

1886.

NEW ZEALAND.

OWHAOKO AND KAIMANAWA NATIVE LANDS

(MEMORANDUM ON, BY THE HON. R. STOUT).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.

In the matter of the KAIMANAWA-ORUAMATUA BLOCK, of 115,100 acres; the OWHAOKO BLOCK No. 1 (School Reserve), 28,601 acres; the OWHAOKO BLOCK No. 2, 181 acres 1 rood 16 perches; and the OWHAOKO BLOCK, 134,650 acres.

THE Minister of Native Affairs has referred to me a large mass of papers, with minutes of the Native Land Court, &c., concerning these blocks. Certain Natives residing on the blocks complain that they have been unjustly deprived of their land by the Native Land Court, and they ask that their title to the land should be investigated.

I think it better to give a short statement of the history of these blocks, in order that it may be the more readily determined what relief, if any, the Natives who have asked for a rehearing should obtain.

These blocks are contiguous, and are situated in what is called the Patea District. [Sketch-map annexed herewith will show their position.] In the year 1875 certain Natives applied to have the title to the blocks determined. The notices were gazetted on the 7th day of September, 1875, and the Court sat on the 16th September, 1875. The Native Land Court sat at Napier, Hawke's Bay. The notice in the papers is dated "Office of the Native Land Court, Auckland, 9th August, 1875," and states that Renata Kawepo, Karaitiana te Rango, Ihakara te Raro, Te Retimana, Aperama te Kouna, Hakopa te Hiraka, Horima, and others, claimed to be owners of Kaimanawa; and, regarding the Owhaoko Block, three Natives, Renata Kawepo, Noa Huke, and Te Hira Oke, claimed to be the owners.

At the Court held on the date I have mentioned the claims were read, the applications as gazetted being called over. The first claim was that relating to the Kaimanawa-Oruamatua Block. It does not appear from the minutes of the Court that many Natives were present; and it is of importance that the whole evidence regarding this claim of 115,100 acres should be read. Two witnesses only were examined—namely, Renata Kawepo and Noa Huke. The following was the evidence:—

Renata Kawepo, on oath: I live at Omaha. I belong to the Ngati-te-Upokoirā and Ngatiwhiti hapus. These are hapus of the Ngati Kahungunu Tribe. The Ngati-te-Upokoirā have lived and are at present located at Omaha. I understand the map before the Court, but have not been on the land. I have travelled over it, along the track. Myself and Karaitiana