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War Office, October 18, 1865.

THE Secretary of State for War has received a Despatch from Lieutenant-General Sir Duncan A. Cameron, K.C.B., with its Enclosures, of which the following are copies:—

*P. and O. Steamer "Mongolia,"
My LORD, Near Malta, October 10, 1865.*

I HAVE the honour to forward, for your Lordship's information, the enclosed reports received from Colonel Warre, C.B., commanding at Taranaki, relative to two skirmishes which took place in that district, on the 28th July and 3rd August last.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) D. A. CAMERON,
Lieutenant-General.

*The Right Honourable
Earl de Grey and Ripon,
War Office.*

*New Plymouth, New Zealand,
SIR, July 29, 1865.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for the information of the Lieutenant-General Commanding, the enclosed Reports which I received at 10 o'clock last night. It is with very great regret that I have to record the death of Captain Arthur R. Close, of the 43rd Light Infantry, whose gallantry in the skirmish with the rebel natives, to whom he fell a victim, gave evidence of great promise, but the conduct of Ensign J. T. O'Brien and of the Non-commissioned Officers named by this Officer, and of the men of the patrol, is highly commendable, and I have seldom read so clear and spirited a report as that furnished by Ensign O'Brien of this fatal affair.

I have directed Lieutenant-Colonel Colville, 43rd Light Infantry, with 150 of the 70th Regiment, and 50 of the 43rd Light Infantry, as a flying column, to proceed at once to Warea to endeavour to punish the rebels; but I much fear they have now dispersed, as I am satisfied that the rebels who attacked Captain Close's party are those under Big Jack, mentioned in my Confidential Report, No. 14, of the 23rd instant—although I was, apparently, deceived as regards the number of followers with Big Jack,—indeed Mr. Wilmington Carrington, employed in the absence of Mr. Parris in the Native Office, a few

days after my last report was forwarded, told me that Big Jack could muster about 40 followers.

All other parts of this district are perfectly quiet.

I have, &c.,
H. J. WARRE, Colonel,
Commanding at Taranaki.

*The Deputy Quartermaster-General,
&c. &c. &c.,
Head Quarters, Auckland.*

I have forwarded duplicate copies of this and the enclosed Reports for the information of his Excellency the Governor.

*Camp, Warea,
July 28, 1865, 4 P.M.*

SIR,
I REGRET much having to report, for the information of the Colonel-Commanding, that a patrol, as detailed in the margin,* under Captain Close, 43rd Light Infantry, was fired on to-day by a party of about fifty or sixty Maories, at a place named Hongu-Numi, about two miles from this camp, in a south-easterly direction.

About one o'clock firing was heard in camp, and I immediately ordered out all available men, and proceeded in command in the direction from which the firing was heard.

As we approached the firing ceased, and in about half an hour we came up with Captain Close's party, when no trace of a Maori was to be seen. They had evidently escaped inland on seeing the reinforcement coming up.

I regret much to state that Captain Close was mortally wounded, and is since dead, and one private was killed.

I beg to enclose a report from Ensign O'Brien, who was Captain Close's Subaltern on the occasion, and who seems to have acted with much coolness and judgment. A list of casualties is also attached.

On arriving at the position I sent out Lieutenant Talbot, with fifty men, to skirmish through some bush from which the firing had come, but meeting with no sign of the enemy he returned, and as the enemy was no where to be seen, I returned to camp.

On examining the bush from whence the firing had come, and on which it was returned, a con-

* 1 Captain, 1 Subaltern, 1 Assistant-Surgeon, 2 Sergeants, 1 Bugler, and 51 Rank and File.