

it was quite impossible for me to follow so strong a force of the enemy into the bush with my so small a 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 who 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 that it would entail greater loss. I was about retiring, leaving a rear-guard 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, No. 925, Private John Ewins, killed.  
 No. 1 Company, No. 805, Private John Hamilton, wounded severely.  
 No. 7 Company, No. 324, Private Thomas Dunbar, wounded slightly.  
 No. 7 Company, ——— Conway, wounded slightly.

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

I have, &c.,

(Signed) JAMES RING, Captain Royal Irish,  
 Commanding Detachment.

The Officer Commanding Troops,  
 Drury.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT.

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

I have &c.,

(Signed) J. RING, Captain.

Camp, Drury,  
 July 23, 1863.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour 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 Hayes'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 Raitt, R.A., and his troopers to proceed in the direction of the Wairoa Valley, for the purpose of calling off any marauding parties. On arriving at Mr Hayes's, his son Ensign James B. Hayes of the Militia, volunteered to act as guide to my party, and I scoured all the bush in that vicinity with 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 Keri Keri 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 mile of that settlement, I was overtaken by Veterinary Surgeon Anderson, R.A., who informed me that a detachment of the 2d 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 Keri Keri, and just before sunset entered the main bush under the guidance of Ensign Hayes.

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 2d Battalion 18th Regiment, upon an entrenched knoll, and the natives on the lower ground, but pressing them hard on three sides, when the detachment, 65th Regiment, cut off in their turn the immediate rear of two of them. Lieutenant Pennefather, who commanded the rear-guard, finding himself exposed to a cross fire from both the 2d 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 2d 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 2d 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 began 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 Raitt, Royal Artillery; 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. Hayes, 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 harassing 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 Com-  
 manding 65th Regiment and Troops at  
 Drury.

The Military Secretary,  
 Head-Quarters, Drury.

\* Royal Artillery—1 Subaltern, 1 Staff, 1 Serjeant, 1 Drummer, 26 Rank and File; 65th Regiment—1 Field Officer, 1 Captain, 3 Subalterns, 1 Staff, 6 Serjeants, 3 Drummers, 72 Rank and File; Volunteer Militia—1 Captain, 1 Subaltern, 1 Serjeant, 33 Rank and File.—Total—1 Field Officer, 2 Captains, 5 Subalterns, 2 Staff, 8 Serjeants, 4 Drummers, 131 Rank and File.