

Hauraki gulf, and to a small river which falls into said gulf, and which separates it from the Hauraki district. The Maoris are very numerous in this part of the country, and the district consisted according to the statistical report of December 31st, 1895, of nine branches, named as follows: Ngarnawahia, Karakarika, Kawhia, Puketapu, Whangape, Weraroa, Huriwai, Tauranganui and Wairoa. The membership of the district was 238, or 336 souls including 125 children, all Maoris. Two Elders from Zion (Jens K. Nelson and Parley A. Waters) are the missionaries in the district at the present time.

The Ngarnawahia branch comprises nearly all the inhabitants residing in a Maori village lying on the left bank of the Waipa river opposite the European settlement. Ngarnawahia, which is a railway town situated immediately above the junction of the Waikato and the Waipa rivers, and in the fork of the two stream, is fourteen miles by rail southeast of Auckland. The branch was organized in 1892, by Elder Thomas C. Stanford and the late Elder Otto L. Chipman, with Paora Hopere as president. The Elders laboring in the district make the hospitable home of Paora Hopere their present headquarters.

The Karakarika branch consists of the native Saints residing in a number of small villages, but mostly in one called Taketawa, which is situated on the left bank of the Waipa river, about six miles above Ngarnawahia, or one mile below Karakarika, on the Waipa river. The branch was first organized December 2nd, 1885, by Elder William Gardner and a missionary companion.

The Kawhia branch, organized by Elder Henry J. Manning, August 14th, 1887, consists of the Saints residing in the village of Kawhia, situated on the south side of the bay or harbor of that name. This is on the west coast of the North island, about seventy miles by roundabout road southwest of Ngarnawahia.

The Puketapu branch, the largest is the Waikato district, consists of the Saints residing in the villages of Puketapu and surrounding villages, among which may be mentioned Rakamangmanga, where Elder Otto L. Chipman died August 31st, 1892, and Paruwhare. The village of Puketapu is situated on the left bank of the Waikato river opposite the European town of Huntley and distant from that town about half a mile; it is also ten miles down the river from Ngarnawahia. This branch was raised up by Elder William Gardner and organized by him August 9th, 1885, as the first successful branch of the Church in the Waikato country.

The Whangape branch consists of the Saints residing near the Whangape lake and at different points on the left bank of the Waikato river. Most of the members reside at a place called Te Papa, on the south side of the Whangape lake, about five miles west of Church Hill, or about thirty by winding road southwest of Ngarnawahia. The branch was organized by William Paxman and other Elders, July 22nd, 1889.

The Weraroa branch consists of the native Saints residing in the villages of Weraroa and Manawaru. The former is situated about five miles inland from the west coast, about twenty miles south of the mouth of the Waikato river, and

about twenty five miles due west of Church Hill. Manawaru is about five miles east of Weraroa. Most of the Saints live in Weraroa, which is the largest village of the two. The branch was organized by Elders William Gardner and Alfred W. Harper, December 10th 1885.

The Huriwai branch consists of Saints living in the villages of Huriwai and Huarau, mostly in the latter, which is situated near the west coast of the North island, or about five miles south of Port Waikato. Huarau is situated about three miles north of Port Waikato on the opposite side of the Waikato river. Meetings are held at both villages, but Sunday school only at Huriwai. The branch dates back to December 13th 1885, when it was organized by Elders William Gardner and Alfred W. Harper.

The Tauranganui branch was organized by Elders Alfred W. Harper and Francis H. Wright, September 5th, 1886, and consists of the native Saints living in the village of Okahu and neighborhood. Okahu is situated on the left bank of the Waikato river about two miles above Port Waikato, a European town situated at the mouth of the Waikato river, about thirty miles northwest of Church Hill, or sixty miles from Ngarnawahia.

The Wairoa branch (only partly organized as yet) consists of the Saints residing in a district of country bordering on the Hauraki gulf. Most of the Saints reside in the village of Marepana, which is situated about five miles northeast of Wairoa on the right bank of the Wairoa river, near its mouth.

On Thursday, January 16th, I took leave of the good Saints at Ngarnawahia and traveled seventy-four miles by rail to Auckland, where I now spent several days busily engaged in finishing up my historical labors in connection with the New Zealand part of the Australasian mission.

I have now visited every district and nearly all the principal branches of the mission, and I have learned to love the Maori people, who, notwithstanding their peculiarities and fickle-mindedness, possess characteristics which any Saint might be proud of. Their devotion to God and their religion and their love for the brethren, who as the Saints of God have brought them the true Gospel is so practical in its nature that a great many members of the Church in Zion could learn very important lessons in that regard, and in a great many other respects, from their dark-skinned brethren and sisters in Maoridom. The Maoris are naturally a praying people. Usually, where there is an organized branch of the Church, all the members of the branch meet together morning and night for prayer, and they also attend their public meetings, both on Sundays and week days, with a regularity which would put the members in many American and European branches to shame. In my travels in New Zealand I have met all the Elders from Zion laboring there except one (Elder Ashby); and my opinion is that they are all good young men and worthy representatives of the cause they have espoused, though some are more diligent and successful in their labors than others. My associations with them have been of the most pleasant kind. Most of those who are laboring among the Europeans have a hard time of it, as the whites as a rule reject the message the Elders bear without investigating it.

The brethren laboring among the Maoris are generally provided with enough food to eat, though not always of the most agreeable kind, but they are generally always treated to the best the natives have to give. Sometimes they eat by tables, in regular white man's style; at other times they sit on mats and eat with their fingers unless they bring knives and forks along with them. Sometimes their meals are served to them on the green grass out of doors, on which occasions they often have to wage a general warfare with pigs, canines and fowls which generally roam about at pleasure, seeking what food they can find around the houses, and especially when meals are served out of doors. On such occasions it is no uncommon occurrence for some member of the quadruped family to steal up to the dish intended for the human party of the household, and lay hold of some delicious joint or eat up the food altogether in a moment when it is not properly guarded. A story is told of a good Maori sister who had cooked for herself an extraordinarily nice fowl, which she was preparing to eat on the green. She closed her eyes and asked a good long blessing; but what was her astonishment when she had finished her prayer, to discover her pet dog standing some distance away with her favorite fowl half eaten. Often one Elder has to watch and keep pigs away, while the other prays or asks the blessing. I am not referring to these things in the light of ridicule; but simply to show some of the little odd experiences which some of the Elders laboring among the semi-civilized people of the Pacific islands have to pass through.

As for New Zealand, taking its many different features into consideration, I may say that I rather like it. The present government, however, seems to be very unpopular with the masses; and the colony is heavily in debt. In many respects the country tries to pattern after the United States of America, from whence most of the machinery and farming implements used in the colony are imported. When the colonists learn to introduce good sensible four-wheeled American farm wagons, to take the place of the heavy, clumsy and ugly two-wheeled drag carts now in use, that will be another step in the direction of improvements. The colonial government own nearly all the railways in the colony, and manipulate them on a common basis, which does away with competition. The people complain that the fare is too high; but it is claimed to be placed on merely a paying basis. The government telegraph system is the best I have ever become acquainted with. And though the rates for sending messages are very low, it is said to be the best paying institution in the colony. For one shilling an ordinary message is sent to any part of the country, irrespective of distance; and for a so called delayed telegram, which is not delivered till the next morning after it is sent, sixpence only is charged. This enables all the people, both rich and poor, to use the telegraph, which is more than we can say of the American systems, where the rates are very high and only the more wealthy can afford to use the telegraph, except on very urgent cases.

I am now bound for the Society Islands, and sail this afternoon for Papeete, Tahiti.

ANDREW JENSON.

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, January 23rd, 1896.