

I beg to invite your Excellency's attention to the gallantry displayed by Captain Herford and Lieutenant Harrison, of the Waikato Militia; and I recommend them and the other officers specially mentioned by General Carey to your Excellency's favourable consideration.

I have already had the pleasure of bringing to the favourable notice of the Secretary of State for War the conduct of all the officers and men of Her Majesty's troops engaged on this occasion, particularly of those who are reported to have distinguished themselves.

It is impossible not to admire the heroic courage and devotion of the natives in defending themselves so long against overwhelming numbers. Surrounded closely on all sides, cut off from their supply of water, and deprived of all hope of succour, they resolutely held their ground for more than two days, and did not abandon their position until the sap had reached the ditch of their last entrenchment.

I have, &c.,

D. A. CAMERON,
Lieut.-General.

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

Enclosure in No. 36.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL CAREY TO THE ASSISTANT MILITARY SECRETARY.

Camp Te Awamutu, April 3, 1864.

SIR,—

I have the honour to state, for the information of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Forces, that about mid-day on the 30th ultimo, it was reported to me by Lieutenant-Colonel Haultain, commanding at Kihikihi Redoubt, that natives were seen in force at the village of Orakau, about 2½ to 3 miles distant from his post.

I immediately rode over and made a reconnaissance, found that the natives were engaged building a pa, and as it was then too late in the day to attack at once, I returned to this camp, and made arrangements to march on the enemy's position during the night.

Captain Baker, 18th Royal Irish, Deputy-Assistant-Adjutant-General, fortunately found two men in the camp (Messrs. Gage and W. Astle) whom, from their local knowledge, I at once engaged as guides, which circumstance enabled me to determine on a combined movement.

My plan of attack was to advance with the main body along the dray road to Orakau; to detach a force of 250 men under Major Blythe, 40th Regiment, who would take a circuitous route through a somewhat difficult country, crossing and recrossing the Punia River, and marching on my right flank to take the enemy's position in reverse; and, thirdly, to draw a force of 100 men from Rangiawhia and Haeirini, under Captain Blewitt, 65th Regiment, who would march across to the enemy's position on my left, the three bodies of troops arriving, if possible, simultaneously before the enemy's stronghold shortly before daylight.

At midnight, Major Blythe, 40th Regt., marched with 250 men, as enumerated in the margin,* with directions to take the road to the right, to cross and recross the Punia River, and to gain the rear of the enemy's position before daylight, halting there until he should hear my attack, and then to dispose of his force so as to cut off the retreat of the enemy.

The road from Rangiawhia to Orakau I found, on inquiry, to be very difficult, being intercepted by deep swamp and thick bush; however, having every confidence in Captain Blewitt's energy, I directed that officer—who commands at Rangiawhia—to march during the night and endeavour to form a junction with me before daylight on the proper right of the enemy's position, bringing with him one hundred men.†

At 3 o'clock on Thursday morning, the 31st ultimo, I marched with the main body as shown in the margin,‡ along the dray road to Kihikihi, taking on Lieutenant-Colonel Haultain and 150 men from that post, and then proceeded by the same road to the village of Orakau, which I reached without opposition as the day dawned.

The enemy, evidently taken by surprise, opened fire on the advanced guard, composed of 120 of the Royal Irish, and 20 of the Forest Rangers, gallantly led by Captain Ring, 18th Royal Irish (and supported by 100 of the 40th Regiment), who immediately rushed forward to the attack in skirmishing order.

The position being found very strong—an earthwork with strong flank defences, deep ditches, with posts and rails outside, and nearly covered from view with flax bushes, peach trees, and high fern—this

* 40th Regiment—1 field officer, 1 captain, 1 subaltern, 1 staff, 3 sergeants, 2 drummers, 100 rank and file. 65th Regiment—1 captain, 3 subalterns, 6 sergeants, 3 drummers, 125 rank and file. Forest Rangers—1 captain, 2 sergeants, 25 rank and file. Total—1 field officer, 3 captains, 4 subalterns, 1 staff, 11 sergeants, 5 drummers, 250 rank and file.

† 65th Regiment—2 captains, 1 lieutenant, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, 53 rank and file. 3rd Waikato Militia—1 lieutenant, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, 52 rank and file. Total—2 captains, 2 lieutenants, 2 sergeants, 2 drummers, 106 rank and file.

‡ Royal Artillery—1 lieutenant, 2 sergeants, 1 drummer, 31 rank and file. 3 guns, Mounted Royal Artillery—1 lieutenant, 1 staff, 1 sergeant, 1 drummer, 28 rank and file. Royal Engineers—6 rank and file. 12th Regiment—1 lieutenant. 18th Regiment—1 captain, 3 lieutenants, 1 staff, 5 sergeants, 3 drummers, 140 rank and file. 40th Regiment—1 field officer, 4 captains, 2 lieutenants, 1 staff, 14 sergeants, 5 drummers, 258 rank and file. 65th Regiment—1 lieutenant, 2 sergeants, 1 drummer, 38 rank and file. Militia—1 field officer, 3 lieutenants, 8 sergeants, 3 drummers, 137 rank and file. Forest Rangers—1 lieutenant, 2 sergeants, 1 drummer, 22 rank and file. Total—2 field officers, 5 captains, 13 lieutenants, 3 staff, 34 sergeants, 15 drummers, 660 rank and file.