

I cannot speak too highly of the conduct of all engaged in this affair, and I should wish to recommend to your notice three of the Volunteers, who accompanied me from the blockhouse and pointed out the road to the pah.

beg to enclose for your information the surgeon's return of casualties, and

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

P. CRACROFT,

Captain and Senior Officer,

At New Zealand.

The Honble. Colonel Gold,

Commanding the Forces in New Zealand.

Enclosure 4 in No. 25.

CAPTAIN BROWN TO MAJOR HERBERT.

New Plymouth,
29th March, 1860.

SIR,

I have the honor to report what took place yesterday, from the period when I left the town with the force under my command at half-past one, p.m., until I returned at half-past twelve this morning.

The officers and men who accompanied me were—

Captain and Adjutant Stapp, Militia.

“ H. A. Atkinson, Volunteer Rifles.

Lieutenant M'Keckney, Militia.

“ M'Kellar, “

“ Hurst, Volunteer Rifles.

“ Hammerton, “

2nd Lieutenant Webster, “

“ Jonas, “

Ensign Messenger, Militia.

Rank and File { Militia, 52.
Volunteer Rifles, 98.

After a quick march of about two hours we reached the stream Waireka, where it runs on to the beach. We here perceived that the natives were rapidly running down from their pah about a mile off on the Waireka hill to meet us. We were, however, able to get into position without difficulty on the high land in the following manner, under Captain Stapp's direction.

A company of Volunteers under Captain Atkinson were thrown forward, and reached the high ground on the south side of the Waireka, driving back the natives; but greater numbers of the enemy coming on both flanks, Captain Stapp, who had joined and taken command, ordered a retreat on position No. 1, shown in the enclosed tracing made by the Provincial Surveyor—the position consisting of a house, stacks, and furze and rail fences on level ground on the brink of two gullies running out on the beach. From this point Captain Atkinson was moved on to No. 2, to cover the rear of the main body. Lieutenant Hurst with his company occupied No. 3, and was joined by Lieutenant M'Keckney and myself, when I pushed Lieutenant Hurst forward to endeavour to occupy the bush in the Waireka gully, under cover of which the natives were swarming, and followed myself. Lieutenant Blake with a party of the “Niger's” men having thrown themselves in advance by another route, I directed Lieutenant Hurst to turn his attention to the natives on the lower and open part of the Waireka Gully whence they were annoying Captain Atkinson's party as well as our own. Lieutenant Hurst having done some execution, passed across the gully by No. 2 to Captain Stapp at No. 1. The Natives soon made us aware that they possessed pieces of long range against which our muskets were of no use, and I had to fall back on the scanty cover at No. 3, where I had not been long when Lieutenant Urquhart, 65th regiment, with some 25 men joined me as also some stragglers of the Naval Brigade, and some Volunteers from the Omata Stockade under Lieut. Armstrong, Militia, and Lieut. McNaughten, R.A. With their gallant assistance we drove the Natives out of sight into a straggling and slight line of cover in the gully that runs into the Waireka, and as I perceived the intention of the Natives was to intercept our line of retreat to the Omata Stockade by occupying the cover of flax between Nos. 3 and 4, I requested Lieut. Urquhart to leave me a few men, and with the remainder occupy No. 4, thus placing the Natives creeping along the gully, between two fires and securing one communication with the Omata Stockade; to my surprise and regret Lieut. Urquhart had not many minutes occupied No. 4 before I saw him and his men retire, recalled as I am informed by Colonel Murray, by his orders; the position commanded my own, was uncommanded by any other, had open and level country between it and the Omata Stockade, and had excellent cover of flax at the edge of the position to seaward. When the Natives saw them retire, they called out “Ka horo, Ka horo,” and boldly ran along the open part of the gully to the cover on the North side of the Waireka, bringing themselves under the murderous fire of Captain Atkinson which dropped them in twos and threes about the ground; at this time finding my position untenable and valueless to the Natives, I ordered our wounded and dead to be carried to Captain Stapp's position. These consisted of one of the Marines of H.M. S.S. “Niger,” wounded in the head and since dead, one militia man shot through the neck, and Sergeant Fahey of the Stockade at Omata shot dead, the first