

of the Native Department. I satisfied myself that the claim was a just one. I directed Major Brown, who was at that time Civil Commissioner, to set apart and give to Mrs. Brown and her sister 500 acres of good land in the Urenui District (a).

This request was accompanied by a direction to Major Brown that the land to be given should be of good quality, to be taken on the low lying, level country, and on no account whatever was the award to be given in the broken bush country of the Urenui District.

I also specially requested Major Brown to allot the land, if possible, where Mrs. Brown's house then stood, and I was not aware, until you referred the papers to me, that my instructions had not been carried out. I considered then, and consider now, the case as one of the greatest hardship, and I am personally aware that she has spent more in time and money than the value of the land I proposed to give her.

3. You were good enough to mention to me, on the occasion of your handing me the papers, that you proposed to meet Mrs. Brown's claims out of lands in the Patea-Whenuakura District. You thought of giving town or rural land, and the balance in fair country, in the same vicinity. You mentioned your reasons to me for taking that course, with which, at that time, I entirely concurred. I am of still the same opinion. I consider your proposal, if given effect to, will meet the equity of the case; it will save her from having to reside in a purely Maori district like Urenui, and give her an opportunity of making a living for herself and family in a settled European district.

JOHN SHEEHAN.

Wanganui, 21st April, 1882.

MEMORANDUM for the Hon. Sir W. Fox on the Mataihuka Claim, by Major Brown.

The first knowledge of this claim that my memory will serve me on clearly, was about the middle of September, 1878, in Mr. Sheehan's office, when Mrs. Brown went there by appointment on the subject of the land claim. Mr. Sheehan then told her that the promise of Sir George Grey was provided for in the Special Powers and Contracts Bill then before the House (b), and that if she applied to Mr. Clarke (or Mr. Lewis) he would give her a copy of it.

But as regarded her Mataihuka claim, he had not had time to go into the papers, which he had before him. About two or three weeks after he told me he was satisfied of the justice of her claim, and would see her at some leisure moment that evening at his office in the House, and instructed me to get tickets from Mr. Bunny for the ladies' gallery for Mrs. Brown and other ladies. I sat behind the chair waiting for instructions. During the evening he told me to ask Mrs. Brown if she would take £500 in satisfaction of her claim, for if so he would consider it settled, and give effect to it. Mrs. Brown asked my advice, and I advised her to have it in land, if possible, my idea being that it would be dealing with it in a different manner to other claims of the same kind which had been liquidated with land, and might, therefore, be imperilled by the change. Mr. Sheehan then had an interview with Mrs. Brown, in my presence, when she told him she would prefer the land to money; and he replied that he would see Sir George Grey again on the subject. What further result was arrived at, I was not present; but Mr. Sheehan told me that it had been decided that she was to have the 500 acres, and asked me if I could indicate any place where she had tribal claims, where it could be allocated? I pointed out that she had tribal claims between Mimi and Urenui; and he said it should be located there. After I left Wellington, Mr. Sheehan wrote the note to me that appears in the Report of the Royal Commission, where he says, "*Re* Mrs. Brown in the Urenui country, I would carry out the arrangement as soon as it is possible, and have matter ripe for confirmation next session." There is also an explanatory note that I put to it, "That as compensation for the claims derived from their mother, and for which Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Naera petitioned the House of Representatives (c), they are to receive 500 acres between the Rivers Urenui and Mimi." When he subsequently came to New Plymouth, he saw Mrs. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Naera and the late chief Pamariki, at the Masonic Hotel. I was present and understood that the enquiry he then made as to the tribal claims of Betty Nicol, between the Urenui and Mimi Rivers, was for the purpose of more definitely deciding where the 500 acres should be located, and this was settled to be at Te Kaueka, where she was born, and where Mrs. Brown built a house in consequence of this decision.

As the Survey Office here could not supply a surveyor to lay off the 500 acres, Mr. Sheehan told me he would send Mr. Tole down from Auckland to do it. I have an impression that I received an official telegram to that effect.

I do not think that I can add anything material to what I have written. I feel satisfied that I saw more documents on the subject in Wellington than I have seen here, probably the evidence that was taken on the Mataihuka petition. The contention of Mrs. Brown has always been that the Mataihuka claimed by her mother is comprised in the land (785 acres) acquired by Major Wood from the Crown.

CHAS. BROWN,
Late Civil Commissioner.

New Plymouth, 2nd June, 1882.

(a) See Major Brown's Evidence before Commissioners, 1880, Q. 318.

(b) This was clearly a mistake. This enquiry before the Committee and the decision of the Government related solely to the Mataihuka case. See my note to Report.—W.F.

(c) In this Major Brown was wrong. The petition referred to Mataihuka only, and made no allusion to the other claims.—W.F.