

Te Matenga.
Eruara Paraone Tahurangi.
Heta.

Kereopa Tarawainui.
Takerei Paora.
Patene Puhata.

DONALD McLEAN.

Witnesses—James Preece.
Geo. W. Drummond Hay.

True translation—Donald McLean.
9th November, 1861.

Enclosure D.

Letter from Mr. JAMES MACKAY, jun., to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Auckland, 22nd April, 1864.

I have the honor to inform you that during my recent visit to the Thames District, I received information from various sources that gold had been discovered in Kauaeranga and Ohinemuri Streams; the former of these enters the sea near the mouth of the River Thames, and the latter thirty miles from its mouth.

From information which I received from Nepia te Ngarara, of the Ngatiraukawa Tribe, who was formerly mining for gold at Collingwood, it is my opinion that the gold at Ohinemuri is found in alluvial deposits, and not in quartz the same as at Coromandel.

He states that he intended to work the gold at Ohinemuri, but was prevented by the jealousy of the Natives, who feared that if it became known a European population would be attracted to the district.

I had some conversation with the Natives about working the gold fields in the Thames District. I found them very determinedly opposed to this, principally that they feared the Europeans would kill them, miners being reported as very riotous people. I took advantage of Nepia te Ngarara and another Native having been at Collingwood, and requested the former to state in what manner the gold fields at Nelson were managed, and whether Native miners did not receive the same protection as Europeans. The answer given being in the affirmative, I observed a marked difference in the demeanour of the Natives.

I would suggest that if a Magistrate is appointed for that district, it should be one of his duties to endeavour to bring about an arrangement for the working of the Thames Gold Fields. If an available gold field was discovered there it would be very useful to this Province, and would tend to prevent that depression which otherwise will be felt after the cessation of military expenditure. I visited the Coromandel Gold Field, and, as far as I could judge from the limited survey I took of it, am of opinion that it is only the outside of a gold district, and a better field exists in the neighbourhood of the Thames.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary (Native Department), Auckland.

JAMES MACKAY, jun.,
Assistant Native Secretary.

Enclosure E.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. J. MACKAY, jun., to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

(No. 19.)

SIR,—

Auckland, 19th October, 1864.

I have the honor to inform you that in accordance with your instructions I proceeded to Coromandel, with the view of arranging outstanding questions relative to the occupation of Native lands there for gold-mining purposes. I was engaged on the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th of October in investigating and negotiating the various questions connected with that subject.

It appears that on the 2nd November, 1861, Mr. McLean entered into an arrangement with the Natives to permit prospecting on their lands at Coromandel. In consequence of this, large numbers of persons settled on the gold fields. On the 23rd June, 1862, an agreement was completed with Riria, and other claimants of the Tokatea Block, to permit gold-mining to be carried on there, the owners receiving £500 per annum rent, commencing from that date. In the event of more than five hundred persons being employed on that gold field, a sum of £1 per annum was to be paid for every person in excess of that number.

On the 23rd July an agreement was made with Pita Taukaka, Kitahi Te Tanewha, and Patene Puhata, for the working of their lands at Coromandel, known as Kapanga, Ngaurukehu, and Matawai: the Government, on their part, consenting to pay £1 a year for each and every European who worked upon the several pieces of land. It was not stipulated that the miners were to be the holders of licenses. The Government were therefore liable for every person who worked on the land. There was no time fixed for the commencement of the agreement, and no stipulation as to the date when the first payment should be made. No plan appears to have been laid down for the division of the money among the owners of the respective blocks.

The first step I took was to endeavour to obtain information as to the number of persons who had been employed on the various pieces of land. Although I tried in several quarters, it appeared utterly impossible to obtain anything like a correct account of the number. The Gold Fields Registrar showed that 613 miners' rights had been issued up to the 23rd July, 1864, but no clue was there given as to the locality for which any miner's right had been granted. I found, in comparing Mr. Preece's return of the number of miners on Pita's land in 1862-3 with that of the late Mr. Hastie, that they did not correspond at all.

The Natives could not furnish any correct data either; they stating they did not interfere, as the Government had agreed to keep account of the number of miners. This is certainly correct, as far as the agreement went.