

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE TAKEN BEFORE THE MANUKAU PILOT STATION COMMITTEE.

MONDAY, MARCH 23RD, 1863.

Committee met pursuant to adjournment.

Present—Mr. Bateman, Mr. King, Mr. Rattray, Mr. Daldy (in chair.)

Minutes of former meeting read and confirmed.

Mr. EVANS in attendance, and examined.

To Chairman.] I left the Pilot Station at the Manukau when the pilotage fees were stopped. I acted as Second Pilot. No one ever told me I was not to act as such. When I left I had leave of absence for six weeks. I acted as Signal-man. I went to Otago, and was longer away than I expected. When I came back I did not report myself. I had no communication with the Harbour Master or any one connected with the Government. My pay was £7 a month, and I thought it too little to support my wife and family. I never told Captain Wing that I did not intend returning to my situation. I was never told by any one that I was not required. I never got any pay from the time of asking leave. I left my situation on the 14th of the month, but was never paid for that portion of the month.

To Mr. Bateman.] Mr. Wing's son acted in my absence. Mr. Wing wrote a note for me to convey to the Superintendent asking leave for Mr. Wing's son to act in my absence. The Superintendent gave me a sealed letter to Mr. Wing in reply. I don't know the contents of that letter. I thought the Station was quite safe in the hand of Mr. Wing's son, as he had often acted as Signal-man previously. I think he was quite competent to act as Signal-man. I never heard any complaint against him. **My only reason** for leaving was that I considered £7 a month too little to support my wife and family. I had no other reason for leaving. I was in the situation seven years. No accident occurred in my time.

To Chairman.] The new signals were not in use when I left. The old signals were in very bad order. They were all tattered. I had to patch them almost every day. There were no danger signals arranged between me and the Pilot. I could not have told him if a vessel was in danger outside when he was coming down the Harbour. We had not Marryatt's signals.

To Mr. King.] My name is Evans. I have been a sailor twelve years. I served my time in a coasting vessel off Wales. I arrived in this Colony about ten years ago. I was never accustomed to act as Signal-man until I went to the Manukau. I was at sea all the time from leaving home until I went to the Manukau. I was coxswain in the boat with Captain Lewis, and appointed Signal-man after he left. I complained to Mr. Wing that the signals were in bad order. I thought there was a necessity for having signals in the event of Mr. Wing's absence, and I told him so several times. There was no arrangement between the Harbour Master and me in case any vessel was in danger. I used to get all the pilotage fees of the vessels I piloted. Mr. Wing's son had charge of the Pilot Station when I left. My pay averaged between £10 and £11 a month when I had the pilotage, including salary. I don't remember having ever made any complaint to Captain Wing or any other person connected with the Government. After I went to Otago I got Mr. Graham to write that I would not return to the situation, for I was not contented with the low rate of wages I had been getting. I never received any answer to that letter. I never received any notification that I was not to go back, nor heard of anyone being appointed in my place. I never gave any intimation when I left that I would not return again. I thought my services were not again required.

To Chairman.] I have been on the South Head of the Manukau a hundred times. If I had to plant a Flagstaff at the Manukau Head I would put it on the South Head, because its signals would be much better seen than they are at present, in consequence of a much higher hill being at the back of the present Signal Station.

To Mr. Rattray.] The life-boat was never used in my time. No accident occurred during the time I was there. I think the Head is too far distant from the boat.

To Chairman.] I have often had great difficulty in getting to signal during high tides, often up to the middle in water.

To Mr. Bateman.] I never heard any complaints of incompetency against young Mr. Wing. I think him quite competent.

Witness stated, in reply to Captain Wing, that he had never made any arrangement with anyone about receiving the fourteen days' pay.

Mr. Evans was thanked for his attendance, and withdrew.

On motion of Mr. King—*Ordered*, That, in consequence of the absence of the Chairman, it is desirable to adjourn until Captain Wing reports himself to Mr. O'Rorke, which he was requested to do on the earliest possible occasion.

WILLIAM C. DALDY,
Chairman.