

Local and General letters received by Principal Agent Wellington 01 Jan – 29 Dec 1841
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No.5.1 Daniel Riddiford, Port Nicholson 13 Jan 1841 to Colonel William Wakefield

Dear Sir, I am extremely unwell and have been confined to my bed for these two days, your note this morning has been attended to. Several families now at the Depot have applied to me for the fourth time for rations, I did not feel satisfied in giving them without an order from you to that effect – they say they cannot get work. I have succeeded in getting several employment, but at the present time there are many out of work. Will you be kind enough to sign the enclosed certificates, Yours truly, Daniel Riddiford.

No.16 Petition to Colonel Wakefield

The Humble Petition of the Working Men on the road Humbly Sheweth “That we the undersigned request you will be pleased to take the three undermentioned articles into your wise Judgment viz: 1st To knock off work at 5 o'clock same as all the men in the Colony; 2nd to allow us the same rations as the surveyors; 3rd not to stop wet Days. Hon. Sir, Your Petitioners relying on your Gentlemanly and Fatherly kindness to all Emigrants so far from their native sail that you will take the above to your generous Breast and accede to our Petition if not to make what ever alteration you please for our benefit and your Petitioners in Duty Bound will every pray.

Signed: William Cooper, Thistle Public House, Angus Cameron (his mark), Duncan Cameron (his mark), Donald Cameron, James Miller, Michael Pilkington, James Hobman, ... Mitchell, ... Natrass, James Collins, John Cameron (his mark), Allen Cameron (his mark), Thomas Janes, William McConnel, Donnell Maguvrey? (his mark), Donal Cameron (his mark), Hugh Cameron (his mark), William..., William Harvey, John MacKay, Hugh Marson(?), Daniel Cameron (his mark), John Mog..., William Miller, George Baron, Archy McQuin (his mark)

– [note: the above is a best guess as many signatures are difficult to read]

No.17 Joseph Carter, Petoni, River Hutt 06 Mar 1841

“I have been working on the Surveying staff near 10 months since in the Colony, about three weeks since or last Friday fortnight from getting wet wading through the rivers in the Bush and being exposed to the camps I was seized with a violent attack of Rheumatism which settled in head and caused an ulcerated sore throat, in that state I was confined to my bed a fortnight unable for a week to take any food and part of the time not any nourishment and with so sudden and severe an illness it left me exceedingly weak and incapable of returning to the Bush or providing for my family in any way, having a Wife and five small children depending solely on my labour...”

No.20 Robert Stokes, Wellington 14 Mar 1841 to Capt William Smith, R.A., Surveyor General
Sir, I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter this Morning enclosing Carter's complaint to Colonel Wakefield which I have read and return. If I am to understand he states I have drawn any difference between the two men, or given any orders as to their pay his statement is untrue, as you are well aware I have nothing whatsoever to do with the matter; the men I believe being generally paid by yourself. On my return from the Hutt I reported to you the illness of Carter and the accident of Lawrence leaving any further question to be decided by yourself & I stated to Mr Bircham my impression that rations were allowed to men working for the Company who were ill while in their service but not pay & I find from your letter my impression as to the pay is correct. The statement about the carriage of Provisions is equally untrue, at First they were carried by the Men cutting the Line, this proved an expensive and unsatisfactory arrangement & I suggested that Mr Dean's plan of employing carriers for this purpose would be more efficient & economical & if Maoris could be induced to take them still more economical. The distance of the Tent from the Store House by the nearest practicable path is at least seven miles and the men received 7s for the journey carrying 48lbs weight until they refused to go for less than 10s which I believe is the highest payment they have received. This sum they still consider insufficient & I advised Bircham to give more if necessary rather than the provisions should not be carried up as in that case the line would be stopped. Mr Deans never paid less than 2s 6d per mile afterwards 3s per mile and when higher up the valley 4s per mile for the carriage of 50lbs weight. It would thus appear that the highest sum paid by the Company is less by nearly one half than the lowest sum paid by Mr Deans. I should remind you that you have always been acquainted with and acquiesced in any arrangements that have been made & I have undertaken them only in obedience to your request. Property they are beyond my province, all that I have to do being as I conceive to set out according to your instructions and to the best of my judgement any lines that want cutting to survey them when cut & to report to you on my return any thing that may have occurred requiring your notice or attention & this I have generally done. With the expenses of the Lines I have nothing to do. If I may be allowed to hazard an opinion on the subject I believe they are much less than those of the former lines up the Hutt.

No.27 William Webster, Sydney 31 Mar 1841 to Colonel William Wakefield
"I understand you are about purchasing land in New Zealand, and having a large quantity to dispose of in the Frith of Thames, I hereby offer it for sale to you knowing it to be the best land to be found in New Zealand, having resided in the Thames for seven years I can warrant the whole of it to be of the very best quality. It is situated in different parts of the Frith and a large portion on the River Thames, and also the river Piako. With this I send you a Map of all the land belonging to me, you will see it marked with red ink. If you are disposed to purchase send me an answer by the first opportunity and send some person to inspect the land. I have sent all my claims to the United States Government and I have likewise sent them in to the Colonial Secretary's office here. The Titles are the best from the original owners of the Land. I have in employment about 100 Europeans on my land and every place is in my possession. The terms provided you take the whole I have, will be from 3 to 4 shillings per acre. I have since my abode in the Country expended £20,000 purchasing and improving the land. An early answer to this will much oblige. Your obedient servant, William Webster, Bay of Island or River Thames, New Zealand."

No.30 Robert Stokes, Wellington 08 Apr 1841

Sir, I have the honor to inform you that in obedience to your instructions I have visited the Parties cutting lines at Porirua, and from Nga Houranga to the Kinapora, and now report to you the present state of the Survey. On my arrival at Porirua I found the party under Jackson cutting a line from the termination of the road to Porirua along the west side of the Harbour towards the Coast. Accompanied by Jackson I proceeded towards the Coast to ascertain the direction in which the line could be continued with the greatest advantage, and after passing a short distance through the bush we gained some rising ground under cultivation by the Natives a little south of the Harbour of Titahi round which we passed to Porirua. That Evening and the next morning I examined in part the Eastern branch of the Harbour and the line the Surveyor General had directed to be cut from the Porirua road on a stream falling into the Kina-pora, and gave Jackson the necessary instructions as to the continuation of his line. While at Porirua Jackson informed me it was his intention to have proceeded towards Waikanai for the purpose of ascertaining the best direction of the road in continuation from Porirua but this I suspended for the present. Before leaving Porirua I may briefly state the information I was able to collect generally in reference to that Neighbourhood. The Natives inform me there are two vallies on the North side of the Eastern branch of Porirua harbour through which there are Mauri paths leading to the Coast, the path through the first valley terminates at Pari-Pari, the path through the second which is described as containing a good deal of available land terminates at Wai nui. This path is said to be good and tolerably level, and if on examination this information should prove correct, a road through this valley in continuation of the road from Wellington to Porirua would immediately connect Wanganui with this place as the Beach from Wai-nui to Wanganui is sufficient for all purposes of communication. On the South side of the East branch of the Harbour near its commencement the Natives describe a path which is very good leading through vallies by a comparatively level route to the valley of the Hutt. The cutting directed by the Surveyor General as above mentioned would unite this route with the road from Wellington to Porirua, and after turning the head of the Eastern branch of Porirua Harbour the road would communicate with the valley leading to Wai nui so that in this direction there would be no occasion for a ferry. The route to the valley of the Hutt I have just indicated is not the same with that lately traversed by the Surveyor General which commences at the head of the East branch of the Harbour. Round the shores of the Harbour of Porirua and the small Harbour of Titahi there appears to be a considerable extent of very available land stretching to the South beyond Titahi; the greater portion of the land at Titahi has been cleared and cultivated by the Natives. The line of road from the Kai-wara to Porirua has already received many improvements under the judicious direction of Mr McDonald and no doubt will be still further improved by him in many places between the point to which the works have at present advanced and the termination of the road at Porirua. These alterations will be so numerous that it may be advisable to defer the selection of Sections on this line until the road shall be so far advanced as to admit of the whole line being resurveyed and a defined and certain boundary laid down to each Section. On my return I visited the line which has been cut by Hayward's party from the Nga Houranga to the road from Kai Wara meeting it at a place called the Totara flat. Its direction from the Totara flat at first is over level ground crossing several times a small stream until it meets a precipitous Hill over which it passes. It then crosses another Hill and the ground is tolerably level until again descending and ascending the line enters a very steep and narrow ravine the bed of a small stream, the Hill being steep on both sides, along which it continues for a considerable distance until, approaching lower ground, it terminates at Nga Houranga. This line where it passes over the Hills and along the bed of the Watercourse will require considerable alteration before it can be made available as a future line of road without occasioning a serious outlay of money. The Survey up the Valley of the Hutt has been continued through the narrowest part where the valley does not admit of more than one Section of available land in width to a point nearly eight miles in a straight line from the Beach and following the windings of the river ten & a quarter miles. The Survey for the present has terminated at a point where the valley begins to open, and where there appears to be an extensive district of fertile and well timbered land. As far as I am able to form an opinion the available land in the valley of the Hutt not yet surveyed lies almost wholly to the East of the river, so that little interruption to the lines of communication may be apprehended from the river beyond the portion already surveyed. According to the statements of the Natives a road may be made to the district of Wairarapa from

any point of this portion of the Valley. In obedience to the Surveyor General's instructions the party up the Hutt will be withdrawn very shortly as the difficulty and expence of carrying provisions so far up the Valley will be materially increased during the Winter in the present imperfect state of the means of communication.

No.31 E. Dieffenbach, Kawhia 18 Apr 1841

Reporting his journeys in North Auckland, Auckland, Thames and Waikato; intends going to Taupo, Tongariro and either Taranaki or Wanganui, Rotorua and East Coast; has found a live kiwi and bones of a large extinct bird, the Moa.

Dear Sir, Since the departure of the 'Cuba' from the Bay of Islands I have been continually on the move, exploring the land from Cape Maria van Diemen and the North Cape as far South as Kawia, where I am now detained since several days by heavy rains. My opinion of the Island has been continually improved, the more I have seen of it, and I confidently... that it fully deserves the high... bestowed upon it, always... in its own and proper light without comparing it to other places of Colonization, from the Bay of Islands to the North Cape. I visited five harbours, viz Wangaroa, Mangonui, Rangaunu, Mount Camel and Paringa ringa, all of them with the exception of Mount Camel, comprising in their boundaries a goodly extent of fine and open land. The greatest extent of the latter is found at Rangaunu, where a river discharges itself, coming not far from the left hand branch of the Hokianga, the Mango muka from which it is separated by a range of hills of which the highest the Maunga Taniwa commands a beautiful view over the whole of the northern Island as far as Kaipara. On the river is rich alluvial land, on both shores, entirely flat, and covered with fern and flax, on an area of at least 500,000 acres. I went up the river in a schooner belonging to a ... Captain Burnard, and we anchored 25 miles up before the house of a Mr Maxwell, one of the Port Nicholson Emigrants, who bought 2500 acres, from another farmer, who is settled in the neighbourhood, a Mr Southee. This land is mostly claimed by Missionaries, and some other private individuals, and a large extent is still in the hands of the natives who have a fine village and a Mission station at Kaitaia a place you will find mentioned in MacDonnells chart. The range of hills, which traverses the northern Island terminates at that place, and, with the exception of a line of cast hills along the northern shore the land is flat. The good land however is interrupted by sandhills, which progressing from the western shore, occupy the land in a line drawn from that shore to Mount Camel and to the North of what MacDonnel calls Sandy Bay or Paringa ringa harbour. Then the land is again good, resting on a volcanic subsoil, but is of no great extent. From the Bay of Island to Hokianga the road leads to the Waimate district, a flat with many volcanic cones, generally not wooded, with some very good land, but which is generally too light, to give heavy crops and in other places is quite useless, being strewed over with an iron gravel. The left hand branch of the Hokianga leads into a fine and fertile valley, where the natives have cultivated a good deal. In Waimate are hot springs of several kinds, which will become very important one day. The space between Kaitaia and Waimate is filled up with primitive forest, 51 miles in length, through which the Missionaries have cut a road. The forest has not much Kauri, but is of the mixed kind of the South. Limestone is very plentiful in the northern part of the Island, crystallizing in many places into most beautiful marble. I have followed this limestone to Kawia, and in the case you should want some this latter place will be most convenient for you to procure it. I say nothing of the Kaipara, as you have seen that place yourselves. It seems to me a most noble river, with plentiful of good land especially in the upper district of the valleys of its lateral branches, and has the greatest abundance of Kauri forest in New Zealand. The Kaipara, properly speaking winds to a distance of about 10 miles of a navigable branch of the Houraki gulf. This river is very serpentine in... and the land at its shores good, although subjected to occasional overflowings. The land between Waitemata and this branch of the Kaipara is generally filled up with hills on which... Kauri grew, and is of a very bad description. The neighbourhood of Auckland however is good, and ... far to the heads of Manukao harbour. This land is not yet in possession of the Government, and the natives seem to be inclined to ask exorbitant prices for it. The whole possession of the Government near Auckland is about 4000 acres. The river Thames, where the largest flats are, are about to be purchased. Auckland commands a good extent of land by portages, the first connecting Manukao with the Thames, 1½ mile broad, the other connecting Manukao with the Waikato, 1¾ mile broad, and by that means commanding the Waipa which flows into the Waikato, and which is

very much grassed for it, open and fertile land. The Waikato has a very narrow and bad entrance and is only accessible to vessels of the smallest burthen, but inside the river deepens and is navigable for 160 miles. The next harbour to Waikato is Waingaroa, a beautiful place, with fertile and undulating hills in the neighbourhood. Large vessels have visited this harbour, as it has 3½ fathoms at high water. 25 miles from this, and about 5 miles from Kafia is another harbour Aritea, with good land in the neighbourhood but only small schooners can enter it. The coastland between Kawia and Manukao is for the most part consisting of undulating and fertile hills, covered in patches with a mixed forest. A higher range divides the coast from the valley of the Waipa, which springs from the Tongarido. The Waikato comes out of the Taupo lake but the latter is not... from it. In this district I am now bending my steps, first from here to the Waipa, from there to the Tongarido and another high mountain in the neighbourhood. Whether I go from this to Taranaki or Wanganui depends much upon the state of the roads and other circumstances. At all events I return from these to visit the whole of Waipa and Waikato, the lakes and springs at Rotorua, the East coast, Poverty Bay, and the river Thames, when I shall be able to give you a full report of the whole of my travels in the Island. I think to complete this tour in about 3 months from here. In the meantime I should be glad to find a letter from you on my return to the Thames. And I should be likewise much obliged to you if you would forward me to that place any letters which have arrived for me in Port Nicholson. I am very anxious to hear from home and... the things generally are going on. I have heard here that new Emigrants are arrived in Taranaki, and I am rejoiced to see that fine district settled in such a short time. In my proper department I have heaped up many treasures, amongst others the long looked for Kiwi, and (do not laugh) a few precious bones of an extinct bird of same kind, the Moa, for which I am now going to search the land. Amongst produces of export I must mention to you, that Orgilla, that dear dying lichen is found plentifully on the basaltic cones in the neighbourhood of the Thames. I have not mentioned the thing yet to anyone, but I am sure it will become an important article. Copper ore I have seen in very rich quality I think it came from the great... island in the Mouth of the Gulf of Houraki, but I am not quite sure whether it came from there, as the man who had it made secret of it. There is plenty of lignite to the North of the Thames but no coal, and I do not think there is much chance of finding any in the North Island. Sandstone of prime quality is plentiful near Kaitaia, like that of the Madelaine in Paris. This, Dear Sir, are only a few notices and you may expect my report in the earliest time. For the meanwhile, believe me, Your most obedient servant, Dr E. Dieffenbach.

No.51 W. McClatchie, Chatham Islands 11 Aug 1841

Sir, I have taken the liberty of writing to you to inform you in consequence of Mr Faddy's coming to Port Nicholson I have taken the liberty of authorising Mr Faddy to receive the sum of ten pounds the expenses incurred by me in fetching you from Port Hardy you will recollect my receiving two pounds from you on my arrival in Queen Charlotte Sound but I will now inform you of my expenses. Firstly the Boats Crew 5 men £5; Loan of the Boat £1; Provisions £2; Paid to six natives whom I employed to take you from Queen Charlotte's Sound to Port Nicholson 12lbs of Tobacco at 5s per lb - £3; Total £11. I shall now leave it to your own generosity what you think my services worth. I have been extremely miserable on this Island and in eminent danger of my life in several instances, both myself and Mr Faddy have had to live on potatoes for weeks at a time. The Island is one of the Finest in the World it will produce anything that will grow in Europe the expense of clearing it away will be comparatively nothing when compared with New Zealand. I should feel extremely obliged if you would inform me by the first opportunity what are the company's intentions with regard to this Island as I have to support the man who was employed to come down with us to this Island but as you will hear more than I can write from Mr Faddy I will conclude. I remain, Sir, W. McClatchie.

No.55 Francis Heeley and 8 signatures, Port Nicholson 26 Aug 1841

Sir, We the undersigned holders of land orders of the second series beg to enter our protest against your acting upon or adopting a resolution entered into this day, be certain holders of land orders of the second and third series – first in as much as that resolution is calculated, if not intended, to deprive you of the responsibility not only of giving us due and timely notice, when land was really surveyed & Ready for distribution but also of the consequences that should attach to you in the event of any disappointment such as has already occurred at Wanganui - & second because if there should only be ready for distribution but a few sections and those of such a character as we could not select we would then be compelled to postpone our selection and subject ourselves to all the expenses & dangers of our going to Wanganui. We are Sir, Your obedient servants [signed] Francis Heely, William Bannister, James Dent Greenwood, Andrew Duncan, W. K. Hulk, H. Milne, George Robertson, Thomas Beavan.

No.57 R. Giddings, 03 Sep 1841

Sir, It is with great reluctance I take up my pen to address you being at the present moment labouring under the greatest difficulties and distress believe me Sir in the first place I have lost my wife and child likewise another one nearly burnt to death which is now confined to her Bed since my arrival in this colony lying side by side. I should not have troubled you to ask you for your assistance on the Roads to enable me to assist my children to a loaf of bread having expended all I had for their support.

No.62 Thomas Hodgkin, Brook Street, London 22 Sep 1841 to Dr Dieffenbach, New Zealand

My dear Friend, I am truly sorry that the last day & almost the last moment for writing by the emigrant vessels going to New Zealand has arrived without my having prepared a packet for this and my other friends in the different settlements. I must therefore content myself with sending this a very... token of my remembrance. We have long been looking for thy further report respecting the native having only received the first part, though a second was mentioned as being on its way several months ago since what we have not had the satisfaction of hearing from thee either directly or indirectly. We hope notwithstanding that thou art pursuing thy scientific and benevolent labours and that in him we shall have the result. We greatly need constant and detailed accounts of what is doing for and amongst the natives. The published reports seldom mention them and when they do so they are contradictory. Good expressions on their behalf are not wanting on the part of directors emigrants and government officers but we have no proofs of the operation of the principles avowed. What is Halswell doing? We have heard that he had left the Colony for New South Wales. What is Dr Evans doing? We hear that he has done the same and that the books &c what he look out for instructions are remaining useless. We do not ask thee to sending information what may prejudice myself but we desire to know the parts of the case and will not use thy name without thy sanction. How are the Missionaries going on? If the natives are beginning to rise in acquirement and wealth whilst the settlers are comparatively few and when if justly treated they might acquire capital by well paid work and by raising provision their fate is sealed and the character of British Emigrants to that quarter is gone without redemption. Be so kind as to give my kind regards to any in New Zealand with whom I am acquainted and urge them by regard for our common humanity by their own interest and by any value which they may place on the good opinion of the friends whom they have left behind to make strong and united efforts for the good of the poor people amongst whom they have placed themselves.

No.73 Donald Cameron and 15 signatures Wellington 12 Oct 1841

Sir, We the undersigned have heard with regret and indignation that a letter had been left about your... last night (which came into your hand) purporting that because you had reduced the wages of the workmen employed by you on behalf of the New Zealand Company on the road now making between this and Petoni, your House should be set on fire. We admit that we felt ourselves aggrieved when it was announced to us that our wages were to be reduced and we then agreed to join our fellow workmen in remonstrating with you or in other words to make it as plain as possible to you that we could not at present work for less wages than we have had, and we still adhere to this, but it never once entered our heads to use unlawful and far less Criminal means to attain our object. On the contrary we beg (and the purpose of this letter is) to assure you that we are at all times ready and willing to assist you and the authorities in supporting all that is right and lawful and in putting down what is the reverse. We believe that many of our fellow workmen would sign this letter if they had an opportunity but we are anxious to take the earliest opportunity in our power of thus declaring to you our sentiments. (Signed) Donald Cameron, Donald Cameron 2nd, Donas Cameron [mark of], Alex Cameron [mark of], John Cameron, Archibald McQueen [mark of], John Cameron, Allan Cameron [mark of], John Mackay [mark of], Lachlan Mackay [mark of], Hugh McKenzie, Hugh Morison, Duncan Morison.

No.79 William Webster, Coromandel Harbour 25 Oct 1841

Dear Sir, I sent a letter dated in Sydney in March last and a Map of different pieces of land purchased by me about the River Thames, which I offered for sale to the New Zealand Land Company. Mr Blacket of the yacht 'Albatros' has had the kindness to say he will hand you this, and perhaps you will have the kindness to inform me whether you received the letter and Map which I forwarded from Sydney by Mr Hind in the schooner 'Success', and let me know whether it is likely that the Land will be required by the Company, if so I will come down to Port Nicholson in one of my small schooners and bring all the Titles with me, please to let me have an early answer and you will oblige. Your obedient servant, William Webster.

No.80 Wellington, Port Nicholson 26 Oct 1841

Sir, We, the undersigned, Proprietors and renters of lands in the River Hutt, beg to solicit your Aid, on the part of the Company to the construction of a substantial road through that important district.

It is an acknowledged fact, that no land in the county of Port Nicholson, is so well adapted for supplying agricultural produce, and the finest timber, to our infant capital, as the Valley of the Hutt. It's superiority over all others is manifested in its proximity to the town, the flatness of its surface and its natural facilities of water carriage. These advantages are so important, that we consider the prosperity of Wellington, so far as its internal produce is concerned, is mainly dependent upon the Agriculture of the Hutt. Without the power of raising food at a lower rate than it can be imported, our commercial prosperity will be fallacious.

But to attain this desirable object the free navigation of the river, and the construction of a substantial road through the Valley, are absolutely essential. The first, it is to be hoped, may be effected, at least in part, by individual contributions and a plan for this is in progress. But the construction of a main road requires larger funds than the proprietors & renters are capable of contributing letting aside the consideration that many of the former are absentees, from whom no aid can be expected. The enormous outlay necessary for breaking up and clearing the land is a sufficient tax upon the renters; while the distance of many of the richest sections from the river, and the want of any road to its banks, disheartens any one from commencing their cultivation. The Agriculture of the Hutt, in fact is at present confined to a few acres, close to the lower banks of the river in scattered localities.

With a view, therefore, of obviating these evils, we solicit your assistance in opening a district, capable, in a very few years, of producing grain, sufficient for the whole city. This road may either be continued from that to Petoni along the foot of the hills which skirt the back of sections No. 15, 20 and 24 (the two former native reserves) by which an angle of nearly two miles may be avoided; or it may commence from section No.25 (where the river at present is no longer navigable) and be carried directly up the valley until it reaches the surveyor's line, just opened, to Porarua. These two most fertile districts thus united would pour this produce into the Capital. Timber, corn, potatoes, and grain of all sorts might thus be conveyed with facility to Port Nicholson through miles of level land, without the dangers of a sea voyage or the impediments of mountains and a population would rapidly be located on the whole line, simply because they would have the means of sending their surplus produce to market.

We feel fully persuaded all these considerations are understood by you, but as they cannot be so well known to the Director in England, we trust that they will give this our representation of the obstacles we have to contend with, their most serious regard. We confidently hope, that as the Company is deriving large profits, you will feel authorised to expend a portion upon the formation of these roads, alike beneficial to the Colony, the encouragement of agriculture, the interest of the landed proprietors, and the future aspirations of the Company. We have the honor to be Sir [signed]: Francis Alexander Molesworth, William Swainson, George Samuel Evans, George Hunter, Thomas Mitchell Partridge, J. W. Childs, George White, R. Barton, Robert Stokes, Henry St Hill, H. Moreing, G. T. Wicksteed.
