

The Maoris had issued a challenge to the troops to come out and fight, even naming the day; and when the British refused to be drawn the anxious Natives built eight miles of road up to their encampment so as to lessen the strain on the Queen's soldiers. When this courteous act failed to bring about the battle, the Maoris marched down to within three miles of the Mission Station and threw up trenches on the ridge now known as Gate Pa. This position was stormed by some three hundred troops, but the Maoris held their ground with great courage and the troops retired with heavy casualties. Ten officers were killed or died of wounds, twenty-five other ranks were killed and seventy-three wounded. The Maoris lost about forty-five killed, but there is no record of the number of their wounded.

During the night the Natives retired from the position in spite of the fact that a large party had moved in behind them to cut off their retreat. Several days later, at a battle at Te Ranga, the Maoris were heavily defeated, losing more than a hundred killed. Within a month most of



"The Elms"—one of New Zealand's first wooden homes.

them had surrendered their arms to the British Forces.

Of particular note were the bravery and chivalry of the Maoris in these engagements. The description of the Gate Pa fight in the D.Q.M.G.'s journal says of the Maoris: "The manner in which they defended this position proves them to be an enemy anything but despicable in intelligence and courage. The readiness with which they stood to their posts and met the assault, as well as their endurance during the bombardment, would reflect credit on disciplined troops. As to Te Ranga, the C.O. of the troops engaged says: 'I must not conclude without remarking on the gallant stand made by the Maoris at their rifle pits; they stood the charge without flinching and did not retire until forced out at the point of the bayonet.'"

Their chivalry is best illustrated by a letter sent to Colonel Greer at the time of their first challenge:—

"Friend, salutations to you. The end of that, friend, do you give heed to our laws for regulating the fight.

"Rule 1: If wounded or (captured) whole and the butt end of the musket or hilt of the sword be turned to me, (he) will be saved.

"Rule 2: If any pakeha being a soldier by name shall be unarmed travelling and meet me, he will be captured and handed over to the direction of the law.

"Rule 3: The soldier who flies, being carried away by his fears and goes to the house of the priest even though



The first staircase to be built in New Zealand.