



NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.

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By His Excellency's Command,

ANDREW SINCLAIR, Colonial Secretary.

VOL. VI.]

AUCKLAND, SATURDAY, JAN. 17, 1846.

[No. 1.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Auckland, 17th January, 1846.

THE Lieutenant-Governor feels great satisfaction in directing the publication of the following Despatches from Colonel Despard, containing the details of the operations against the rebel Chiefs Kawiti and Heke, from the 29th December last, to the 11th instant, inclusive—operations which were conducted in a manner most highly honorable to Her Majesty's Naval and Military forces, and which resulted in a series of successes which must produce the most beneficial consequences for this portion of Her Majesty's dominions.

By His Excellency's Command,

ANDREW SINCLAIR,
Colonial Secretary.

Camp before the Ruapekapeka.
Kawiti's Pah, January 5, 1846.

SIR—

In my letter dated the 28th ultimo, addressed to your Excellency, I had the honor of detailing the proceedings of the force under my command up to that period, and I now proceed with the detail of what has taken place since.

Before daylight on the morning of the 29th, a party of our Native allies penetrated the wood immediately in our front, in a most praiseworthy manner, and took possession of an open piece of ground on the opposite side, sending me immediate intelligence of what they had done.

I directly moved forward with two hundred men to their support, and secured the position.

The 30th and 31st were principally occupied in bringing up the guns and ammunition through the woods; a work of great labor and time, as it required between fifty and sixty men to each gun to get them through, on account of the heavy trees it was necessary to cut down, in making the road, and the steepness of the hills they had to pass over.

Several rockets and shells have been thrown into the Pah on the 31st, and each day since, with the utmost accuracy, doing great credit to the Officers of Her Majesty's Navy who directed them; namely, Lieutenant Egerton, *North Star*, in charge of the rockets, and Lieutenant Bland, of the *Racehorse*, and Lieutenant Leeds, of the H. E. I. C. Ship *Elphinstone*, who directed the shells.

On the morning of the 1st instant I pushed forward a strong party into the only wood that now divided us from the enemy, and taking up a position in the centre of it on an open piece of ground, about four hundred yards from the Pah, a strong stockade was immediately commenced for the purpose of covering a Battery, and the work sufficiently advanced before night to render any attempt of the enemy to drive us away, useless. This work was carried on under cover of a very thick part of the wood, which completely concealed it from the enemy.

On the afternoon of the following day, the enemy made a strong sally from the Pah, with a view, it is supposed, of turning the flank of this advanced party of ours in the stockade,

which was not yet finished ; but they were most gallantly opposed by our Native allies, under the direction of the Chiefs Tommati Waka Nene, Noble (or Nopera), Mohi Tawhai, and others, who instantly dashed out and attacked them, driving them back with some loss—supposed to amount to eight or ten killed, and between fifteen and twenty wounded—on our side five were wounded, on this occasion ; and one of our most active Chiefs, Reppa, was severely wounded the previous day in a skirmish with a small party of the enemy, who it appeared had come out of the Pah for the purpose of picking off any stragglers from our camp, and who had succeeded in killing one of the Volunteer Pioneers, who had gone to an unnecessary distance for water, and was shot in the act of taking it. Up to this date no casualty, with the above exception, has taken place in the European part of the Force.

It may be proper for me to observe that in the action of the afternoon of the 2nd, the European Troops only acted as a reserve, at the particular desire of the Native Chiefs, who were fearful that their own people might be mistaken for the enemy, and fired upon.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) H. DESPARD,
Acting Colonel on the Staff,
Commanding the Troops in
New Zealand.

His Excellency
Governor GREY,
&c., &c., &c.

EXTRACT FROM BRIGADE ORDERS.

*Camp before Ruapekapeka,
11th January, 1846.*

THE Officer Commanding the Force acting against the rebel Chiefs, Heke and Kawiti, has the greatest satisfaction in congratulating the whole of the Force at the brilliant success that has attended their operations of the last two days. The capture of a Fortress of such extraordinary strength by assault, and nobly defended by a brave and determined enemy, is of itself sufficient to prove the intrepidity and gallantry displayed by all concerned, whether Seamen, Marines, Troops of the Line, Artillery of H. E. I. C. Service, and the Volunteer Pioneers ; and it will be a most pleasing part of his duty to bring such conduct to the notice of His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand, and through him to that of Her Majesty, and His Grace the Commander-in-Chief.

The Colonel cannot conclude this Order without expressing his admiration at the brave and intrepid conduct displayed by our Native allies on every occasion since these operations commenced, and more particularly during the assault of the Pah, on which occasion their bravery was fully equal to what might be expected from the bravest of Her Majesty's Troops.

The Colonel Commanding feels the greatest regret at the loss of so many brave men as have been killed and wounded on this occasion : but it will be considered as an alleviation by their friends, that they have fallen while nobly performing their duty to their Queen and Country.

*Camp at the Ruapekapeka,
Kawiti's Pah, January 11th, 1846.*

SIR—

It is with extreme satisfaction that I have the honor of acquainting your Excellency that Kawiti's stronghold, or Pah, at the Ruapekapeka, was this day carried by assault by the force under my command, after a bold and most determined resistance on the part of the enemy, who continued the action long after he had been driven from the Fortress ; but the ardour and intrepidity displayed by the British force of every description, as well as by our Native allies, overcame every obstacle, and after three hours hard fighting, the enemy was obliged to fly, and dispersed in different directions.

The detail of this attack, as well as that of the preceding day's cannonade, shall be laid before your Excellency with the least possible delay.

I greatly regret to add that our loss on this occasion has been heavy, as will be seen by the enclosed list of killed and wounded ; but when the extraordinary strength of the place assaulted is taken into consideration, I am only surprised it has been so small.

I have the honor to be,
Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

H. DESPARD,
Acting Colonel on the Staff,
Commanding the Troops.

His Excellency
Governor GREY,
&c., &c., &c.

Return of killed and wounded of the Force under command of Colonel Despard, 99th Regiment, acting Colonel on the Staff, during the assault on Kawiti's Pah, on the 11th January, 1846.

Her Majesty's Ship Castor.

7 Seamen killed.
10 Seamen wounded.
2 Marines wounded.

Her Majesty's Ship North Star.

2 Seaman wounded. Mr. Murray, Midshipman, included.
1 Marine killed.

Her Majesty's Ship Calliope.

1 Marine killed.
1 Marine wounded.

Her Majesty's Ship Racehorse.

1 Seaman wounded.

H. E. I. C. Ship Elphinstone.

1 Seaman wounded.

Her Majesty's 58th Regiment.

2 killed.
10 wounded.

Her Majesty's 99th Regiment.

1 killed.
1 wounded.

Volunteer Pioneers.

1 wounded.

Name of Officer wounded.

Mr. Murray, Midshipman of H. M. Ship *North Star*, severely, but not dangerously.

Wounded during the previous operations.

2 Volunteer Pioneers. One since dead.

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Camp before the Ruapekapeka,
12th January, 1846.

SIR,—In my letter of yesterday, I had the satisfaction of acquainting Your Excellency with the fall of Kawiti's Pah, by assault, on that day, and now I proceed to communicate the detail.

On the morning of the 10th instant, our advanced batteries being completed, (one within 350 yards, and the second about 160 yards of the Pah), a general fire was commenced from all the guns with a view of opening a breach into the place, and several rockets were thrown into it at the same time, for the purpose of driving the enemy out. This fire was kept up with little intermission during the greater part of the day, and towards evening it was evident that the outer works on those parts against which the fire was directed were nearly all giving way; but the numerous stockades inside, crossing the place in different directions, and composed of much stronger timbers, were scarcely touched. Towards evening our fire slackened, and was only continued occasionally during the night, to prevent the enemy attempting to repair the breaches that had been made.

On the following morning, the 11th instant, no person being observed moving within the Pah, a few of our Native allies, under a Chief, named William Waka, a brother of Tamati Waka Nene, went up to the place for the purpose of observing whether or not the enemy had evacuated it. This party entered the breach unopposed, which being perceived from the nearest battery, a party of 100 men of the troops, under Captain Denny, was pushed up rapidly, and together with the natives gained the inside of the stockades, before they were perceived by the enemy, who at the time were sheltering themselves from the fire of our guns on a sloping piece of ground in one of their outworks. Our parties had scarcely gained the inside when they were noticed by the enemy, and a heavy fire of musketry instantly poured in upon them. The stockades, however, now became our protection, and strong reinforcements being immediately brought up from camp, possession of the place was secured in spite of all the efforts of the enemy to drive us back, and he was obliged to retreat and shelter himself

in a wood opposite the east face of the Pah—where the trees being extremely large and forming complete breastworks, many of them having been cut down previously, and evidently purposely placed in a defensive position, he was enabled to maintain a heavy fire against us for a considerable time, until a door way in that face having been broken open, the seamen and troops rushed out and dislodged him from his position. He, however, still continued to keep up a fire from the woods, but more with a view to cover his retreat, and enable him to carry away his wounded men, than with any expectation of renewing the contest. The attack commenced about ten o'clock, a. m., and all firing had ceased about two, p. m. The extraordinary strength of this place, particularly in its interior defences, far exceeded any idea I could have formed of it; every hut was a complete fortress in itself, being strongly stockaded all round with heavy timbers sunk deep in the ground, and placed close to each other, few of them being less than one foot in diameter, and many considerably more, besides having a strong embankment thrown up behind them. Each hut had also a deep excavation close to it, forming a complete bomb proof, and sufficiently large to contain several people, where at night they were completely sheltered from both shot and shell.

The enemy's loss has been severe, and several Chiefs on their side have fallen; the numbers I have not been able to ascertain, as they invariably carry off both killed and wounded when possible. Several of the former were, however, left behind; and it has been decidedly ascertained from a wounded prisoner, that the Chief Heke had joined Kawati in the Pah on the afternoon preceding the attack.

As Your Excellency has been an eye-witness to all our operations, and I may say actually engaged in the assault, it may be thought unnecessary for me to draw your attention to those persons who had a greater opportunity than others of distinguishing themselves; but the satisfaction I feel in recording the obligation I am under to those persons, makes me persevere in doing so. To the Officers, Seamen, and Marines from Her Majesty's Ships, for their extraordinary exertions in dragging the guns over steep hills, and through difficult and thick woods, as well as for their distinguished bravery in action, the service on this occasion is greatly indebted. To Captain Graham, of H. M. S. *Castor*, for his co-operation, and the readiness with which he afforded every possible aid and assistance since his arrival. To Captain Sir E. Home, who had previously been the Senior Naval Officer, and who, not only upon the present occasion, but on all former ones, has used the most strenuous exertions to forward all the objects of the expedition. To Commander Hay, of H. M. S. *Racehorse*, who commanded the whole of the Seamen attached to the Force, and who so greatly aided our operations by his personal exertions and example, not only during the assault, but in all the previous difficulties we had to encounter. To Lieutenant Otway

of H. M. S. *Castor*, commanding the small-armed seamen. To Lieutenant Falcon, of H. M. S. *Castor*; Lieutenant Bland, and Mr. Nopps, Master, of H. M. S. *Racehorse*; and Lieutenant Leeds, H. E. I. C. S. *Elphinstone*, who all directed the fire of the guns with such precision and excellence; and to Lieutenant Egerton, of H. M. S. *North Star*, who directed the rockets, much of our success is to be attributed. To Lieutenant-Colonel Wynyard, commanding the 58th Regt., I feel the greatest obligation. His advice was of the utmost use to me on many occasions, and his personal exertions, whenever an opportunity offered, as well as his gallantry during the assault, were most conspicuous. To Captain Reid, commanding the flank companies 99th Regt., and Captain Langford, Royal Marines, (attached), much praise is due. To Captain Marlow, Royal Engineers, for his exertions in constructing the batteries; Captain Matsom, 58th Regt., who acted as Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General; and Lieutenant Wilmot, Royal Artillery, who directed the mortar battery, great praise is also due. I have also derived great assistance from the services of Lieutenant O'Connell, 51st Regt., A. D. C. to Lieut.-General Sir Maurice O'Connell, and acting Major of Brigade to this Force. And I must not omit to notice in very strong terms the indefatigable exertions of Capt. Atkins and his small corps of Volunteer Pioneers, whose conduct and services during the whole operations have been of the greatest advantage.

Every kindness has been shewn to the wounded men by Doctors Kidd and Pine, the Senior Medical Officers, and all the Medical Officers, both Naval and Military; and I have

reason to be satisfied with the exertions of the Commissariat Department, under Dep. Ass. Commissary General Turner. The wounded men are generally doing well, and the only officer amongst them, a young midshipman of H. M. S. *North Star*, Mr. Murray, whose ardour carried him too far when the enemy were driven from the woods.

I have now only to express the peculiar satisfaction I feel, that Your Excellency has had an opportunity of personally witnessing the toils and difficulties that were encountered, and the cheerfulness with which every part of the Force exerted itself to overcome them, and I beg to express my own sincere thanks for the advice and observations that you have occasionally been kind enough to favor me with during that period.

I should also wish to draw Your Excellency's notice to Mr. Edward Shortland, who was prevailed upon to act as my Interpreter, and who has rendered me many important services while acting in that capacity.

I have the honor to be.

Your Excellency's most obedient servant.

(Signed)

H. DESPARD,

Acting Colonel on the Staff,

Commanding the Troops.

His Excellency
Governor GREY,
&c., &c., &c.