

manding the admirable conduct of the men under my command, the silent and orderly way in which they behaved, enabling me to surprise these Maori sentries.

Ensign Broderip and Dr. Tomlinson were with my party, and greatly assisted me in every way.

I have, &c.,

EDWARD MILLS,

Lieutenant, 57th Regt.

Captain Wright, 70th Regt., Commanding at Poutoko.

CAPTAIN SHORTT, 57TH REGIMENT, TO THE ADJUTANT 57TH REGIMENT.

New Plymouth,

October 2nd, 1863.

SIR,—

I have the honor to report for the information of the Officer Commanding the Regiment, that, in compliance with instructions received, I marched this morning with a party, strength as per margin,† with orders to proceed to Poutoko. On the road I was overtaken by Colonel Warre, C.B., who directed me to advance to the Redoubt by the bush road near Touett's house. Shortly after we had turned down this road, I heard firing on my right, in the direction of Poutoko. I at once strengthened my advance guard, and pushed on as rapidly as I could, and became engaged with the enemy near Touett's house. The Natives immediately retreated to the bush, and opened fire upon my party from all directions. Leaving a reserve on Alwyn's hill to protect my rear, I advanced towards the bush, but being met with a tremendous fire, I got the men under cover behind logs, &c., and endeavoured to keep down the fire of the enemy. I then charged the bush, but perceiving that it was occupied by a very large body of Natives, I desisted, and got my men again under cover, and remained at this spot until I received orders from Colonel Warre to retire gradually; which I did, occupying Alwyn's hill with the whole of my party, and we then retired towards Poutoko.

I beg to bring to your notice the excellent conduct of the two officers with me—Ensigns Douglass and Down. The latter officer volunteered and with four men brought in the body of a wounded man under a very heavy fire. Drummer Dudley Stagpool I would wish also to recommend most favorably to your notice; for, although wounded in the head, he twice volunteered and brought in wounded men. I cannot, indeed, speak too highly of the conduct of all my men; notwithstanding the superiority of the enemy in numbers, and the exceedingly heavy fire with which we were assailed, they were cool and collected and obedient to orders, which enabled me to retire with such slight loss and good order, in the face of a very large body of Natives, who lined the whole belt of bush to my front.

I have, &c.,

W. A. SHORTT,

Captain, 57th Regiment.

The Adjutant 57th Regiment.

MAJOR BUTLER, 57TH REGIMENT, TO COLONEL WARRE, C.B.

New Plymouth, New Zealand,

2nd October, 1863.

SIR,—

I have the honor to report that, in accordance with your instructions, I proceeded at 10.30 a.m. this morning to the Poutoko Redoubt. On arrival there I was informed by Captain Wright, 70th Regiment, that a party under Lieutenant Mills, 57th Regiment, had proceeded to Hurford's clearing early in the morning for the purpose of laying an ambuscade, and had come into contact with the Natives, killing one and wounding several. I was also informed by Captain Wright that the Redoubt had been fired on by the Maories, and that he had reason to believe that they were assembled in large numbers in the surrounding bush.

I immediately despatched a mounted orderly to Omata for reinforcements, and on their arrival and on hearing that 100 men were on their road from the town for my support, I proceeded in charge of the force detailed in the margin§ in the direction of Hurford's Clearing, for the purpose of making a reconnaissance and ascertaining as nearly as possible the number and position of the enemy. On arriving at Gilbert's Clearing, barely a mile from the Redoubt, a very heavy fire was opened upon my party from the surrounding bush, by which Ensign Powys, who commanded the advanced guard, and four men were wounded. I at once returned the enemy's fire, keeping my men as much under cover as possible; but finding myself greatly outnumbered, I ordered my party to retire steadily towards the Redoubt.

Learning, however, that 100 men of the 57th Regiment, under Captain Shortt, were advancing by the bush road towards the same spot, I advanced my men again, and (the enemy's fire being much weakened by Captain Shortt's attack on their right) drove them back from their position on the edge of the bush, which I then occupied—the Natives still keeping up a heavy fire which was returned by my men.

As the latter part of the operations was carried on under your own immediate supervision, I will omit further details, but must beg to bring to your prominent notice the admirable conduct of the whole of the force under my command, and more especially I would wish to mention Ensign

† 1 Captain, 2 Subalterns, 3 Sergeants, 3 Drummers, 84 rank and file.
§ 1 Field Officer, 1 Captain, 3 Officers, 100 rank and file, 57th and 70th Regiments.