

referred to, and who was more intelligent than many of the other natives who at that time claimed the ownership of the soil, took a very active part in the transactions and the disposal of the rights of the tribe. He visited and advised with several of the subdivisions of the Ngatiawa in Queen Charlotte's Sound about a sale of Waitara and other portions of the Taranaki district. He afterwards gave every possible assistance to the surveyors who shortly after the purchase proceeded to Taranaki to subdivide the land. He was well aware of the object of their visit and gave them letters of introduction to the few natives of the Ngatiawa tribe who were then residing at Ngamotu. A second sale of the whole country was originated by the Natives of the South, and they despatched some of their chiefs to Taranaki to aid in completing the negotiations. This was effected in the course of a few months and afterwards the New Plymouth settlement was established; payment having in the meantime been made to the Waikato chiefs for their rights. The difficulties in which New Plymouth was placed at the time when these arrangements were made to which I have been referring, were of a very peculiar kind. Natives from all parts of the island North and South, who had originally lived in the district, were preferring claims to the land. In order to settle those claims on a satisfactory basis, I was instructed by one of the Governors of the colony in the following terms:—

*Memorandum of an arrangement proposed to be entered into with the Native Land Claimants in the Taranaki District.*

It is proposed that the whole of the Natives having claims to land lying between Ngamotu and the Waitara (with the exception of the Puketapu Natives now resident within this block) should, if possible, be induced to abandon their claims without further enquiry, and to locate themselves on the North bank of the Waitara.

These Natives may be divided into two classes—

Those now resident on the north bank of the Waitara.

Those who are shortly expected to arrive here from the Southward.

It is proposed that the first of the above classes should be induced to agree to abandon their present cultivations within a period of three years, and then to remove to the north bank of the Waitara, if they remain within this district.

The second class should be induced to proceed at once to the North bank of the Waitara, there to locate themselves on such sites as they may select—relinquishing all pretensions to any lands to the south of that river.

This arrangement is regarded as one in every respect so likely to promote the future peace and prosperity of the country, that the Government, in order to induce the Natives to accede to it, will offer the following advantages to them.

It will, without further enquiry, admit the claims of the parties acceding to this arrangement, to the lands lying immediately to the north of the Waitara.

Upon all pretensions being at once relinquished to all lands to the south of the Waitara, the Government will, without further enquiry into such pretensions to these lands, admit that from the prompt settlement they are making of this question, they are entitled to such compensation as may be agreed on between themselves and the Officers of the Government.

The Government will then also recognise and permit them immediately to dispose of their claims at Waikanae and Totaranui for such compensation as may be agreed on.

The compensation in both cases to be paid in annual instalments, spread over a period of not less than three years.

The Government will survey regular village sites on the north bank of the Waitara for Native villages, at such points as they may select, and will endeavour to see that the amount of compensation paid to the Natives shall be so expended as to secure their permanent advancement in civilisation and prosperity.

This is the general outline of the instructions I received from Sir George Grey, in 1847. They can be referred to in the Blue Books or as recorded in the Government offices. This was the view then taken of the Taranaki question. In accordance with those instructions, arrangements were made from time to time with the Natives resident on the spot for the satisfaction of their claims. Absentee proprietors had to be treated with separately, and on a different scale from those who were actually resident on the spot; and the Government of that day went so far as to say that where the parties concerned did not agree to a reasonable arrangement for the cession of rights which they had almost entirely forfeited, their claims of ownership to the soil should not be recognised.

With reference to the particular block under consideration, the claims of the actual owners were carefully enquired into. Notice was given publicly at the time of the purchase to such absentee claimants as were known to have a right to the soil. It was not considered necessary to go about the country to rake up claims, or to induce Natives to prefer them. It was well known that when any block of land was offered for sale, there was no hesitation on the part of claimants to come forward to receive that portion of the proceeds to which the extent of their claims might entitle them. The sale of any land in the country soon becomes known throughout it, from one end to the other, and it is often found that a hundred fictitious claims are adduced when the actual owners altogether do not exceed thirty or forty persons. There has been a great deal said about unsatisfied claims in different parts of the country, but my own conviction is that many of those claims have been manufactured. At all events, I found that in the course of a few months after the time of the first offer of the land and my notification of it to the tribes at the South, several parties were adducing claims who had never previously done so. It is notorious that if any native thinks he has any chance of obtaining money for land, it is an easy matter for him to assert a claim. There are various motives which impel him to do so—one is the love of