

wounded, but has not one gunshot wound about him. The Hauhaus tried to run in upon our men to do this sort of thing several times, but in no instance but this succeeded.

In carrying off the wounded the officers set a bright example to the men: I saw Captain Newland himself, with one or two men, carry poor Major Hunter and Constable Kelly from the spot where they fell, and where, but for their prompt action, in another moment they would have been tomahawked. The officers, however, never passed to the rear farther than in carrying the wounded—they held the post of danger. If I can say that the men behaved excellently, maintained their discipline, and were from first to last determined to do their duty, I must do the officers the justice to say that their exertions were conspicuous even among brave men. It is not necessary for me to say more on this subject, for you will easily understand that where all did their duty in their several stations, I do not wish to draw distinctions of this kind. Of the eighty Kupapas, only fifty with the chief Kemp, whose gallantry, whose coolness, and whose determination to hold if possible the post of honor was evident throughout the day, behaved like men. These fifty were not his own peculiar hapu—they were a medley of all hapus composing the Kupapas. If Kemp had had even 100 more Natives, the kainga not only must have been taken, but it is possible I might after that success have carried Okutuku.

Having drawn off my men, and begun an orderly retreat by alternate divisions, one of their own chiefs suggested to me that as there were Maoris at the redoubt and further back, it would be desirable that they should relieve my men. I consented to this, and he went to the redoubt and addressed his people. Unluckily a long shot mortally wounded him while he was speaking; when Kemp, who was on the parapet, called Puckey, one of his men, and they bore their countryman from the field, and the Europeans, as in other instances, carried him for them when they were exhausted. Kemp's behaviour throughout was beyond all praise—he uniformly supported me, and made his people carry out my orders to the best of his ability; and had he known that one European was missing, would have gone back at the last moment to fetch him, or (as it seemed to me) to die.

When we passed the redoubt a few Hauhaus came out and occupied it, but I had already extended a party to reply to their fire on the next hill, and, as we marched, dropped companies on each low range to cover the retreat of the rear guard, so, though there was some noise, there was no harm done on our side till we reached Wairoa. At about a mile off, a hundred Hauhaus perhaps, scattered along the brow, and fired long shots, which could not reach, probably out of bravado. When this had gone on for a short time I had one of the guns run out, and fired a few shell among them, which presently dispersed them.

The enemy was in great force. He could not have brought up less than 500 or 600 men against us. He showed in numbers, and was disposed to close at several points at once. He attacked No. 2, and section of No. 6, on the left, while he was swarming down on No. 6 and Kemp's Natives, and while thus employed pushed forward a large number to the dray road. Here at first they were taken for Kupapas; but Sergeant Blake (Volunteer attached to A.C.), finding that a man named Kohiri (well known here) was in advance leading them, undeceived our people, and a sharp volley at close quarters drove them back. Though less prominently placed than other divisions, No. 2, and the left section of No. 6, did excellent service, and as they fired at close quarters from concealment on the enemy in almost open ground, it is probable that their fire was about the most destructive. But the rapidity of fire of our men, who were quite cool and never fired during the retreat, except when pressed, or when they saw the enemy close to them, must have been very fatal.

When we first got up to the palisade we all heard the women crying inside, and as it appeared to me to give no protection to its defenders except concealment, and as 200 rifles were fired into it from two sides at easy range for an hour, and it was full of men, I am sure there must have been many casualties inside. Kepa, who looked inside, and was shot in doing so (he is doing well, I am glad to say), saw four dead men lying together in a heap, partly covered with a mat, and this was within five minutes of the beginning. I believe they were too many for their style of war. They were exposed to a fire on three sides all day, for every man of ours for the first half-hour had an opportunity of delivering his fire from concealment quite as good as that of the enemy, while they were collected in a comparatively small space in and behind the palisade. Afterwards as we retired we had a much wider front than he had, and, except the supports, all the men could see and fire as well as he could. Not having won the ground, I cannot of course do more than conjecture from my own experience and observation, but I never heard quicker volleys, and these were delivered in no wanton manner, but only when a rush was attempted or the enemy showed out in force.

Kemp and his Natives, who have won the admiration of all ranks, are quite as much charmed with our fighting, and indeed from first to last not one person in the force can be blamed for his part of the whole. All obeyed my orders as accurately, and when obliged acted for themselves on momentary emergencies, as if all were old veterans. If there be any blame for our failure it rests all upon me, unless it be considered by the Government that I had a full right to expect the co-operation of the Natives; once committed, I had no choice but to proceed. The road by which I advanced is a track not used by the Natives, but which the settlers had lately found out. I never again could have used it if I had turned back. If I had halted outside the bush the approaches would have been lined, and I could not have got so far unmolested. Moreover, the reinforcements which Moturoa might get at any moment after the first quarter of an hour compelled me to lose no time in attacking. The arrangements made enabled us to reach the kainga without the loss of a man in crossing the open, and between the first shot and our doing so very few minutes elapsed. Again, if I had held the ground outside, the party believed to be on my right co-operating (which never came up, I may observe) would have been cut off, and our prestige here lost by returning when in sight of the enemy. Moreover, it is to be questioned if I had waited for the party of Natives I have mentioned outside the bush, and then returned, whether I might not have been drawn into a worse bush and more hopeless position than that of Moturoa. On the whole, I feel quite sure I had no choice, and that I had a very fair chance of success and nearly achieved it. Grieved as the men are at the loss of Major Hunter, sadly as they think of their missing comrades, I am happy to be able to state that their courage is high, their discipline wholly unimpaired, if not improved, and that they may be absolutely depended on when raised to something like equality with the enemy in point of numbers. And I do earnestly entreat the Government—whatever view