

I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the European portion of the force under my command for bushwork, vieing as they do with their Natives comrades, who of course are quite at home in this kind of warfare.

I must in justice say that the Ngatiporou are the best body of Natives it has ever been my fortune to command. To the officers I am much indebted for the manner with which they severally carried out my orders.

My thanks are also due to J. Booth, Esq., R.M., for valuable assistance rendered.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM C. LYON, Lt.-Col.,

Commanding Field Force, Patea District.

The Hon. Colonel Haultain.

### No. 39.

Copy of a Letter from Colonel WHITMORE to the Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

SIR,—

Fort Galatea, 18th May, 1869.

My diary having been sent by another route, which will I fear delay it, I send this report to you overland.

On the 5th the column under Major Roberts, and on the 4th that under Lieut.-Colonel St. John, marched from their respective camps by the routes already decided. Lieut.-Colonel St. John has reported fully the incidents of his march, but the report has unfortunately been sent enclosed in my diary. I accompanied Major Roberts' column myself, as I feared some complication with the Arawas, who are so notorious for giving trouble, and because I was unwilling in such an event that the responsibility should devolve upon a junior officer who was so weak in Europeans.

On the 6th, Ahikereru was surprised at about noon. The Hauhaus were scattered about in the valley collecting their crops, so that all could not be killed. They made a show of resistance, but were speedily driven off—Fox's Arawas being the nearest, and getting first into the pa, which was fairly fortified in a mixed Native and European manner. Six men were shot, among whom was Matthew, a noted prophet and cannibal. It was unfortunate that some of the men were absent ambuscading another road, by which the column was expected, and others assisting Te Kooti. About fifty prisoners were taken, women and children, with much plunder and very large stores of provisions.

The Arawas could not be induced to go on that day, and Mr. Clarke recommended me to be satisfied with the day's work, lest by urging them while they were indisposed to move, I should have a difficulty in getting them on at all.

Next day we waited till 11 a.m. when, finding the Arawas still not moving, Major Roberts and the Europeans moved off, the chief Fox accompanying the column, and thereby assisting very much in inducing the tribe ultimately to go on. Mr. Clarke, Civil Commissioner, whose influence over the Arawas is probably greater than that of any other single individual, and who to further the interests of the public service had volunteered to take charge of them in spite of recent illness and physical weakness, remained after the Europeans marched, and ultimately brought on the tribe.

As the roads in the Uriwera country are chiefly along river beds which become impassable in rain, and as Lieut.-Colonel St. John depended upon the support of Major Roberts' column, it was necessary to push forward at all hazard, and even without the Pikau men bearing our ammunition and bacon, who remained with their tribe. The march of the 7th, like that of the 5th and 6th, was mainly in the bed of a river, in a narrow defile. The crossings were however more numerous, being no less than fifty-five. The Corps of Guides led with the greatest caution, but in such narrow passes it is impossible to avoid receiving the first fire compatibly with reasonable progress. Seven miles is a long march in the Uriwera country. One mile a day could not be traversed if the column had to wait for flankers to scramble through the cliffs and brushwood of the river banks. At length the enemy opened fire, and after a smart skirmish was driven off, probably with some loss, as a man shot through and saturated with blood was picked up, and a man fell in another place close to the leading guides. Three of our men were hit, all of the Corps of Guides. One of these was Hemi, a well-known Native from Taranaki, much respected in this force, and who wore a watch and pistol presented to him by the officers of the 43rd Light Infantry, for his gallantry on many occasions when acting as their guide. This poor fellow died the same evening; the other two were Europeans, and were severely, not dangerously, wounded. The column showed the greatest spirit in this affair, closing up and rushing forward at once, while No. 4 dashed into the scrub, and made its way round the position.

Here a halt became necessary, and the column slept the night. Next morning the wounded were sent back with an escort, and Mr. Clarke, whose wound, received in the war at the Bay of Islands, caused him much pain, and could proceed no further, was compelled to return.

During the night the Arawas declared their intention of returning at once, as this country was too dangerous; but Fox came down from his picquet, and with great vehemence and contemptuous expressions replied to the speakers. Mr. Clarke also spoke, and with effect. Ultimately they agreed to go on, and Fox offered to take the lead if he was allowed to fire into suspicious places. All object of concealment being at an end, I sent him in front accordingly and allowed him to fire, though I did not anticipate opposition.

On the 8th the road was over a succession of very steep heights, ending at a spot called Tahuaroa where there was a kainga, which was abandoned, as the column approached, at 2 p.m. From this spot a view was obtained of the whole Ruatahuna basin with a few open spots, relieving the monotony of the endless bush. Below was Pairau's pa, that at least he has lately occupied, and we perceived a red flag hoisted within it. A large force was about the place which I felt satisfied was Lieut.-Colonel St. John's column. Although, measured on the map, we were not, perhaps, more than two miles from this pa, it was after dark before we had descended to the Whakatane. The hill is almost a precipice. I observe Mr. Hunter Brown, whose report of the country is exceedingly correct, calls the difference of level