

I ordered Sub-Inspector Roberts to select any it would not be safe to take, and to march with the rest at daybreak in support of the column. These men had with great spirit marched from Kai-Iwi at daylight, and crossing the Waitotara at noon, reached my bivouac at 2 p.m.

I explained to the men the necessity which compelled me to ask for further exertions so soon, and they thanked me for giving them so early an opportunity of trial. In order to give them as much rest as possible, I ordered them to march the last of the several columns, when I detailed the troops for the movement against the enemy.

During the day I issued orders for the march of the whole force at various hours, so that they should not interfere with one another; but the advanced column, guided by Captain Hawes himself, was to be accompanied by Captain Kemp, and twenty selected Natives and the Maoris of No. 1 Division, Armed Constabulary.

I have to acknowledge your various despatches of the 2nd instant, and up to that date.

I have to call your attention to the extreme energy and promptitude of every person connected with the bringing up of the new division. It has been excellently recruited, and the men are good. It has been kept in excellent order on the journey by Sub-Inspector Roberts, and was brought on by him in the most spirited manner. It was pushed on by Lieut.-Colonel Gorton with his usual promptitude and despatch, and arrived in excellent spirits and order, though it marched that day from Kai-Iwi, and forded the Waitotara. I have never seen a finer body of men.

I have, &c.,

G. S. WHITMORE, Colonel.

No. 4.

Copy of a Letter from Colonel WHITMORE to the Hon. Colonel HAULTAIN.

SIR,—

Head-Quarters, Wairoa, 7th November, 1868.

In continuation of my former despatches, I have the honor to inform you that the whole available force under my command marched this morning from my bivouac at this place, at 1, 2, and 3 o'clock a.m., with excellent guides, provided by Captain Hawes from the actual residents, he himself guiding the advanced party. This latter was composed of the Wairoa Rifles, the A.C. Natives, and 20 picked Natives under the chief Kemp. The Kupapas were ordered to follow the advanced party, but, whether on account of a light rain that was falling or not, they did not do so. They, however, promised to come when I caused them to be roused, and I moved off myself with the Patea Rifles, Nos. 1, 2, and 3 A.C., and the Patea Yeomanry Cavalry dismounted. No. 6 Division, A.C., having been carefully inspected by Captain Roberts, and the wholly untrained and footsore men left behind, marched from Wairoa as an escort for the reserve ammunition at daylight. All these columns met by 4 a.m., or thereabouts. It was now light, but I could neither see any Natives coming, nor had any number of them come up, though a few were there under young Aperahama. The bulk of the force under my orders were Maori Kupapas. I am not able to speak their language, and am but indifferently versed in the Maori mode of forming an opinion, so I specially asked Messrs. Parris and Booth to ascertain the disposition of the whole contingent, and they were satisfied that they would fight. Their delay was embarrassing to me, and I at first resolved to go back; but as Aperahama told me that 100 Kupapas, relying on my carrying out my arrangements, had gone by the dray road, and would be left in the lurch, and as Mr. McDonnell told me that all the party present meant and wished to fight, and that many others would soon overtake me, I decided to push on and take Moturoa, which, from my information, was not likely to be held in force. If the absent Kupapas did not then appear, I told Kemp I should not enter the forest track to Okutuku, but confine myself to what I believed we were then strong enough to accomplish. Apparently up to this point the enemy had not discovered our approach; indeed I have grave suspicions that he was accurately informed of my intentions, and took no trouble to keep any sentries at all. I advanced at length cautiously, and at the entrance to the scrub by the dray track I halted and sent on scouts. At a distance of 600 yards, on a commanding elevation, I left the Wairoa Rifles under Mr. Middlemas. They were ordered to throw up a small redoubt, and to protect the reserve ammunition, which they did. Having allowed the scouts to proceed some way, I cautiously entered the scrub. I knew the ground from the description of many of the Wairoa settlers, and I was accompanied by Captain Hawes, whose own property adjoined the block now occupied by the Hauhaus. I enclose a sketch map to illustrate the events of the day, which I hope will supply any imperfections in my description.

The position of Moturoa when attacked by General Chute was not in any way defended by fortification, and it was then held by the inhabitants of the place only. When last seen by Captain Hawes there was no enclosure. The kainga is on a very large clearing, which is perfectly bare; it is close under the slope, covered with dense forest, up which the road leads to Okutuku. The approach to the open ground passes through a belt of long fern and Koromiko scrub, by a broad dray track. This belt of scrub is again shut in on either flank by forest, and has been a clearing at some time.

Having proceeded about half-way through the scrub the scouts with Kemp returned, and reported that they had seen the kainga (I had myself also just seen it); that it was palisaded; that we had not been perceived, and that we might endeavour to surprise and carry it by a rush without any unreasonable danger. Kemp suggested a plan, and undertook the execution of the most important, because the most difficult part. I supplemented it by one or two additional precautions, all of which proved of value. Kemp's plan was to strike into the forest with such of his men as he could get to follow him, on the right flank supported by Europeans, and to creep up close to the kainga to its left rear. I was to advance by the road the way I was expected, and as soon as I was perceived, Kemp's party was to open fire on the place, while I assaulted it. I added the ordinary precaution of supports and reserves, and on my left flank extended a party to prevent that road being left open to them in case they designed to turn it. I may here say that the kainga was surrounded by an oblong palisade with one gate (as it proved) only to the rear. The palisades were new, and neatly put up, but in no way different, I think, to ordinary kainga palings, except that they appeared to be of uniform height. I hear from some that