

No. 13.

(No. 3.) Copy of a Letter from HIS HONOR H. R. RICHMOND to the HON. COLONEL HAULTAIN.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, New Plymouth, February 23, 1866.

I have the honor to state that since last writing to you on the subject of the Patea Surveys, my attention has been directed to the great pecuniary loss to the Government which would be occasioned by giving up the best lots for a Town on the Patea to the Military Settlers. This Township, if the District around it be as good as has been represented, can hardly be valued under £10,000.

It will very soon require public buildings, streets and roads, which, if it be given away, can only be provided by the immediate imposition of heavy local taxes.

On the other hand, it may fairly be questioned whether, if the best site on the river be not taken for Military Settlers, it would not be preferable to adhere to the old system of villages in each block. I have only time to speak of these things in a very cursory manner, but if no positive pledges have been given, as the question is one which must considerably affect the terms upon which the Provincial Government can take over the management of the balance of the Confiscated Lands in this Province, I shall feel much obliged by your deferring any positive decision with regard to it, until I have had an opportunity personally, or otherwise, of more fully discussing it with you.

I have, &c.,

H. R. RICHMOND,

The Hon. the Minister for Colonial Defence, Wellington.

Superintendent.

No. 14.

(No. 91.) Copy of a Letter from the HON. E. W. STAFFORD to HIS HONOR H. R. RICHMOND.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 9th March, 1861.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your Honor's two letters, numbered and dated respectively No. 99, 17th February, and No. 3, 23rd February, 1866, addressed to the Hon. Colonial Defence Minister, on the subject of Surveys at Patea, and to apologise for the delay which, owing to his absence, has arisen in replying to these letters.

After a careful consideration of all the circumstances, it appears to the Government desirable that the land allotted to the Military Settlers at the Patea, should be confined to the Province of Taranaki. The river Patea is not, however, the boundary between the Province of Wellington and Taranaki. The boundary there is a straight line drawn from the mouth of the Patea to the point where the Taumatamahoe path, leading from Waitara, strikes the Wanganui River. This leaves a strip of land within the Province of Taranaki, on the left or Wellington bank of the Patea.

The question where the Town Lots for the Military Settlers should be, whether in one place, or in villages on each block, is one that can be best determined, after a personal inspection of the locality, by your Honor and Mr. Carrington.

No pledge, of which the present Government is aware, has been made to the Military Settlers on this subject, the only instructions on record being those to Mr. Carrington, in which the selection of the site, or sites, was left to him, as intimated in the letter of the Hon. the Defence Minister, of the 9th ultimo. Only two Companies of Military Settlers have been, it is believed, actually promised land at Patea, though on grounds of policy more may be located there.

I would add that large portions of the land near the Patea, in the Province of Wellington, are claimed (it is believed correctly) by Hori Kingi, Wi Tako, and other friendly Natives, and that the occupation of that land would for many reasons be unwise, and would entail large money payments in compensation, to meet which there are no funds available in the present financial position of the Colony.

I have, &c.,

E. W. STAFFORD.

His Honor the Superintendent, Taranaki.

No. 15.

(No. 7.) Copy of a Letter from HIS HONOR H. R. RICHMOND to the HON. E. W. STAFFORD.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, New Plymouth, 28th March, 1866.

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 19th ultimo, enclosing a Statement of the amount of Land required in this Province for the location of Military Settlers, and also a list of the names of Native Claimants to Land in this Province.

The latter document, I need hardly observe, gives me little or no assistance towards arriving at an estimate of the amount of land required to satisfy the claims of friendly Natives; neither, probably, could any very reliable estimate be made until these claims shall have been actually investigated by the Compensation Court.

The delay which must thus occur in arriving at any conclusion as to the conditions upon which the Provincial Government can take over the management of the Confiscated Districts would be a serious evil if the country South of New Plymouth were in a more settled state, so that the formation of Agricultural Settlements, at different points, could be proceeded with.

But, after carefully considering the subject with those here whom I consider the best qualified to