

# OF THE CONFISCATED LANDS.

A.—No. 2 A.

## No. 11.

(No. 88.) Copy of a Letter from the HON. E. W. STAFFORD to HIS HONOR H. R. RICHMOND.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 6th March, 1866.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Honor's two letters, No. 92, of the 8th February, and No. 98, of the 17th February, 1866, on the subject of the investigation of native claims to land within the confiscated block in Taranaki.

Your Honor is in error in supposing that the Civil Commissioner, Mr. Parris, had not been instructed to take steps for the adjustment of these native claims. I enclose a copy of the instructions issued to him to that effect on the 30th August, 1865, by the late Government. Subsequently, with reference to these instructions, Mr. Parris was directed to take the opinion of and act in concert with yourself.

The Government is most anxious that as little delay as possible should take place in the adjustment of these claims, as it fully recognises that both the peace of the country and the progress of the Province of Taranaki, are intimately involved in the settlement of the question. With that view it desires to have the aid of your Honor's advice and co-operation, both on account of your local knowledge of the circumstances, and because the Province of Taranaki is primarily interested in a speedy and satisfactory settlement of all those outstanding difficulties which have hitherto so seriously retarded the occupation and opening out of the country.

The Government concurs with you in believing that an early investigation of them by the Compensation Court in Taranaki is desirable, and the Senior Judge of that Court has been requested to take steps to bring it into action in that Province. The Government also wishes that, in order to protect the public interests, your Honor would recommend some suitable person, who has sufficient local knowledge, to watch the claims sent in for the purpose of objecting to such as may appear unfounded or exaggerated.

With respect to the last paragraph of your letter of the 17th ult., the Government believes that much of the suspicion and discontent engendered in the minds of the natives has arisen from the conduct of persons in the Province in the public service. In connection with this subject it has been reported to the Government that friendly natives have been harrassed and their goods plundered by some of the Military Settlers and other armed corps, and in consequence of these reports, the Government has determined to hold a Court of Enquiry into the circumstances, which, if correctly stated, are most discreditable to those concerned in them.

I have, &c.,

E. W. STAFFORD.

His Honor the Superintendent, Taranaki.

## No. 12.

(No. 99.) Copy of a Letter from HIS HONOR H. R. RICHMOND to the HON. COLONEL HAULTAIN.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, New Plymouth, 17th February, 1866.

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter, noted in the margin, with respect to the Surveys at Patea, and shall take the first opportunity of going there, in company with Mr. Carrington, to examine the ground, with reference to the site of the Township.

No. 947.

9th Feb., 1866.

We shall probably be accompanied by one or two of the Assistant Surveyors, who will go for the purpose of inspecting the country, with reference to the cost of surveying it, and of ascertaining for themselves whether the work can be prosecuted without serious risk of interruption.

I feel no doubt that this Survey will be undertaken by them, and that, being accustomed to work with Mr. Carrington, it will proceed more satisfactorily, and with much less risk of errors, and the expense and trouble attending them, than if others were employed.

I understand, from the two letters, above quoted, that there are to be no separate Townships for each Company, but that all are to have their Town Acres, in a Township to be fixed in the most suitable spot, on the banks of the River, and on both sides of it.

I should suppose that those who have their Rural Land on one side of the River will have their Town Land on the same side. I refer to this merely with the view of pointing out, if it has not already occurred to you, that some difficulty may arise in adjusting liabilities and claims between the Provinces of Wellington and Taranaki, if any of the Patea settlers should have their Town Allotments in one Province and their Farm Sections in the other.

The Patea River is not the boundary between the Provinces in any part of its course, but a line drawn from the mouth of that River to a certain point inland.

Between this line and the course of the River, near its mouth, there is, I believe, a narrow strip of land, so that if many are located on the South bank it may be necessary to give them Rural Land in the Province of Wellington.

Mr. Carrington is willing to give his services on the terms offered by you, the Province paying him at the rate of £150 per annum, whilst this arrangement continues, for his general supervision of the Survey Department.

I shall do my utmost, with Mr. Carrington's assistance, to carry your wishes into effect as speedily as possible, with regard to this Survey, but, from the uncertainty of communication, and other causes, some delay will be unavoidable.

I have, &c.,

H. R. RICHMOND,

Superintendent.

The Hon. the Minister for Colonial Defence, Wellington.