

In reply, I am to refer you to the Despatches from Major-General Chute, copies of which accompanied the letters from this office of the 23rd July and 21st August last, as containing an explanation of the reason why he had failed to fulfil the orders which he had received from the Secretary of State for War, for the restoration of the troops withdrawn from the Australian Colonies,—the reason being that he had been prevented by Sir George Grey.

Sir Frederic Rogers, Bart., &c.

I have, &c.,

EDWARD LUGARD.

Enclosure 2 in No. 15.

Sir E. LUGARD to Sir F. ROGERS.

SIR,—

War Office, 24th October, 1866.

With reference to recent correspondence on the subject of supply of rations to the Colonial Forces in New Zealand, I am directed by Secretary Lieutenant-General Peel to transmit, for the information of the Earl of Carnarvon, the enclosed copy of a letter from Deputy Commissary-General Strickland, dated Auckland, 7th August, 1866, upon this subject.

I have, &c.,

Sir Frederic Rogers, Bart., &c.

EDWARD LUGARD.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 2 in No. 15.

Deputy-Commissary-General STRICKLAND to the Under SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR.

SIR,—

Commissariat, New Zealand, Auckland, 7th August, 1866.

I have the honor to report to you, for the information of the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for War, that I have just returned from Wellington, where the Major-General Commanding has temporarily established Head Quarters. I used every effort, through the Major-General, to learn the intentions of His Excellency the Governor as to the removal of troops, and on other points referred to in Enclosure 190 c., dated 11th June, 1866, forwarded to you in my letter No. 52, dated 26th June, 1866. I have entirely failed in gaining any information, and I believe I am correct in stating that the Major-General conveyed to me all he knew on the subject I have alluded to.

At the time of my departure from Wellington, the Major-General Commanding was still awaiting replies to letters addressed to His Excellency. Under these circumstances, it has become necessary to treat the decision of His Excellency the Governor, communicated to me by the Assistant Military Secretary in his letter No. 4691, dated 25th May, 1866, (copy of which was enclosed in my letter to you above quoted,) as still holding good, viz.,—that the circumstances under which the issue of rations from this department is made to the Colonial Forces, “amounts to a pressing and extraordinary emergency affecting the safety of the Colony.” Acting upon this, it became my duty to leave nothing to chance in the due execution of the onerous duty imposed upon me, especially on the West Coast, between Taranaki and Wanganui. The “Gundagai” had scarcely begun her work afresh at the Patea River, when she became almost a total wreck upon the bar of that river; and at this same time, without any warning to this department, the Colonial Government sent about 270 Infantry and 40 Cavalry to be stationed in the country between Patea and Waingongoro. This was an ill-timed addition in the middle of winter, when in anticipation of a withdrawal of outposts under proper instructions the coast depôts had been permitted to fall low; and our steam transport, on which such confident reliance had been placed had broken down, and the Hokitika gold diggings had drawn away from Wanganui well nigh all the coasting craft.

The news of these difficulties reached me at Nelson *en route* to Wellington. At Nelson, and afterwards at Picton, I sought in vain to charter vessels adapted to my wants.

It became now an imperative necessity to replace the “Gundagai” by another suitable steamer, to avoid the responsibility of not meeting properly a “pressing and extraordinary emergency affecting the safety of the Colony.”

At Wellington I met Deputy-Assistant-Commissary-General Graham, who had come overland from Wanganui to report to Major-General Chute what I have now written. The result of careful inquiry from Mr. Graham as to the quantities of stores in the depôts on the coast, the means available of replenishing them, the actual condition of the “Gundagai,” and the number of rations required to be daily provided by the department, was to convince me that I had rightly decided regarding the “Gundagai” steamer. I therefore recommended to the Major-General Commanding that a steamer should be immediately procured at Canterbury. This recommendation was approved of, and I at once proceeded to Canterbury to carry it out, taking Deputy-Assistant-Commissary-General Graham with me.

I succeeded in chartering the steamer “Waipara” on the terms stated in the agreement (copy 680 E., 63 E., enclosed). The cost is £100 per month in excess of that paid for the “Gundagai,” but she is well worth 694 E. the difference, being a twin screw steamer, built expressly in England for bar harbours. She sailed out here, making a short passage; and for working on a bar or in surf is unrivalled on the coast.

I have now instructed the officers on the coast to come to a clear understanding with the Officer commanding the Colonial Troops that we cannot undertake to provide any land transport for their supplies. We have only sufficient land transport to maintain the force of Imperial Troops on the coast. Therefore it will be necessary for the Colonial Government to hire its own land transport, this department only undertaking to land what stores may be required by the Colonial Force at the existing depôts approachable by sea.

I am now preparing a statement of the extra expenses incurred by this department on account of the Colonial Government, including the cost of the “Waipara” under the circumstances above related. The amount will be found duly charged against the Colony, and it may be relied upon that I shall always keep the expenditure of the field force still or hereafter to be employed as low as possible. I only trust that my efforts have not failed to make it clear that, after the declaration made by His Excellency the Governor herein quoted, I was obliged to act as I have done, despite the orders which