

wish the land to be surveyed by private individuals, but to be undertaken by the Government, free of cost to them, after the price per acre has been properly agreed upon.

With reference to the Rev. Charles Baker's claim, I led the Natives carefully round to the subject, and we had a long discussion, the result of which is, that they have promised me that if surveyors are sent by the Government to survey the land, that they will go over the ground and survey the portion agreed upon before, at the time the surveyors were stopped, and that no dispute will now arise. At the same time, I would suggest that if the Government assent to this, a Government officer should be on the spot during the survey, and I think that this very troublesome question would then be amicably settled.

Any further action taken by me than ascertaining what I did during this visit might have proved injurious, so I left the following Monday, promising to write soon after arriving in Auckland. The Natives mentioned by me expressed a strong wish to hear from yourself, and His Honor Mr. Gillies, after which they would send for me. I promised them as far as I could that their wishes should be attended to. They expressed themselves satisfied, and the meeting broke up.

On Sunday morning, Wharepapa called to see me, giving me a letter for you, which I have already forwarded, and he told me that the Natives wished Baker's claim to be settled, and surveyed off; but he hinted that a further reduction of acreage would be asked for, though he said at the same time that he did not think that the extra claim would be at all insisted on, and I fancy he is right.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS McDONNELL.

The General Government Agent,
Auckland.

No. 22.

Lieut.-Colonel McDONNELL to the GENERAL GOVERNMENT AGENT, Auckland.

SIR,—

Auckland, 7th April, 1873.

On my arrival at the Taheke, on the 22nd ultimo, I proceeded with Hone Mohi and others to Hokianga to see the block of land called Omahuta, situate at the head of the Mangamuka river. We were joined at Herd's Point by other owners of the land, who had been warned to meet us there, and the next day we went up the river, camped out, and the next morning we went over the block.

I can only give a rough idea of the acreage, and should say it was from 10,000 to 12,000 acres, more or less.

There is some very good rich land in the block, and some very indifferent—about equal proportions. There is a large quantity of kauri timber, of first-class quality. I may say that a more magnificent kauri forest I have seldom seen, and much of it is available in the ordinary method of getting it to market.

Kauri gum is to be had in large quantities. The surface of the ground is in many places covered with it. I can recommend this block to the Government, if only for the very excellent timber and quantity of gum obtainable. I estimate the timber at many millions of feet.

The price for which the Natives say they will sell is 12s. an acre, but from 2s. 6d. to 3s. will, I think, be taken. Private individuals might be inclined to give more.

If I may be allowed to make a suggestion, presuming this land is purchased by the Government, I would place settlers on this country that have been used to work at timber, such as Canadians or Nova Scotians. They could collect gum and timber a few days after they were located on their land, and so commence work that would not only provide them with the necessities of life, but provide them also with a handsome surplus to improve their respective lots.

The boundaries of the block offered for sale are as under, commencing at the stream of Tahekeiti, and on to Te Tupapa, Karakarere, Te Wai o Pukekohe, Tuara Whakapai, Te Hutu, Paia, Katutu Te Ture, Te Papa, Te Piha Tanginoa, Rata Kamaru, Puke tawa, Ohawhe, Te Rakauhere, Rahui Kokoromiko, Te Kiripaka, Turangakou, Te Waiaira, joining again to Te Tahekeiti.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS McDONNELL.

The General Government Agent,
Auckland.

No. 23.

Lieut.-Colonel McDONNELL to the GENERAL GOVERNMENT AGENT, Auckland.

SIR,—

Auckland, 7th April, 1873.

I have the honor to report my return from the North, and to state that, on arriving at Otua to pay the Natives the advance of £150 for the Waoku block, I found that Mr. John White had offered Te Haurangi and other Natives a penny an acre more than I had been authorized to offer. After a whole night had been taken up in tiresome altercation, the Natives proposed that Te Haurangi's and Puataata's portion in the block should be left out, and that the money I had brought with me should be paid as an advance for what remained. This I refused to do, unless I obtained the whole block according to our arrangement; but I offered that, if they were willing to make up the difference by selling another piece of land, so as to bring the boundaries nearer to the Otua settlement, as an equivalent for that portion of the Waoku claimed by Te Haurangi and Puataata, that I then might be induced to pay a deposit. I then left, promising to return after I had visited Hokianga, and told them to think over what I had proposed.