

proceeded to Captain's Shortt's assistance—the rebels were already driven back, and it only remained for Major Butler to give directions to collect the killed and wounded, thirty-four (34) of whom, scattered at different distances, and one within fifteen yards of the Redoubt, were brought in, and nearly double that number, as is stated, were wounded, and carried away by their comrades.

On reaching Sentry Hill I had much satisfaction in witnessing the result of this most successful engagement, in which we had only one man wounded;† and as I had taken out the friendly chief Mahau and one or two other influential natives, I was able through Mr. Parris to identify several of the principal chiefs killed, among whom, by the enclosed Report, the Lieut.-General will be glad to observe the names of Parengi Kingi, Manaihi, and some of the most troublesome and warlike of the neighbouring tribes.

On Captain Shortt hearing the Maoris in the adjoining bush, he, without the slightest noise or evidence of his watchfulness, fell in the men of his detachment at their appointed stations, and made them sit down on the banquettes, with strict orders not to show themselves or to fire until they received the order to do so. The Maoris (reported by the prisoners as over 300 in number) advanced to within 300 yards of the Redoubt. They hesitated, evidently startled by the unexpected silence, then approached a little nearer, and some more bold than the others rushed forward. Captain Shortt called upon his men to stand to their arms, and a succession of volleys, with an occasional shell from the 4½-inch cohorns by which the Redoubt was defended, stopped the Maoris in their advance; they hesitated, broke, and fled, leaving, as above stated, upwards of thirty killed and several wounded; while numbers were seen to fall, and to be dragged off by their comrades. Major Butler, with the reinforcement from Mahoetahi, followed up the pursuit, but the bush offered facilities of escape, and the weakness of his force prevented his attempting to gain any further advantage.

It was too late to do so upon the arrival of 200 men from town (nine miles distant); and I then determined that it would be better to await the reinforcements for which we have so anxiously looked than to attack an enemy whose strength was unknown, and who had reached the cover of his entrenched position at Manutahi. In this decision Major Butler and Atkinson cordially coincided, although I fear it must have greatly disappointed the eager but small force under my command, who, flushed with the morning's success, would have doubtless driven the enemy from both the positions at Mataitawa and Manutahi, but I should have been obliged immediately to withdraw, as I have neither men to garrison nor transport to supply any new outposts.

I need scarcely take the liberty of recommending to the Lieut.-General's favourable consideration the excellent conduct of Captain Shortt, commanding the detachment, and of Lieut. Waller, 57th Regiment, (in the absence of Ensign Down on temporary leave) the only two officers in the Redoubt. Captain Shortt the Lieut.-General will kindly recollect recommending for the Victoria Cross for his gallant conduct in storming the enemy's position on the Katikara river on the 4th June, 1863; and Lieut. W. Waller was brought to the Lieut.-General's notice in May last, when having fallen alone into a native ambushade after his horse was shot, he beat off seven natives, and with his revolver wounded Hori, who was afterwards taken prisoner and tried.

To the conduct of the above officers, and to the steadiness and strict attention to orders (as reported to me by Captain Shortt) of the non-commissioned officers and men in the Redoubt, I must attribute the excellent result of this engagement, which has entirely restored the confidence for a moment shaken by the unfortunate disaster at Ahu-ahu. Our vengeance has been at least five-fold; and to show how we appreciate the desperate gallantry of the natives, I sent to offer to return to them their dead, but they had not the courage to send for them, and they were buried near the Redoubt.

Major Butler and the officers and men placed in support at Mahoetahi promptly responded to Captain Shortt's application for assistance, but too late to render any effectual aid.

The men of the 57th Regiment under Captains Stewart and Schomberg, and the Taranaki Rifle Volunteers and Militia under Major Atkinson from Town, were equally zealous in marching to the scene of action.

Assistant-Surgeons Tomlinson (Staff) and Spence (T.M.) were in attendance on the wounded prisoners, two of whom died shortly after removal to Mahoetahi, the other, Hori Piriri (brother of Maneihi, the murderer of Mr. Ford and other settlers), a native of this town, is now in hospital, severely wounded in three places. He awaits, with the other prisoners now in gaol, the orders of the Government as to their disposal.

I have, &c.,

H. J. WARRE,

Colonel Commanding Troops in Taranaki.

The Deputy-Quarter-Master-General, Head Quarters.

3rd May, 1864.

P.S.—I have since writing the above report ascertained that although only 300 rebel natives advanced to the attack of the Redoubt, they had a support of 300 in the adjoining bush on the Waiongana river, and that about 200 were left at Manutahi ready as a reserve in case we should have attacked them, as they expected, on the open ground, and driven them back upon their entrenched works.

H. J. WARRE,
Colonel.

† Drummer D. Hurley, 57th Regiment.