

CONSTRUCTION OF ROADS BY ARMED CONSTABULARY.

No. 1.

MEMORANDUM by Hon. DEFENCE MINISTER for OFFICER COMMANDING Waikato.

Alexandra, 23rd February, 1871.

1. THE roads in Waikato require a series of improvements, in order to render them available for military purposes.

2. Under the circumstances of the period, it is necessary that easy communication should be established between the different posts, so that a rapid concentration of the force under your command could be effected on any threatened spot.

3. The aspect of affairs in your district has been the cause of your being reinforced, so that you will shortly have now (200) two hundred men under your command. You are well aware that the constitution of the Armed Constabulary does not exempt it from the road duties, which troops in all ages have been called upon to perform to the benefit, not only of the country in which lay the scene of their labours, but also of their own health and well-being.

4. It has invariably been found that the habitual idleness prevalent in detached posts, has resulted in the demoralisation of their garrisons; and everywhere it has of late times been the object of the authorities to wean their men from lazy habits, and afford them some occupation beyond the daily routine of drill and pipeclay. Wherever this has been achieved, the results have been highly satisfactory, and it is with a view to improve the physique of your men, as well as to carry out works, which will prove of advantage to the district, that it is decided to employ them on road works.

Idleness, and a continuous series of harassing and useless parades, giving the forces no bodily exertion, and stunting their minds and muscles, were the bane of the militia forces in the Colony. Officers of the Constabulary have before them the experience of the last ten years, and can well point out to their men that exercise and a due amount of labour, will in every way make them more efficient members of the force, and useful to their adopted country.

6. With the means placed at your disposal, you will be able to keep in reserve one hundred (100) men, distributing a similar number at the outposts; the number to occupy each post will rest entirely with you, it being understood that frontier places, like Alexandra and Kihikihi, shall be held in ample strength.

7. With regard to the road parties, the following are the arrangements which should be carried out:—

8. The hundred available men for reserve are to be divided into two working parties of 50 men each, the one to at once undertake the formation of the road by Ohaupo, from Alexandra to Hamilton, thus giving you free communication in all weathers; the other to complete the unfinished part of the road from Cambridge to Rangiaowhia, through Messrs. Douglas and Walker's swamp, which would enable you to move at all times along the extent of your frontier line.

9. A third road will be from Alexandra to Ngaruawahia, through Whatawhata: and as a garrison of fifty (50) men is to be kept at Alexandra, I see no reason why twenty-five (25) of them, at least, should not at once be put on this, to be supplemented afterwards by the first party of fifty (50) which has finished its appointed work. *The labour will be by the piece*, and it will be, therefore, necessary that a proper supervision should be exercised in laying out the lines, and giving out the different sections; for this purpose, the services of Sub-Inspector Kenny will be at your disposal. On his sending in a requisition for plain levelling instruments, for the proper laying out of the road through the swampy ground, on the way to Ohaupo, he will be furnished with them, as well as with a copy of the general instructions for road works, issued by the Public Works Department, and the forms of monthly returns to be sent to that office.

10. These forms you will have to countersign. It will, of course, be part of your duty to exercise a general superintendence over the whole of the road works, and to report specially whenever a necessity occurs for so doing. You will use your own discretion in giving alternate turns of road work and outpost duty to your force.

11. You will of course act in concert with Road Boards, in existence, and avail yourself of their local knowledge and experience in any deviation or improvement that may be suggested, in the direction of the roads.

DONALD McLEAN.

No. 2.

MEMORANDUM by the Hon. DEFENCE MINISTER for ARMED CONSTABULARY, Waikato.

Alexandra, 4th March, 1871.

As the men of the Armed Constabulary at work on road parties will receive extra pay of one shilling a day, the officer in charge of the works will report to you any remissness on their part in finishing the different pieces allotted to them by him. It will then be at your discretion to stop the extra pay, or take any such other steps as you may think fit.

DONALD McLEAN.
