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Colonial Secretary's Office,
Auckland, 28th July, 1863.

HIS Excellency the Governor directs the publication of the following Despatch, with its enclosures from Lieut. General Cameron, C.B.

ALFRED DOMETT.

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

SIR,—I have the honor to forward for your Excellency's information copies of reports from Captain Ring, 2nd Batt. 18th Regiment, and Colonel Wyatt, commanding 65th Regiment, regarding a skirmish on the 22nd inst. with a body of natives in the vicinity of Kiri Kiri.

Colonel Wyatt and Capt. 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 Captain 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.,
&c., &c., &c.

Camp, Drury,
July 23rd, 1863.

SIR,—I have the honor to request you will inform the Lieutenant-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 Lieutenant 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

	F.O.	Cap.	Sub.	Staff.	Serg.	Dr.	R.&F
*Royal Artillery	—	—	1	1	1	1	26
65th Regiment	1	1	3	1	6	3	72
Vol. Militia	—	1	1	—	1	—	33
	1	2	5	2	8	4	131

30 men, having previously directed Lieutenant and Adjutant Lewis, with 40 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 2B. 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 2B. 18th on an entrenched knoll, and the natives on the lower ground, but pressing them hard upon three sides, when the detachment 65th regt. 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 2B. 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 2B. 18th regt., a rapid and continuous fusilade was opened on the natives ensconced in the gullies and sheltered by trees from the fire of the 2B. 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.

I must bring to the Lieutenant-General's notice the cool and intrepid gallantry evinced on this occasion by Lieutenant Rait, R.A., Captain Gresson, Lieutenant and Adjutant Lewis (who commanded No. 1 Company, the Officers being both sick), and Lieutenant Pennefather, who commanded the advanced guard; and I trust you will recommend Ensign James B. Hay, of the Militia, to the favourable consideration of His Excellency the Governor, for his coolness and cleverness in guiding the party under my command, so rapidly into the scene of this brief but smart action.

With a proud heart I must bring to the Lieutenant-General's notice, the cool and quiet order and gallantry displayed by all ranks of the force under my command, and the unflinching patience with which the men bore the harrassing and toilsome march to and from the scene of action.

I am happy to say that the casualties of my party were limited to one private killed.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) ALFRED F. W. WYATT,
Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding
65th Regt. and Troops at Drury.

The Military Secretary,
Head-quarters, Drury.

Camp near Keri Keri,
Wairoa-road, 23rd July, 1863.

SIR,—I have the honor to state for your information that at noon the 22nd instant, I received information that two settlers had been fired upon by a body of natives, and that one of the settlers was killed, and hearing firing in the vicinity of Pukikiwerekere, about two miles from my camp, I immediately proceeded with 100 men of the detachment under my command, and close to the abovenamed place I fell in with natives who were engaged with 16 volunteers. I opened fire and the natives retreated to my former entrenchment above the whari at Keri Keri. The firing of the skirmishers drove them down the side of the hill into the brushwood; the leading skirmishers on the right, under Lieut. Wray, took possession of the hill, and kept up fire on them. I, with another body of skirmishers, proceeded to take them on the right flank, but found that the natives, who mustered a strong force, nearly surrounded me. Here I lost one man killed, whose rifle and bayonet were taken possession of by the natives, though not without serious loss to them. I then concentrated my men on the entrenchment, and having heard from an artillery officer, who rode up to my position, that the 65th Regiment was in my immediate vicinity, I requested that he would inform the officer commanding 65th that there was a track on the enemy's rear, and if an attack were made in that direction it would be of great service, as it was quite impossible for me to follow so strong a force of the enemy into the bush with my small force. I remained in the entrenched position until close on sunset, keeping a steady fire on the enemy, who were endeavouring to obtain the body and ammunition of the private who was killed, and whom I would not leave. I repeatedly tried to obtain possession of the body by sending out volunteers of the man's company, but desisted, finding it would entail greater loss. I was about retiring, leaving a rearguard in the entrenchment, when the mounted artillery arrived; immediately after I saw the 65th appear. The natives then drew off their right flanking movement, and, retreating into the bush, enabled me to obtain the body of

the man of my detachment; this accomplished, the whole force withdrew.

I beg to annex the following list of casualties :—

No. 1 Company, 925, Private John Ewins, killed.

No. 1 Company, 805, Private John Hamilton, wounded severely.

No. 7 Company, 324, Private Thos. Dunbar, wounded slightly,

No. 7 Company, Private Conroy, wounded slightly.

The officers engaged on this occasion were Lieutenant Wray, Ensign Jackson, and Ensign Butts, whose assistance, coupled with the steadiness of my men, merits unqualified approbation.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) JAMES RING,

Capt. Royal Irish, Commanding Detachment.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT.

I beg to forward the enclosed list just received from Captain Clare, of the Auckland Militia, who at first were engaged with the enemy and then joined my force, and rendered every possible assistance, and behaved in a most creditable manner.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. RING, Captain.

W. Hutchins, Lieut.-Colonel,
Assist.-Mil. Sec.

MILITIA AND VOLUNTEERS.

Appointment of Lieutenant Hay.

Colonial Defence Office,

Auckland, 28th July, 1863.

HIS Excellency the Governor has been pleased to direct that

Ensign JAMES BAIRD HAY be promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, in the the 3rd Battalion of the Auckland Regiment of Militia.
Date of Commission—28th July, 1863.

T. RUSSELL.

