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War Office, December 21, 1863.

THE Secretary of State for War has received a Despatch, with its Enclosures, from Lieutenant-General D. A. Cameron, C.B., Commanding Her Majesty's Forces in New Zealand, of which the following are copies:—

*Head Quarters, Queen's Redoubt,
October 5, 1863.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the force under my command in this province has continued to occupy nearly the same positions as at the date of my last despatch. The boats which I mentioned were being fitted to carry guns, are now ready to enter the Waikato river, and on the arrival of the iron steamer from Sydney, which, from the intelligence lately received, may be expected daily, I shall lose no time in commencing active operations.

My advance having been necessarily delayed until the gun-boats and steamer were available, the enemy has, in the meantime, taken the opportunity of practising his favourite mode of warfare by forming marauding bands, plundering the scattered settlements in the bush, and murdering individuals. This, in such a country as New Zealand, it is impossible wholly to prevent. It has, however, led to several skirmishes reflecting the highest credit on the officers and men engaged, who have invariably fought with great gallantry and intelligence, and in every instance, excepting the conflict at Cameron Town (where a small detachment was suddenly exposed in a most unfavourable position to the fire of overwhelming numbers), they inflicted a much severer loss on the enemy than they have themselves sustained. The officers in command, many of them young, and most of them untried, have one and all merited my entire approbation.

I forward, herewith, copies of the reports of these engagements which I received from the officers in command, together with copies of my despatches to His Excellency Sir George Grey, and I beg to recommend to your Lordship's favourable notice, the officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates who are specially mentioned in them for their distinguished conduct, more particularly Major Lyon, Auckland Volunteers, formerly of the 92nd Highlanders, Captain Russell, 57th Regiment, Captain Inman, 18th Royal Irish, Captain Saltmarsh, 70th Regiment, Lieutenant

Butler, 65th Regiment, and Colour-Serjeant McKenna, 65th Regiment.

I feel sure that your Lordship will read the reports of the conflict near Cameron Town with feelings of admiration for the bravery and fortitude displayed by the detachment of the 65th Regiment, under command of Captain Swift, and that you will lament with me the loss which the service has sustained by the death of that gallant and chivalrous officer, who was killed while leading his men against the enemy, and whose last words, after he had fallen, were an exhortation to the men to charge.

With reference to the capture and destruction of commissariat stores at Cameron Town, I beg to explain that, with the view of relieving the troops as much as possible during the very inclement weather from the harassing duties of escorting convoys along the road, I made arrangements that supplies should be brought round from Auckland in a vessel which was to anchor inside the Waikato Heads, whence her cargo was to be conveyed up the river to the Queen's Redoubt, in canoes manned by friendly natives. These natives being on good terms both with ourselves and the enemy, it was considered that the stores would be safe in their charge. Mr. Armitage, Resident Magistrate of the district, who had resided a great many years among the natives, was appointed by the Government to superintend this service. As the natives employed in it belonged to two different tribes, each of which would not work beyond a certain part of the river, it became necessary to establish a small intermediate depôt for the temporary reception of stores, and for this purpose Cameron Town was favourably situated, particularly as Mr. Armitage himself lived there, and a small number of friendly natives inhabited a pah on the spot. This pah was suddenly attacked by a large body of the enemy, the friendly natives driven out, Mr. Armitage killed, and the stores destroyed, consisting principally of forage, and including, fortunately, but little that would afford subsistence to the enemy.

From Mr. Armitage I had always received the greatest assistance; and I deeply deplore his untimely death in the midst of a career of great public usefulness.

I am happy to inform your Lordship that the efforts of the Colonial Government to raise volunteers in this and the neighbouring colonies, for general service during the war, on condition of