

3. I regret much, also, that the erection of the redoubt does not meet with your approval. I should have strictly adhered to my instructions had I not found that both time and labour were saved by using the materials most readily at hand, viz., "turf," close outside, and ponga (fern). The erection of a stockade with small round timber would have been a more lengthened and difficult operation, owing to the distance it would have had to be drawn, the extreme wetness of the season and the state of the ground rendering it impossible to carry the timber. Even could the small round timber have been employed, its stability would have been very uncertain, owing to the violent and frequent gales and exposed position.

4. The reasons for employing the one cart and bullock I have already had the honor of submitting to you. I will, however, at once order them to be returned.

5. With regard to the price paid for the rental of the land, 2s. 6d. per acre, I did not imagine when I was in Wellington that the Natives would agree to the present locality being occupied, it being close to the harbour. The locality I had in view when in Wellington, and where I referred to as light timber being available, is nearly two miles off, and of an inferior description of soil. I had to abandon the idea of this locality owing to the impossibility of carrying provisions there. I also beg to remind you that although land might be procured at from 1d. to 3d. per acre at more distant spots, yet the Natives have sought no remuneration for the occupation of land by the guard and prisoners upon which they are located, and that the ground rented is in close proximity to the harbour likewise, and of most productive quality, being a portion of their own cultivations.

6. With regard to the price of potatoes at £3 per ton, I beg respectfully to state that you have been erroneously informed as to this rate being much above the usual selling price of late years. With the exception of last year, when hardly a vessel visited the islands, the prices considerably exceeded that amount.

7. With regard to the return of half the guard on the second occasion, my instructions received from Mr. McLean were to the effect that that portion of the guard composed of the Defence Force were to return, which they did, and likewise any of the Military Settlers and Native guard if they wished it; none of them, however, wished to avail themselves of the permission.

8. Toenga's desire to have the prisoners removed to the pa is correct, but not with the idea of exercising any control over them. When I suggested a guard to be enrolled from amongst the Natives they evinced no desire, but in fact treated it rather contemptuously, and they have since again reiterated their indifference.

9. I beg to enclose return of receipts and daily expenditure of supplies as requested, and likewise a return of further supplies to be forwarded by the return of the steamer. I beg to state that the amount necessary for the pay of the guard (£486 17s.) for the current quarter I have received, but not the amount for the supplies procurable on the island, which I stated in my requisition £157 13s., and which I beg may be forwarded by the return of the steamer.

10. With regard to all the tools and implements supplied to the prisoners, I have the honor to state that they are carefully brought into the redoubt every evening after work, counted and examined; any casualties are duly reported. This has been the practice all throughout, a strict order having been issued by myself to that effect.

11. I must express my regret that the medical report should have been inadvertently sent to the Hon. the Defence Minister with other documents. Herewith I beg to enclose a report furnished by the Medical Officer in obedience to your instructions, containing the names, sex, age, disease, and date of deaths, including the two mentioned in my last report; likewise a report of births.

12. The return called for of the names and ages of the prisoners landed here from the beginning, with the names, sex, and ages of those who accompanied them, I have, in obedience to your instructions, forwarded to the Under Secretary by this mail.

13. By the return of the steamer the supply of potatoes at this place will be exhausted, and it will be necessary that the steamer should proceed to the port of Kaingaroa, at the northern extremity of the island, for the purpose of bringing a supply of potatoes for food as well as seed, the freight demanded by coasters being excessive.

14. The general conduct of the prisoners still remains good; they are daily divided into working parties, and a regular system of routine is carried out. Weather permitting, a party is told off daily for fishing. The Natives here have given them boats free of charge. Although the prisoners have felt the change of climate, yet their general health is good. Their number, now amounting to 115, nearly equalizes the number of Maori male population on the Islands, 151; therefore I trust the number of the guard will not be lessened.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Native Minister,
Wellington.

W. E. THOMAS,
Resident Maistrate.

No. 15.

Copy of a Letter from Captain THOMAS to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

(No. 19.)

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office,

Chatham Islands, 16th June, 1866.

In compliance with instructions received from the Hon. the Native Minister, I have the honor to enclose a Return of Prisoners landed at the Chatham Islands, from their first arrival on the 15th March last to the 10th instant, being the date of arrival of the third batch.

2. Also, the Medical Officer's Report for May last.

3. Also, a Statement of sums required for the payment of the Military Guard, and supplies procurable on the island, for September quarter, 1866.

I have, &c.,

The Under Secretary, &c.,
Native Department, Wellington.

W. E. THOMAS,
Resident Magistrate.