

The Mangapihi, a branch of the Mokau, contains limestone, and the line follows it down for about three and a half miles. It is a flat grass valley, with its stream flowing without rapids, and has open hills with occasional bush patches on either side. The land is of good quality.

At 194½ miles the line crosses a low place in the watershed into the Paritikonā, which is followed down about three and a half miles, and from thence, at 198 miles, crosses another low place in a watershed to the main stream of the Mokau, which is followed down seven or eight miles. Each of these valleys is similar to the Mangapihi. Another low watershed is now crossed into the Waititi, which is nearly all open fern and grass, with perhaps a mile of bush. The land in this valley is also very good, but the valley falls rather quicker, and about six miles down it joins the Mangaokewa, which is at this point a rocky limestone gorge. Just beyond a low place occurs in the hills very suitable for the railway, which leads direct to Te Kuiti. It is remarkable that all these watersheds are mere razor-backs one to two chains wide, consequently the earthwork will be inconsiderable.

Te Kuiti, the former residence of King Tawhiao, contains a number of whares. Above Te Kuiti the Mangaokewa runs through limestone gorges, and does not offer inducement to seek the other route of the Ongaruhe or Waimika. From Te Kuiti to Maraehine is splendid grass and fern country, following down the Mangaokewa, Mangapu, and Waipa, which have flats of considerable width, and some large patches of timber, chiefly white-pine and pukatea.

Brown coal is visible in a creek which I visited near the Mangawhero, some five miles off the railway-line.

A low watershed occurs at Maraehine, another across the Mangaorongo, and another near Puniu, all of which are inconsiderable. This latter place is all open country, and presents no difficult feature.

The length of the line shown on my section is 244 miles, which corresponds with my field-book, but which I could by no means find room for on the map. The difficulty of judging distances is very great, and can only be a rough approximation, especially as the only marks I could make use of were the larger mountains, which are themselves not yet correctly placed on the maps. I consider the line will not exceed 200 or 210 miles in length at the outside, and I am also of opinion that, on survey, the grades will work out more favourably, probably nowhere steeper than 1 in 80. The probable cost per mile, including everything except land, may be estimated at from £6,000 to £6,500.

In conclusion, I may say that I made notes all through my trip of whatever seemed to be of value in the way of information; but, the time being so short in which my plans and report have to be prepared, I have not attempted to mention anything beyond what is required in a report of an exploratory survey.

I have, &c.,

The Engineer-in-Charge, North Island, Wellington.

JOHN ROCHFORD.

Appendix to Mr. John Rochfort's Report.

FINDING my report as to the line of railway would become complicated by attempting to introduce any particulars as to the Natives encountered along the route, I do so in the form of an appendix.

Before commencing work I obtained letters from Mr. Woon and the Rev. T. Grace to the following Natives along my route: Hoani Mete, Wiari Turoa Ma (Porewa), Nika Waiata, Teata Pikirau, Ropana (Ngahurukehu), Meriana, Patihapa (Raketepauma), Porokoro Patapu (Murimotu), Meiha Keepa, Aropeta Haeretu, Paora Patapu (Murimotu and Ranana), Hirika te Raupe, Ihakara, Meiha Topia Turoa, Te Heuheu, Matuahū, Kingi te Harakeke, Kingi Topia, &c. (Murimotu, Taupo, and Tokaano), Ngārupiki, Tukimata, Ngatai (Tuhua).

26th June.—I commenced work at Marton, and after about a fortnight, during which it rained almost incessantly, arrived at Ngahurukehu. At Turangarere, where I first met any Natives, they were unwilling to let me pass until a general meeting took place; but, as the opposition was feeble, I went on, and have since had a letter from the same people, requesting me to come again and see the advantages they had to offer for the railway coming there.

On arriving at Kerioi I was stopped by the Natives (said to be twenty armed men, but found afterwards to be only six) occupying part of the Rangataua Block (Government land), who allege that Adamson (employed by me on the work) had sold land on the part of Nika Waiata—the woman who is living with him, and who, by the way, is a great warrior—to the extent of three thousand acres more than belonged to her. Pita te Rahui and others were said to be placed in possession of the Rangataua Block by Major Kemp and his council until satisfaction was had for the lost land; and I was informed that if I went on I should be shot. I soon found out that Adamson's presence only added fuel to the fire, and discharged him. Finding Major Kemp was the head, and that he was at Upokongaro, I went down *via* Hales's Track, but was somewhat delayed by snow on the road down. I found Major Kemp at Upokongaro. He said the stopping me was done without his authority. This is doubtful; but he at once said, "I will support you and help you with five hundred men, if necessary, for I consider a railway will be for the good of my people." I returned to my work armed with letters from Kemp to Pita te Rahui, and also to some of the principal chiefs of Manganui-a-te-Ao. I returned, and met the stopping party at Rangataua. Pita te Rahui and Remona still held out, as owners of the part in dispute. However, I told them I had nothing to do with the land question, my work concerned the railway only, and that they would be lunatics to stop the railway, which would be a benefit to them. After a long *korero* they, obtaining the consent of a daughter of Pita te Rahui, allowed me to proceed, and eventually came to work for me, cutting the line through their own district. This may by-and-by be a troublesome question, as they are still planting and occupying part of the block, which, according to Mr. Thorpe's survey, is part of the Government block (Rangataua). These same people are now very anxious for the line to be made, and asked me to get the fact of the Government approval of this line inserted in the Maori newspaper.