

Taranaki Military Settlers – State of Surveys July to September 1865

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Letter to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary, Wellington

Survey Office, New Plymouth 18 September 1865

Sir, I have the honor to enclose copy of my letter to the Commissioner of Crown Lands on the subject of Surveys. I have done this as I consider the case of Captain Carthew's company No.4 requires to be brought under your notice as early as possible. I have the honor to be Sir, Your most obedient servant, Octavius Carrington, Chief Surveyor

Letter to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Taranaki

Survey Office, New Plymouth 18 September 1865

Sir, I have the honor to inform you that on Monday the 11th instant I accompanied Mr Munro to Matarikoriko to meet Mr Parris and the Principal Natives of the District. I have much pleasure in informing you that the opposition these natives have shewn respecting the Survey at Tikorangi has been withdrawn. Selection for the Officers and non-commissioned Officers of No.7 Company have taken place, subject to the approval of the Government as it is not known when this Company will be struck off pay. I have with Lt-Col Lepper's approval postponed the general selection until I receive instructions.

With respect to Reserves I shall be glad to be informed if there any to be made for Natives and to what extent. Mr Parris expresses disappointment that Native Reserves had not been laid out in Huirangi Hort? No.2 Company.

The selections for Nos 1 & 3 Companies Oakura Hark? are all completed.

In consequence of the wreck of the steamer 'Alexandra' and the appearance of rebel Natives at the White Cliffs the work has been restarted, but reinforcements having been sent to that place and the rebels having left, the Survey can now be resumed with activity.

I am sorry to say that great dissatisfaction is evinced by the men of No.4 Company (Capt. Carthew) they express themselves very strongly against occupying the land unless an alteration is made in the boundaries – A few days since I was engaged with Colonel Warre and Lt-Col. Lepper arranging block house site... they were of opinion that the land should be laid out between the Kaihihi & the Hungatahuna, but this is not possible as there is only about one fourth of the land required for this Company between the rivers. If I may be allowed to express an opinion (should the Government consent to an alteration) I consider that bringing the north boundary nearer the coast would be a better arrangement. The enclosed tracing will explain the suggestion more fully and clearer than any further remark I can offer.

Letter to the Honourable The Colonial Secretary, Wellington
Crown Lands Office, New Plymouth 28 August 1865

Sir, In compliance with your request that I would keep His Excellency's Government fully informed as to the condition of the surveys of the confiscated lands in this Province, it was my intention to have forwarded by this mail a Schedule showing the acreage of Rural and Town Lands, the amount selected and the amount reserved in the blocks of which the surveys are completed. Finding however that the surveys of two blocks which it would be desirable to include in the Schedule will be completed and the selections made during the course of next week, I shall defer preparing it until next mail and merely give a general statement as to the condition of the Surveys.

The land which will be given out next week will complete the location of four Companies of Military Settlers, viz Capt Corbetts & Capt. Percival's at the Waitara & Capt. Mace's and Capt. McKellar's to the south. There will then remain of the surveys for Military Settlements with respect to which definite instructions have been given 1st the block at the White Cliffs for Capt. Messengers Company; 2nd the Tikorangi block for Capt. Stapp's Volunteers; 3rd the Block for Capt. Carthew's company.

The survey at the White Cliffs has been commenced, but has not yet made much progress, the garrison there having been so small that with hostile natives in the neighbourhood it was impossible to provide working parties and covering parties for the surveyors. This difficulty will soon be at an end as a considerable reinforcement is on its way there and the Officer in Command has received order to do all in his power to facilitate the Surveys. The two surveyors at work at Tikorangi will have done in two or three weeks all that they can do at the present time without opposition from the natives. This however will only be about a third or fourth part of the proposed block of 9000 acres. As soon as the opposition of the natives is overcome two or three more surveyors will be sent into this district.

The site of the block house for Capt. Carthew's Company is to be fixed and the Company moved up to it in the course of this week. Three surveyors will there be employed on the survey of this block. Mr Carrington reckons that with his present staff (allowing for the discharge of one or two of doubtful efficiency) he will complete the survey of the three blocks in from three to four months from the present time.

The Survey of the Waitara Township is now I trust progressing satisfactorily, although there was considerable delay in its commencement. Mr Nelson Carrington is engaged upon it together with Mr F. A. Carrington. It is estimated that unless there be any unforeseen hindrance it will be completed towards the middle of December. Mr Carrington is not able to forward by this mail as intended, a section of the continuation of the Great South Road to the Timaru, the work of McVerral the surveyor employed to make it having been found incorrect. It will be sent together with estimates for making that part of the road by next mail. Two of the surveyors mentioned in the Schedule which I had the honor to forward a few weeks ago, have since been discharged for incompetence, viz Messrs Moran & Vercoe.

I have the honor respectfully to draw your attention to the circumstance that the Warrants to cover Supplementary estimates for July have not yet been received, although the last of those estimates was forwarded on the 19 July. Owing to the stringent Treasury Regulations, which do not allow the advance of money in any case by the sub-treasurer to meet unforeseen contingencies, Mr Carrington and myself have been obliged to draw on our personal credit at the Bank of New Zealand to the extent of £460. I have the honor to be Sir, Your obedient servant H. R. Richmond, Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Letter to the Honorable The Colonial Secretary, Wellington
Crown Land Office, New Plymouth 19 July 1865

Sir, I have the honor to acknowledge your letter dated Nelson July 12th placing me in charge of the Surveys now being executed in this Province on behalf of the General Government. I have made it my business in the first instance to ascertain what work has been already completed, what blocks are in progress and as to what others Mr O. Carrington has already sufficient instructions to enable him to proceed with them. I have also had a schedule prepared which I enclose shewing the persons employed on the Survey Staff with particulars of salary and terms of engagement and have ascertained that Mr Carrington has already taken measures for ascertaining at the end of each month, the amount and character of the work executed by each surveyor, the particulars of which will be submitted to me.

On the northern side of the Settlement the Survey of the block for Captain Corbett's Company No.2 Taranaki Military Settlers is completed including the Townships of Huirangi and Manutahi and Officers and men are placed on their lands.

The Survey of the block for Captain Percival's Company No.7 Taranaki Military Settlers is in progress, the Township of Mataitawa is surveyed and the whole will be ready for selection if the weather is tolerably favourable towards the end of next month. Five surveyors are now at work on this block.

Two surveyors have been recently set to work on the north side of the Waitara at Tikorangi to survey the land for the two companies of Volunteers under Captain Stapp.

To the north of the Settlement the survey of the blocks for Captain McVillen's Company No.1 Taranaki Military Settlers and Captain Mace's Company No.3 Taranaki Military Settlers is in such a condition, that it would be completed in a fortnight of fine weather. The Officers and men of both these Companies have been struck off pay, those whose rural allotments are not yet marked out, being employed as labourers by the surveyors – as these men were not anxious to occupy their lands at once, the surveyors employed on this block, have commenced on the block for Captain Carthew, Company No.4 Taranaki Military Settlers but the remainder of the sections for No.1 and 3 will be marked out very shortly. Mr Carrington's verbal or written instructions further direct him - [1] To survey a block for Captain Messenger's Company No.6 Taranaki Military Settlers at White Cliffs; [2] To locate the Native Contingent at the Mimi, on a block which will join Captain Messengers' Company; [3] To cut exterior boundaries of a block for Nikorima and his people.

There remains to be located Captain Morrison's Company No.5 Taranaki Military Settlers, Captain Brassey's Company No.8 Taranaki Military Settlers, Captain Page's Company No.9 Taranaki Military Settlers and Captain Pennefather's Company No.10 Taranaki Military Settlers and the Staff Officers, with respect to all these Mr Carrington has no definite instructions.

I am informed that Captain Percival has applied to Mr Carrington on behalf of No.7 Company Taranaki Military Settlers to be allowed to select their second half acre Town allotments in the Huirangi Township, together with No.2 Company instead of having a separate Township in their block at Te Arei. I do not know whether this application will reach the Government in any other way, but it may save time to mention it here – Mr Carrington informs me that there is room enough for the additional sections in the Huirangi Township by his using all the referred and unselected allotments, the belt of reserve would still be left of a width of about 10 chains round the Township.

I have enquired of Mr Carrington whether he considers himself authorised to discharge any of his staff who may not give satisfaction, or to reduce their salaries without reference to Wellington. He informs me that he was verbally empowered so to do my Major Atkinson, but to avoid doubt and disputes on such points, it would be desirable that whatever powers he has in this respect, should be in writing. I also enquired of him whether if desired by Government he could employ more hands advantageously – His answer was to the effect that at such an unfavourable season, he was very unwilling to have the responsibility of a larger staff, nevertheless if the saving to the Government by locating the men quickly on their lands is much greater than the extra cost of surveying at this season probably a larger staff might be employed without increasing Mr Carrington own work, by giving increased responsibility to such of his subordinates as he can rely upon.

Whilst on the subject of Mr Carrington's staff, I have the honor to recommend that the pay of Mr C. P. Sisson be raised from £2-£3 per week... I having agreed on those terms to undertake whatever writing is required in connection with the General Government surveys either by Mr Carrington or myself.

On account of the very unfavourable season nothing is at present being done with the south road, except the completion of contracts for earth-work previously let by Mr F. A. Carrington. Mr O. Carrington has placed this work under the charge of Mr J. Vercoe who sees to the execution of the contracts and will prepare a working section of the road from the point at which Mr F. A. Carrington's section ends, to the Timaru which section with an estimate of the cost of the road will be forwarded to the General Government for approval before any... work is undertaken.

The Tapuae Bridge is in progress according to a design approved by General Government.

A design and estimate for the bridge over the Oakura have been forwarded to Wellington, but no answer has yet been received with respect to them.

With respect to the laying out of the Waitara Township, I have the honor to inform you that I have arranged to accompany Mr Carrington and the Superintendent to the proposed site as soon as the weather is at all favourable. I am informed that a plan has been already forwarded to Wellington for approval. I should wish to know whether any alteration on that plan must be submitted to the consideration of the General Government or whether it will be left to be finally settled by Mr Carrington, the Superintendent and myself. I shall request Mr F. A. Carrington to send in for your information a monthly statement of the progress of his work, after it shall have been fairly commenced. I have the honor to be Sir, Your obedient servant, H. R. Richmond, Commissioner of Crown Lands.

P.S. The Schedule of the Survey Staff not being quite completed shall be forwarded by next mail.
