

P A P E R S

RELATIVE TO

PROPOSAL TO CONSTRUCT A RAILWAY BETWEEN NEW  
PLYMOUTH AND THE NORTHERN PART OF THE PROVINCE OF  
WELLINGTON.

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PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BY COMMAND OF  
HIS EXCELLENCY.

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W E L L I N G T O N .

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1865.



PAPERS RELATIVE TO PROPOSAL TO CONSTRUCT A RAILWAY BETWEEN NEW  
PLYMOUTH AND THE NORTHERN PART OF THE PROVINCE OF WELLINGTON.

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No. 1.

W. K. HULKE, Esq., to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Auckland, New Zealand, 13th July, 1864.

I have the honor of submitting for the consideration of the Colonial Government, the following proposal for the construction of a railroad in the Province of Taranaki, and which will form the main trunk line of road through that Province, connecting it at the same time with the Province of Wellington at its northern boundary.

The great desirability of such a work must be so apparent that I need not occupy your time in pointing out the great importance it would be to the Provinces of Taranaki and Wellington, independently of the many advantages the Colony at large would enjoy from it.

Now although the first cost of a railroad exceeds that of a metal road, yet it will be found in the end much cheaper. The extra expense being more than covered by the high price that would be given for land in its vicinity.

The country through which it is proposed to make the line is particularly adapted for agricultural pursuits, and which country, unless such a work is executed, must be simply used for grazing purposes, and this would be a great impediment to the country being speedily occupied by settlers. Besides this important fact, the cost of transporting farm produce over a great extent of metal road effectually prevents all profitable farming. In the case of a railroad this would not occur, as an occupier of land, residing from sixty to eighty miles out, would thus be placed on the same footing as one living only twenty miles out on a metal road.

With these few remarks, I have the honor of submitting the following proposition for the consideration of the Colonial Government, believing that it will receive every attention that such an important subject deserves, and if found practicable, be entertained with favour:—

Firstly.—The promoters of the undertaking require that every facility be granted them to obtain a rough survey of the country through which it is proposed to carry the line, and would suggest the desirability of such rough survey being executed by one of the local surveyors now in the employment of the Government, when such survey may become practicable.

Secondly.—That if after executing a survey, the promoters find the country favorable for the formation of a railroad, they will be prepared to form a Company to carry out the undertaking on the following basis:

That a substantial permanent way be formed (single), capable of running a locomotive of not less than fifteen tons weight, with the necessary carriages.

That the cost of such permanent way do not exceed the sum of £4000 per mile. The Company to be subsidised by land to be selected by the Company in blocks, and the Company to have the priority of choice: the land to be issued to them at one and a half acres for the pound sterling. You will perceive that by such a system of selection (blocks), all the frontage would not be taken up by the promoters, but the Government, holding the remaining portion in their hands, would obtain such an increase of price as would cover the extra cost of railroad over the construction of a macadamized road.

I have, &c.,

W. K. HULKE.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

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No. 2.

The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to W. K. HULKE, Esq.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, 19th July, 1864.

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 13th instant, relative to a railway at Taranaki.

The Government has given the subject its very careful attention. It cannot in the present position of affairs commit itself to any definite expression of opinion on the subject, but it is prepared to place the services of a surveyor at the disposal of those on whose behalf you write, for the purpose of commencing a rough survey, so far as it may be possible at present to execute one. I cannot learn with certainty here that Mr. Hursthouse, whom you mentioned, is at this moment in the Government Service; but if he is not, probably his services can be obtained for this purpose.

I have, &c.,

W. Fox.

W. K. Hulke, Esq., New Plymouth.

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No. 3.

W. K. HULKE, Esq., to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 22nd July, 1864.

Not having received an answer to my former communication prior to leaving Auckland, I have the honor to request that all letters that the Colonial Government may favor me with shall be

forwarded to my address, New Plymouth. Since my return here I have informed the Provincial Government of the action I have taken in Auckland with regard to the formation of a railroad in this Province, and have the honor to enclose the following resolution, passed by a special meeting of the Provincial Council; and have also called a public meeting of settlers for the 30th July, when I hope to be in a position to lay before them your reply to my former communication.

To the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Auckland.

I have, &c.,  
W. K. HULKE.

### Enclosure to No. 3.

EXTRACTS from MINUTES of COUNCIL, New Plymouth, 21st July, 1864.

RESOLVED:—"That this Council, having heard Mr. Hulke on the desirability of the construction of a railway in preference to the construction of an ordinary metalled road through this Province towards the south, is of opinion that a railway, if practicable, would be preferable.

"That this Council approves of the principle of setting apart lands abutting on the line for the purpose of paying the cost, or part cost, of construction of a railway, without pledging itself to details."

(True extract.)

WM. M. CROMPTON, Speaker.

### No. 4.

The UNDER SECRETARY to W. K. HULKE, Esq.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Auckland, 26th July, 1864.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd July, 1864, and am directed by Mr. Fox to inform you that the reply to your letter of the 13th instant was addressed to you at New Plymouth.

I have, &c.,

W. K. Hulke, Esq., New Plymouth.

W. GISBORNE,  
Under Secretary.

### No. 5.

W. K. HULKE, Esq., to the Honorable the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 2nd August, 1864.

With reference to your letter of the 19th July, 1864, we have the honor, before proceeding further in the matter, to request information upon the following points:—

1. Whether the rough survey for the proposed line of railroad is to be made at the expense of the Government or the persons I represent.

2. Whether the Government has decided that it would be more advisable to make a railroad from New Plymouth than a metalled road, if the railroad can be constructed at say £4000 per mile.

3. Whether the Government would, in the event of having decided to make a railroad, be desirous of paying for it, either wholly or in part, by a grant of land or by cash; and if by a grant of land, at what would it be valued at per acre—say for forest, fern, or open country.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary, Auckland.

I have, &c.,

W. K. HULKE.

### No. 6.

The UNDER SECRETARY to W. K. HULKE, Esq.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Auckland, 6th August, 1864.

I have the honor, by the direction of the Honorable Mr. Gillies (in the absence of Mr. Fox), to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant on the subject of a proposed railway at Taranaki, and to reply as follows to your three questions respectively:—

1. The Government do not propose to be at any expense further than by placing the services of a surveyor gratuitously at the disposal of the promoters to make a preliminary survey.

2 and 3. Whilst viewing favorably the general idea of making a railway at the cost mentioned in preference to a metalled road, the General Government feel that it would be premature, in the present condition of the Province of Taranaki, to come to any decision as to what public works may hereafter require to be executed on lands still in possession of the Natives, and as to the appropriation of lands not yet at the disposal of the Government.

I have, &c.,

W. K. Hulke, Esq., New Plymouth.

W. GISBORNE,  
Under Secretary.

### No. 7.

W. BAYLEY, Esq., to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Taranaki, 13th August, 1864.

I have the honor to lay before you, and to offer as a suggestion, my simple opinion as to the construction of a railroad through the Province of Taranaki. Sooner or later, we may presume, that the rebels of this Province will be conquered, and the question will then be, how are they to be held in such subjection as to prevent future aggression?

I have long given consideration to the civilizing and colonizing of this Province. We have no harbours of refuge, our maritime expenses are great; and the making of a metalled road, constructed at great cost and indefinitely prolonged as to its completion, is, I fear, a slow process of populating a district. The expenses of military tenure for holding a large country with a scattered population, for

an indefinite time, will, I am satisfied, greatly exceed its advantages; and metalled roads, without the accompaniment of harbours adjacent thereto, will place the outlying districts in a very disadvantageous state, obliging them to purchase all articles of import at an advance of twenty per cent., and to sell their produce at a similar reduction on the average prices, thus necessarily retarding their progress in civilization as in countries similarly situated.

The time of adjustment must come, when every Province must pay its just share of the cost of the war; but I regret to say that this Province will be unable to meet its liabilities in that respect, while in its present position as to land and finance.

I now come to the question of a railroad, and I believe that one on the broad gauge principle, to carry a locomotive of twenty tons, may be constructed (including surveys and rolling stock) for the sum of £5000 per mile; and that 179,200 miles of rebel land will make the railroad complete, say from Mokau to Patea, 105 miles. By way of illustration let me suppose the survey finished, and the contract let at £5000 per mile. A block of land may now be surveyed in the centre of the Province, containing 40 square miles, 10 miles long by 4 miles wide, equal to 25,600 acres; in the centre of this block let a township be laid out, consisting of 600 acres, with a frontage of one mile by a depth of half a mile on each side of the railroad, less 40 acres to be for sale, with an upset price of £3 for the rural land and an average price of £50 per acre for the township, the amount realized would be £105,000. At the end of every 15 miles other similar settlements may be formed, giving a result as follows:

Seven Settlements, 15 miles apart, containing 25,000 acres, at £3.

Seven Settlements, 51 miles apart, "Township," containing 600 acres, at £50.

Amounts to, Rural land . . . . .	£525,000	0	0
Amounts to, "Township" land . . . . .	210,000	0	0
Total . . . . .	£735,000	0	0
105 miles Railroad, at £5000 per mile . . . . .	£525,000	0	0
Leaving a balance of . . . . .	£210,000	0	0

And I am sanguine that this work could be completed in eighteen months after the conclusion of the war, and if the Government would give over the land for the construction of the work, I am confident that the Province would be able to pay its fair share of the cost of the war. I beg further to submit that the Government should construct this work beyond the limits of this Province. A railroad should unite Auckland and Wellington, making them the maritime inlets and outlets of the western side of the Northern Island; the cost of which, in accordance with the previous calculation, will be as follows:—From Auckland to Wellington, 420 miles, at £5000 per mile, £2,100,000; and the amount realized by the disposal of the twenty-eight Settlements, at £105,000 per Settlement, would be £2,940,000, the produce of the sale of 716,000 acres of land. And I am of opinion that a railroad from Auckland to Wellington could be completed in two years after the conclusion of the war,—that the land sold would realize a larger sum than I have estimated,—and would do more to colonize the country in five years than a metalled road (without the advantage of harbours for a distance of 400 miles on the Western Coast) would accomplish in twenty-five years. I beg also to offer my opinion respecting the Military Settlers, that 4000 men under arms between Auckland and Wellington, placed on blocks of land on the line of railway, say 100 men ten miles apart, or 50 men five miles apart, would be a more efficient force for holding the country against future Native aggression, than four times that number with metalled roads, which could not be made for an indefinite time. The extra 12,000 men would require more land for their military service than all the land needed for making the railroad, 420 miles in length.

In conclusion I would observe, that should the present Government construct this great work it will lay the foundation stone of New Zealand, and make it, in the words of a great Statesman, "The Britain of the South;" and should my proposition be thought worthy of consideration, I shall be prepared to answer any question that may be required of me. I have, &c.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Auckland.

W. BAYLY.

No. 8.

The UNDER SECRETARY to W. BAYLY, Esq.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Auckland, 16th August, 1864.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th August, 1864, in reference to the construction of a railroad through the Province of Taranaki, and am directed by Mr. Fox to thank you for your suggestions.

I have, &c.,

Mr. W. Bayley, Sen., New Plymouth.

W. GISBORNE,

Under Secretary.

No. 9.

W. K. HULKE, Esq., to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, Taranaki, 21st April, 1865.

Believing that the introduction of emigrants on a scale sufficient to occupy the confiscated lands in this Province is of the utmost importance for the prevention of future outbreaks amongst the Native races, and will greatly advance the prosperity of the Colony at large, I have the honor to suggest for the consideration of the Colonial Secretary a scheme by which not only a great increase to the European population could be effected, but also one by which a large and at present valueless tract of forest land could be opened out for speedy occupation without any expenditure on the part

of the Colonial Government, a matter of no slight importance in the present financial state of this Colony. The means by which I purpose effecting the objects stated above is by the formation of a railroad through this Province, connecting it with the Province of Wellington at its northern boundary of the Patea River.

That by taking the railroad on the inland side of Mount Egmont a distance of twenty miles can be saved between the Town of New Plymouth and the entrance of the Patea River. That by so doing a much larger extent of country would be opened out than if taken on its sea side, which from its being open fern land already possesses a marketable value, and to a considerable extent means of transport. As the advantages offered by a railroad over those of a metal road are so well-known, I refrain from occupying the time of the Colonial Secretary by mentioning them, at the same time I would observe, that as the object of the Colonial Government is the speedy occupation of the country by settlers, and not by sheep and cattle, such can only be effected by the formation of a railroad in preference to a metal road, as the heavy cost of transport on the latter would quite prevent all other than cattle and wool being cultivated, there being no navigable river or even shipping places between the Patea and this settlement, a distance of eighty miles.

The formation of such a large and important work as a railroad must necessarily cause a considerable expenditure of capital; it would not only give employment to many at present residing in this Province, but would offer employment to such of the Military Settlers as might desire it on their being disbanded, and thus relieve the Government from further outlay; otherwise a great majority of able men, introduced at a high cost, and trained to arms, would leave the Province, and by so doing, effectually defeat the very object the Government had in view by their introduction.

That if taken in a military point of view it offers the quickest means of transport, besides offering greater protection to all settlers within its radius (free of cost to Government), than by the formation of military villages on the coast at a heavy Government expense.

Should a favorable view be taken by the Colonial Government of my suggestion, I am prepared to form a Company to carry out such works as may be required in the formation of a railroad between the Town of New Plymouth and the Patea River, including the survey of the country. The line to be a single line: the rolling stock to consist of five locomotives, five tenders, six passenger vans, and one hundred and fifty trucks; the cost of all, delivered when finished and passed to the satisfaction of an Inspector appointed by Government, to be Five thousand pounds (£5000) per mile; the Company to receive as payment, a concession of land in the following portion,—for every One pound up to Five thousand pounds, one and a quarter acres taken in blocks along the line, the Government and the Company selecting as follows:

The Company having the first selection to take from half to two-thirds frontage, as they may see fit. The Government will by this always possess one-third frontage, and possibly half. That the line be delivered over to Government in sections of not less than ten to twenty miles; and the full length of the lines to be finished and in work in two and a half and not exceeding three years from the time of the first sod being turned. In conclusion I may add that I had an interview and correspondence with the late Ministry on this subject, at which interview Messrs. Higgins and Bloomfield, gentlemen having great experience in the formation of railroads in Australia, and who have successfully undertaken and carried out the Echuca line, were examined as to the practicability of carrying out such work in the manner now suggested. Both these gentlemen greatly approved of the plan, stating at the same time the Victorian Government was at the present time offering concessions of land for the same object, and that if the survey was favorable to its construction, a Company would easily be formed to undertake the work. That in the present offer the surveying is to be executed by the Company instead of by the Government, and the rolling stock is included—both of which were not included in the former offer.

Reservation is also made that should the Company, after executing a survey at their own cost, find the country offer serious difficulties to the successful carrying out of the undertaking, they can decline proceeding with the work.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

W. K. HULKE.

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#### No. 10.

The UNDER SECRETARY to W. K. HULKE, Esq.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 2nd June, 1865.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st April, 1865, on the subject of the introduction of emigrants into Taranaki, and the formation of a railroad in that Province, and in reply am directed by Mr. Weld to inform you that your proposal will be laid before the General Assembly.

I have, &c.,

W. GISBORNE,

Under Secretary.

W. K. Hulke, Esq., New Plymouth.

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