

## No. 93.

Copy of a Letter from Colonel McDONNELL to the UNDER SECRETARY for COLONIAL DEFENCE.

SIR,—

Camp Waihi, 22nd August, 1868.

I have the honor to report, for the information of the Honorable the Minister for Colonial Defence, that I paraded the force, as per margin,\* at 5:30 a.m. on the 21st instant, and marched off for Te Ngutu-o-te-Manu. I experienced considerable difficulty in crossing the Waingongoro River, there being a fresh, and the stream very rapid. I caused a rope to be stretched across, with the help of which, and every one working with a will, I got the force over without further damage than the wetting of some of the men's ammunition. Immediately after getting the men formed up, I moved on towards the bush, and on arriving at its margin left Captain O'Hallaran with the Patea Yeomanry Cavalry, and instructed him to hover about, and be ready to render any assistance that might be required.

I then entered the bush on the same track I last went by (the rain at this time coming down in torrents). On arriving at Pungarehu, I left Lieutenant Roddy, with the Taranaki Volunteer Militia, as a connecting link between the main body and the cavalry. I now found that rifle pits and defensive posts had been made on each side of the track, right up to Te Maru te Whenua, and they had evidently been used the preceding night, as the embers were still smouldering; using great caution and enforcing the strictest silence, we reached Te Maru, and crossed the creek without being heard. On my arrival there, I found that a stockade had been erected since I last was at the place, which commanded the crossing of the creek. This compelled me to alter my original plan; and instead of detaching Major Von Tempsky's division to the left to occupy the bush, and allowing Inspector Hunter to rush his division right at the village, I led the leading division right at the new stockade (see plan enclosed), which did not take five minutes to get hold of, without a man on our side being hit, and with the loss of three to the Hauhaus.

I then directed Major Von Tempsky, with his men, to take the track to the left, and endeavour to enter the village simultaneously with the men whom I led round to the large clearing in front. When we reached there we were received by a very heavy fire from the village, which I now found was strongly stockaded. As soon as I could get sufficient men up (they could only come in Indian file), I ordered a cheer and a charge, and never was any order more heartily responded to, in spite of the destructive fire poured on us from the bush on our right, and from the palisading in our front; we went right into the pa without a pause. Major Von Tempsky entered about the same time from the left, and the defenders broke and fled in every direction where they could find bush to cover them. As the remainder of my force came up, I caused them to be extended round the village, at the edge of the bush, while those within the palisading cleared the whares. Only one man was found within; and, as he fired and killed one of the men, a hand grenade was thrown in to prevent him doing further mischief. I then directed the whares to be searched for arms, &c., &c., and in the large house a considerable quantity of powder was found in flasks, also a good-sized box of Government ammunition of all kinds, and a quantity of breech-loading cartridges, made by the Natives themselves. There was also ammunition found in almost every one of the small houses. Katene's pouch, quite full, his double-barrelled gun, eleven other guns, two swords, two revolvers, tomahawks, spears, &c., were taken, and either brought away or destroyed. I then ordered the houses to be set on fire, and commenced with Titokowaru's house. He had evidently been at dinner when we arrived.

The dead and wounded I had brought to the large wooden building, and when all were cared for by the doctor, sent them on under Major Von Tempsky, with Nos. 3 and 5 Divisions, Armed Constabulary. When they got clear away, I caused the larger house to be fired in several places, and when it was so far gone as to be impossible to be extinguished, called on the companies who lined the bush, and, leaving a strong rear-guard under Major Hunter, moved out of the stockade. About this time the Natives appear to have got reinforcements, as they commenced firing at us from several parts of the bush, but their fire was promptly returned by the rear-guard. I was anxious to follow them, but could not find any track, and, as they seemed to be hid in bush which I could not possibly penetrate, without great labour and loss, I thought it better to move steadily on. In several clearings on the track we were fired on, but the men behaved so steadily, and the Natives fired so badly, that no damage was done to my force. On arriving back at Pungarehu, I directed Lieutenant Roddy, with the Taranaki men, to remain and join the rear-guard under Inspector Hunter, and their behaviour was in keeping with that of the other corps composing the force. On reaching Weri Weri, a smart fire was opened on the party escorting the wounded, but fortunately without effect, and Lieutenant Fookes, with a few men, rushed up to the pa, and speedily silenced the enemy. On reaching the Waingongoro River, I found it had risen considerably; and it was a work of danger as well as difficulty to get the force across. My principal anxiety was for the wounded, but the Volunteers named in the margin† came forward and offered their services, and after a severe struggle succeeded in getting them all safely across. The men managed to scramble across, some by the rope, and some holding on to the cavalry horses, but a great deal of their ammunition was rendered unserviceable. We reached Waihi about 6 p.m., and drenched and tired as the men were, they gave three cheers that were refreshing to hear. The loss of the enemy must have been severe. We know of seven bodies; and as the party who

## \* UNDER COMMAND OF LIEUT.-COLONEL McDONNELL.

<i>Under Inspector Von Tempsky, A.C.</i>				<i>Under Inspector Hunter, A.C.</i>			
		Officers.	Men.			Officers.	Men.
No. 2 Division, A.C.	...	0	19	No. 3 Division, A.C.	...	2	40
No. 5	...	2	49	Wellington Rifles	...	3	80
Wellington Rangers	...	3	63	European Contingent	...	1	28
Taranaki Volunteer Militia	...	1	31	Patea Yeomanry Cavalry	...	2	16
Volunteers	...	0	5				
				Total Force	...	14	331

† Ensign McDonnell; Sergeants Livingstone, R. Blake, E. Blake; Lance-Corporal Cahill, A.C.; Volunteer Pope.