

I stopped in the same house with Te Amo and his people for the night, and passed the greater part of it in a friendly talk, after I had explained to them the boundaries of the land I proposed to survey.

The next morning a canoe was sent for me from the Kopua, when I crossed over, and after breakfast I called the people together to make arrangements for commencing the survey, when I was informed of a proposal to sell more land. I told them I could not consent to any alteration without first hearing what Te Amo and his party had to say about it.

I sent a message to Amo requesting him to come across and bring to Rangawhenua and Te Ngohi with him (those three comprise the opposition). They soon came over, and were the first to offer the hand of friendship, and a peaceful influence of a rub of noses to those from whom they had evidently been estranged since the proposal to sell land was first made. The result of this day's meeting was a decision of Te Amo's—that the extension of the boundaries as proposed by Rangikeiho was right and should not be opposed.

The next day the survey was commenced up the Waitara River, and in the meantime I found out that there was a movement going on in favour of the sale of land, and that it was intended to offer a large quantity for sale as soon as this—the first block—was settled for. I, therefore, determined at once to keep to the natural river boundaries of the block as first offered, and leave Rangikeiho's proposal to come in with the new offer, which as I at present understand it, has also considerable natural boundaries. The weather was very unfavourable for surveying, but we finished the work on the 22nd July, and the following day left to return home. We came down the Waitara River in two canoes for about twenty miles as the river runs, and landed at a place called Ohaura on the north bank where the canoes were hauled up, and from thence we walked across the country to Tikorangi, where we had left our horses, which enabled us to return home that evening. We left Kopua 7 o'clock a.m., and arrived home 6 o'clock p.m.

I consider the amicable termination of the survey and purchase of this small block of land in that district to be of far greater importance in a political point of view than the value of the land itself, inasmuch as it is the best proof we can have of the determination of the Natives of this district to withdraw from the old land league, and the combination of the disaffected tribes who have so long been hostile to the Government of the country, to which they now wish to be allied.

The deed of cession of the land to the Government was signed on the 1st inst., and the purchase money, £230, paid to them.

I cannot conclude this report without bringing under the notice of the Government the valuable assistance rendered by Hone Pihama, who accompanied me. It is on occasions of this sort that the respect for a chief of his rank is manifested. The Ngatimarū were originally a branch of the Ngatiruanui tribe, and the relationship has been kept up by inter-marriage with that tribe more than any other. I have been told that the Ngatimarū were a section of the Ngatiawa tribe, but this assertion was disproved by information which I obtained during my late visit.

The Ngatimarū tribes living in the Ngatimarū country, in the Upper Whanganui, and at the Thames, are descendants of a branch of the Ngatiruanui tribe, who originally lived at a place called Rata-Maru, near Otapawa in the Ngatiruanui district. The elders of this section of the tribe were Maru-haranui, Maru-kopiri, and their sister Mihirawhiti; Maru-haranui, the eldest brother, settled on the Waitara, the origin of the district and the people being called Ngatimarū; Maru-kopiri settled at Manganui-a-te-ao (Upper Whanganui); Maru-Tuahū, son of Mirirawhiti, settled at the Thames; consequently the Ngatimarū at the Thames are the younger branch, but the most numerous at the present day.

With reference to the offer of another block of land, I beg to explain for the information of the Government that the Ngatimarū Natives are now being joined by Natives of the Ngatitū hapu, a section of the Ngatimutunga tribe, in this offer of a large block. I enclose herewith a sketch plan which is a true copy of the original as drawn by the Natives of the district, which will give you some idea of the locality, but as it is only a Maori sketch with no scale the area and distances represented cannot be relied on.

I am informed that the land on both sides of the Teremouku River is very fine, and should the block on the south side now offered be acquired as easily as the one purchased, it is highly probable that a block on the north side will be offered, as the Ngatimarū are joint claimants with other Natives.

I was also informed whilst at Ngatimarū that there is a very fine district of country between the Waitara River and the Whanganui River, further east, owned by the Ngatimarū and Upper Whanganui tribes conjointly, and the former declare they will not rest till all is handed over to the Government. It is called Tangarakau, situated between the Ngatimarū district and the Tuhua district.

There is also a very fine district, so I was informed, between the Waitara River, so far up as Te Autawa, and the surveyed portion of the district between Manawapou and Waingongoro, owned conjointly by Ngatimarū and Ngatiruanui. At Ngatimarū I found a few old men of the Tangahoe tribe still there, and during my stay they had a consultation with Hone Pihama and the elders of the Ngatimarū people about taking steps to cede the last-mentioned district to the Government, and one day two of the old men took me up the river to Te Autawa to show me their boundary. From information which I obtained from the Natives I am inclined to think there would be no engineering difficulties in making a road or railway through that part of the country between the West Coast and Tuhua on to Waikato.

I deem it my duty to furnish the Government with this latter information for future consideration and to show how much improved is the feeling of Natives in reference to such questions.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

R. PARRIS.