

LIEUT.-GENERAL CAMERON, C.B., TO GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE GREY, K.C.B

Head Quarters, Queen's Redoubt,
July 25th, 1863.

SIR,—

I have the honor to forward for your Excellency's information copies of reports from Capt. Ring, 2nd Battalion 18th Regiment, and Colonel Wyatt, commanding 65th Regiment, regarding a skirmish on the 22nd instant, with a body of Natives in the vicinity of Kerikeri.

Colonel Wyatt and Captain Ring (the latter a very promising young officer, whose gallantry in charge of an escort, I had the pleasure of bringing to your Excellency's notice, a few days ago), displayed great judgment and ability in command of their respective detachments, and the officers and men of both deserve the greatest credit for their conduct in the engagement; those under Capt. Ring for their courage and firmness in maintaining an open position so long against superior numbers; and those of Colonel Wyatt's detachment for the promptitude with which they hastened to the support of the former, and the spirited manner in which they attacked and drove off the enemy.

This is the first occasion on which the Militia of this Province have co-operated with the regular troops in action against an enemy, and your Excellency, as well as the inhabitants of the Province, will be gratified to learn that the detachment attached to the force under Colonel Wyatt, is so honorably mentioned by that officer.

I have, &c.,

D. A. CAMERON,
Lieut.-General.

His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

Enclosure 1 to No. 6.

COLONEL WYATT TO THE MILITARY SECRETARY.

Camp, Drury,
July 23rd, 1863.

SIR,—

I have the honor to request you will inform the Lieut.-General that, yesterday forenoon, having been informed by a mounted Volunteer, that a man had been shot by the Natives on Mr. Hay's grounds, and that his house was threatened, I immediately got my available force under arms (as per margin),* and proceeded in that direction, directing, as I went along, the detachment of the Militia to crown a small knoll, and thus protect the approaches to Drury, and also ordering Lieut. Rait, R.A., and his troopers to proceed in the direction of the Wairoa valley, for the purpose of cutting off any marauding parties. On arriving at Mr. Hay's, his son, Ensign James B. Hay, of the Militia, volunteered to act as guide to my party, and I scoured all the bush in that vicinity with thirty men, having previously directed Lieutenant and Adjutant Lewis, with forty men, to remain outside, and thus cut off any Natives attempting to escape. On reaching the Native settlement of Kerikeri, I heard some desultory firing on my left, and was led to understand by some militiamen that they had fired at some natives towards the Wairoa, escaping into the bush.

Being satisfied with this explanation, I returned towards Drury, having previously picked up the body of the murdered man and sent it there.

When within one and a half miles of that settlement, I was overtaken by Veterinary Surgeon Anderson, R.A., who informed me that a detachment of the 2nd Battalion 18th Regiment was in a very precarious position near Wairoa, and required a reinforcement, as they could not do more than hold their position.

On this, I retraced my steps towards Kerikeri, and just before sunset entered the main bush, under the guidance of Ensign Hay.

As my party advanced, firing and shouting were more distinctly heard; and after proceeding about half a mile, a turn of the road brought me suddenly upon the combatants,—the 2nd Battalion 18th Regiment on an entrenched knoll, and the Natives on the lower ground, but pressing them hard upon three sides, when the detachment 65th Regiment cut off in their turn the immediate rear of two of them. Lieutenant Pennefather, who commanded the advanced guard, finding himself exposed to a cross fire from both the 2nd Battalion 18th Regiment and Natives, directed the bugler to sound the "Regimental Call" and the "Fire;" and with a loud cheer, which was answered by the 2nd Battalion 18th Regiment, a rapid and continuous fusillade was opened on the Natives, ensconced in the gullies and sheltered by trees from the fire of the 2nd Battalion 18th Regiment.

Being completely taken by surprise, they, after a smart action of about ten minutes, fled towards the denser bush; but the darkness, which had now begun to set in, rendered all attempts at searching for their dead and wounded perfectly futile.

The enemy's fire being now completely silenced, I directed both parties to move off to their respective camps; and while so doing, a few desultory shots were fired high over their heads.