

engaged with the troops from the time they first went out till their return to camp, about half-past seven p.m.) reports having counted 28 dead of the enemy; and, from the reports of other officers, I believe five or six more are killed. I have much pleasure in stating that all officers and men turned out with the greatest alacrity, and those engaged behaved very much to my satisfaction. I estimate the force of the enemy at about 150. I beg to enclose a return of casualties. The body of the man of the 40th Regiment who was missing yesterday was recovered this morning, brought into camp, and interred with the other dead. The bodies of the enemy killed have been handed over to a party of their own, in compliance with the orders of the Lieut.-General Commanding the Forces.

I beg to enclose a report from Sir H. Havelock, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General, who was senior officer with the troops actually engaged.

I have, &c.,

R. WADDY,

Colonel Commanding in front of Paterangi.

Captain J. D. Baker,
Assistant Military Secretary.

LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR H. M. HAVELOCK TO COLONEL R. WADDY, C.B., COMMANDING THE ADVANCED
CAMP NEAR PATERANGI.

Camp before Paterangi pah,
February 12, 1864.

SIR,—

Having been directed by the Lieut.-General commanding to report on the successful skirmish of yesterday, on both banks of the Mangapiko river, I have the honour to state that about 2.30 p.m., on an alarm that a bathing party had been suddenly fired on from an ambush by apparently 100 Maories detached from the Paterangi pah, the inlying picquets of 40th and 50th Regiments, at this camp, turned out promptly, and hastened to the scene, being reinforced immediately by parties of both regiments as fast as the men could seize their arms.

2. The Maories retired along the left bank, and a sharp running fight soon commenced between them and the foremost pursuers.

3. Finding themselves so readily met, they took post, while endeavouring to gain their pah, on the site of an ancient entrenchment called Waiari, where the high mounts and deep ditches of an old fortification, densely overgrown with thick cover, gave them, together with their intimate knowledge of the ground, great advantage.

4. On reaching the level plain under Paterangi, after crossing the Takoutu stream, I found that the pursuit and fight had gone to my right. But as there were threats of large bodies sallying out to cut off those of our men whose eagerness had carried them farthest to the front, I collected every available soldier of both regiments, and formed them up in chain of skirmishers and supports to watch this flank.

5. Soon after, a considerable party under Captain Honourable F. le Poer Trench, 40th, having assured our left and rear, I moved rapidly down to where our leading men were hotly engaged and pressed. They were commanded by Captain Fisher, 40th, who had hastened here earlier with a few men. Captain Heaphy, Auckland Rifle Volunteers, and Captain Jackson, Forest Rangers (both accidentally on the spot), had lent their services, and reinforced him with some 30 men of the 40th and 50th.

6. These parties, that which I myself brought up, and one under Ensign King, 40th, united, had now the happiness to come full on the main body of the Maories, retiring towards Paterangi. We turned them back to the shelter of the ancient earthwork above mentioned, which is singularly placed in a double loop of the Mangapiko.

7. Major Bowdler's party of 40th, who had moved down the right bank, were firing on the front of the Maories from across the river. Our arrival on their rear effectually hemmed them in, and sealed their fate.

8. After much hot firing we were able to dash across the river into the entrenchment, over a bridge formed of a single plank. The banks are here from 40 to 60 feet high, precipitous, and densely wooded.

A series of hand to hand encounters here took place, between the Maories crouching secreted in thick bush, and our men, who displayed, if anything too keen an eagerness to dash at and close with their lurking enemies whenever visible. This forwardness cost some valuable lives, but the punishment inflicted on the Maories was sharp and telling, and read them a severe lesson.

9. At the time some 20 men of the Forest Rangers (both companies) arriving from the head-quarter camp, materially assisted in hunting out and destroying the enemy.

10. Eventually, every Maori that could be discovered being either killed or wounded or made prisoner, the work of removing our wounded (most difficult from the narrowness of the planked bridge) and of securing their dead commenced.

11. Two large parties of the enemy now approaching through thick bush, endeavoured to intercept this. It became necessary to throw Captain Fisher's party, with which were Lieutenant Simeon and Ensign King, again on the right bank, where they most steadily covered this operation under a sharp cross-fire.

12. Finally, near dark, all our wounded having been removed, and as many as possible of the Maori dead brought in, the skirmishers were gradually withdrawn, file by file, across the plank bridge, and the troops moved slowly, taking every advantage of ground, towards camp.