

FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE FORMATION OF A ROAD BETWEEN WANGANUI AND TAUPO.

No. 1.

Mr. BULLER, R.M., to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Wanganui, 19th July, 1870.

I do myself the honor to forward herewith, for your information, copy of correspondence between myself and Mr. Field, on the subject of the Mangawhero-Taupo Road.

Mr. Field claims payment, at the full rate of two guineas per diem, for time which is not, I think, fairly chargeable to the road. For example, Mr. Field came to town on one occasion for his own pay and that of his men, and waited some ten days before it arrived from Wellington.

The professional fee of £2 2s. per diem is charged for the whole of this period. Mr. Field was instructed to stop out of the men's pay an equivalent for time lost in obtaining supplies from town and packing them to the camp. The same rule ought to apply to Mr. Field, who was paid at a much higher rate, and part of whose time was spent in packing supplies.

Referring to your letter of 30th May, I have the honor to report that I have seen Mr. Hales, and that he is willing to undertake a general inspection of Mr. Field's work in the early part of next week. When Mr. Hales' report has been received, the Government will be in a better position to decide on Mr. Field's tender to complete the work by contract.

I have, &c.,

W. BULLER,

Resident Magistrate.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

Mr. FIELD to Mr. BULLER, R.M.

SIR,—

Wanganui, 18th July, 1870.

Referring to our conversation of yesterday, as to the time the rest of the Mangawhero-Taupo road line would take to cut through, I beg to trouble you with these few remarks.

The question depends on two things: 1st, the weather; and 2nd, the distance it may be desirable to travel along the dividing ridge before descending to the plains. As regards the first, I think we may reasonably hope that we may be favoured, as we are at present, with at all events a little fine weather, after the almost continuous rain of the past two months; and, as regards the latter, I think it probable that we may have to keep on the hill-top till above Pihaua or Rangiwahaea.

It seems to me, however, to be so lamentable to be losing this, the only fine weather we have had for months, that, if the Government would prefer it, I would be willing to take the risk on the above points, and to complete the cutting of the line by contract, as follows:—

If the Government find the labour, I would undertake the work for thirty pounds (£30); or for forty-five pounds (£45) if I find the labour. I make this offer on the following conditions, viz:—

1. That the matter be decided at once, so as to enable me to get what I can do before the weather changes.
2. That, if I find the labour, I am not expected to employ Natives.
3. That, should the Government want any further information or returns, the papers relating thereto shall be sent up to me, in order that the work may not be hindered by my having to come down to town to supply them with what is required.

I shall be obliged by your communicating this offer to the Government, and giving me an answer with as little delay as possible.

W. L. Buller, Esq., R.M., Wanganui.

I have, &c.,

H. C. FIELD.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Mr. BULLER, R.M., to Mr. FIELD.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Wanganui, 18th July, 1870.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of this morning's date, offering to complete the cutting of the Mangawhero-Taupo line by contract. Your letter shall be forwarded to the Government by first mail. Meanwhile, I am not prepared to incur the responsibility of any further expenditure.

You will of course understand that, from the time of the suspension of the work, your fee of two guineas per diem ceases.

I understood you to-day to say that you claimed payment (at the rate of two guineas per diem) for the whole of the time lost in town. Whether the Government will allow such claim or not, I cannot say. My own opinion is, that, under the arrangement which I made with you, on behalf of the Government, you are only entitled to be paid for days on which you were actually engaged on professional work.