

Rihitu Wi, Ahipene Rangī, Ihaia Patutahi, Paora Kingi, Tiopira Tawhiao, Te Pirihi Tutekohi, Mata te Ao, Hohepa Kaitahi, Kereama Rere, Hetekia te Kani, Mere Tahatu, Te Moanaroa Pere, Matenga Taihuka, Harete Noti, Hohepa Raharuhi, Paora Parau, Hera Hokokao, Atereta Ruru, Mika Rore, Herewini Tamaihonua, Hirini te Raekaihau, Te Peneha, Kataraina Whatiwhati, Karepa Maruwahakatipua, Pohoi, Takawhaki, Arihia Tako, Tea te Eke, Mita Mataitai, Korotau, Hineteariki Pera Harata Hone, Meramera, Tapeta Matenga, Wiremu Ireto, Rutu te Ruru, Arapera Pere, Epiha Parau, Harata te Eke, Tuakana, Peti Taihuka, Tuhura, Te Mini Kerekere, Te Koraierangi, Taraia, Ereti Kahukura, Kunene, Rangitake, Hoera Take, Katerina Tako, Korehe, Tawhiao, Matanuku, Pirihi Tutaha, Te Peneha Hoia, Hia Uatuku, Rutene Ahuroa, Riria Manaranui, Raiha Kota, Heni te Auraki, Wi Haronga, Teopira, Korohe, Katerina te Hane, Hirini te Kani, Rutene te Eke, Katerina Pahoho, Karaitiana Ruru, Tapeta Ireto, Rangekohera, Teira Ranginui, Moanaroa, Pauapa Waihopi, Mereana Paraone, Heni te Whakaetanga, Wiremu Kingi te Kawau, Wi Mahuki, Otene te Waka, Hera Hokokao, Taraipine Tatua, Ariwia Tu, Mere Taotata, Koroniria Ruru, Nepia Tokitahi, Hemaima Rere, Kawhena, Hone Kewa, Paora Upa, Mere Peka Kaimako, Peti Moreti, Himiona Tekino, Rawiri Noti, Tuhura, Patoromu, Taraipine Tutake (113 individuals).—H. T. CLARKE, Commissioner.

WI PERE'S Case.

Gisborne, 30th October, 1882.

Court of Inquiry opened at 10 a.m. in the Government Buildings.

Present : H. T. Clarke, Esq., Commissioner ; S. Locke, Esq., acting on behalf of the Government ; and John Brooking, Licensed Interpreter, acting as interpreter.

Letter from Wi Pere, of the 3rd November, 1879, read and acknowledged, making claim to the Patutahi land. I have also made application to the Government for the overplus of the five thousand acres of the Muhunga. I have also made a claim for myself personally for a portion of Te Muhunga Block.

Wi Pere, being sworn, stated that he desired to make a general statement before he gave his evidence, giving a history of different matters leading up to the cession, which he continued until adjournment of Court.

Court resumed at 2 p.m.

Wi Pere continued his general statement. Afterwards he began his evidence as follows : Myself and hapu have none of the flat land of Turanga. I myself have only fifty acres. Some of my hapu live on it ; others of them are scattered about on lands belonging to others. I was entitled to large blocks of level land in Turanga, but now it has all passed into the hands of Europeans. It was through the law of joint tenancy that I only obtained the fifty acres. I have been a great sufferer through that law. Only for that law I should have had all the land I was entitled to through my ancestors, and my people would have had sufficient to maintain them. We did not know at the time the effect of the joint tenancy, and that the Crown grants were made out in that way. What I have stated refers to one of my hapus, Te Whananakai. I make this application for the Government to consider us on account of our suffering, and I, on the other hand, would give up all contention with the Government with regard to those lands. When I say that I have only fifty acres upon which my hapu are living I state that which is absolutely correct ; the fifty acres are my own. I refer particularly to Patutahi. No portion of Patutahi was returned to the loyal Natives. I claim Te Muhunga through another hapu. There were four hapus who originally claimed that block : Ngaituketekui was one, Ngatikahuru was another, Te Whananataupara another, and Ngapotiki another. I can point out on the map the portions of each. It was arranged that five thousand acres should be taken there. Three burial-places were to be reserved to the Natives. Many people were buried in those places. According to what I know, none of these burial-places were reserved, and the area taken exceeded five thousand acres, as arranged. I applied to Sir Donald McLean that twenty-five acres should be returned to me of the Muhunga Block out of that portion which had not been sold by the Government. Sir Donald McLean acceded to my request, and stated that Mr. Locke would look out the piece. On my applying to Mr. Locke, he informed me that the time for the military settlers to cut firewood in the bush had not yet expired. Soon after that Sir Donald McLean ceased to be Native Minister, and Mr. Sheehan took his place. I applied to him, asking him to arrange that Mr. Locke should carry out Sir Donald McLean's proposal. He consented, but before he did anything he ceased to be Native Minister. My last application was relative to the acreage over and above the five thousand acres agreed upon. It was to the effect that this land should be returned at Te Muhunga, but, if it was found that there was no land there available, out of some other land belonging to the Government. I make this application, not on behalf of the whole of the hapus I have mentioned, but only those who have suffered and are still suffering. The principal owners of Te Muhunga by ancestral right were loyal men. I again repeat my request, on behalf of those that suffered of the hapus of Te Muhunga Block, that the Government will show consideration towards us, and particularly with regard to the burial-grounds. These have passed into the hands of Europeans, and are now occupied by them. Whether it would be possible or not to buy them back again I cannot tell. I would again repeat that these hapus have no flat land between Ormond and the coast. I do not assert a claim on the ground of the land having been wrongly taken, but simply pray the Government to show some regard for those sufferers who have no flat land in this vicinity. I forgot to state, with regard to Patutahi, that I made application to Mr. Sheehan for certain sections there, which was agreed to, and the numbers of the sections were given. They were sections 77, 80, 81, and 82. In 1866 or 1867 Waitawaki was surveyed. When I was a child my European father (Halbert) asked my mother to obtain from her people some land, to be settled upon me. She asked for two pieces, and Pouparae was given her, which was bought by my father for me ; he afterwards sold this piece to other Europeans. When Mr. Bell, Commissioner, arrived here in 1859, I