

about midnight. Thus terminated the first portion of our campaign, in which we claimed to have been the first Volunteer Corps who received their baptismal fire in service with Her Majesty's Regular Troops."

No article on Volunteering in the early days would be complete without some reference to the deeds of the Forest Rifle Volunteers, who did excellent service against the Kingite Maoris in the Waikato in 1863. The Forest Rifles were raised from among the country settlers in the autumn of that year by Major Lusk, who was residing at the time on his property between Patumahoe and the Waikato River, and under his command they played a very important part in protecting the district from the violence of marauding bands of natives. No other Volunteer corps saw so much fighting as the Forest Rifles. Their first encounter with the natives was on September 9th, 1863, when a band of two hundred rebels was overtaken, and engaged in some dense bush near the Manku. A sharp tree-to-tree skirmish ended in the rout of the natives, who lost six of their number, while only two of the Company were wounded and none killed. The Volunteers showed the same steadiness and gallantry under fire in this, their first engagement, as marked their fighting throughout the campaign. Several minor skirmishes followed, including a gallant defence of the Pukekohe Church against a surprise attack by over two hundred natives. On October 23rd the Forest Rifles fought one of the most desperate engagements of the war. Three hundred Ngatimaniapotos, with about fifty of the Ngatiporou, had come down the Waikato, eluded the military forces, and landed below Cameron Town, with the avowed intention of killing all the settlers between that place and Auckland. The only troops available at the time to check the marauders were the Forest Rifles and a detachment of the 1st Waikato Regiment, divided between the Manku stockade and the redoubt at the church, higher up the valley. The fight took place outside the latter place. Captain Lusk had only sixty-seven officers and men

with him, but as the number of natives visible was not more than one hundred and fifty, he did not hesitate to make a sortie. The natives retired up the hill, and when our men reached the brow of the slope a force of three hundred and fifty Maoris, who had hitherto remained hidden in the bush, came round to the rear of the whites, cutting off their retreat. Major Lusk had just time to change his front when the Maoris, in a long line, charged the Volunteers. It was an anxious time, but the Volunteers never flinched. Retiring in good order to the shelter of the bush, they met the yelling savages with a well-directed fire, and after a fierce fight ultimately repulsed them. Eight Europeans were killed, and a large number wounded, while the natives lost thirty-two, and so many of them were wounded that they gave up their expedition and left the district that same night. Governor Sir George Grey, in his despatch dealing with the engagement, expressed "the greatest admiration for the resolute gallantry shown by the small body of men under Major Lusk's command."

And here it would not be out of place to refer to an early Volunteer, who had the proud distinction of being the only colonial soldier who received the Victoria Cross.

Charles Heaphy was an original member of the City Company of the Auckland Rifles, and rose from the ranks to be first sergeant and then lieutenant of that Company, and was on detachment duty at Otahuhu, Papatotoi and Papakura in 1863. Later in the same year he was elected captain of No. 3 (Parnell) Company.

It was while acting as guide to the flying column in the Waikato on 11th February, 1864, that he performed the act of valour which led Col. Sir Henry Havelock, V.C., to recommend him for that coveted badge, but the existing regulations did not admit of the Cross being conferred on any but members of the Imperial forces. It was largely, if not entirely, through the representation of Sir George Grey that the warrant was amended, and Major Heaphy received his Cross in 1867.