

level of the ground to reconnoitre, though the line may be thickly occupied; in the recent case it is presumed by a force at first amounting to nearly 1,200 men.

I would, in conclusion, beg to bring to your notice the officers of Royal Engineers under my command. Captain Mould, as senior, was the chief executive officer, and I believe I may without partiality declare that to his courage, energy, perseverance, and skill, added to his personal example, even of affording manual labour at the head of the sap, much of the success of the operation, and comparative absence of loss, was owing. Lieut. Warburton afforded me every assistance, and had especial charge of one of the Brigades of Engineers and the accompanying working parties, which he also incited by his example. In consequence of the deficiency of Officers of Royal Engineers the Major-General was pleased, upon my application and with the concurrence of Commodore Seymour, to place Lieut. Battiscombe, R.N., at my disposal as Assistant-Engineer, and that officer gave most valuable and efficient aid, not only in the occasional superintendence of the working parties in the trenches and at the construction of the redoubts, but in superintending the preparation of "materiel" at the Waitara Camp and overlooking other works both of defence and civil buildings.

Colour-Serjeants Porter and Morant, each in their turn in charge of brigades and working parties, were most zealous and effective.

Considering how closely the late Lieut. Macnaghten, Royal Artillery, was connected with the Engineer operations, the advance of which was materially aided by his constant presence at and near the head of the sap effectively working a howitzer and Coehorn mortar, I beg to be permitted to pay a tribute to his memory as a cool, courageous, zealous, and highly-talented officer, and withal most unpretending, one who was warmly regarded and respected by his men, and admired and beloved by the officers of all arms of the service who had the advantage of his acquaintance, and by whom his loss is deeply deplored.

I have, &c.,

THOS. R. MOULD, Colonel,  
Commanding Royal Engineers.

*The Deputy Adjutant-General,*  
&c. &c.

*From Captain Mercer, Commanding Royal  
Artillery, New Zealand.*

*Camp, No. 7 Redoubt.  
March 30, 1861.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to report, for your information, the operations of the Royal Artillery under my command, from the 13th March to the 19th March, 1861. The half battery of Armstrong guns arrived at the Waitara, from Auckland, at 9 a.m. on the 13th March. We commenced disembarking in surf-boats, and by the same afternoon they were ready for service. The guns were taken out of their cases, cleaned and mounted, the ammunition, &c., examined, and the whole was found to be complete and in perfect order. The next day, the 14th, according to your directions I rode with Mr. Parris to select a

favourable position for shelling "Mataitawa," the stronghold of Wiremu Kingi; but the distance of the nearest spot from which it could be seen, over the tops of the trees, was beyond the range of the 12-pounder Armstrong gun. Whilst away on this duty Lieutenant Pichard, with Sergeant-Major R. Hayes, had the men drilled and exercised in laying the guns, so as to be satisfied that they had not forgotten what they had learnt, in England. The artificers at the same time were busily employed in making poles, &c., for bullock draught. Three poles were completed during the day, thus enabling the guns to start for the front at 6 a.m. the next morning, Friday 15th March. When the half battery arrived at No. 7 Redoubt the white flag was flying on the pah, but about the middle of the day it was hauled down, and the red war flag was hoisted instead, this was immediately followed by volleys from the natives. I was speaking with the late Lieutenant Macnaghten, R. A., at the time in the advance parallel, but returned to No. 7 Redoubt when the Armstrong guns, and 8-inch and 10-inch mortars were opened on the rifle pits of the enemy's position, at distances varying from 820 to 900 yards. The whole position from left to extreme right forms a curve about a mile in extent, and is naturally a strong one, from being situated on the edge of the forest, as well as from the nature of the ground: it consists of the "Te Arei" Pah which is a mass of rifle pits, with a dense bush in the rear for escape; on the right of the pah is a precipice overhanging the River Waitara, and on the left of the pah extends a range of hills commanding the approach to it, having a deep gulley and bush in front of them, and the forest in their rear. The slopes of these hills as well as their steep declivities are full of ingeniously constructed rifle pits; many of these pits are concealed by a stunted growth of bush, so that the presence of our all but invisible enemy is often only known by the puffs of smoke from the rifles or guns, or occasionally a few heads appear above the crest of their line of pits for a moment or so, and then as suddenly disappear; they lie concealed for hours, and now and then by single shots, and sometimes by volleys, they endeavour to do all the mischief they can. I have been particular in describing the position and mode of warfare of these natives, as it appeared to me at the time in order the more fully to explain the method I adopted to use the Armstrong gun with the best effect against them. After a trial shell on each of their positions, and the range having been accurately obtained, the guns were laid just below the crest of the line of their rifle pits, so that the shells when discharged should penetrate some three or four feet of earth, and fixed with the concussion fuse only, should burst inside their pits, when they retired, after delivering their fire. The guns were loaded and laid, the gunners, with lanyard in hand, waited for the word from the officer who was watching until some heads appeared above in that direction, or a puff of smoke revealed their presence, when the gun was instantly fired, and the shell entering just below the crest of the pits burst inside. The natives were in the habit of firing volleys in the morning and evening, whilst our working parties were going to or returning from the head of the sap, on these occasions the Armstrong guns were laid upon the lines of the pits, the shells fixed with time and concussion fuses, and before the working parties marched the gunners were ready waiting for the word, which was given directly the natives opened fire, and the shells almost at the same instant burst amongst them.