

COPY of DESPATCH from Major HERBERT.

SIR,—

Militia Office, 23rd February, 1861.

I have the honor to report for the information of Major-General Pratt, C.B., commanding the forces in New Zealand, that, in obedience to garrison orders of yesterday's date, I marched from town at half-past 8 o'clock, and under my command one captain, four subalterns, nine sergeants, three buglers, and 188 rank and file, for the purpose of escorting provisions for the detachment stationed at Omata Stockade, and to reconnoitre.

I proceeded on the Beach Road, and met with no opposition until I reached the stockade, and when in the act of giving orders to pile arms, there was a heavy volley from small arms fired at the escort, wounding two men slightly, from an ambuscade party of the enemy, consisting of about from seventy to 100, from an old fortified pa, situated on Major Lloyd's property, on a high hill about 700 yards from the Omata Stockade towards the sea-beach. I promptly returned the fire, and after three rounds from the twenty-four pounder howitzer, I ordered the 57th Regiment to storm the enemy's position from the right flank, which was done in gallant style. I immediately advanced by the centre with the 65th Regiment and the twenty-four pounder howitzer, the Militia and Volunteers, and on getting possession of the hill I discovered several rifle-pits recently constructed, besides which a good deal of original fortification. I forced the enemy from every position he took up along the flats, swamps, flax bushes, sand-hills, &c., and drove him into the Wairika Gully, when I found I was short of ammunition for the gun, or I would have forced him from the gully.

Lieut.-Colonel Young, 65th Regiment, joined me about between 12 and 1 o'clock p.m., with a strong support, and being my senior officer took over command of the whole force.

Before closing my despatch, I feel very desirous of bringing before the favourable notice of the Major-General the gallantry and very determined manner in which the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the force under my command carried out my orders, and wish to bring before the special notice of the Major-General, Captain Brown, Taranaki Militia, under my command, and Lieut. Hasted, of Her Majesty's 57th Regiment. The former officer was with the skirmishers the whole time whilst engaged, and his perseverance in gaining ground on the enemy whenever an opportunity offered gave great confidence to the men of the Militia and Volunteers. The latter officer commanded the men of the 57th Regiment to my entire satisfaction, and showed a very great readiness to carry out my orders.

I cannot ascertain the exact loss on the side of the enemy, but from what I can learn he must have suffered severely, as several wounded were seen carried away.

Subjoined is a list of casualties as forwarded to me by Dr. Nevin, Staff-Assistant Surgeon, whom I recommend to the favourable notice of Major-General Pratt, C.B., for his coolness under fire, and always being found wherever his services were required.

I am happy to state that the wounds are all of a slight nature with the exception of one.

I have, &c.,

CHAS. ST. JOHN HERBERT,

Major Commanding Taranaki Militia and Volunteers.

True Copy.—CHAS. HERBERT,

Late Major Commanding Taranaki Militia and Volunteers.

COPY of an EXTRACT from a letter from DEPUTY-ADJUTANT-GENERAL of MILITIA and VOLUNTEERS to Major HERBERT, Commanding Militia and Volunteers, New Plymouth.

Deputy-Adjutant-General's Office, Auckland, 24th January, 1862.

In communicating to you these arrangements, which will probably have the effect of terminating the present official position occupied by yourself, I am directed to express to you the thanks of His Excellency and of his Responsible Advisers for your valuable services and their full appreciation of your gallant conduct whilst in the command of the Militia and Volunteers.

I am also to request you to convey to the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates of the Militia and Volunteer Forces in Taranaki, the thanks of His Excellency the Governor and the Government, and to express the high sense which they entertain of the courage and devotion displayed by that force under extraordinary difficulties.

H. C. BALNEAVIS,

Deputy-Adjutant-General of Militia and Volunteers.

True Extract.—CHAS. ST. JOHN HERBERT,

Late Major Commanding Taranaki Militia and Volunteers.

No. 4.

DESPATCH No. 186.—Auckland, 4th October, 1864.—Recommending Colonel Sillery for some mark of Her Majesty's approbation for his services.

Copy of Despatch from Governor Sir G. GREY, K.C.B., to the Right Hon. EDWARD CARDWELL, M.P.

(No. 139.)

Government House, Auckland, New Zealand,

SIR,—

4th October, 1864.

I have the honor to enclose copies of a correspondence I have received from Colonel Sillery, late Deputy-Quartermaster-General in New Zealand, requesting that he may be placed in a similar position to that of Major Herbert, by being appointed a Companion of the Civil Division of the Order of the Bath.

2. The case is this: Colonel Sillery performed such services in New Zealand as would have entitled him to be appointed Companion of the Military Division of the Order of the Bath; but just previously to this class of honor being conferred on officers of corresponding rank and similar services in New Zealand to those of Colonel Sillery, he retired from the service, and it was decided that, as he