberately killed with his tomahawk a man who had nothing to do with the dispute. This was Hunga, a chief of Ngati-Haua, who was on a visit to his daughter near Tarukenga.

The Rotorua people were very much incensed at this act of treachery, which they knew would provoke a war with the powerful Ngati-Haua tribe who lived at Matamata and neighbouring inland parts, and also with the Waikato tribe.

They inflicted some punishment by plundering Haerehuka of all he possessed, but the mischief had been done.

Tapsell, on hearing of this murder and realising the inevitable ruinous consequences, went off to Tauranga, where the Waikato and Ngai-te-Rangi chiefs were assembled. He told them of his great sorrow for what had occurred, spoke of the peaceful nature of his calling and his neutrality in their intertribal feuds. "Fight the battle where the murder was done," he advised them. "Keep the war away from Maketu." This speech he followed up with a present of four double-barrel guns as a kind of bonus to secure their goodwill.

All consented to his suggestion to fight the battle at Rotorua, and he left with a mind relieved. But after he had gone, the Ngai-te-Rangi people prevailed on the other chiefs to change their intention, saying, "Let us go to Maketu first. There is good plunder there, and there are very few people."

And straightway they began preparations for a descent on the seaport of the Arawa, in alliance with the Ngati-Haua of Matamata.

When Clementson, Tapsell's agent inland at Matamata, heard of the impending raid, he sent off by night a white man who lived with him, to take a warning to Maketu. But in the morning the messenger was missed, and about forty men, armed with tomahawks, rushed off in pursuit and overtook him on the road. He was brought back, but succeeded in starting

again, only to be captured once more and brought back, with the warning that the next time he would be killed.

Farrow, Tapsell's agent at Tauranga, also tried to send a warning to Maketu, but he was strictly watched, and prevented from despatching a messenger. So he consulted the Rev. A. N. Brown (afterwards Archdeacon), who called a committee of the Waikato and Ngai-te-Rangi chiefs, and obtained from them a promise not to touch Tapsell's property.

All the country as far as Waikato was now up in arms, preparing for this great expedition. Ngati-Haua and their allies put an army of about sixteen hundred warriors into the field. The advance guard kept Farrow as a prisoner until they reached Te Tumu, where they crossed the Kaituna River intending to approach Maketu from the land side. Farrow they released, bidding him go to his master. The man ran along the beach at the top of his speed, and was seen by Mr. Tapsell through his telescope.

"A running messenger bears bad tidings," said he, and ordered a canoe to be put across to meet him and bring him over.

Exhausted by his long run, Farrow could only lie and gasp for a while. Then he told Tapsell that sixteen hundred fighting men were on their way to take Maketu and would be there in a few minutes. He also related the result of Mr. Brown's intercession with the Tauranga chiefs and their promise not to molest the trader's property.

"Can they be depended on?" asked Mr. Tapsell doubtfully. The question was decided for him very soon.

Suddenly the bangs of musketry echoed across the valley, and puffs of smoke came from the groves of Wharekahu. The enemy's advance guard came into sight, skirmishing towards the fortress-hill. The Arawa replied to the fire below the hill where Tapsell's house stood. The trader and Farrow ran out to shout to the advancing Ngati-Haua and try to stay hostilities. It was hopeless. They found themselves in a cross-fire from both parties; the bullets whizzed about their heads. They separated, for safety. Farrow ran for shelter to the Ngai-te-Rangi, whom he called his own people. Tapsell climbed the hill to his house. He shouted to the few Arawa warriors left in Maketu, engaged in a vain effort at defence, to fly to Waihi, in their rear, and make their escape to Rotorua. Some did so; all who remained to defend their homes were shot down.

Tapsell's great friend, the chief Haupapa, refused to go. He stamped his foot, and replied to the trader's entreaty, "No, I will die beside you."

Tapsell and Haupapa stood inside the fence surrounding the trade-house, and looked down on the hundreds of the invaders as they marched along the foot of the hill. Haupapa's wife stood by his side, with a loaded musket; the chief was armed with a double-barrel gun.

As the invaders passed below, Haupapa fired, and shot one of the leaders. With his second shot he hit another, but a bullet from the enemy tore through the fence and struck him in the breast, and he fell.

Tapsell picked up his friend and carried him into the house. There he laid him under his bed, hoping that amidst the confusion he would not be perceived. But there were too many fierce eyes on the watch.

The fight went on along the beach, the Arawa firing as they retired, fighting a despairing rearguard action. All the men who stayed to fight were killed; the women and children were

taken for slaves. The first Arawa warrior shot was the chief Nainai. The savages cut his head off on the gunwale of his own canoe. Pipi, a fine young warrior chief, fled along the beach, as far as the clumps of angiangi trees, where he was overtaken, decapitated, and cut up for the cannibal oven. His nephew, who could have escaped, when he saw his uncle killed, came back to share the same fate.

His head, too, was soon off, and his body divided like the other.

What scenes of horror followed on that brief and hopeless stand of the outnumbered defenders!

The ovens were set going, bodies were cut up, and the exulting warriors were at their meal before the corpses were half cooked. The heads of the slain warriors were hurriedly smoke-cured. This haste was prompted by the fear of speedy reprisals. The feasting on the dead went on through the night.

Amongst those who escaped were a party who came from distant Kapiti Island, near relatives of Tupaea, who were engaged in scraping flax at Waihi. The chief sent a messenger overnight warning them to hurry away to Rotorua, which they did and so saved their heads.

During that terrible night Tapsell tended the dying chief Haupapa. Early next morning on going outside he was stopped by an armed man, standing sentry at the gate. The warrior said, "Tapsell, go back, go to your own place, you are wanted there."

An old woman climbed over the fence and went in to the house where Tapsell's wife, Hine-i-turama, sat in fear of death. Over her the old dame threw her mat, to indicate that she claimed her as a slave. But another chieftainess, the wife of Murupara, coming in at that moment, addressed her angrily: "What are you doing here? There are plenty of slaves down below. If you want her for a slave, you must kill Tapsell first."

The trader returning at that moment, the old woman retreated in haste. Tapsell descended to the beach. There the foe were chopping off the heads of the slain. As he passed along, his leg was seized by a woman, the wife of Pipi, the young chief killed at the angiangi bushes. She was crying bitterly. Tapsell, knowing that slavery was the fate of all women taken in battle, asked her who was now her master. She pointed out a Waikato chief. Tapsell asked the man if he would part with her. "Give me a cask of powder and you can have her," he said.

The trader ransomed her, and also five other women. They were then, with the consent of the leader of the army, Te Waharoa and the others, handed over to a Waikato chief. He undertook to escort them as far as the Waihi lagoon, on the coast, where they would be allowed to depart in safety for Rotorua. So much of his duty this chief performed with fidelity, but before leaving the women he appropriated to himself all their ornaments, such as the greenstones and mako shark's teeth that they wore in their ears.

Te Waharoa insisted on a ransom of the store and of Tapsell's whaleboat. The conquerors were tolerably quiet so long as any gunpowder remained, but when it was all gone they threw off the mask. They broke into his flax-store. The trader angrily reproached Te Waharoa with a breach of faith, inasmuch as he had promised to hold his property inviolate. The war-chief waved his hand deprecatingly, "Don't be angry," said he. "By-and-by it will be all right."

Tapsell was urgently entreated by his friend Tupaea to leave the place. "Come away, come away, or you will be killed."

"Get my wife and child away," said Tapsell, "and leave me here. I shall look after myself."

Tupaea, finding his warnings useless, led away Tapsell's wife and child, down the hill to the beach. There they were met by a chieftainess named Karu. In her right hand she grasped a musket, in the other a tomahawk.

"Give me this woman," was Karu's peremptory demand.

"If you are a greater chief than I am, you can have her," was Tupaea's answer. He passed on towards the canoe in which he placed Hine-i--turama and her child. He bade his crew give way, and took his charges to Te Tumu, where he left them in safety with his people.

Meanwhile, the woman Kara ran up to Tapsell's house, where she seated herself opposite to the trader at a table. She glared at him with eyes dashing hate. But as her angry glances made no impression on the fearless Pakeha, she soon bounced out again.

Now hundreds of infuriated savages, reeking of slaughter and feasting, surrounded the house and clamoured for the body of Haupapa.

The chief was still alive, and Tapsell refused to give him up. They threatened to take Tapsell's head, whereupon the trader stepped out in front of the door, a sword in one hand, and a loaded musket in the other.

"You want my head," said he. "Here I am! Come and take it!"

But they all drew back, muttering. The chief Murupara, who came up at that moment, sent them away.

When Tapsell returned to the room, he was touched gently on the shoulder. He looked around,

and saw Haupapa's wife. "He is dead," said she. I must die with him. Run your sword through my body."

"I cannot do that," said Tapsell.

"Then will you cut his head off?" she asked.

Just as the weeping woman uttered the words, Murupara entered the room.

"I'll do that," said he. "Give me a knife."

Tapsell in silence pointed to a large carving-knife lying on the table. Murupara seized it and decapitated Haupapa's corpse. Grasping the tattooed head, he hurried from the house, as if he had been pursued, to exhibit his bleeding trophy.

Now that Haupapa was dead, the trader told the assembled chiefs that they might have the body. It was dragged out, and there was a horrible scramble by the cannibal crowd, each warrior eager to cut off a piece of the flesh and swallow it raw.

In their mad struggle, clambering over one another's shoulders and stretching out their arms to snatch pieces away, they looked to the trader like a pack of hungry wolves, gnawing at a dead horse.

When Murupara cut off Haupapa's head in the house, blood ran in streams into the lockers surrounding the room. These lockers were full of ripe watermelons. The melons

were seized and eaten greedily by the cannibals. The blood in which they were soaked seemed to give the greater relish.

All this time the Tauranga chief, Tupaea, who had returned from Te Tumu, was urging Tapsell to seize the opportunity for escape. At last the trader consented and Tupaea sent his wife with him as a protection. The moment he had gone the savages set fire to his house and trading store.

Along the beach the ruined trader and his escort met two missionaries, the Revs. Wilson and Wade.

"Where are you going?" asked Tapsell.

"We are going to see if we cannot stop this dreadful slaughter," was Mr. Wilson's reply.

"You ought to have come before, if you intended to do any good," said Tapsell. "You can see my store all in flames, and I myself am stripped to the clothes I stand in."

The missionaries went on their way, but when they reached Maketu, and saw the hell that reigned there, the horrid confusion and uproar, the cooking of bodies, and curing of heads, they were stricken with terror. Hastily they returned, and they overtook Tapsell on the way to Te Tumu.

Tapsell and his wife and child stayed that night in the pa at Te Tumu. Next morning the Ngati-Haua and their allies returned bearing the spoils of victory. Amongst the loot was much of the trader's property. The warriors passed on towards Tauranga without stopping. To Tupaea one of them said, "You have got the best prize," meaning Tapsell.

Murupara's wife was there. Tapsell had been very kind to this woman. Now she was carrying a box containing some of the trader's valuables and best clothing. At first he had thought that she intended saving this for him, for when the confusion was at its height she had thrown herself across the chest as if to protect it from the general pillage. But now as she passed with her plunder on her shoulder she looked at him with great disdain.

At Maketu the victors had disinterred the body of a child of Tapsell's, who had been buried about two months before, in the garden at his home. The grave, being surrounded with a neat railing and the ground decorated with flowers, attracted the attention of the savages. On digging they were rewarded by finding a cedar coffin, which they carried away with other prizes, expecting it to contain a treasure. On the march they opened the box and tossed the little corpse into the surf.

The invaders before leaving Maketu, dismantled Tapsell's battery, spiked most of the guns, and threw them into the river.

Tapsell's loss by the sacking of Maketu, in goods, trade, buildings and a hundred and twenty tons of flax in store, was more than £4,000, estimated on Sydney prices.

## CHAPTER XXI

# REVENGE: THE BATTLE OF TE TUMU

The dejected trader and his wife watched the cannibal conquerors march off along the coast to Tauranga, leaving destruction and horror in their trail. The chief Tupaea condoled with his Pakeha friend; the tears ran down his tattooed cheeks as he lamented the ruin of the lately beautiful and prosperous village.

"I must leave Maketu," said Tapsell, "I have no goods left to buy *muka*,"

He had decided to go to Matata, eastward along the Bay of Plenty coast. He had a trading station there under the charge of a man named White.

"I shall see you safely to Matata," said Tupaea.

The trader and his family, accompanied by the faithful Tupaea, embarked in a boat and sailed along to Matata. There the trader met his old acquaintance the chief Te Rangitikina, who provided him with a canoe and a good crew to go up the Rangitaiki River to Te Kapenga, a large village which then stood a short distance above Te Teko, near the base of Mt. Edgecumbe. This was done, Tapsell bidding farewell to Tupaea, who sat sorrowfully on the bank of the river at Matata with his mat over his head. From Te Kapenga the party travelled to Rotorua, over hills and through forests, a toilsome journey. Tapsell's wife was heavy with child, and a party of men carried her in an *amo* or litter made of poles and interlaced bush-vines. Two nights the refugees spent in the bush, without any covering other than the clothes they wore. On the third day they reached Rotorua and were among their tribes folk and relatives again.

When the trader and his family were approaching Ohinemutu village on the lake shore the Arawa gathered there, whom a messenger had advised of their coming, fired volleys of musketry in welcome and salute, continuing this until the weary travellers walked into the pa. The women met them, waving green branches and singing songs of greeting. They spread mats for their guests to sit upon, and they then surrounded them in crowds, crying with a loud and bitter lamentation for those killed at Maketu.

This reception, vociferous and heartbreaking, lasted most of the day. When it ended, Tapsell asked for a canoe and crew to take him across the lake to Mokoia Island.

So at last the distressed ones came to a place of peace and security. Hine-i-turama's mother lived on the island. Hikairo, the chief with whom he had traded, sent him a hundred baskets of potatoes and two pigs, with injunctions to be careful of it, as food was likely to be scarce in that war-troubled season.

Now Tapsell set to work to prevail upon the people to muster all their forces, and march for the coast against the enemy, some of whom were fortified in the stockade at Te Tumu. At last he succeeded and an army of Arawa warriors, about a thousand men, marched off against the foe.

Tapsell, armed, went with them, until Amohau, uncle of his wife, put difficulties in his way. One excuse for wishing to leave the trader behind was that they proposed taking a difficult road, in order to come on the enemy unawares, and would have several rivers to

swim. Tapsell replied, that he was able to go where they did, and if they were required to swim he could swim too. But finding that the chiefs raised fresh obstacles and evidently did not wish to have him with them, he told Amohau that he knew they would take the pa, for he had had a dream that told him so. His only object was to be able to lay hands on his own stolen property. The chiefs assured him that all his goods would be held sacred and returned to him.

Tapsell then consented to go back, after giving the leaders strict injunctions to spare Tupaea's life, as that chief, now in the pa at Te Tumu, had been good to him. This injunction he frequently repeated, and received their emphatic promise faithfully to obey it. The trader returned to Mokoia, and the war-party went on its way.

Tapsell soon afterwards heard all about the battle at Te Tumu; the news was obtained from a white man named Taylor, who was taken prisoner there. The attacking party arrived at the coast early in the morning and at once attacked the fort of the Ngai-te-Rangi. Many were killed on both sides. The first storming party, about thirty of the Tarawera warriors (of the Tuhourangi tribe) were nearly all shot down while cutting an entrance through the palisading. Women inside dragged the bodies through gaps in the fence, and cut off the heads, which they held aloft tauntingly, crying to the besiegers, "This is the way we will treat you!"

This stung the attackers to frenzy, and the attack was continued with great fury. Tareha, a great chief of the pa, was shot, and on one of the women crying out "Tareha is killed!" the defenders became panic-stricken and fled from the pa. They were pursued along the beach by the victorious Arawa, and most of them were killed.

Tupaea had a narrow escape, a bullet grazed his forehead. His uncle urged him to fly instead of remaining to share his fate. Tupaea obeyed and got clear; the uncle, Hikareia, was killed.

Three weeks later the expeditionary force, returning in triumph from the coast, manned canoes at the Ohau and paddled across Rotorua Lake homeward to Ohinemutu. They passed Mokoia on their way, chanting their war songs.

They had taken a good portion of Mr. Tapsell's goods, but returned nothing to him except a pocket-book. This had contained with other papers an order for £250 upon Captain Patterson Stewart, of the British Navy, from Tapsell's brother in Denmark. When returned to him every paper was there except the order, which had been stolen, and that was the last he ever heard of that.

The old woman Karu, who wanted to take Tapsell's wife for a slave at Maketu, was shot in the pa at Tumu. Another woman, a chief's wife, was taken prisoner there. The Arawa brought her to Rotorua for Tapsell's wife to kill as utu for the insult she had received at Maketu. Hine-i-turama declined the offer; but the wife of Haupapa, the chief who was mortally wounded in Tapsell's house, cheerfully undertook the duty, and despatched the captive with one blow of a tomahawk.

## APPENDIX

# MAORI NARRATIVES OF TE TUMU

Dramatic stories of the battle of Te Tumu, May 9 1836, when the Arawa army stormed and captured the pa on the coast and avenged to some extent the capture and destruction of Maketu were given to me by two aged warriors of the Rotorua district many ears ago. One of these ancient survivors of the cannibal era was Patera te Ngungukai, who was a tohunga of the Ngati-Whakaue and Tapuika tribes in his old age he was the tribal bone-scraper, whose grisly office it was to disinter the bodies of the dead after they had been buried for a year or two, cleanse the bones and convey them to the urupa or final burial place. He was usually under the ban of tapu, and was of necessity a recluse. In his young warrior days he was reputed the fastest runner in his tribes.

He described with a grim enjoyment of those memories the almost constant intertribal fighting in 1833-40, the great preparations made for the expeditions of revenge, and the march to the coast and the desperate fighting at the Ngai-te-Rangi Pa. He shared in the cannibal feast which followed the victory. Patara gave me his narrative in 1894 and 1895; he died about 1900.

Te Araki te Pohu, who was over ninety years old when he told me his early life story, in 1904, was a chief of the Ngati-Tu clan of the Arawa; his home was at Owhatiura, on the eastern shore of Lake Rotorua. He was a splendid old patriarch, with a fine intellectual face, strong features with the keen Jewish-like hawk-nose (the ihu-koka or parrots-beak of the Maori) that is to be seen in some of the Arawa families. His face was tattooed, like Patara's, but the blue lines of moko engraving were partly hidden by a white beard. He was tall and lean, with the square shoulders of an old soldier, straight of bearing even in his 'nineties'. He had fought in many battles of the cannibal days, between 1830 and 1840. The expedition against Te Tumu, he said, was undertaken because the Ngai-te-Rangi who held that fort were the allies of Ngati-Haua, of Matamata and the Waikato.

"We were filled with the fury of war," said Te Araki, "when we paraded, many hundreds of us, on the lakeshore at Ohinemutu, and the thunder of our war-dance made the ground quiver. We crossed the lake in our fleet of canoes and from the Taheke, on Rotoiti, we marched for Te Tumu. (The distance is about forty miles.) There were many chiefs, each with his hapu and relatives; the highest of all our War-leaders were Korokai, Kahawai, Pukuatua, Te Amohau, Hikairo, and Pango the high priest. It was indeed a great *tauā*, it was an army (*ope*), the full fighting strength of Rotorua.

"It was just at the break of day that we rushed from our ambush below the palisades of Te Tumu, and charged upon the pa. Ha! It was indeed a fight, that assault. Ngai-te-Rangi, though few in numbers — there were more women and children than men within the stockade on the sandhills fought desperately and killed Kahawai and many of our warriors. But at last we forced our way in through and over the war fence. There I was, hacking away with my long tomahawk — like this! Many of the defenders fled in the direction of Tauranga, but we pursued them along the beach and killed or captured most of them. So fell that fort — they died — they were cooked — they were eaten!"

"Three of my hapu, the Ngati-Tu, were shot in that fight, but I was not struck once. We killed Kiharoa and Hikareia and many other chiefs of Te Tumu, and nearly two hundred

others. There lay the Ika-a-Whiro, the sacred Fish-of-Whiro — the slain warriors — all around us. And after the battle and pursuit, we gathered in the conquered pa, the many hundreds of Rotorua, and there we danced our war dance of jubilation and victory. This was the great chorus we sang as we held our weapons horizontally before us with both hands, and quickly raised them at arms' length above our heads — like this — and down again in time to the song: “

“Koia ano!  
Koia ano!  
Koia ano te peruperu!  
Inahoki te taiaroa;  
Whakatirohia mai na  
Ki te whana.  
A ha! Pare-rewha,  
Pare-rewha!”

“(Yes indeed!  
Yes indeed!  
This is the battle-dance!  
Behold this victor-weapon,  
And see this mighty blow! a ha!  
And the dead that strew our battlefield!)”

*The illustrations in this book include portraits of these tattooed veterans of the old wars. The photograph of Te Araki was taken at Owhatiura, at my suggestion, by Mr. James McDonald (who died recently at Tokaanu). — J. C.*

*\* In Te Araki's words: “Ka hinga taua pa — ka mate — Ka hangia — ka kai!”*

## CHAPTER XXII

# TAPSELL SETTLES AT WHAKATANE

For nearly six months the trader and his Maori family lived on the beautiful island of Mokoia, the ancient sanctuary of the Arawa people. There Hine-i-turama's child was born, a boy, who was given the name Retireti or Retreat, in memory of the flight from ravaged Maketu. The family lived in the midst of alarms. There was slaughter all around them on the mainland. The Rotorua country was invaded by a great war-party from the Waikato and Matamata, led by the celebrated Te Waharoa.

At this time a missionary, the Rev. Thomas Chapman, had taken refuge on Mokoia. The Church station on the mainland, at Te Koutu, was destroyed in the war. Chapman and Tapsell, with a telescope, watched the fighting from the slopes of the island and saw Te Waharoa's unsuccessful effort to storm Ohinemutu Pa.

Tapsell received frequent letters from his friend White at Matata, cautioning him against returning to the coast just then, as many of his enemies were about, who threatened to take his life. But this inactive life wearied the vigorous trader. He told his friends and chiefs that he had determined to go to Matata and there to take passage for Sydney to obtain more trade goods.

He asked them to drag his boat for him overland from the Lakes to the Kapenga village (on the Rangitaiki River). This was a boat he had built on the island. The Chiefs accordingly furnished him with two hundred men for this purpose. The heavy task was accomplished by sheer man-power in four days from Rotoiti and Rotoehu. At length the Kapenga was reached, and there White was waiting to receive them. The boat was launched; the Maoris fired a parting salute, and Tapsell with his wife and two little children descended into the river to Matata, their new home.

In a few weeks a vessel arrived, and the trader and his wife and children sailed for Sydney. His first business there was to settle accounts with his merchants, who were heavy losers by the calamity which had deprived him of everything he possessed. The accounts were at length settled with the merchants, who made over to him all the debts due on the coast but were not willing to renew a trade so hazardous. So Tapsell made arrangements with a Mr. Paterson for a fresh trade in flax with the natives. A schooner called the Harlequin was loaded with goods, and Tapsell and his family sailed for New Zealand. At Tauranga he found that his agent, Farrow, with Clementson, his Waikato agent, believing that he did not intend to return, had gone in a whaleboat to Matata for the purpose of consulting with Mr White and arranging to trade on their own account. News came next day that they had both been drowned in the surf when attempting to land at Matata.

Tapsell took the Harlequin on to Whakatane, where he landed all his trade, and took possession of a house he had had built for a man named Jackson, at one time his agent there. At Whakatane he again began trading for flax. The Ngati-Awa tribe and their connections there were most friendly, and so honest that he never once lost any articles of value. They knew Tapsell's worth, and they gave him all the assistance they could, and promised to defend him from outside attack.

There were some queer customers trading along the shores of Maoriland in those days before the Law. A certain Captain Hart was one of them.

Tapsell, besides his purchases of flax, carried on at Whakatane a trade in pigs and maize (*kaanga*). He had a large quantity of the Indian corn stored for shipment, when a brig commanded by this Captain Hart came down the coast seeking a cargo for Sydney. At Opotiki Captain Hart went ashore to try to buy maize, and not being successful he travelled by the beach to Ohiwa, where a trader named Nicholson lived. This man told Hart that Tapsell had a large stock, and the two of them walked to Whakatane. The brig followed them up the coast, and stood off and on abreast of Whakatane. A gale of wind set in lasting two or three days. After it had moderated Tapsell took the captain and Mr. Nicholson off in his whaleboat. Hart invited them both below with great cordiality and ordered wine for them. Something in the skipper's manner set Tapsell on his guard, and he was sparing of the wine.

## PATARATE NGUNGUKAI.

This ancient warrior and tohunga of the Arawa tribe fought in the cannibal wars, 1835-1840, and was at the storming of Te Tumu Pa, 1836. Portrait at Ohinemutu, Rotorua, 1895.



PATARA TE NGUNGUKAI.

This ancient warrior and tohunga of the Arawa tribe fought in the cannibal wars, 1835-1840, and was at the storming of Te Tumu Pa, 1836. Portrait at Ohinemutu, Rotorua, 1895.

## AN ANCIENT CARVED PATAKA OR STOREHOUSE IN AAKETU PA.

(PHOTOGRAPH ABOUT 1885.)



AN ANCIENT CARVED PATAKA OR STOREHOUSE IN AAKETU PA.

(PHOTOGRAPH ABOUT 1885.)

## MATATA PA, 1865.

From a sketch by Major-General Gr. Robley reproduced in the "Illustrated London News," 1866.

This large stockaded village was captured from the Ngati-Awa rebels and is here shown occupied by the Arawa tribe. In the background is the Hauhau sacred flagstaff or "*Niu*."



MATATA PA, 1865.

From a sketch by Major-General G. Robley reproduced in the "Illustrated London News," 1866. This large stockaded village was captured from the Ngati-Awa rebels and is here shown occupied by the Arawa tribe. In the background is the Hauhau sacred flagstaff or "*Niu*."

Hart was very anxious to buy the maize from Tapsell, and offered a price for it. This Tapsell declined, saying that he was not selling it.

"Then I'll fight you," said Hart, "you'd better let me have that maize."

"Well, you are captain on board your own vessel, but you don't frighten me," coolly answered Tapsell.

"I'm damned if I don't shoot you!" yelled the captain, and shouting for his steward he ordered him to bring his pistols. They were brought. Hart proceeded to load them with ball.

The amazed Tapsell narrowly watched Hart's movements. He thought the man mad, but had no intention of letting him shoot him, mad or not.

Hart cocked one of his pistols and presented it at Tapsell's head. Like a shot Tapsell struck his arm up. The trigger was pulled at that moment, and the bullet passed through the deck and very narrowly missed the man at the wheel.

"Now, Captain Hart," said Mr. Tapsell, "I think we have been shipmates quite long enough," and he went on deck.

The fire-eating captain ran up after him. "Come, Tapsell," said he, "you are not going to leave me that way." "Here, Mister" (to the mate) "get up a case of wine and put it into Mr. Tapsell's boat."

The order was obeyed, the wine put into the boat, and Tapsell and his fellow-trader returned to the shore. "That madman is sure to come to grief one of these days, Nicholson," said Tapsell as they left the maize-hunting brig.

A young slave woman, belonging to a Maori who had been christened quaintly Matene Ruta (Martin Luther), ran away to Ohiwa. She was caught and brought back to Whakatane. There was an excited gathering in front of Tapsell's house, and Matene and another man were about to kill her with their tomahawks when Tapsell ran out to her rescue. He threw his arms over her head to shield her from the threatened blows, and led her into the house. There she was safe until the fury of her master had subsided. Matene then came and asked to have her given up to him. Tapsell consented, on condition that her life should be spared and she should be treated kindly. The man promised to do this and was allowed to take her away, and he kept his promise to Tapsell.

Another episode was a slave girl's elopement. A minor chief of Whakatane ran away to Maketu with a girl belonging to Apanui, the head rangatira of Ngati-Awa. Tapsell happened to have gone to Maketu to bring away his wife and daughter, then on a visit to their relatives. On his return to Whakatane he brought the two fugitives with him in a canoe. As they approached the landing-place in the river they saw a man awaiting their arrival. He was naked except for a band round his waist, in his hand was a greenstone mere, which he brandished in a frantic manner; he clenched his teeth with savage spite, his eyes rolled with a diabolical glare, his whole frame quivered with excitement. It was Apanui. As the canoe party landed, he sprang at the two runaways, and would have cloven their skulls but for the intervention of Tapsell, who thrust himself between them to cover the lovers' retreat into his house.

When they were safe inside the trader stood in the doorway guarding the entrance. Apanui danced about waving his mere, and shouting and threatening till he was hoarse. By-and-by Pono and another of his relatives came up and took the weapon out of his hand.

The chief's anger gradually subsided, and, as if suddenly seized with contrition for the annoyance he was giving Tapsell, he said: "My passion is over; I shall not harm them."

So the two lovers were permitted to depart. But the compensation had yet to come, the *utu* had to be paid. Next day the man was stripped of every article of property he possessed, and heavy contributions were levied upon all the relatives of both of them. It was the *taua muru*. The couple were now acknowledged as man and wife and were left to begin housekeeping on the slender resources which they had received from nature.

## CHAPTER XXIII

# TRICKS IN TRADE: THE TROUBLES OF THE PAKEHA-MAORI

The early traders, particularly the skippers of vessels from Sydney, seldom hesitated to swindle the Maoris, as, for instance, by selling them turnip seed instead of gunpowder, and by persuading the confiding savage that if he planted rum bottles — the contents had already been sold to him at exorbitant rates — for each of which a pig or a basket of flax was exacted, he would find them filled again in a few weeks. And the Maori, profiting by experience, soon learned to take down the Pakeha at his own game. Tapsell was always scrupulously honest, the Maoris say, but he suffered sometimes for the sins of other traders.

Stones were sometimes put in the baskets of flax to increase the weight. On one occasion a number of baskets were brought to Tapsell containing to all external appearances what was good dry flax. The weight being too great in proportion to the size of the baskets, Tapsell made an examination, and found that the covered-up flax had been steeped in water, which, if it had not been discovered, would have greatly depreciated its value. When the deception was found out, the flax-sellers fled, leaving the flax behind them.

Again, it was Tapsell's custom when weighing flax to place the baskets that had been weighed at one end of the store, separate from those waiting to be weighed. The natives, when his attention was occupied, would quietly slip round, and transfer the weighed bags to the other end of the building, by which device they were weighed over again, although in checking over the numbers the cheat was afterwards discovered.

Then perhaps at a time when Tapsell's stock of goods had run out, a native would bring him a pig, and on being asked its price, would answer "*Homai noa mai*" ("Nothing, a gift"). But by-and-by, when the vessel arrived with goods, the same man would come and say to him, "You don't remember me? You know that pig you got from me?" "Yes, but you said you did not want anything for it." "Well, you had nothing then, but now that you have got plenty I want payment."

The most curious bit of deception ever practised on Tapsell when he was trading at Whakatane in the 'Forties. A boat from Mr. Gilbert Mair's whaling station on Moutohora Island was swamped at the bar, and three men were drowned. Tapsell offered a reward for the recovery of the corpse of an Englishman who was among the drowned. Some time later, two Maoris came forward and declared that when on their journey from Matata and stopping to eat a meal, their attention had been attracted by what looked like the hair of a man buried in the sand, on scraping which away they had discovered the Pakeha's body.

Tapsell gave the men a blanket in which to wrap the body, and told them to bring it in for interment, and he would reward them. They brought a figure tied up in the blanket, and the trader, with a man named Middlemas, then living with him, made preparations to bury it. The natives had previously been very unwilling to let anyone but themselves dig the grave.

"Don't you think," said Middlemas, "that it would be right to say a prayer over him first?"

"Yes," replied Tapsell, "I have my prayers all in my head. They are short and to the purpose. I have buried many people, but I never yet buried one without looking in his face first that I might know whom I am burying. So cast him adrift and let us see him."

The natives, upon hearing this, became very uneasy, and delayed obeying under all sorts of pretences, until Mr. Tapsell impatiently called for a knife to cut the flax ties. None was handy, and Middlemas began to saw the flax with a sharp stone. The Maoris turned and ran as for their lives. Suddenly, Middlemas exclaimed, "I'm damned if I think it's a man at all!"

It was not. The head, when uncovered, proved to be a large pumice stone, with flax on the top to resemble hair. Two sticks did duty for arms, while two stouter ones answered the purpose of legs. The crowd of natives standing round appeared petrified with astonishment, and Apanui, the chief, looked very nervous, anticipating Tapsell's anger. The two rascals who had attempted the cheat were nowhere to be seen, and they did not venture back to Whakatane for many a day.

Tapsell said that the Whakatane people themselves were extremely honest. Thieving or begging were not known amongst them, and valuable implements could be left lying around without fear of being stolen. But if visitors arrived, Apanui, the chief, would come up to the trader at his store and pass him a word of advice: "You had better take your things in; there are strangers about, and I cannot answer for them."

## CHAPTER XXIV

# RANSOM: THE CASH VALUE OF A WHITE MAN

There was a time when an able-bodied white man, even if he were not a wealthy man in trade goods, was a decidedly valuable fellow to Tangata Maori.

Had one happened to be wrecked on the New Zealand shores anywhere between the years 1820 and 1835, there was quite a good chance of escaping the tomahawk and the Maori oven, and of being taken on a tour of the country by the chief in whose territory the wreck occurred. The Pakeha would have been relieved of the burden of his clothes for the trip, and probably would have reached the destination attired economically in little else but his sunburnt skin — what was left of it by the bushlawyers and the mosquitos and sandflies.

But if he survived the tour, and any fellow-pakeha were disposed to part with, say, £20 worth of tobacco, gunpowder, and blankets for him, he would find himself once more a free man — free, at any rate, as soon as he had worked off the debt to his redeemer.

Judge Maning has told of the Pakeha whose cash value was nil; at any rate, he could find no one who was willing to buy him from his tattooed owners. But Tapsell's heart must have been as great as his Viking frame, for he could never listen unmoved to an appeal for assistance from a captive in Cannibal Land. This is his list of purchases of "*live stock*," Pakeha and Maori, during the period 1820-1840.

Three. — One Englishman and two Americans (names not remembered), who pleaded to be ransomed as they were "very miserable;" purchased from the Ngapuhi in the Bay of Islands for an equivalent in value of £20 each.

Three. — An Englishman (Abraham), a Lascar, and an American negro. The negro, Powers, was the only survivor of a crew of five killed and eaten at Wanganui in 1831.

\_Two. — An Englishman (Jackson) and a whaleship cooper purchased from the chief Apanui at Whakatane, £20 each.

Six. — Women of the Arawa tribes, slaves to the Ngapuhi, £20 each.

Six. — A man named Taylor (English), his wife and three half-caste children and his wife's sister, £20 each.

One. — The son of Rewa, a chief of the Ngapuhi, purchased from the Waikato and Ngaitete-Rangi for £20.

One. — Hapene, a native woman of Tauranga, ransomed from the Arawa for £20.

One. — A daughter of Rangitikina, a Matata chief, ransomed from the Ngapuhi for £18.

At this period money was never used as a current medium; muskets, powder and lead and other necessities of life took its place. A musket worth, say, £20 for the Maori trade, would purchase eight hundredweight of flax, which, in England, then sold for £75 a ton.

Altogether twenty-three people were ransomed by Tapsell at an average value of £20. Tapsell therefore expended some £450 on the liberty, and, in most of the cases, the lives of persons in whom he was in no way interested except from motives of humanity. He does

not seem to have received any recompense for the rescue of the whites, though the Maoris may have been more grateful.

These are the details of the third item on the list: Apanui, a chief of Whakatane, one day arrived at Maketu bringing with him two white sailors who had run away from their ship, and whom he claimed as slaves. These Mr. Tapsell ransomed, paying a musket for each. One of them being a cooper, and a handy man, Tapsell kept at Maketu. The other was a man of good education, and him he entrusted with goods and sent back with Apanui to trade for flax at Whakatane. Tapsell provided him with a wife, Hapene, a slave girl taken during a fight at Tauranga, whom he ransomed from her owner by payment of a cask of gunpowder (ledger value £18).

The last on the list, Rangitikina's daughter, was rather curiously linked up with a land purchase. Some years after this £20 free gift transaction, Tapsell was desirous of obtaining the Island of Matata, between the swamps and the coast, and offered to purchase it from Rangitikina. The chief agreed rather reluctantly, only out of gratitude for the ransom of his daughter. He sold the land, giving Mr. Tapsell a written document as a title. About the year 1867 Mr. Tapsell's sons preferred their claims to Whale Island, White Island and the Island of Matata, all of which were acquired by purchase. The title of Whale Island and White Island was admitted, and Crown grants were issued, but the title of the Matata block was refused.

While Tapsell was away at the Bay of Islands, Tautari, a chief of Whakatane, who had a bitter animosity against Rangitikina, the head man at Matata, persuaded about three hundred of the Ngapuhi warriors to start with him from Maketu in the middle of the night, unknown to their chief Wharepoaka, to attack Rangitikina's village. The alarm was given of the approach of the enemy along the beach, and by the time Tautari's warparty had come up to Matata Rangitikina with his wife and family had escaped in a canoe to Whakatane along the labyrinth of creeks in the great Rangitaiki swamp.

A Pakeha named George White, who was then at Matata buying flax for Tapsell, and his wife, a daughter of Rangitikina, were left behind. The wife was taken prisoner by the Ngapuhi. They plundered the house and store of all the goods they contained, and burned a large quantity of flax which was ready for shipment to Sydney. Two other women were captured, and the party returned to Maketu with the loot.

When Tapsell returned in the cutter from the Bay of Islands, and anchored in the river at Maketu, White came off in a canoe, dressed in his shirt and trousers, the only clothing he was able to save when the Ngapuhi made their midnight attack. He was in much distress over the fate of his wife, a slave to the Ngapuhi. Tapsell came to the rescue as was his usual way. He induced Wharepoaka to negotiate for her ransom with the man who claimed her as his property. This was done, and she was purchased by Tapsell for a double-barrel gun, trade value £18.

## CHAPTER XXV

# TAYLOR THE BEACHCOMBER: THE STORY OF A PAKEHA-MAORI

In a previous chapter mention was made of a white man named Taylor who, with his Maori wife and family, lived with the Ngai-te-Rangi people in Te Tumu. When that stockade was captured Taylor narrowly escaped death. He was taken to Rotorua by the victorious Arawa. The returning war-canoes on their way across the lake from Rotoiti passed close to Mokoia Island.

Taylor, his wife and children, were in one of them. Tapsell hailed the flotilla and Taylor, answering, called out that his wife and children were slaves to the Arawa.

Tapsell got a canoe and crew and followed the war-party. A woman seeing him approach at Ohinemutu said, "I know what Tapihana is coming for. He wants our slaves, but I will not give mine to him; they are my own property."

Tapsell sought out Amohau, his wife's uncle, and made request for Taylor's wife and children, and wife's sister. These people were given to him on payment of a ransom, and Tapsell took them all to his home on Mokoia.

Taylor presently departed for the Urewera Country, where his wife's relatives lived. He took his family with him, and they disappeared from the trader's ken for many months. One day, after Tapsell had settled his affairs in Sydney and had begun life afresh as trader at Whakatane, this man Taylor came in from the Urewera Country. He was in a miserable plight. All he wore was a blanket. Tapsell gave him quarters and food, clothed him, and employed him occasionally to superintend the pressing of the flax by the natives. Presently the Pakeha-Maori sent for his wife and children. When they arrived they, too, were well clothed by Tapsell, and given a share of the plentiful food stores.

Taylor said he believed he could obtain pork very cheaply in the Urewera Country, if Tapsell would give him trade. He was confident that, for two or three figs of tobacco he could procure a fine pig.

"All right," said the trader; "I shall be satisfied if you can buy good pigs at that rate."

The intention was to build up an export trade in salt pork for Sydney. Taylor was given some trade goods, and departed, with his wife and children.

It was eleven months before the fellow came back again. He was alone and as wretched as before, barefooted, clad only in a blanket. Tapsell asked: "Where are the pigs you were sent to get?"

"They are coming presently," said Taylor.

But they never came.

The ineffective Taylor's explanation was that the Urewera people were very anxious to obtain goods, and though they did not bring the pigs at the time, they promised them by-

and-by. His wife declared that the people were honest, so he parted with all his trade for which he never received any return.

Tapsell once more clothed his protege, who quartered himself on the trader as before. Taylor's wife had deserted him in the Urewera Country for a Maori. He sent a message asking her to return to him, but she refused. The chief of the Urewera, however, sent her away, and she returned to Whakatane with her children. They were almost naked when they arrived, and Tapsell again clad them. The woman remained some time, but presently became restless, and said she must visit her friends, promising to return in two or three weeks. She went away, but did not return. Her Maori husband was more to her taste.

Taylor now tried to find a wife among the women at Whakatane, but none of them would have anything to say to him. The reason was that it was reported he had been seen carrying potatoes on his back, a thing no chief was ever known to do. A chief might carry burdens on his tapu back, so long as they did not consist of food. The fact that the white man carried a swag of potatoes showed that he was only a *taurekareka*, a slave, and unworthy of the notice of a *wahine* of reputation.

So strongly had Taylor become imbued with Maori superstitions that he now believed himself to be bewitched.

One day Tapsell's wife pointed to a man passing by the fence surrounding the house, who, she said, was one of the two natives who had attempted the imposition with a fictitious corpse.\* Tapsell went out and the man ran away. This fellow was a tohunga and was believed to possess a knowledge of makutu, or witchcraft. Tapsell angrily shouted after him, "*Upoko kohua*" ("Cooked head"), which in Maori is a powerful curse. The head of a chief is always tapu; so much so, that if an article of food, or an iron pot were hung from the roof over the door of a whare no chief would enter. The hair of a chief's head was especially tapu, and when cut, was always carefully concealed in the thatch of the roof; for if anyone having a spite against the person from whom it had been taken, should become possessed of any portion of it, and take it to the makutu man, he could accomplish the destruction of the original owner. So "cooked head" is much worse than it sounds.

As Tapsell was chasing the Maori, the beachcomber Taylor rose to join in the pursuit, but hearing the words of the curse he seized two sweet potatoes from the table, which he threw before him as he ran. He was asked his motive for so doing, to which he replied that he did it to take the spell off his children. Tapsell laughed and assured him that witchcraft could have no effect on his children.

A few days later a Maori boy who had been sent to Taylor's room to call him ran out saying the thought the man was dead. Tapsell went in and found him lying on his back, dead, with a half caste child on each arm.

\* See Chapter XXIII, "*Tricks in Trade*."

Tapsell buried the man, and took charge of the children until some time afterwards when the mother came from the Urewera and begged for the elder one, whom she took away with her. Tapsell adopted the younger as his daughter.

The same tohunga was consulted by a woman about a string of beads which she had lost, and which she prized very highly. The wise man named a boy as the thief, and informed the woman that she would find the beads hung up behind the door in the house of the boy's

mother. The woman found the beads in the place indicated and told the mother of the boy's theft. She was very indignant and asserted that the prophet had spoken falsely.

"Ha!" said the wizard when he heard this, "does she call me a liar? I shall bewitch the boy."

Sure enough the boy fell so ill that the alarmed father entreated the tohunga, for the sake of kinship, to withdraw the spell, and presented him with a cask of gunpowder. The makutu man ordered the boy to be sent to him, kept him for about a month, and restored him in health to his parents.

Now the wizard directed his spells of darkness against Tapsell himself. It became known that the tohunga had bewitched the trader in retaliation for the curse he had uttered against his head. One evening as the chief Toihau entered there was whispering between him and the women folk present. Tapsell at length perceived that he was the subject of their talk, and enquired the nature of it, but they replied, "Nothing, it's nothing."

As the mysterious whispers did not cease, he became angry, and insisted on knowing the meaning of it. Then it came out that Toihau's object was to take off the spell from Tapsell's children, but as for himself that was impossible. He must die.

Tapsell and his white companion, Middlemas, a trader, laughed heartily at this. The women were appalled at the callousness of his behaviour.

"Did you ever see such a mad fellow?" said one. "Tapihana laughs and smokes as if nothing were the matter, and he knows that he must die to-night." At which Tapihana laughed the more.

In the morning Tapsell called their attention to the fact that he was not yet dead.

"Wait a bit," said they, "you will see."

A month passed away, and he again reminded them of the spell, asking what they thought about it.

"Yes," replied they, "he is not strong enough for you."

"No, he is not," answered Mr. Tapsell, "and there is not a man in New Zealand strong enough to bewitch me, for my God will protect me."

This inspired the natives with great respect for the strength of a character which could withstand the dread incantations of a powerful wizard.

The people of the Urewera mountains tribe were in those days regarded with fear because they were believed to be endowed pre-eminently with the power of witchcraft. Even Apanui, the intelligent and friendly chief at Whakatane, was so much under the influence of this belief that on one occasion when he expected a visit from a powerful Urewera chief and tohunga he brought his gun to Mr. Tapsell, requesting him to take care of it. If his visitor were to see it, he explained, he would take a fancy to it, and he would be obliged to give him, otherwise the bush wizard would *makutu* him.

The principal chief of the Urewera had many wives whom he had procured by the aid of witchcraft. If he saw a woman who took his fancy, he would hold out his hand and she dared not refuse to go to him. Were she to refuse he would *makutu* her, and she would inevitably die. It was said that he had fatally bewitched many women.

## CHAPTER XXVI

# SHIPWRECK: THE LOSS OF THE SCHOONER VALCONA

It was early in the 'Forties that the topsail schooner Valcona, a Sydney vessel of about two hundred tons, came to Whakatane, consigned to Mr. Tapsell, with a cargo of trade goods on board. After discharging the cargo in the estuary at Whakatane, Tapsell brought the schooner to Maketu to take on board a shipment of flax. He anchored her outside the bar at the entrance to the harbour. On board with him he had his two eldest children, Catherine (Katerina), a girl of ten years, and Retreat (Retireti), a boy of eight.

Tapsell was sending them to school at Sydney in compliance with a suggestion from his merchant, Mr. Paterson. There was then a light wind off the shore, but a very heavy swell was setting in from the northward. He proposed taking the flax on board the following morning. Those who had berths turned in, while those who had not, among them Tapsell, lay on lockers in the cabin.

About midnight, with terrific suddenness, a gale which increased to hurricane force burst on the Bay. A fearful sea quickly rose, both wind and sea increasing in violence. Though an order was given at the top of the voice to a man standing close by on the Valcona's deck it could not be heard. All sounds were drowned in the frightful roar of the gale. The sea between Motiti Island and the mainland was one succession of breakers.

A tide higher than any ever known before or since swept over the sandhills dividing the Maketu River from the sea and flooded the plain, rising half-way up the hill on which the pa of Maketu was situated, till, with the exception of the summits peeping above the water, nothing was visible but boiling sea and flying foam.

The night was clear and the moon shone, and Tapsell went up the main-rigging to see his whereabouts. The Valcona had dragged her anchor. While he clung to the shrouds, the wind blew his body and legs out like a flag and it was with difficulty he regained his footing. "A seventy-four gun frigate," he said afterwards, "might have crossed the bar at Maketu in that amazing high sea."

The vessel was kept head to wind by her anchor, though it was evident she was drifting. The recoil of the sea beating against the sandbar at the entrance of Maketu carried her further up the coast. The enormous seas which rose with the continuance of the hurricane began to break over the schooner, and the captain asked Mr. Tapsell what he had better do. The trader advised that all hands should be called aft, and the hatches battened down. This was done; the men were called into the cabin. The captain said he thought it advisable to let go the second anchor.

"No, no, whatever you do, don't do that!" said Tapsell. He was sure that if the anchor should hold, the vessel inevitably would founder in deep water, and all hands would be lost, while if she dragged she must be driven on the sandy beach, where there would be some faint prospect of life being saved. Nevertheless the anchor was let go. The chain whizzed through the hawse-hole like a flash till it came to the full stretch at the windlass, where it parted.

Some hours passed in this condition, all knowing that sooner or later the vessel must strike the shore. Tapsell was fearfully concerned for the safety of his two children. Not very long before daylight a gentle grating sensation told all on board that she had touched the ground. Presently a huge roller lifted her up and carried her further in shore and, on its return, left her nearly high and dry on the beach.

The black cook, a big Jamaica man, came into the cabin with his bag slung over his shoulder and a stick in his hand, as if prepared to walk comfortably ashore.

"My cookhouse has gone," said he.

"Yes," said Tapsell, "and something more will go yet."

Anticipating the striking of the vessel, Tapsell had earnestly hoped that she might cast in with her masts inclined towards the shore, for then there might be a chance of some life being saved; whereas if she cast out she would be a coffin for them all. The schooner cast in. The captain and crew jumped over the side and got ashore almost without wetting their feet.

Tapsell remained behind, in painful uncertainty about his children. He looked on them as they lay to all appearances asleep, although they were awake and feigned sleep to hide their terror. Going on deck to see how things stood before he took them out of their berth he was half-drowned by a tremendous roller which washed him shoreward and brought him seaward again. A good swimmer, Tapsell retained his presence of mind, and trod water to keep clear of the schooner's keel which was lifting and falling with the intermittent waves.

The suction of each sea as it retired was too much for him, his lungs were choked with water, his strength and consciousness forsook him and he lay beaten about in the surf like a log. But for the moonlight he would never have been seen by those on shore.

The first man who saw him was his Lascar servant. "Bear a hand!" he yelled. "Bear a hand! all of you, and bring Tapsell ashore!"

The sailors rushed into the water, and succeeded in dragging him, apparently lifeless, to land.

"My children," he gasped as soon as he recovered consciousness. "My children — save them!"

One of the sailors volunteered to go on board for them. He brought on shore, first one and then the other, safe and unhurt from the wreck.

The shipwrecked party, all hands saved, walked up to a sandhill distant from the stranded vessel about thirty or forty yards. Tapsell clasped his two children thankfully to his breast as he looked seaward, when a wave, exceeding all former rollers in size, came rolling up toward the schooner with a white seething crest, hissing as it approached. It curled, toppled over and buried the vessel in an avalanche of water, broke her into a hundred pieces and washed the fragments over the sandhill into the river on the other side. Nor was its force even then entirely expended, for the wash of so great a volume of water with the momentum it had acquired, cut through the isthmus of land dividing the river from the sea, and undermining the sandhill on which the shipwrecked party stood until a part of it crumbled in.

It was now about daybreak, and the tide was at the ebb. Hundreds of running figures appeared in the half-light. These were Maoris, all stark naked, tomahawk in hand, racing eagerly to plunder the wreck. That was the ancient law, the right of the wrecker. Should a canoe be upset, a vessel be cast ashore, or a house be burned down, all the fragments became public property and the legitimate objects of a general scramble. It was not very different from the practice of the wreckers on the English coasts not so long ago.

As the excited Maoris drew near the wreckage, the captain asked in alarm if they were going to murder the survivors. Tapsell assured him there was no danger of that. But nearly everything that came on shore was seized.

Tapsell with difficulty saved a little of his property. The loss of the schooner was a most serious matter for him. His financial ruin was complete when, after shipping his remaining produce at Whakatane, by the next vessel that came down the coast, he received advice of the failure of his agent in Sydney. This was the merchant Paterson, with whom all his business dealings were transacted. Paterson owed Tapsell some hundreds of pounds for flax shipped to Sydney. This must now go down as a dead loss. So one calamity pressed on the heels of another, and the plucky Tapsell, at the age of over sixty, was stripped of resources and left to begin his trading life again.

## CHAPTER XXVII

# THE LAST DAYS OF TAPSELL

The old sailor's courage and fortitude which had carried him through so many difficulties under which weaker men would have sunk preserved him from yielding to despair in his financial ruin.

During his many voyages, he had acquired a knowledge of all kinds of maritime handicraft, boatbuilding, carpenter's work, sail-making; and indeed he could turn his hand to almost anything.

So he set to and built a small schooner for the Maoris; this they paid for in flax. He afterwards "rose on" a large boat of his own, which he converted into a half-decked schooner, and in her made several trading trips to the Bay of Islands.

He sold her to the Maoris.

On one of his cruises to the Bay of Islands, Captain Thomas Beckham, the magistrate and postmaster at Kororareka, gave him a letter from the Danish Consul, informing him of the death of his father at Copenhagen, fourteen years before, and stating that a large sum of money had been left to him. He was asked to send a certificate that he was still alive, in order that he might claim the bequest. He went to Auckland and sent the necessary certificate, with a power of attorney, to Copenhagen. The next letter he received informed him that the business was not quite settled. Later he found that the legacy had been given to a near relative, but that if the decision of the Court should be reversed, the Master in Chancery would have to pay him the money and all expenses. That was the last he ever heard of his legacy.

Tapsell carried on a trade with the people at Whakatane and those further up the river, until in the mid-Fifties a war broke out between them which lasted nearly two years. The Whakatane people (Ngati-Awa tribe) wanted the site of his house for a fortification, and he sold it to them for six horses worth £20 each. He moved up the Whakatane River, and bought wheat and maize for shipment to Auckland and Sydney. The Ngati-Pukeko tribe, from whom he bought the produce, were industrious farmers. But when he had a cargo ready, the Whakatane Maoris, jealous of the others, refused to let it pass through their territory, and it remained in store until it was destroyed by weevils.

His resources were now completely at an end.

For a time he remained at Whakatane unemployed, until his son living at Maketu brought down a schooner and took him away. Next he shifted up the coast to Tairua and remained there for two years, trading and boat-building; then for a while he lived on Whale Island, where his son-in-law George Simpkin (who had married Katerina Tapsell) had a trading station. Then hearing of the expected arrival of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh in New Zealand, he, at ninety years of age, walked from Whakatane to Maketu, forty miles along the coast, for the purpose of presenting a petition enumerating the services- he had rendered to the English Government and people by the capture of the convict brig Wellington, at the Bay of Islands in 1827, and the ransom at his own cost of many British subjects, and praying for some consideration. The Prince's unexpected return to England,

in consequence of the attempt on his life at Sydney, prevented the presentation of the petition, and it was sent to the Governor, Sir George Bowen, with a request that it might be forwarded to the Prince. A reply was received, from Sir George Bowen, stating that this would be done, and that was the last that was ever heard of it.

Though he had lived so hard a life and had seen so much bloodshed and savagery, the patriarch preserved to the last his simplicity of character, and remained in his last days a pious, contented, gentle old man. To the new generation of Maoris and whites growing up around him he was almost a stranger, and the story of his career like an ancient tradition. Sometimes an old, old chief visited him, and wept with emotion at the recollections which the sight of Tapsell awakened. "It is the ghost of the past," the tattooed warrior said.

The meeting with the venerable Pakeha brought back to his mind the men of renown whom he had outlived, and recalled events that seemed wild, fantastic dreams.

Tapsell's brave spirit animated his stalwart sons and grandsons. Retreat (Retireti) the eldest son, tall and handsome, of aristocratic bearing and pleasant nature, was sergeant of police and Customs officer at Maketu, and in the late 'Sixties Philip, of scarcely less stature, stalwart and muscular, was a corporal in the Arawa Contingent. Jans (Ieni), slender, active and intelligent, was a sergeant in a Maori division of the Armed Constabulary, engaged in the West Coast War and other campaigns against the rebel Maoris. These two young soldiers fought in many expeditions on behalf of the Government, 1864-70. Jans captured a rather notorious white man named Peter Grant, who had deserted to the Hauhaus from the Waikato Militia at Tauranga.

It was in February of 1873 that the patriarch called his children and grandchildren together, and in the presence of the missionary and the magistrate of Maketu, delivered to them the farewell speech I have recorded in the Preface. An address of simple, touching eloquence that came fitly from the heart of a courageous old sea-king. He requested that he should not be enclosed in a coffin but sewn up in a blanket, "for men whom I consider far greater than myself, my brothers and my fellow-seamen, when they died had no coffin." He desired that two guns should be fired, one at the moment he died and the other when he was lowered into his grave. "Let that be the only mourning for Tapsell."

The old man said also in words that were translated into Maori by the Rev. Seymour Spencer and were handed down by word of mouth by those who heard them: "I have been a wicked man, a man of blood. In days long gone by, in the year 1807, I received the brand of my sin. Let it not be understood by any man that I have been a murderer in saying that I have been a man of blood. I mean that I have been a man of war, and the brand of sin which I refer to is the wound which I received during the war between England and Denmark, when I was in command of a fighting ship."

Tapsell, having spoken thus, lay back apparently dying. But his great heart sustained him; he lived for some months longer. It was in August of 1873 that he died, and his requests were obeyed.

A gun boomed from Maketu hill, and after *the tangihanga*, when the weeping women cried their departed white chief to the spiritland (for in spite of his injunction they could not restrain their grief), another salute was fired as he was lowered into his grave, sewed up in a blanket like a warrior on the battlefield, and so was laid to rest in the sacred ground of his many adventures and perils.