

of Manukau relative to the apparent discrepancy referred to in your letter No. 360 of date 10th September.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT GRAHAM,  
Superintendent.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary, Auckland.

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Enclosure to No. 17.

MR. WING TO THE SUPERINTENDENT, AUCKLAND.

Manukau Pilot Station,  
29th September, 1863.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Honorable the Colonial Secretary's letter of the 10th instant, through your Honor's office of 14th instant, with correspondence attached from His Grace the Duke of Newcastle to His Excellency the Governor Sir George Grey, requesting an explanation from the Harbour Master of Manukau respecting the discrepancies alluded to therein in connection with the Court Martial held at Portsmouth to enquire into the particulars of the loss of Her Majesty's Ship "Orpheus;" and in compliance with your Honor's request, as directed by the Honorable the Colonial Secretary, I have now to report upon the discrepancies alluded to as follows :—

In the first place, my being from the Pilot Station in charge of the "Wonga Wonga," I can only state such information as was obtainable from those who were at the Pilot Station (my two sons and one of the boat's crew), and they distinctly assert that the position of the "Orpheus" at the time referred to by Mr. Amphlett (Paymaster) was South Eastward of the directions given in the New Zealand Pilot for crossing the bar, and as regards the bar having shifted since Mr. Amphlett was last there in the "Niger" it is but trifling, the deepest water on the bar only varying one quarter of a point in the bearing to the Eastward since that time, and had the "Orpheus" been steered in accordance with Mr. Veitch's (Master of the "Niger,") sailing directions, which, I believe, are the same as given in the Manukau Harbour Regulations, I have every reason to believe that she would have come into the Harbour safely, at that time of the tide (shortly after high water), leaving at least five fathoms water on the Bar, deepening quickly to seven and eight fathoms. With reference to the evidence given by Lieutenant Yonge that he saw the Commander, and the Master evidently steering by signals as made from the shore, I have to reply that it is unexplainable by us, as no attention was paid to the Telegraph Arm, which was pointed to the N.W. a full hour to guide them in that direction.

Respecting the evidence of William Oliert, Signalman of H.M. late Ship "Orpheus," I have to state that the first signal (Take the Bar) was made at 10 a.m., instead of 11.30, as stated in the evidence, and when the "Orpheus" was seen steering to the eastward of the bearings for crossing the Bar (about 1 o'clock) the N.W. Telegraph arm was put up, and kept there until the warning signal was made, and not dropped as stated in evidence. The ship still stood to the eastward, leaving an offing of three or four miles from the shoals, until Puponga must have been well open of Paratutae, when the "Orpheus" was observed to keep away for the breakers on the outer middle heads, and kept steaming in that direction. The Telegraph Signal (Keep the Vessel more Off Shore) was then put up, and the signal (Take the Bar) was taken down. Even this alteration of the signals was not attended to by those on board the "Orpheus," and the ship was allowed to stand on under all sail and steam till she struck the ground, being fully twenty minutes after the warning signal was made to warn them off shore. As regards Lieutenant Hill's evidence, that he thought the people in charge of the Signal Station should not have allowed them to skirt the reef, as they called it, so long without making the danger signal, in his opinion they had not time to put a turn of the helm either way, before she struck: to the above-cited evidence of Lieutenant Hill, I can only reply by referring to the statements already made by me respecting the signals which were made at the Signal Station on the occasion.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS WING,  
Pilot and Harbour Master.

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No. 18.

COPY OF DESPATCH FROM HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE, K.G., TO GOVERNOR SIR GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

NEW ZEALAND.

No. 28.

Downing Street,  
26th October, 1863.

SIR,—

I communicated to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Despatch, No. 27, of the 28th of February, enclosing Copies of the Inquisition and Informations concerning the death of