

1879.

NEW ZEALAND.

MURDER OF JOHN McLEAN

ON 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1878, AND STEPS TAKEN FOR CAPTURE OF SUPPOSED MURDERER
(LETTERS AND TELEGRAMS RELATING TO).

Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr. Sheehan, with the Leave of the House.

Hon. J. SHEEHAN, Wellington.

Waverley, 21st September, 1878.

Inquest held to day, at Waverley, on body of John McLean, cook to survey party, Moumahaki, who was shot on 19th September, at survey camp. Verdict wilful murder against person unknown. Suspicion points to Native, Hiroki, of Papatupu, Waitotara, who is said to have fled. Information against Hiroki now being laid by police, and warrant issued for his apprehension.

C. A. WRAY, R.M., Coroner.

Hon. NATIVE MINISTER, Wellington.

Patea, 21st September, 1878.

Man of Fraser's survey party found shot—supposed, by Natives, as powder and bullets taken from camp. Fraser (my partner) was surveying Moumahaki, near Wairoa, for Government.

EDWD. TREGGAR.

R. WOON, R.M., Whanganui.

Wellington, 22nd September, 1878.

The following telegrams were received by me last evening:—

“Waverley, 3.40 p.m., 21st September, 1878.—Inquest held to-day, at Waverley, on body of John McLean, cook to survey party at Moumahaki, who was shot on 19th September, at survey camp. Verdict wilful murder against person unknown. Suspicion points to Native, Hiroki, of Papatupu, Waitotara, who is said to have fled. Information against Hiroki now being laid by police, and warrant issued for his apprehension.—C. A. WRAY, R.M., Coroner.”

“Patea, 21st September, 1878.—Man of Fraser's party found shot dead—supposed, by Natives, as powder and bullets taken from camp. Fraser (my partner) was surveying Moumahaki Block, near Wairoa, for Government.—EDWD. TREGGAR.”

You will be good enough to let me know anything which may have come to your knowledge respecting this matter other than is contained in the foregoing telegrams. Information particularly required on the following points: Whether or not the offence may be regarded as a murder pure and simple, or as having any connection with the surveys now going on. Secondly, whether any rumours had previously reached you indicating any intention on the part of any body of Natives to commit such an act of violence. Whether the alleged offender is known to you; also his character and position in the tribe. Whether you have received any information as to the direction in which he is supposed to have fled. Whether any alarm exists among the European inhabitants of your district in consequence of this offence. Please note that the following offices will be open all day: Wellington, Whanganui, Waitotara, Waverley, Patea, Hawera, Opunake. His right name is Wiremu Hiroki. He is Waikato, married to a Pipiriki woman, and has no claim to the land. Waitotara Natives imagine he will make for Waikato. He is a stiff-built young man, a little over five feet high, without hair or tatoo on his face. The name of an ancestor is tatooed on right arm. Any important particulars that you may receive that will throw any light on the commission of the offence, or the movements of the supposed murderer, should be wired to the other offices at once.

JOHN SHEEHAN.

Similar telegram sent to—Captain Wilson, Hawera; Deputy Inspector of Police, Whanganui; Constable, Police, Waitotara; J. Southcombe, Waitotara; Constable Burrows, Waverley; Officer in Charge Armed Constabulary, Opunake.—J.S.

Hon. J. SHEEHAN, Native Minister.

Whanganui, 22nd September, 1878.

Re Wairoa murder. First heard of matter by reading telegram in last night's *Herald*; no rumours had reached me previously indicating any intention on the part of Natives to commit such violence. Alleged offender unknown to me. No information as to where he has fled. No alarm here yet. I will make due inquiry as to the nature of the offence in connection with the surveys, and let you know. Seems to me rather like a simple murder, although the matter looks suspicious as coupled with the survey of the confiscated land. Last Wednesday, on way down river, met Paiaka's party on way home, and they reported that ammunition carts had left Whanganui for Waimate, as survey