

## Reprinted from the New Zealand Herald

## Colour and Pay Sergeant, H.M 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment

We publish today the first portion of the diary of Colour and Pay Sergeant, Robert Hattaway, sen, of the 58 Regiment, as kept by him during the Northern War of 1845-1846. Mr Hattaway was subsequently a captain in the Auckland New Zealand Militia during the Waikato campaign of 1863-1864.

He arrived here with the first detachment of the 58<sup>th</sup> under Captain (afterwards Major) Matson, the late General R.H. Wynyard then being commanding officer of the regiment, and served through the whole campaign. Mr Hattaway kept a diary of events throughout. His object was to give a true account of what came under his personal notice, as well as reports of current events during 1845-46. He is not aware that any other military man engaged in those military operations has given any detailed accounts or kept a diary.

His description of many amusing and truthful episodes of those eventful times should form interesting reading to young colonials, as well as to those who study the history of the colony.

Mr Hattaway enlisted in H.M. 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment in 1842, when nearly nineteen years of age.

It is in the recollection of many old settlers of Auckland the state of uncertainty and fear that prevailed in the minds of many when the news arrived of the sacking of Kororareka, and the flight of the European inhabitants. The general report and belief then were that the rebels were on their way to Auckland to perpetrate a similar episode, which probably they would have done but for the watchfulness of Tamati Waka Nene, the chief of the Ngapuhi tribes. His many engagements with the rebels at that time prevented them from carrying their boasted intentions, and these services of Tamati were gratefully recognised in due course by Sir George Grey, and he was granted an annuity. It was a matter of regret to have entered upon a winter campaign without necessary provisions being made for the requirements of the campaign. In a new country with no roads, bridges and means of transit, it clearly showed that whoever gave the order, whether the Governor of New South Wales or of New Zealand, he was unable to comprehend the gravity of his position. If the necessary preparation had been made, and resources husbanded during the winter for a spring and summer campaign, a lesson might have been taught to the rebellious natives that they would have long remembered. As it was, a brave and competent man, Colonel Hume, was despatched to perform, with inadequate means, a physical impossibility, namely, the effective chastisement of the rebels. The prestige of the military forces had seriously suffered, in addition to the great sacrifice of men which took place in trying to redeem affairs and sustain the honour of Britain. Heke was the leader of the rebels, and Kawiti and other chiefs were associated with him. The principal rebel chiefs, it is said, were impressed with the belief that so long as the British flag was displayed overlooking the bay and harbour, and in view of the place where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed, their power was lost, gone. The cutting down of the flagstaff was immediate cause of the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment being despatched from Sydney to sustain the honour of England, and the Queens sovereignty over the colony of New Zealand. This much by the way of preliminary, and Colour and Pay Sergeant Hattaway goes on to tell the story of the Northern War in his own way.

### H.M. 58 REGIMENT EMBARK FOR THE WAR

Major Bridge, who was commanding the detachment which was stationed at Parramatta was ordered by General O'Connell to have two companies ready to embark for New Zealand. There being no suitable transport available caused about a month's delay, but on March 11, 1845, we were embarked on board H.M.s North Star, 26 guns commanded by Sir Everard Home, the day that Kororareka was captured and sacked by the rebels. After a passage of 14 days, we entered the waters of the Waitemata. I can well recollect the event. It was a beautiful clear night, a full moon overhead, while serenity reigned around. We neared Port Britomart, and the ship cast anchor. On the same day the troops disembarked at Mechanic's Bay. They consisted of Captain Matson's company, 100 strong, with Lieuts. Balneavis and Masters. Captain Dressing, with two officers and 100 men were a few days afterwards sent to Wellington.

This was the first detachment of the old "Black Cuffs" to arrive in the colony. The company of Captain Matson marched up Shortland Street to old St Pauls Church and halted, the rank and file extending their formation down to where the New Zealander printing office stood. There was a crowd of natives assembled, and they were in a great of excitement, rushing up and down the lines, counting and recounting the numbers. After considerable delay, the greater portion of the men were sent to Port Britomart, the residue, of about 60 men, to Hardington's old hotel (where Bycroft's mill now stands); the officer retaining one room, and the men distributed throughout the rest. After relieving ourselves of our accoutrement's, and spreading our greatcoats on the floor for a mattress, and our knapsacks for a pillow, we lay down and enjoyed a short repose. After resting we looked around for refreshments, and found an old lady who supplied our wants. On tendering some silver coins, in change she handed me several small cards with IOU on them. We looked at the cards, and then at some refreshing drinks, and the drinks won the day. The issue of these small debentures was a great convenience for small tradesmen in these days. After the arrival of the troop's money became more plentiful, and the IOU's disappeared from circulation. The Maoris were the principal purveyors of Auckland at that time. Their canoes were beached and drawn up to the highwater mark, just where the Victoria Arcade and General Post Office now stand. Their supplies for disposal,

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consisted of pigs, potatoes, pumpkin, kumaras, maize fish and, in the season, splendid peaches, the prices for which fruit were reasonable. The natives, especially the women, were keen higglers in exacting the last farthing, and many amusing scenes ensued in the purchase of pigs by the knights of the cleaver.

But this is by the way. Upon our return to our quarters a sentry had been placed in front of the same, and strong outlying pickets were placed, forming our cordon around the infant city, in order to protect it from any surprise and give time for the women and children to assemble in the places provided for their protection, namely, Britomart Point and St. Paul's brick church. The windows of the latter were well planked and loopholed for musketry. These precautions, and the presence of troops, had the effect of allaying the fear and uncertainty that existed previous to our arrival. The provisions issued to supply our daily wants consisted of 1 lb bread, and 1 lb pork and vegetables; coffee in the morning and tea in the evening. Boiled pork and fish continuously was not too appetising. Some of the men partook too freely of intoxicants at a time when sobriety was so necessary for the very safety of the people whom they had come to protect. Many of the inhabitants, from mistaken kindness presented to the men on out-post duty intoxicants contrary to stringent orders. The duty on liquor was low at the time. One of the wisest acts of the authorities was to double it, thus increasing the revenue, and having a tendency to decrease the use of intoxicants.

Mr George Graham, the clerk of works under Major Marlow, R.E, was then engaged in completing Fort Britomart, a working party of the military being daily employed in strengthening the defences, prior to mounting guns. This was a promontory of land containing from four to five acres, projecting into the harbour, and since removed for harbour and railway improvements.

### A GREAT SCARE

On April 1, about 2am, a dark and cloudy morning, we received a great scare by a musket being discharged in the vicinity of Government House, then occupied by Governor Fitzroy. The alarm was sounded by the bugler of the guard. The troops assembled at the appointed place, and the volunteers arrived at short intervals, some rushing up Shortland street with their bayonets fixed at the trail – a dangerous practice of a dark night. After the men had been formed up and told off, ready to be moved to any point required, Lieut. Balneavis was despatched to visit the different outposts, to ascertain the cause of alarm. The rear of the Governor's residence was covered with a low scrub and dense fern, which at this time surrounded Auckland. A non-commissioned officer commanded a picket whose sentries were placed extending from Government House grounds to where the Church Hall now stands. One of the sentries stated that he heard something stealthily approaching the post, and after listening for some time he heard the crackling of the scrub. Seeing some object approaching he challenged three times, received no answer and fired according to orders. The report which circulated after our dismissal at daylight was that the object was one of the Governor's cows, which had not answered the sentry's challenge and thus caused all the commotion that ensued. That sentry had a bad time of it afterwards. Even at the Antipodes All Fools Day was not forgotten.

### REFUGEES FROM KORORAREKA

A few refugees continued to arrive from Kororareka, Bay of Islands in small coasting craft, many of whom had been under the protection of H.M.s Hazard, Captain Robertson, whose name is remembered with love and affection for his gallant and undaunted bravery. He and his bluejackets fought like lions in covering the retreat and protecting the necessary embarkation of those who sought the protection of their country's flag. Captain Robertson through his severe wounds was crippled for life, and did not long survive. Thus, his country was deprived of one of one of her noblest sons. The first lieutenant (Phillpott) succeeded his disabled captain, and lost his life in leading a body of bluejackets at the storming of the pa at Ohaewai on July 1 1845. The continued assistance of Tamati Waka Nene, and his Ngapuhi's, together with the arrival of headquarters of the 58 Regiment, under the command of Major Bridge, had the effect of restoring confidence and a sense of security in the minds of the people.

The arrival of the Slains Castle, about April 24, with the addition of 200 men, the band, medical, and quarter-master's departments, strengthened the garrison. The children and non-effectives were left to the care of Lieut. Cooper (afterward Adjutant Cooper), with Dr. Philson, at Parramatta, New South Wales. The head surgeon, Dr. Pine, had seen much service in China and India. After Heke's war he was Home and appointed to the fifth division, under General Cathcart, in the Crimean War, Dr. Thomson the author of "the Story of New Zealand," being his successor in Auckland.

### THE EXPEDITION TO THE NORTH

The transport Slains Castle was detained in the harbour awaiting instructions. After some delay, every available man was despatched from Auckland, consisting of the 58<sup>th</sup>, and a few men from the 96<sup>th</sup> under Colonel Hume, a brave and able commander of the old school, and accompanied by a few of the Auckland volunteers. This force was to rendezvous at the beginning of May at the Bay of Islands, on board the H.M.s North Star, Hazard, Government gun-brig Victoria, and Slain Castle. The naval party had a rocket tube and 12 small rockets. They had no cannon or mortars of any kind to affect a

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breach, therefore were totally inadequate to perform any effective work, and arrived and disembarked at the Kerikeri River about 350 strong. After being supplied with three day's provisions and extra ammunitions, which they had to help carry, in addition to their 60 rounds, they were subsequently assisted by some of the friendly natives.

#### ATTACK ON OKAIHAU PA

After a tedious march through Maori tracks in tea-tree scrub, the troops debouched before the rebel pa, not a very formidable place. The force was formed up on rising ground in column. The commander, after surveying its position and strength, had the rocket tube placed in position, hoping to set fire to the inflammable material of which the whare was constructed, within the closure of the pa. This enclosure was protected on its outside by a palisade of timber in its rough state, averaging about a foot in diameter, 10ft high, placed upright in the ground, and faced with flax, as a blind. This was one of the usual living pas, and to which the rebels retreated with their booty after the sack and pillage of Kororareka. The surrounding was principally covered with manuka, or tea-tree scrub, which was very favourable for planting ambuscades, and from which an invading force might be surprised and decimated. The natives were very excitable, in action, at close quarters. After dropping their cartridges into their guns, and using the rammer, they fired from the hip, producing a wastage of powder and ball with little effect. The 58<sup>th</sup> were about to be engaged in and to receive their first baptism of fire in New Zealand. The 12 rockets had been fired without producing any effect; the musketry fire was also useless, and the natives within the pa were completely protected by its palisades. A timely warning was given by the friendly natives, under Johnny Hobbs – whose keen ears and quick sight had discovered a strong body of the rebels in ambuscade – to the troops, whose position would have been taken in reverse, an important service which was recognised by Sir George Grey subsequently giving Hobbs employment in the Government service. The practical experiences of Adjutant McLerie and the bravery of Captain Denny enabled them to have time to change the position of the Light Company, by extending them along the front of the Maori ambuscade, completely frustrating the attempted surprise of the Maoris; but in performing this operation the right section of the company suffered severely. Notwithstanding their losses, the troops continued to advance, steadily driving the rebels before them, until they eventually left the field defeated and discouraged. This was the first conflict that ensued before the old "Black Cuffs" and the rebellious natives. The latter on this occasion suffered a reported loss of about 70 killed and wounded. Old Kawiti lost a son in this skirmish and it was said that he was passed in advance of the troops by his feigning death. The old corps nobly sustained their reputation in their first encounter with the rebels. The three companies – Grenadier, Light, and No 9 – each sustained loss, but the principal sufferers were the Light Company. Total, 8 killed, 16 wounded.

After the conclusion of the engagement, and the retreat of the rebels, the dead were collected and buried on the field. The wounded, who numbered 16, were carried on improvised stretchers, in torrents of rain, with the aid of the friendly natives. They reached Kemp's store at Kerikeri, and were afterwards forwarded to Auckland by the Government brig Victoria. This engagement took place, and was fought at Okaihau, on May 8, 1845. I was stationed in after years at Wahapu, 1847-1850, under command of Major Bridge. I spoke with Kawiti and many of the natives engaged on May 8, and they freely acknowledged their defeat, and the loss of 70 men on that occasion. Among the friendly natives intermingled with our skirmishes was a white man, in the garb of a native warrior, named Jacky Marmon. He was a stalwart and muscular man, and apparently exercised a good deal of authority, over the young braves in action.

When seen in his war-paint, white ochre, breasts and arms tattooed, a light girdle mat about his loins, and head adorned with feathers, with long-handled tomahawk and spear, he looked a formidable fighter. A few days after the engagement of May 8, at Okaihau, a small force was sent up the river towards Kawakawa, where Pomare, a supposed disaffected chief, resided in a Pa on the left bank of the river. It being reported that his hapu was in sympathy with the rebels, and many of his men actively engaged in the pillage of Kororareka, on March 11, as well as the engagement on May 8, the authorities decided that chastisement was necessary. His pa was taken and partially destroyed by fire without resistance, and Pomare detained on board the North Star for several weeks. This act had the effect of deciding the whole of Pomare's men to join Hone Heke, and they did not return to their old locality during the war.

After the defeat of the Maori rebels at Okaihau, they retired to Ohaewai; and the various war ships returned to the Bay of Islands, to await further instructions from the General commanding at Sydney.

#### OHAEWAI PA

At Ohaewai the rebels built the strongest pa ever seen in New Zealand. It was the most perfect of the many pas constructed for defence against musketry or ordinary field guns. A model of this pa was sent Home by the late Col. Balneavis to the British Museum. This pa was built on the margin, or contiguous to, a large forest, where the timber was ample, and easy to remove, collect, and erect. It was ample dimensions for all the purposes required by its occupiers. The rough timber used for its construction was of unusual dimensions, placed firmly in the ground, reaching a height of about eight or ten feet from the ground. The whole was fenced around, and consisted of a double line of palisades, about two yards apart, with angles in which a few old ships guns were mounted. The latter were supposed to be obtained from a

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French frigate or the ship Boyd, captured at Whangaroa. The loopholes for the musketry were from the ground level, and were affected by taking a scarf out of the two connecting palisades forming a letter 'A' on both lines. In the interior of the row of palisades was a deep trench, six feet in depth, with steps, enabling the defenders to deliver their fire from ground level, and slip down and reload their guns in safety. Their living habitations consisted of many single large excavated chambers, dug to the depth of about six feet, and about 30 ft by 20 ft in length and breadth. These abodes were all covered with rough timber, and the earth that had been removed, used as a covering to strengthen them, and add security to its defenders. These pas were known to have been the strongest the British troops ever had to contend against, and in which the Maori rebel's skill and ingenuity were plainly manifested.

### PRELIMINARY OPERATIONS

In the early part of June, 1845, Col. Despard, with the two flank companies of the 99<sup>th</sup> arrived. As senior officer he assumed the command of the whole force, which consisted of three companies of the 58 Regiment, under command of Major Bridge, two companies of the 99<sup>th</sup>, about 25 men of the 96<sup>th</sup>, 40 volunteers, and some bluejackets from the H.M.'s North Star and Hazard, amounting altogether to about 500 men. The Governor of van Diemen's Land had also sent his aide-de-camp, Captain Wilmot, of the Royal Artillery, and two antiquated artillery sergeants, who had served under Wellington in the Peninsular War! This artillery force of one officer and two old sergeants were strengthened by a selected few of Auckland's blue - smocked volunteers, under the charge of the late Mr. Reader Wood, then lieutenant – subsequently Colonial Treasurer, and one of Auckland's politicians. The rest of the volunteers were under the command of Mr. Figg, and they acted as pioneers to the force. The artillery had under their charge two old six pounders (field guns) and two small mortars. This force, having assembled at the Bay of Islands by their different vessels, proceeded to Kemp's store and remained in the vicinity for the night. One of the customs observed by the troops when on service in the field was to remain under arms for one hour before the break of day. This rule was strictly adhered to. On this occasion we were supplied with half a pound of biscuits per man, a portion of the day's rations, the balance to be received on reaching Waimate Mission station. Captain Thompson, with two sergeants and two corporals and 50 men, with a six-pounder gun, and a dray load of ammunition, was despatched on the journey soon after daybreak. The rain soon set in, and continued the whole day and night. When about half-way, our gun and ammunition dray, to which were attached four miserable bullocks, became bogged in the track. Drenched and without food, we had to remain for the night. The following day the ammunition was conveyed to its destination, and the gun was extricated with considerable labour.

### WAIMATE MISSION STATION

About ten o'clock in the evening we reached Waimate, hungry and exhausted, but the best arrangements made by our comrades afforded us a very pleasant surprise. They were located in a very large kitchen, in one of the Mission buildings, whose inhabitants had fled. Large logs were burning brightly on the hearth, and on the floor were several large dampers, a couple of large jars of jam, and plenty of strong hot tea. As I entered the door, I was agreeably surprised. We received pleasant greetings from our comrades, who relieved us of our arms, accoutrements, and our outer garments, which they kindly cleaned and dried. After doing justice to the good thing put before us, we fell into a sound sleep on the floor, until reveille sounded to keep usual vigil an hour before daybreak, and to stand to our arms till daylight.

### A FORAGING COOK

Each company, when in camp or garrison had an appointed cook. Our purveyor, who was afterwards killed in an affray in Shortland street, was very popular with the men for any addition to the menu. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest foragers in the regiment, and was constantly discovering some 'plants' of food, hidden by those who had fled. The men made no inquiry, but partook willingly of everything put in front of them. The Mission station was certainly minus of any food after our departure.

### OUR SKIRMISH

A few days after our arrival, Col. Despard, having reconnoitred the road and the nature of the country leading to Ohaewai, moved from the Waimate with his whole force about the 10<sup>th</sup> June. As we approached within a mile of the rebel's position, No 9 company of the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment, being the advance guard, formed in skirmishing order, under command of Lieutenant Balneavis. We were assisted by a few friendly natives, amongst them being a white man who acted like a sort of chief. Very soon we were greeted with volleys of musketry. The surrounding scrub being eight to ten feet high their aim was ineffective, as I saw only one man injured by the fire. A friendly native on my left received a ball to the thigh, and his comrades speedily stopped the haemorrhage by plugging the wound with clay. We advanced in line, preserving our distance from the centre, taking every advantage of any cover or irregularities in the ground, the rebels falling back before us until they finally reached their stronghold. The advance skirmishers continued in their extended order, and halted on rising to undulating ground, until the whole force arrived. The ground was selected for an encampment, the position being assigned to the various corps, under their respective commanders, two large bell tents were allotted to a company, which

were pitched on the undulating side of a hill, about 500yds or 600yds from the pa. Many of these tents were pierced at the top from the fire from the pa, and two of our men were wounded in the company during the investment.

This stronghold was commanded by a conical hill within musketry range, and connected with and contiguous to the rebel position, from whence they could enter the forest unseen. This hill was placed in charge of Tamati Waka Nene, and his tribe, and on its summit, they erected a flagstaff on which the British flag was hoisted. This post on the right of the camp added greatly to our security from surprise. The two six pounders and the two mortars were placed in position on the highest ground, in advance of the camp, where earthworks, with stone, were erected for the protection of the troops. The medical department was under the charge of Dr. Pine, of the 58<sup>th</sup>, quarter-master's department, under the quartermasters of the 58<sup>th</sup> and 99<sup>th</sup>, and the Commissariat under Mr. du Moulin. At sunset the usual outpost pickets were posted in the most advantageous position for protection. The remaining men off duty, fully accoutred, were ready to turn out at a moment's notice. These were the daily routine of daily duties of the men in camp. Two bell tents were in adequate for a company, and only sufficient for the accommodation of about 16 men. The first night in was miserable; the ground saturated from incessant rain, the flooring of the tents a soft pool of mud. The greater number of men were allowed next day to construct means of shelter for themselves. My three comrades and myself constructed a small tea tree shed, with two blankets for roof protection, and procured ferns for our beds. During the whole of that period, about a month in the middle of winter, an unusually wet one, the men had no change of clothing. Our accoutrements remained on us, and our arms beside our side, as our proximity to the rebel position necessitated every precaution against any sudden surprise. The men in camp did their best to provide themselves with shelter. The staff were very inadequately provided for. There had not been stored provisions for a winter's campaign, and we were without the means of transport. A few old bullocks were obtained from Mr. Bedgood formerly of the Waimate Mission Station. Some of the bullocks were bogged in the numerous streams and gullies they had to pass through, and were slaughtered for the use of the troops. Biscuits and rum were the daily fare.

### FRUITLESS SIEGE OPERATIONS

The second day our encampment ground assumed a grotesque appearance. The many small tea tree shanties enabled the men when off duty to stretch their weary limbs on the ground. The two guns and mortars being now in position, many men were assembled to watch the effect of shot and shell on the pa. Our expectations were not realised, and they produced no apparent effect, even after several days of partial firing. The aim and direction of the cannon shots striking the outer palisade was excellent, but they became embedded in the rough timber. The shell was also useless, being too light to penetrate the earth through the mass of earth which protected them in their covered excavations which lead to their trenches. Our commanders were at their wit's end, as it was clear that the light guns and mortars were useless in effecting a breach. Our ingenious artillery men thought of the empty shell cases that should have contained live shells. Could they be converted into stench balls, and fired by the mortars in a vertical direction by means of short time fuses? We sent two old soldiers to assist in their manufacture. Great expectations were entertained by our artillery officers of the success of this scheme. The shells contained some poisonous substance, the effect of which was expected to deprive the rebels of all animation, and leave them an easy prey to the European victors. As day by day passed away and nothing had occurred to disturb the natives in their stronghold, it was concluded the project had been a failure. It was never ascertained what number of stench balls had been fired.

The hardships that the men had to endure from incessant rain and insufficient food, produced exhaustion and weakness. About this time the supply had been exhausted, and half a pound of flour per day was the only food supplied to the troops for several days, which the men had converted into skilley, by boiling in their mess tins. A gill of rum was supplied after break of day and in the evening. This never failed to be supplied. The effect of the stimulant with an inadequate supply of food was clearly noticeable, producing a buoyancy of spirits for some time, but when its effect had died out there came a reaction, and a craving for more too place. Personally, I disliked the very smell of rum, and seldom tasted it, but I craved for more food, which was not to be obtained.

### THE MAORI WOMEN

The women of Tamati Waka Nene's tribe carried their provisions from Hokianga to camps on their backs. I have often seen them carrying two kits of large potatoes, strapped to their backs. They would patiently toil with their heavy burdens, while their "braves" by their sides would render no assistance. After arriving in camp, they prepared their food for their lords and masters. The women of Tamati Waka Nene, at the time when the men were half starved in camp, regularly visited the sentries on outpost duty in the early morning, accompanied by several women of the tribe, carrying small kits of cooked potatoes, and deposited one before each sentry on night duty before they returned to their camp. The few old soldiers still alive remember with gratitude those acts of kindnesses, as well as the ingenious contrivance of the old chieftainess, Tamati Waka's wife.

### RESUMPTION OF THE SIEGE

As the guns and mortar failed in effecting a breach, as well as the stench balls, through our inability to place them in the dens of the rebels, a new idea had taken possession of the minds of some of the military leaders, namely, to construct walking batteries, a scheme which was approved by the colonel in command. All the men off duty were employed cutting tea tree rods about 12ft. in length, and faced horizontally with flax. When finished they were six feet in height, and reported ball proof. Each company were provided with four, one to each section, which were to be carried by each advancing party in front of them as a shield, thus protecting themselves from the enemy's fire as they approached the pa. Upon arrival they were placed in front of each porthole of the palisade. From whom this idea emanated I cannot say, but to think that orders had been absolutely issued to that effect by the officer in command is more astonishing. Did he think that this phantom army advancing at midnight would act upon their superstitious fears? It is true the natives have never been known to engage into any kind of warfare at night, but in the early morning and peep of day their surprises had been successfully accomplished against their foes. I was on outpost duty with Lieutenant Balneavis. He had orders to withdraw his picket and return to camp at a quarter to twelve pm., and assemble at midnight to make an attack with all our available force. The bugles were not to be sounded, and all was to be conducted with perfect silence. It had been raining for the most part of the day, and the night was pitch dark. At the appointed hour Serge. - major Moir and other non-commissioned officers were endeavouring to assemble the three companies of the 58<sup>th</sup>, but the torrents of rain and the extreme darkness prevented the men from assembling with regularity at their places of rendezvous. This deluge was a providential one, for it entirely frustrated the authorities from putting into execution an attempt to capture the pa by night, which they afterwards failed to accomplish by day. The three attempts to capture Ohaeawai pa ended in miserable failures.

At last, it was decided to bring one of the ship's 32 pounders and mount it on the conical hill, which ought to have been done at first, thereby saving many precious lives. The men in camp consisted of four companies of two regiments, being the picked men of two thousand strong, of superior physical stamina. They were a magnificent body of men, thoroughly disciplined and trained. There was also one battalion company. Their knapsacks having been placed instore at Kororareka, they had no change of garments, were ragged tattered and torn, many without boots, and tied on their feet with flax, their pants of many colours; blankets and greatcoats reduced in size to repair their continuations. To add to their troubles there were no needles or thread, and the soldiers supplies their wants by means of a piece of wood hardened at the point, and a hole pierced at the other end to carry the flax split to the necessary size. When Col. Wynyard afterwards saw these companies of his regiments, he was astonished to find his picked men in such a disreputable garb. He expressed himself by saying "I will indeed make a change in you before long." A great effort by the united strength of the bluejackets and troops succeeded in dragging the big breaching gun from Kerikeri to the camp, which was accomplished by excessive labour, and reached the position signed to it about the end of June.

### SIEGE OF OHAEAWAI PA

The provisions issued daily to the troops continued to be entirely insufficient for the wants of men who were performing such arduous duties. By some means the men heard of a large quantity of potatoes being stored in a whare, about 30 yards away from the enemy's position, and it was an inducement for the venturesome spirits in the camp to increase their supply of food. Many full kits had been taken by the men at night. The quantity gradually diminishing caused the rebels to place a watch to intercept the pillagers. On the night of 30 June, 1845, a small party approached the hut, and secured a supply. When the last man of the party was about to leave, he was captured with his load, and conveyed to the inside of the pa, where the Maori's subjected him to a terribly lingering death, by tying him to a post, and placing around him kauri gum, to which they set fire. This man was a fine young fellow of the Light Company, 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment. His screams and yells of pitiful agony were clearly and distinctly heard by men on outpost duty. The fire was likewise seen in the distance from the conical hill. After the capture of the pa this spot was visited by his comrades. Brass button and a buckle were found in the debris, but his body was completely consumed. This barbarous and cruel act created such a commotion in the camp that it almost approached to insubordination. The men assembled in small parties and approached the sergeant-major, who conveyed their demand to be led to the attack of the pa to Adjutant McLerie, who reported to his superiors the state of the men's feelings in camp. It was stated that the adjutant had volunteered to storm the pa with the flank companies of the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment. This partially allayed the excitement. The old Colonel, who had previously served in a storming party in his early days, decided to satisfy and gratify his men on the following day; the 1<sup>st</sup> July.

### SURPRISE OF THE FRIENDLIES CAMP

My comrades had secured a small suckling pig (we were starving at the time), from a wahine for ten shillings, which she had brought with her from Hokianga. We ignited the wood and secured the animal to a stake driven into the ground, and thus promised ourselves a great treat. The Auckland volunteers were supplied with camp kettles, and I was on my way to borrow one of them at about half past six a.m. on the 31<sup>st</sup>, when I heard a great noise and commotion on the conical hill where the friendly natives were encamped, and where the sergeant's guard of 12 men were placed in charge of a 6

pounder gun, which had been removed from the camp and placed on the hill in order to cover and protect those engaged below in forming the necessary works before the large gun could be placed in position. Colonel Despard was superintending the works, which was placed about two-thirds the distance up the hill. The commotion was caused by a large body of rebels emerging from the bush, who fired a volley, capturing the gun in camp occupied by Tamati Waka Nene, as well as the flag and flag staff erected therein, the friendly natives, who were absent from the position at the time, were trying to discover the whereabouts of the rebels, who were known to have left the pa shortly prior to the surprise. On looking up at the hill I saw the Maori women descending speedily, and heard them yelling. The flag was also hauled down and captured. The assembly to arms having being sounded by the bugler on duty, the men soon all collected in column. The two nearest companies were moved off under the command of Major Bridge, consisting of the Light Company (Captain Denny's) and No 9 Company (Lieutenants Balneavis'.) The words of command were given "Right face; double march!" The track from the camp was a circuitous one, leading around the base of the hill, and continuing up the ascent, until the top was reached. We commenced independent firing when within easy range of our guns by turning to the left, making a temporary halt, delivering our fire, and moving up to the right of our companions in arms. This occupied but a short time, as the rebels retired before us. In recapturing the guns and position our losses were three wounded. The sentry on the gun had been previously killed by a volley, which inflicted upon him six wounds. The Maori's left one big fellow behind, it being an unusual thing for them to abandon their dead. The firing had brought the friendly natives back to their camp, and after posting a strong guard the two companies returned to their own camp. On arrival there the little pig had disappeared, and we lost our promised treat. We were told afterwards that the wahine had been suckling the pig from her breast on the way from Hokianga. There was an amusing incident reported and in circulation among the men, but probably overdrawn. The old Colonel used his stick when walking, and was always accompanied by his field bugler. The bugler was with him at the time of the surprise and the capture of the hill above, where the Colonel and the fatigue party were engaged. They escaped the enemy's bullets but it hurried their flight in defending the hill. The bugler's statement, if rue, was that he ran with his utmost speed to camp, but his commander was there before him, and coolly issuing his orders to the different heads of departments. The capture and the torture of the unfortunate man on the 31<sup>st</sup>, and surprise at Tamati Waka's camp with gun and flag, produced in the minds of the men a desire for retribution. The question arose whether life was worth living as soldiers under the extreme hardships they had patiently to endure; also, why continue to remain before a place they believed could be captured? The commander, well knowing the desire of the men, complied with the request. Was he right in relinquishing his power of command over his men? I think not. He made a great mistake in not waiting to see what results would follow from the firing of the powerful gun from such a position, as already described, on the hill. He undoubtedly made a grievous error in despatching two-thirds of his disposable force against the strongest part of the pa, when there was no egress or ingress to or from that part of the pa immediately facing the camp. At the rear from the conical hill the rebels could be seen daily leaving and entering their stronghold, the forest being adjacent thereto, a most favourable place for collecting and placing of a body of men about to attack or surprise a position. If the Colonel had assembled about 200 men here, supported by the friendly natives, and made a feint on its front, the result may have been successful.

#### DISTASTROUS ATTACK ON OHAEAWAI

As it was, at 3p.m., July 1, the bugles sounded the assembly, and all except those on guard or sick were collected or formed in column with their officers, Colonel Hume, Major Bridge, McPherson, with officers in command of the various companies. On volunteers being called for the forlorn hope, the whole of the men of the 58<sup>th</sup> took a pace to the front, indicating that they were all willing to join with that party. Being more than was required, the right-hand man, front and rear rank, of each section of the company, was ordered to the front; a similar number of the 99<sup>th</sup>, under the subaltern officer constituted the forlorn hope, storming party, main body, and reserve, each party under their duly appointed officers. There were a few volunteers to carry scaling ladders and axes, as well as present Lieutenant Philpott, the commander of Hazard, with about a dozen bluejackets. The bugler sounding the advance, the men all moved forward in double time to their appointed positions. The forlorn hope and storming party arrived before the pa about the same time, with little loss. The supporting bodies were at convenient distances to render assistance when called for, but all were under short range of the pa, and several men suffered from its fire. The guard on the hill had a distinct view of the proceedings below. The surprise to the natives were such that many were making for the back entrance, but as the stormers could not get into the pa the defenders of the pa returned to their trenchers. One scaling ladder was placed against the outer palisade, and the men attempting to affect an entrance by this means were shot down. The faces of this pa were commanded and swept by the fire by angles, and as men were falling fast, after the lapse of about seven minutes the commander ordered the retreat to be sounded. The greatest difficulty then ensued in succouring and assisting wounded comrades. Some lost their lives in performing these noble acts of mercy, 101 men were sacrificed, out of 300 engaged, in the unreasonable attempt to capture the strongest known pa in New Zealand. Many brave acts were performed, as for example, a major of the 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment (said to be 18 stone in weight) was left behind severely wounded, when two men of the 58<sup>th</sup> (J. Palette and Whitethread) volunteered to go to his assistance, and succeeded in affecting his rescue. The former was the son of an old sergeant-major killed in at Waterloo. Both their names appeared in garrison orders after for bravery. Another poor fellow

in the company I belonged to, by name McKinnon, was carrying his companion, a Corporal Stewart, on his back to a place of safety when he received his death wound. Both bodies were afterwards recovered.

### AFTER THE BATTLE

After the repulse, and our return to camp, the rebels came to the outside of the pa, in the midst of our dying and dead comrades and performed the war dance in their naked savagery. They were several 100 strong, and their yells were appalling. A few shells or round shot sent amongst them would have silenced their savage joy, but our unfortunate comrades left on the field, who we were desirous of rescuing, prevented us from seeking any retribution. Three or four poor fellows who had sought protection of scrub reach the camp during the night; one by the name of Fisher, who had two brothers in the Light Company, died during the morning. His brothers escaped uninjured. The three doctors had a busy time of it that night. Several of the wounded men had to have their legs amputated, and a couple had to lose their arms. Dr. Pine's experience was of great service on this occasion. I only heard of one case that ended fatally. After the amputation took place in the upper part of his thigh, mortification set in, and no skill could save him.

The night of the storming of the pa, was an eventful one to those present. The heavy losses, the many wounded to be attended to, the persistent watchfulness required against surprise in the early morning, the camp being without protection, and a perfect quagmire of mud. The men, however were determined to their wounded comrades until the last pass. The night passed away without any attack, and confidence was restored. The dead lay where they fell, opposed to the attacks of wild pigs belonging to the rebels. On the afternoon of the third day, Archdeacon Williams arrived from the Waimate, accompanied by another gentlemen Mr. Baker or Mr. Davis. After some consultation with the commander, they performed a noble act. They went straight to the rebel pa, carrying a small white flag in their hands. We were under some apprehension for their safety, but after about an hour's absence they returned, and we were permitted to collect and bury our dead. A strong fatigue party was sent for that purpose. I was not on that duty, but those who were stated that many of the dead were in a state of nudity. Where the clothing was good it was removed from their bodies, and the condition of the bodies, was pitiable to witness. After the painful and necessary duty of collecting the dead, excavations were made in the ground. Thirty-two bodies were placed in one grave, and eight in another, and the beautiful burial service of the Church of England was read over the fallen. The bodies were covered up, and the dead left to sleep their last sleep. Several isolated bodies were found afterwards, and buried in the same manner. Commander Philpott, the nephew of Dr. Philpott, Bishop of Exeter, was found to the left of where the main attack was made. His body was not mutilated, and had been undisturbed after he fell. Captain Grant's body was not discovered until nearly the middle of the month of July, after the vacation of the pa. Upon search being made the soldiers found he had been buried. He was discovered by one hand being uncovered by the earth. One man in my company, who was assisting in the removal of the body, said it was obvious that portions of the fleshy part of the body had been cut off and removed from the trunk. This matter was much talked about in camp, as also was a drumhead court-martial, on a fine-looking young man, who previous to leaving England had been a sergeant on recruiting service. His habit of indulging too freely in intoxicants brought about his ruin, for he was charged with tampering with and adulterating the grog, for which he was tried and convicted, losing his "stripes" and the respect of his comrades. The following day he was one of the storming party, and in the attack on the pa, he was killed, and his body was buried with those who fell on that occasion. His brother was a non-commissioned officer, and it was conjectured that was the reason the authorities cancelled the proceedings of the court-martial, and he simply appeared on the records as non-commissioned officer killed in action.

### EVACUATION OF THE PA

Several days elapsed, and the duties of the camp continued to be performed in the ordinary way. Provisions were insufficient, and of very bad quality. The boots of many of the men were entirely worn out; the condition of the clothing was becoming worse. Our one great hope was from the breaching gun now in position, for which we had received a supply of ammunition. Our expectations were fully realised on the following day. The shot penetrated their stronghold, and it was reported that two or three natives had been cut in two when they appeared out of their dens for cooking or other purposes. It was unlikely that they could continue to hold their pa, with any prospect of success, commanded as it was by the heavy gun lately mounted.

There were two courses open to the rebel natives, either to capture the summit of the hill occupied by the friendly natives – the very key of the position - or to vacate their stronghold. Unusual vigilance was exercised to protect this strong position from a surprise at dawn. This surprise was not attempted, however, and the friendly natives were evidently aware that the rebels were about evacuating the pa by their constant shouting and bantering at night – a native custom. This revealed the intentions of the rebels to their friends in our camp, or we could not otherwise have become acquainted with their having left at midnight. As soon as this act became known there was a general stampede from camp of the men off duty to explore its vicinity, but it was not until daylight that the nature of this stronghold was fully revealed. We were fully convinced of the folly and madness of sacrificing the lives of officers and men without a possibility of success. But it

must be remembered that Colonel Despard was weak-minded enough to comply with the men's request, probably against his own experience and belief, for his courage and bravery had been too well tested in his early years. It must have been gratifying to the many brave officers engaged to see how nobly the men performed all the duties required of them during the worst portion of an unusually wet New Zealand winter. Continually wearing saturated garments for nearly a month, exhausted from want of sufficient food, and living in shanties that afforded little or no protection from the weather, was it any wonder that both officers and men heartily rejoiced at the prospect of what they hoped would end their military service in New Zealand.

The natives on relinquishing their pa, left behind them large supplies of splendid potatoes, which were acceptable to the troops at the time. With the recovery of their spirits, it was wonderful to see what a physical improvement appeared to have taken place in the troops. The rebels having entirely disappeared, it was reported that they had gone far inland. The men now able to enjoy a good bath, a boon duly appreciated. There was no necessity for remaining in the vicinity of our ever-remembered disaster, the repulse of Ohaeawai pa.

### TROOPS RETURN TO WAIMATE

After the destruction of Ohaeawai pa we marched down to Waimate, and took possession of our old residence, at the Mission station, where we remained about three months. During our absence the bodies of Captain Grant, Lieutenant Philpott (the commander of H.M. Hazard), and Lieutenant Beatty, as well as some of the men who had died of their wounds, were interred in the Waimate cemetery. The Rev. R. Burrows was the Church of England minister there. This station had been the headquarters of the Church Missionary Society, and was a pretty little place. There were then some small surrounding fields in pasture, and several houses which had apparently all being previously occupied, but then falling into decay. There were a few artisans, who had been sent out by the Church Missionary Society to instruct the natives in various trades. The Maoris being apt pupils, soon became efficient in helping Mr. Bedgood at the water mill where they ground their wheat, and made good flour. The natives also assisted in carpentering and blacksmithing, and other trades. They showed wonderful aptitude in their learning anything upon which they set their minds. The war, no doubt, proved the ruination of the station, which was not improved by the presence of troops. Martial law was then in force, and the military commander, assisted by a council, had the full power to put into execution all edicts, as military dictator. After our arrival at Waimate Major Bridge took the first opportunity filling up the vacancies caused by the loss of sergeants in the storming of the Ohaeawai pa on the 1<sup>st</sup> July (1845). The writer was one who received promotion of rank and pay from the above-named date. Our duties at this time were conducted as if we were in the presence of an enemy, namely pending an hour before dawn, and remaining in formation till daylight. After dismissal of the parade rum was issued, diluted with water. Breakfast at 8am.; morning guard took place at half past ten a.m.; then came garrison or camp parades, when all officers and men off duty had to appear, each division or corps paraded under their respective commanders, while the old Colonel was in command of the whole as Inspecting-General. The troops were formed up in about six small divisions. A more motley body of Her Majesty's troops, marching past in review order, under the Union Jack, could hardly be conceived. Their original regimental uniform could hardly be recognised, owing to the large patches, of various colours, already described, and some with boots, and others without. What a contrast his men must have presented to the eyes of the old Colonel to what they were some ten weeks previously, when entering upon the New Zealand campaign.

### A ROWDY VOLUNTEER

Among the volunteers sent from Auckland was an American, who was a source of great trouble to the officers of that force by his acts of insubordination. It eventuated with his cursing the flag that he was serving under. He was confined at 8a.m., tried by a drumhead court-martial at half past ten a.m., and sentenced to 50 lashes before the parade was dismissed. He begged for mercy, but the answer was "Drummer do your duty!" He gave no more trouble during his term of servitude.

### CAMP LIFE

In order to give the men off duty some occupation, field works were commenced, and were carried on daily during the stay of troops. This was partly for defence, as well as instruction, for young officers and their men. Captain Matson arrived from Auckland about this time with some recruits from Home, as well as a few men who had been wounded on 8<sup>th</sup> May, and now fit for duty. There was now sufficient silver to pay the men. After the continuous wet in the months June and July there was a complete change in the weather. Throughout the month of August, the fields in the morning were covered with white frost, but the days were sunny and pleasant. The money paid to the men caused a good deal of gambling and some drinking. From whence the old toppers got the drink, it is difficult to say. Our knapsacks arrived about this time and their contents contributed much to our comfort. The men soon gained strength and weight, and were fit again to perform any required duty.

“MORE BEER!”

I was placed in a very unpleasant position at this time, being non-commissioned officer in charge of some commissariat stores, over which, together with a barrel of rum, a sentry was placed. The guard occupied a small wooden building, and the hogshead was on a dray in our front. I knew the necessity of being watchful myself, owing to the presence of two men of intemperate habits. My suspicions were soon aroused by whisperings between the two men. They thought me asleep, but I was never more awake in my life. One of the men was married with a large family, and the sentry in charge. Through a small opening in the wall, I observed one man tampering with the barrel. I surprised him in the act, and made him a prisoner, taking his arms and accoutrements from him, and keeping him as such till early morning. Fortunately, I detected him in time, or otherwise my duty would have been enforced. This was one of the most important duties of a sentry, a breach which would have caused a heavy punishment, if reported. He begged very hard for a chance, and the rest of the guard interceded him. If tried by court-martial and found guilty, a flogging would have probably ensued. I thought of his family, then in Parramatta, and decided to exercise leniency. A few years afterwards he was discharged, and many descendants of his large family are still in Auckland. The late Captain Symonds of Onehunga, and Resident Magistrate of the Pensioner Settlements, joined the 99<sup>th</sup> Regiment at Waimate. It was amusing to see this tall man being put through his preliminary drill by an old soldier for three hours a day by himself. The old Colonel exacted from his officers a strict performance of duty, being a disciplinarian of the old school. Captain Symonds mounted his first guard at Waimate prior to leaving, and as the non-commissioned officer I had to initiate him into his duties in the way of visiting the posts. He was one of nature's gentlemen. Captain Symonds return to England at the close of the war. He afterwards came to New Zealand again, as an officer of the New Zealand Fencibles, stationed at Onehunga.

RUAPEKAPEKA PA

News having been received that the rebels had established themselves in the midst of a dense forest at Paehau, where they believed no big guns could be brought, it was decided to assail them. They built a large fighting pa and cleared the adjacent ground, in which potatoes were planted, thus believing themselves to be perfectly safe from any further molestations. As the troops were about to move to Kororareka, the head of the Waimate Mission station, it was reported, demanded from Governor Fitzroy, through the military commander, the sum of 1000 pounds as compensation for the damage sustained to the Mission station by the troops during their occupation. However, it was said that this request was not entertained, martial law being in force. A royal salute of 21 guns would dispose of all claims made. Whether these claims were recognised by the late Sir George Grey after his arrival. I never heard. After these occurrences, the troops returned to Kororareka, being placed, for the most part, in tents, prior to moving to Kawakawa.

It now was the month of November, a refreshing spring, with summer before us. Our force had increased in number and was no longer short of provisions, and the want experienced during the winter months was forgotten. We set out on our summer expedition in buoyant spirits, full of hope and believing that the end of all our Maori troubles were near at hand. Colonel Wynyard had arrived, and assumed the command of his regiment. He pronounced our physical appearance as good, but our garments of many colours were displeasing to his critical eye. Those who served through the winter campaign sadly required new clothing, which would have been obtained from home before the men could assume a respectable appearance. A couple of additional men-of-war had arrived, namely, the Elphinstone E.I.C., by which Sir George Grey came, as well as one sergeant and 12 men of the East India Company's Artillery, a valuable addition to the forces. H.M. Castor, 26 guns, had also come into the Bay.

TROOPS RENDEZVOUS AT KAWAKAWA

The whole available force was to rendezvous at Kawakawa, which was done at the native settlement. The men were conveyed up the river as far as the ships could go, opposite where the first residence was built for the Governor, and by thence by boats to the landing place. The portion of the force to which I was attached was conveyed from Kororareka, across the Bay, and landed on the opposite coast, from whence they marched overland, to the appointed rendezvous. Upon arrival there about noon we had to cross the river in canoes, with arms, ammunition, and accoutrements, in our charge. The last man in our canoe, when stepping in, upset the canoe and all were thrown into the water, which was only four to six feet deep. There was a general scramble to save our arms and ammunition etc. which was affected by the assistance of those on shore, but our ammunition was rendered useless, and had to be exchanged. The camping ground having been chosen, and different positions assigned to various bodies of men, with as many tents that could be provided (about sufficient to house one-half the number of men), provisions and liquor were duly issued. At sunset a strong picket was posted encircling the camp, and the men collected in their tents for the night. There being plenty of fern at hand we rested comfortably.

TOMMY ATKINS IN HIS CUPS

Many were sound asleep when they were wakened by some shots being fired by one of the outlying pickets. The ships of war had furnished a strong body of bluejackets and marines. They had a strong picket on the extreme left of our position,

abutting on the river with the right flank, adjoining and connecting with the regulars. This isolated discharge of arms, above referred to, induced the naval picket to open a regular fusillade along their whole front. This aroused the whole camp, which must at this time have been about a thousand strong. The whole force was speedily under arms, and the field officer of the day with a strong patrol proceeded to go his rounds of the picket. The cause was soon discovered as the patrol were dragging into camp a drunken man, who was resisting all his might and shouting, "Mighty men! there are thousands of them!" It transpired that he had a bottle of rum hidden on his person when he paraded, and was passed fit for outpost duty. At sundown when placed on sentry, he satisfied his craving for intoxicants at the expense being on the following morning tried by a drumhead court-martial, sentenced, and received 100 lashes with the cat-o-nine-tails. He was a very intelligent man, but his drunken habits a source of much trouble to his superior officers. In about a week afterwards he joined his company, served to the end of the campaign, and gave no further trouble. He ultimately met a sad fate. About 1850, the 58<sup>th</sup> was one of the regiments reduced from 1000 to 750 men, with four companies on the Home, and six on foreign service. This reduction enabled Colonel Wynyard to discharge his troublesome men. The unfortunate man referred to, was one of them. He for many years followed his life trade as a stonemason. His drunken habits continued until he sacrificed his life by being killed in a country district, through the upsetting of a dray in which he was in charge. The following day the force moved onto Waiomio, and camped for the night. Soon after our arrival two full companies of the 58<sup>th</sup> arrived from Norfolk Island (then a convict station), under the command of Captain Cockraft. It was a pleasing sight to see this fine body of men in their bright scarlet uniforms and the white accoutrements, a contrast to the men in the field. Many of the men who joined the regiment in Chatham or Dublin had grown to be tall and stalwart men. A large number of them were selected to replace those who had fallen in the engagements during the campaign. These meetings amongst old companions in arms, after an absence of two years, afforded much enjoyment, as the nature of our occupation and the uncertainty of our lives naturally created in us a strong humane feeling towards one another. The camp was again on the move early in the morning, and after a cheerful long march, during a fine day, they arrived at the margin of a dense forest, of great extent – Ruapekepeka. The usual arrangements for encampment and the necessary precautions for its protection, was taken by the usual outlying pickets. Additional vigilance was now required against surprise on the part of every man. The negligence of one sentry might cost the lives of many men. The discipline sentry at Kawakawa had produced a good effect, for we had not heard or seen a single man affected by the abuse of drink since discipline was enforced in that fashion in the presence of the men. Vigilance and discipline was also exacted from the non-commissioned officers. This enforcement of discipline enabled the non-commissioned men officers to check any irregularities, which, if allowed to continue, would have been the stepping-stone to insubordination and mutiny. Honourable and trustworthy non-commissioned officers constitute the backbone of military order and discipline.

#### PREPARATION FOR SIEGE OF THE PA

The force was now detained here for the position of the rebels could be ascertained, therefore strong parties were sent out to reconnoitre, and to find the position of their pa. It was ultimately discovered in a very difficult position. Captain Matson was acting in the capacity of quarter-master to the whole force. The Auckland volunteers were employed in cutting tracks, and felling tree for about two miles in order to enable the regulars to reach the position selected for their camp. Colonel Wynyard had volunteered to assist with labour in these operations by furnishing labour as well as supplying a strong covering party to protect them. This occupied several days before completion, after which the troops at once removed from the camping ground, and the positions assigned to the various bodies of men. Small huts were soon erected in numbers, and the officers, staff and the different departments were supplied with tents to meet the various requirements. In the meantime, the bluejackets, under their officers, had succeeded in reaching camp, with several breaching guns, mortars and other pieces of light calibre. These were placed in battery in front of our cantonments. Ammunition, provisions, and other necessaries continued to arrive daily, and met all requirements, the troops never suffered in that respect during future operations. It was now mid-summer, the country dry underfoot, no swamps to pass through, or gullies overflowing with water. Although the Commissariat department had to bring double the amount of provision as heretofore, as well as larger supplies of ammunition, the difficulties before it were much less. The oxen were too, in improved condition, the tracks easy of access, and the ground dry and firm. The whole force assembled before the rebel position at Ruapekepeka was reported to be about 1300 strong, with 13 pieces of ordnance, including mortars. Hone Heke had recovered from his wounds and joined his adherents with a few men, promoting in their minds a confidence as to their ability to resist any attack upon their stronghold, Ruapekepeka pa, which was larger built, and on the same principle as Ohaeawai pa, but its outer palisades were constructed of rough timber of less resisting power. Intervening between the camp and pa was a very steep gorge or gully. Directly in our front, and partly encircling the right face of the pa, was a dense forest. Some of its trees Captain Matson had been trying to fall, as they partly obstructed the view of the gunner in taking accurate aim. While so engaged, Sergeant Munro, was severely wounded, as well as the two of the volunteers, slightly. The former received an annuity from the Government. Water for the use of the camp was obtained directly from the rear of the cantonment, of which the rebels were fully aware, for they had wounded two of our men, while getting supplies, therefore much watchfulness had to be exercised and all necessary precautions taken before taking obtaining what we required. Our battery consisted of several 32. Pounder ship guns and mortars, and

they were now ready for use. The rebels had erected a high flagstaff, upon which they hoisted a flag, designed by themselves, as a challenge. A lieutenant from H.M. Racehorse was permitted to fire a few shots to ascertain the range, the second shot he lowered the rebel's flagstaff and flag' which elicited great cheering from those watching the result.

#### SIEGE OF RUAPEKAPEKA PA

A party of 100 men and a contingent of natives were despatched from the camp, the object being to ascertain the nature of the ground and the facilities for constructing a small redoubt in front of the left face of the pa. The forest here was open, free from supplejack, the trees large with little undergrowth, and very favourable for disciplined skirmishers. We were not long here until we were discovered, and a strong party of rebels from the pa, was sent against us. We opposed them taking advantage of the large trees and every cover that offered protection. Our opponents retired before us, and at sunset returned to their normal position. We had noticed in making this flank movement a small opening of a few yards in extent, in which was growing very strong fern, and from which a full view of the pa could be clearly seen. I was now dusk. Captain Thompson after placing me in the position with three men, returned to camp. My instruction, were to be vigilant, and as advance scouts, we were, if attacked to fire and fall back upon the outlying picket, about half a mile distant. After the captain left us, we sank down in the midst of the very tall fern, and, by pulling that growing under our feet, and placing it in a circle around us, we found a place of security. We rested our guns on the outer circle of the fern facing outwards, keeping our two of number on the look-out, here they could see and hear any hostile movement. We passed the night in safety our position not being discovered by the enemy. The position was selected by Colonel Despard for the use of a two-gun battery, the distance being about 400 yards. The steep gorge or gully describe as located in front of the camp continued its course in front of the left face of the enemy's position; the two other faces were adjoining an extensive forest. The rebel chiefs, therefore, had good reason to believe that their position was unapproachable against heavy artillery. They were accordingly surprised to see batteries constructed on the other side of the pa. This deep gorge would never be attempted to be penetrated, so they thought, even if a breach were made in the outer defences of the pa.

#### THE STORMING COUNTERMANDED ON TAMATI WAKA'S ADVICE

This delusion to which they were subject was about to be tested. Saturday 10, 1846, was the day appointed for the bombardment. The battery in front of the cantonment contained guns taken from various ships in the harbour, and were manned by their own crews.

The two-gun battery consisted of one bronze howitzer, of 12 pound calibre, and one mortar. They were in charge of a sergeant and 12 gunners. These men arrived from a gun from H.M.s Elphinstone. At the appointed time in the morning both batteries opened fire simultaneously, and by three o'clock in the afternoon a practicable breach had been effected by both batteries. The whole of the camp was under arms, preparatory to storming. Sir George Grey had arrived from Auckland. Tamati Waka and some of his leading chiefs were also present. Tamati appeared to be very excited, beseeching the Governor to defer the storming, as the rebels were then awaiting their approach. He had at all times proved a true and reliable friend and probably had some means of divining their intentions. The Governor was pleased to accept of Tamati's advice and in doing so probably saved many lives.

#### SIR GEORGE GREY IN THE FIELD

When Captain (afterwards Sir George Grey) arrived 500 men were formed up to storm the pa. What must his feeling have been when the valiant old chief besought him not to sacrifice the lives of his men, as he had done at Ohaeawai. Can we wonder at his compliance with the request? The men were dismissed, and returned to their quarters, in accordance to Tamati's advice. Fifty men, principally of the company to which I belonged, with four non-commissioned officers, in charge of Captain Denny, were sent to protect the two-gun battery early in the forenoon. We were not present when the storming party was formed up to attack the pa. The Governor's acceptance of Tamati Waka's advice was the talk of the camp.

#### THE ADVANCE ON THE BREACH

In order from to prevent the rebels from repairing the breaches made during the night, each gun that had been engaged in the bombardment was fired every half hour all night long. Early in the morning, Tamati Waka's brother, Patuone, accompanied by the European interpreter, held a consultation with Captain Denny. After this they proceeded along the margin of the forest, crossing the bottom of the gorge, sometimes crawling along to conceal their persons from the view of the garrisons of the pa. The ascent from this deep gully to the outer works of the enemy's position had been protected by acres of fallen bush, in such a manner that the trunks of the trees, many of them very large, were splendid protection against the advance of any attacking force on that front of the pa. The clearing was planted out in potatoes which looked a promising crop in its early growth. All the men, excepting the sentries, were ordered to take off their great-coats, and prepare for a dash. After waiting and watching for some time, we saw the chief and interpreter emerging from the forest into the potato plantation, stealthily moving from tree to tree, listening, and proceeding nearer and nearer to the breach.

At last, satisfying themselves that all was safe, they raised a white signal behind one of the large trees. Captain Denny, at the head of his men, gave the word to advance to the breach. We crossed the gorge and up the steep plantation at our utmost speed. The foremost men with a strong heave, pushed over the damaged palisades, and they all fell inwards with a crash.

#### CAPTURE OF THE PA

This evidently was a complete surprise. We saw no one until we passed right through the pa, with the reverse towards us, when a bell rang which had the effect of causing the rebels to try re-enter the pa. They were met by a few of our men just in time. Several of their men were shot there, and afterwards dragged a short distance away. The balls from the 32-pounder had gone right through the palisading, even to the back palisading, and it was from the holes thus made that the troops kept firing, when the rebels made a very determined attempt to recapture the pa. A companion on my left and I were firing through the same perforated opening, when a bullet struck him in the head, and killed him. A splinter from the same shot struck me on the forehead, but inflicted no injury. At this time men were fast arriving from the camp. We rushed through the back entrance and raised a hearty cheer, still keeping up our firing as we advanced from cover to cover. The many large trees which had been felled afforded splendid shelter and facilities for practical and experienced sharpshooters. As we advanced, we noticed a number of trees fallen, directly in our front, and which was a natural barricade to our further progress. They were on the margins of the standing forest, to which we thought the natives had retreated. Suddenly they appeared behind these large trees, and delivered a volley amongst us. We retired taking advantage of any cover that offered. One of my comrades, T. Hales, was bleeding profusely from the mouth. I went to his assistance, and found that his front teeth had been knocked out, and his gums injured. This injury was probably caused by a spent ball, the natives in their excitement, not ramming their charges home. This was up to a time I speak a soldier's skirmish. The inherent practical knowledge of the disciplined and experienced soldier is a great advantage to any force when officers and men become separated. When reformed, under their officers, the whole force becomes a part of a working machine. There were probably at this time from 600 to 700 men present. Amongst them was a large body of small arm-men from H.M.s Castor, a 36-gun frigate, which had recently arrived from China. They were a fine body of men, full of courage but un-acquainted with the native mode of fighting. They, with some officers, went outside the pa, and, being wanting in taking precautions for self-protection, they foolishly sacrificed a number of lives without orders from their superior officer. Their losses were nearly half those sustained at this particular time.

#### A LAST RALLY OF THE REBELS

The rebels still lingered in the vicinity of their lost pa. Our troops were actively engaged, conspicuous amongst them being Lieutenant Middleton (afterward Sir Fredk. Middleton), who had moved with some men well to the right flank, and something in advance of the movement of the men in front. This formation assumed the form of an L. This flank fire disconcerted the rebels. They then absolutely retired from the field thoroughly defeated. This was the end of the fighting known as "The Heke War of 1845-6." It was clearly to be seen that the rebels were in sore straits from want of food, after our capture of Ruapekepeka pa. It was surmised that they had temporarily taken up a position outside of the pa, during the Saturday's bombardment, but sufficiently near to resist any sudden attack. They kept a look-out man perched up in one of the highest trees to give timely warning against any surprise. This look-out man was probably on the Sunday not expecting any attack on that day, and was therefore less vigilant. However, a rebel, was there, and he was not discovered till one or two men had been wounded by his fire. When he was at last noticed, he was soon brought tumbling down, being about the last rebel killed. The two batteries, the shot and shell of which had pierced the enemy's stronghold during the Saturday's bombardment, prevented the defenders from remaining within its enclosure, therefore they had retired under the safe protection of the large fallen trees above referred to, from whence they had removed their three-legged iron saucepans, and been so suddenly disturbed. Their food appeared to be fernroot, as some of it was found cooked, and also in its natural state.

#### CLOSE OF THE HEKE WAR

The natives, after this last engagement, distributed themselves amongst their friends, and the hapus of the district to which they belonged. From that day peace has reigned in the northern part of the province. There was nothing then to retain the troops in the district, therefore after the destruction of the pa, preparations were made for their departure. Some of the guns were dragged down to kawakawa, to be embarked for their various destinations. The shot, shell, and ammunition were carried by officers and men to the same place, a 32-pound shot falling to my share. Descending one of the steep hills, without boots, I trod upon something hurtful, and then wrenched my foot, the result being a badly sprained ankle. I, with others similarly laden, eventually reached our destination, and delivered our shot for shipment. Previous to this, I had secured a double-barrel silver-mounted flint-lock gun, with the Tower brand. Colonel Wynyard, however, sent for it, and I reluctantly parted with it. I should have liked to retain it, as now it would be prized by my family. That night, very late, about 200 of us reached H.M.s Castor. Sails were spread for our beds on the main deck. At early sunrise we

were ordered to take our places in the ship's boats, taking one day's rations, and some portable coppers, to the head of Waikare Bay, and there landed. The boilers were fixed by a running stream of fresh water, and our clothes, such as they were, were thoroughly boiled. Having no change of clothing, we were left in Nature's garments until they were sufficiently dry and aired to put on.

#### TROOPS EMBARK FOR AUCKLAND

As the campaign was now ended, the whole of the force, excepting two companies stationed at Wahapu, returned to Auckland. We arrived in Auckland about two hours before H.M. paddle steamer *Driver*, which came from China. This was the first paddle steamer to enter Auckland Harbour. Those who saw the natives were much amused at their antics and excitement, as the *Driver* slowly steamed up the harbour, wreathed in smoke against the ebb tide; mean time the Maoris were exclaiming, "Taipo" (the devil), and "Haere mai", (come here).

Upon disembarking, I was sent with the wounded to the Old Courthouse, Queen Street. My ankle had become much swollen, and in an inflamed condition from want of rest. Five weeks elapsed before I was reported fit for duty. During that time, I had become acquainted with a most gentlemanly young fellow, who occupied the adjacent bed. He had a severe wound in his shoulder. The ball had been extracted there from, and he was apparently, in a fair way of recovery. We were talking quietly for some time in the evening, and, to my surprise, early next morning, just as I awakened, I saw two orderlies carrying him out, dead. It appeared that mortification had set in. I became attached to the young fellow, and it was a long time before I could forget him. On returning to my duty, I found my company in tents, but shortly afterwards the greater part of the troops, with other companies, were sent South to Wellington, peace having been proclaimed in the North with Heke and his allies, the other dissatisfied tribes. Thus, finally and officially, ended the Heke war.

#### THE OLD "BLACK CUFFS"

The 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment was destined to remain in the colony for upwards of 13 years, and during that time had about 1300 to 1400 men under its colours. Upon the return of the regiment to England, there were only about 120 men embarked with the colours. The colony had therefore absorbed about over 1100 men, including those that fell in the field. There were also a number of women and children. The descendants of these old veterans are now numerous, the sons being imbued with that military spirit which prevails among a large number of members of the volunteer corps. The regiment coupled with the name of Colonel Robert Henry Wynyard was essentially an Auckland corps, being associated with the city in the early days, both socially and politically, Colonel Wynyard having been elected Superintendent of the province. Some of the members of the regiment and their descendants have held and hold prominent positions in the colony; others have earned a competency through perseverance and industry to support themselves in old age without the aid of Government pension, but others from various causes have failed.

#### DEPARTURE OF REGIMENT FOR HOME

#### KISSING THE COLOURS

I quote the following passage from "Local Gossip," in *New Zealand Herald*, by "Mercutio," respecting the departure of the regiment for Home, and the incident of "Kissing the Colours," "Mercutio," says "In the Long Ago, late in the fifties, it was my lot to look upon an incident in the Albert Park – then the Albert Barracks Square – connected with the colours of a regiment, which gave me to feel in my heart of hearts the moral force that lay behind the colours, which symbolised Patriotism and Duty. The 'Old Back Cuffs' (H.M. 58<sup>th</sup>) that memorable afternoon were forming up for their last parade in New Zealand. The regiment brought into this colony 1500 men, and as the corps formed up to the call of bugle and beat of drum, only 120 men gathered round the tattered and shot-riven colours. The survivors of the wars had fallen into the ranks of civilian life, and were engaged in the heroic work of colonisation, for Peace has its victories as well as War, and the glory of saving life is greater than that of destroying it. The women and children had embarked in the transport, and all that remained was the last parade and roll-call, and final march to the wharf.

"Then I saw one of those unique incidents which no man could witness unmoved. On that parade ground was gathered grey-bearded and bronze-visaged men, whose well-knit and martial figures bespoke the old veteran, who had tramped, some of them 30 and 40 miles, through wretched bullock tracks, from the bush, to bid good-bye and "God bless you" to old comrades who had been with them in the baptism of fire at Okaihau, at Ohaeawai, at Ruapekapeka, the Hutt and Wanganui. Some of those veterans, in their travel-stained clothing, went up and reverently baring their heads, with tears coursing down manly cheeks, kissed the old tattered colours, under which they fought and bled, and were prepared to die if need be. Then I understood, as I had never done before, what lay behind the colours, and the forces which made the British soldier go, as at Balaclava, 'Into the jaws of death, into the mouth of hell!'"

#### AN INTERSTING REMINISCENCE

It was suggested the other day that the old colours of H.M. 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment, now deposited in the gallery of the Auckland

Supreme Court, might have been unfurled at the unveiling of the Queen's statue last week, and as many of the old soldiers of the old regiment as could be got together, specially invited to be present. This suggestion through various causes, could not be carried out. We give today, as of interest in connection with the presentation of colours to the Auckland Infantry Battalion, by the Countess of Ranfurly, an account of the presentation of colours to H.M. 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment on July 10, 1841, on Bruntsfield Links, Edinburgh, these colours being the identical colours now in our Supreme Court. The account appeared in the Scotsman, and we are indebted for it, to Mr Alex. Whisker, an old "Black Cuff", now residing in Auckland: The presentation of colours to this distinguished regiment now in the Castle, which was postponed on a former occasion on account of the unfavourable state of the weather, took place yesterday at Bruntsfield Links in presence of a large and brilliant display of fashionables from Edinburgh and the neighbourhood. The day was exceedingly fine, and the number of equipages on the ground as well as the crowd of pedestrians, was more numerous than we remember on any previous occasion. The regiment was on the ground at 11 o'clock, and about half an hour afterwards, Lord Greenock, Commander-in Chief in Scotland, came up, attended by his staff. The regiment was then formed in three parts of a square, Lord Greenock, his staff, and Lieutenant-Colonel Frith, in the centre, while the old colours of the regiment, riven and tattered, waved in front. Lord Greenock then addressed Colonel Frith and the officers and soldiers of the regiment and said: - "I congratulate you on your appearance, and on the distinguished service the regiment has performed in the field, the memorials of which are recorded on your standards. On your colours are emblazoned your services in Gibraltar with Eliot, on the plains of Egypt with Abercrombie, and on the field of Maida with Stuart. On your colours also is inscribed the glories of the Peninsula war, where your conduct has drawn forth the warmest praise of the first warrior of the age, the Duke of Wellington, the victories of Salamanca and Vittoria, the Battle of the Pyrenees, the passage of the Nivelle, the victories of Orthez and Toulouse. Soldiers of the 58<sup>th</sup>, few regiments carry so many honourable distinctions, and I am confident that the opportunity alone is wanting to you not only to rival your predecessors, but to add fresh memorials of your gallantry to those already inscribed on your colours. But remember, soldiers, that it is not by valour alone a regiment is distinguished; the allegiance that you have sworn to your Queen, and the duties which you owe to your country must be ever present to your heart, leading you to preserve the strictest discipline, and to be prepared on every occasion when called upon to maintain the honour and dignity of the Crown, and to support the laws and constitution of the country, to be true to the colours of your Sovereign, and by your sobriety and good order, obedience, and soldierly behaviour under every circumstance, to uphold the high character of the regiment in whatever portion of this extensive Empire it may be your future lot to serve. Soldiers of the 58<sup>th</sup>, I am confident that none of you will be wanting in these respects from what I have seen of this regiment since it has been under my command. What I have seen of the zeal and the ability of the officers, the steadiness and sobriety of the men, and your appearance in the field this day, gives me the assurance that the colours now to be presented to you will never be dishonoured in your keeping. The colours under which you have so long and faithfully served are now to be shrouded and removed from you forever. I am sure you will always remember them with feelings of reverence and respect, not only from their having been the object of your veneration, and the memorials of your honour and tried fidelity, but from their being sacred to the memory of our late venerable, Sovereign William the Fourth, who, when Duke of Clarence, presented them to this regiment, and who was then graciously pleased to recapitulate in full detail the gallant and distinguished services which this regiment has performed, and to express his approbation and admiration of the character of the regiment. Therefore, soldiers, however bright may be the anticipation of future victories which those new colours inspire, I am certain that you will regard those ancient relics as you would the memorials of some departed friend, who, though removed from you in this world, is destined to enjoy a brighter and happier existence." The old colours were then borne to the rear, to the sound of slow military music, and the new colours were borne to the front by Majors Ervine and Firebrace, and deposited on the drumhead.

In the centre of the square the Rev. Mr. Luther, in an impressive manner, offered up a prayer, on the consecration of the colours, after which they were again taken up and borne towards Lady Greenock, who presented them again to the officers, and said: "Colonel Frith, I feel much gratified by the circumstance which gives me so great an interest in so solemn and inspiring a ceremony, now about to be performed. The faded remnants of those colours which for so many years have waved in triumph over your heads, and whose glory in all parts of the world it has been your pride to uphold, are this day to be replaced by those brighter ensigns, which, at the request of your colonel, you are to receive at my hand. In committing them to your charge, I may well be assured that the gallantry and good conduct that have emblazoned these banners with so many proud records of their former services, will never cease to distinguish the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment with the new colours which I have the pleasure of now presenting. Allow me to offer my best wishes for your long, continued happiness and prosperity." Colonel Frith said: "Lady Greenock, it is now my duty in my own name and the name of the officers and soldiers of the 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment to return you thanks for the honour you have conferred upon us - an honour which, I assure you, we consider a very high one, and I deeply lament that I, as the representative of this regiment, shall be inadequate to express the high sense we entertain of your ladyship's kindness. I can sincerely say that this is an event to which we shall ever look back with pride and pleasure." The colours were then paraded through the square to the sound of military music, and the officers carrying them took their place in the centre. The regiment went through various manoeuvres with great steadiness and precision.

