

On the road from Napier to Taupo two parties of Natives are at work between Tarawera and Runanga; they are both working on contracts, bush felling and clearing chiefly. Copies of the agreements with them and information as to the work they have done will be supplied on Mr. Bold's return.

A month ago I instructed Inspector Roberts to distribute the men at the different posts on the Taupo line so as to best avail of their labour on the road, and gave definite instructions thereon, which met the approval of the Hon. the Defence Minister. I have just received a telegram from Inspector Roberts, informing me that the distribution of the men has been delayed from their having to march to and from Pohue to exchange their arms, but that the force is now distributed in accordance with my directions, and that sixty men will be available in a day or two for regular work upon the roads.

In the case of the railway and road line through the Seventy Mile Bush, I have communicated to Mr. Weber your decision that the exploration of the three lines described by Mr. Blackett should be proceeded with and completed, and he is now engaged upon that duty.

Mr. Weber is also instructed to keep separate accounts of road and railway expenditure.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

J. D. ORMOND.

No. 33.

His Honor J. D. ORMOND to the Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR,—

Napier, 5th December, 1870.

On the 30th ultimo I had the honor of reporting to you on the road works in progress in the Taupo District, and promised fuller information on the return of Mr. Bold. As that officer is again delayed in returning, I now enclose telegrams from him, received since my letter was written, which will, I think, satisfy you as to the care that is being taken in exploring and selecting the best lines of road, and generally in the manner Mr. Bold is performing the duties entrusted to him. Mr. Bold of course acts on distinct instructions, and refers in regard to any points involving difficult negotiations with the Natives; but at the same time a great deal must depend upon the manner in which the arrangements with the Natives are carried out, and I consider Mr. Bold to be executing that part of the work with very great prudence and judgment.

I am glad to inform you that, as I expected, and stated in my letter of the 30th ultimo, the Rotorua Natives, who at first declined work altogether except on daily pay, have now accepted the offer of work made to them, and the work will now be continued from Te Ngae,—to which point, I believe, the Maketu Road is open for drays,—on to Niho o te Kiore, and thence to Taupo.

Mr. Bold will necessarily be delayed in starting these works somewhat longer than I expected, but no delay will occur in reporting to you after his return.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

J. D. ORMOND.

Enclosure 1 in No. 33.

Mr. BOLD to His Honor J. D. ORMOND.

(Telegram.)

Tapuaeharuru, 30th November, 1870.

ARRIVED here. Could not close arrangements with Ngatiwhakaue, as they would not accept piece work: they want day work. The people at Parekarangi were offered six miles of road for £250. They asked £450. I increased offer to £300, and most of them were inclined to close; they, however, finally decided to have a meeting about it. I was loth to come away without starting them. Will report further.

J. D. Ormond, Esq., Napier.

E. H. BOLD.

Enclosure 2 in No. 33.

Mr. BOLD to His Honor J. D. ORMOND.

(Telegram.)

Tapuaeharuru, 30th November, 1870.

I HAVE examined the country between Niho o te Kiore and Rotorua, by the route at present in use, and also by a route represented by Native Manihera to be favourable for road *via* Urupunga. The line is direct passing to west of Hapurangi. I spent two days in examination, and find no advantages are to be gained on the present route. There is a third route, crossing Waikato above Niho o te Kiore, and coursing on right bank of Whirihaki, parallel with that river, passing Hapurangi on east side. This line I have seen for a greater part of distance, from other side of Waikato (from summit of Hapurangi). The Motupuka Natives speak very favourably of it. Ihaia, chief of Ngatitama, says he is anxious for road to commence, and will leave it to us to decide the route, whether by Niho o te Kiore or the crossing higher up *via* Whirihaki. Whichever we select, he and Perenara and Hitiri's people will do all they can to carry out the work. Any differences Ngatiraukawa create, Ihaia says, Hitiri will be expected to settle. From what we overheard at Orakeikorako, I conclude the sudden objections of Ngatiraukawa to road construction by Niho o te Kiore have been caused by Ngatitahu. Some of them left for Cambridge the morning we were at Orakeikorako.

Road work offered to Rotorua Natives, the dray road, being constructed, and passable for some miles past Te Ngae, I concluded best plan would be in meantime to extend that line of communication towards Niho o te Kiore, keeping in view the ultimate extension to Tauranga. I endeavoured to secure the line giving these advantages. I had difficulty at first in settling the proprietorship of localities, in order to give proper hapus the work. This settled, I offered Ngatitawera and Ngatiwhakaue the work from Waengaeheu to Waikorowhiti, distance of five miles, for £110. Greater portion is over flat. Replied they wanted day work, and say they have 500 men ready to go to work. They seemed disappointed