

Timeline of the Taupo Campaign 1869

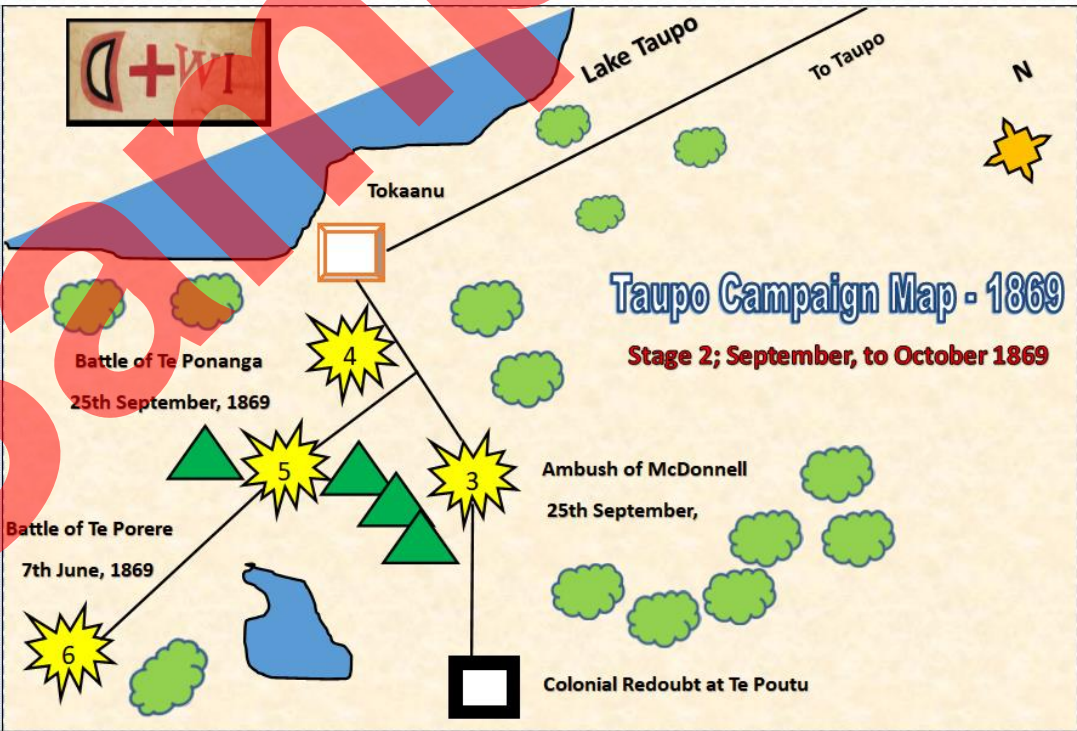
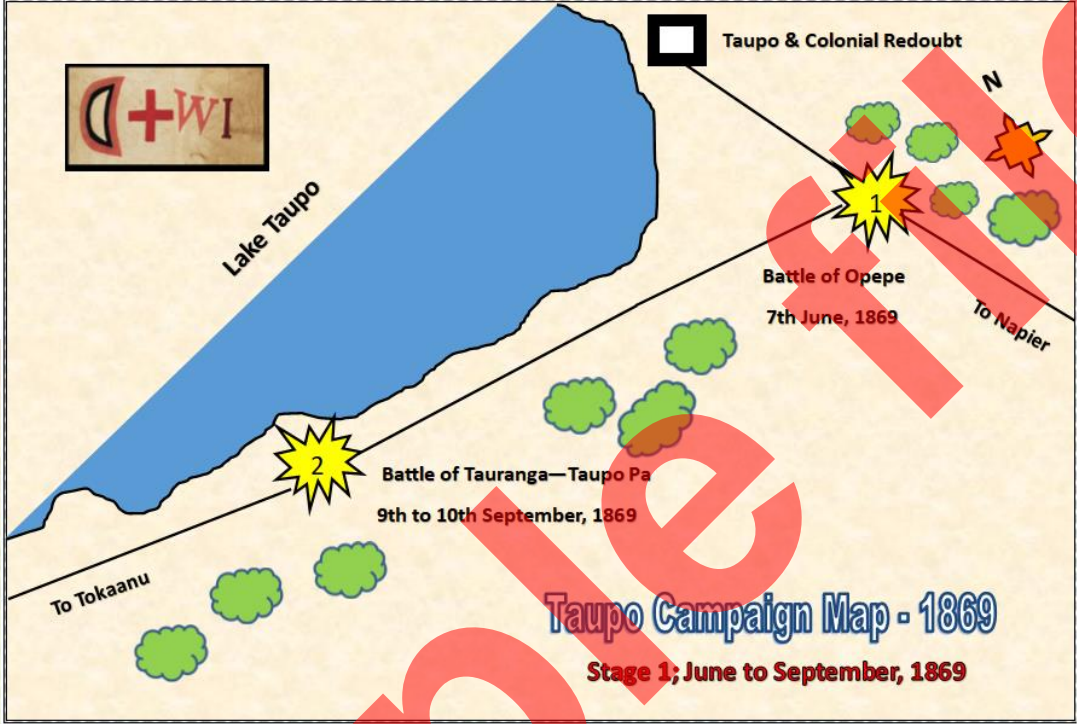
1869

6 th June 1869;	<i>Te Kooti's Forces move across the Kaingaroa Plain</i>
7 th June 1869;	<i>Ambush at Opepe by Te Kooti and his vanguard of his forces</i>
9 th June 1869;	<i>Burns Te Hatepe Pa</i>
10 th June 1869;	<i>Occupies Tauranga – Taupo Pa</i>
10 th July 1869;	<i>Te Kooti reaches the Maori Kings capital</i>
18 th August 1869;	<i>Te Kooti returns from the King Country to Lake Taupo</i>
7 th September 1869;	<i>Colonial Scouts caught and killed by Ringatu forces at Rotoalra</i>
9 th to 10 th September 1869;	<i>Battle of Tauranga – Taupo Pa</i>
25 th September 1869;	<i>Ambush of McDonnell</i>
25 th September 1869;	<i>Battle of Te Pononga</i>
4 th October 1869;	<i>Battle of Te Porere</i>



Te Kooti's Flag at the Battle of Te Porere.

Te Kooti Taupo Campaign Map 1869



War in the Fern & Tussock

(Te Kooti's Taupo Campaign 1869)

After the pursuit by the colonial forces through the Urewera region, Te Kooti decided to move towards the Taupo region in June 1869.

His first engagement was the Battle of Opepe on 7 June, when they killed nine troopers at the Colonial post. Te Kooti and his men rode up, as some had Armed Constabulary jackets on and made out they were friendlies, when once in amongst the troopers they opened fire. After that, they moved south and then burned some lesser local tribe's pa and settlements before reaching Te Hatepe Pa on 9 June. Here Te Kooti made a big mistake when he killed one old man there, which was a relative to one of Te Kooti's most capable generals Te Rangitahau who did not take part in the Taupo Campaign after that.

On 10 June, the Ringatu forces reached the local capital of the Ngati-Tuwharetoa and their chief Te Heuheu, and he and his people decided to fight for the Ringatu forces

Te Kooti then decided to go to the King Country, challenge the Maori King, and try to get his support for the war. This was eventually turned down, but great chief Rewi Maniapoto was sent back to see how good this Te Kooti was. At the Battle of Te Tauranga – Taupo pa, Rewi was not impressed with Te Kooti's actions and decided to return to the King Country.

After the Ringatus retreated to Tokaanu, the colonial forces continued to advance once reinforced with men of the Napier column under Lt-Colonel Herrick. They continued to advance towards Tokaanu, at the same time Lieutenant Preece with an amphibious force in canoes was moving from Taupo over the lake to Tokaanu. In addition, a third force made up of two columns from Whanganui and Napier assembled at Te Poutu under Colonel McDonnell. This forced Te Kooti to retreat towards Lake Rotoaira and started to dig in at Te Porere.

On 25 September, Te Kooti went on the offensive and planned two attacks, one to ambush Colonel McDonnell and the other to attack colonial camps at Tokaanu.

The first, the ambush of McDonnell ended with him escaping and then the attack on the colonial camps, were met with a stubborn defence, and was forced to retreat back to prepared positions on Te Pononga Hill. The Ringatu fought a fierce battle, until reinforcements under Captain St George came up and he immediately ordered a charge and carried the Ringatu positions.

Finally, on 4 October, the Colonial Forces had advanced from Tokaanu and Te Poutu and then were ready to advance on Te Kooti's position at Te Porere.

The Colonial force amounted to 500 men, Te Kooti's was thought to be around 300 men. In the Battle that followed, Te Kooti lost 41 followers killed and had to retreat to the King Country to survive.

Forces involved in the Taupo Campaign 1869



Colonial Forces; Commander; Lt-Colonial Thomas McDonnell

Force	Officers	Unit	Total
Taupo Garrison	<i>Captain St George Lieutenant Preece Captain Scannell Captain Northcroft</i>	<i>No 2 Division Armed Constabulary Te Arawa Kupapa</i>	<i>50 men 50 men</i>
Napier Column (Advance Guard)	<i>Chief Henare Tomoana</i>	<i>Ngati-Kahungunu Kupapa</i>	<i>120 men</i>
Napier Column	<i>Lt-Colonel Herrick Captain Richardson Captain Handley</i>	<i>No 2 Division Armed Constabulary</i>	<i>50 men</i>
Pihanga Mountain	<i>Chief Hohepa Tamamutu</i>	<i>Ngati-Tuwharetoa Kupapa</i>	<i>130 men</i>
Poutu Column	<i>Chief Renata Kawepo</i>	<i>Ngati-Kahungunu Kupapa</i>	<i>100 men</i>
Whanganui Column	<i>Major Te Keepa Te Rangihwinui Captain William McDonnell</i>	<i>Whanganui Kupapa</i>	<i>120 men</i>
Total			<i>520 men</i>



Te Kooti –Ringatu Forces Commander; Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Tūruki

Forces	Chiefs	Hapu	Total
Whakarau	<i>Chief Anaru Matete</i>	<i>Rangowhakaata</i>	<i>50 men</i>
Whakarau	<i>Chief Pāora Toki</i>	<i>Ngāti Maru</i>	<i>50 men</i>
Allied Hapu	<i>Chief Te Rangitahau</i>	<i>Ngati-Hineru</i>	<i>100 men</i>
Allied Hapu	<i>Chief Eru Tamaikhowana</i>	<i>Tuhoe</i>	<i>50 men</i>
Conscripts	<i>Chief Horonuku Te Heuheu</i>	<i>Ngati-Tuwharetoa</i>	<i>100 men</i>
Total			<i>350 men</i>

Scenario 1; (Dice score; 10 – Overrunning a village of huts and crops)

Ambush at Opepe – 7th June 1869

Forces

Colonial

Sergeant –Major Slattery
Lance Corporal Angus Smith
Bay of Plenty Cavalry - 12 men

Ringatu

Te Kooti
Te Rangitahau
Ringatu “The Twelve” – 20 men

Action

On, 7 June 1869, 14 soldiers from the Bay of Plenty Volunteer Cavalry Armed Constabulary, were escorting Lt-Colonel Herrick to the redoubt at Taupo. Opepe was considered a good area to establish another redoubt and Herrick decided to leave the detachment of cavalry at Opepe and move on to Taupo with his staff to catch up with Captain St George. Unbeknown to the men stationed there, Te Kooti was moving with his advance party towards southern area of Lake Taupo and would be moving through Opepe. Te Kooti and his men came up on the small garrison and acted like they were allies (Kupapa) looking for Te Kooti. Standing outside their huts, the troopers suddenly realised they were outnumbered by unknown men who were armed and they had left their guns in the huts. By then it was too late, and the Ringatu forces opened fire and killed nine troopers and the other five escaped and headed towards Fort Galatea towards the north.

Losses

Colonial losses – 9 soldiers killed, 1 wounded Ringatu losses – 0

Scenario Map

