

The Commissioner stated that, although this matter was outside the scope of the present inquiry, he would hear the complaint. According to the statements made by the parties concerned the dispute appeared to be about the position of a boundary—namely, a stream called the Awahonou: one party asserting that it was in one place, and the other party in another, there being two streams in that locality to which the name would be applicable. After a considerable amount of evidence, it was elicited that there were two *wakawakas*—one called Te Rahui and the other Hine Kua; the former being claimed by Kaitahi Pahi and his party, and the other by Ratimira te Au's party. Ratimira contended that his party had held possession of the disputed part for over thirty years; his mother Te Ruataika having erected a whare thereabouts thirty years ago; Poko Matewai also had a house on part of it. It was decided that the final determination of the question should be left in abeyance, and in the meantime that no interference should take place amongst the parties to the dispute to dispossess each other of the disputed part; but that matters should be allowed to proceed as heretofore until further evidence could be adduced that would enable the question to be satisfactorily settled, a diagram of the locality to be furnished for the purpose of elucidating the matters in dispute.

After other matters had been discussed the proceedings were terminated at 12.30 p.m.

THE BLUFF, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1891.

Commission opened at the Athenæum.

A large number of Natives and half-castes were present from Ruapuke, Stewart Island, Omaui, The Bluff, Fortrose, and Pukerau.

Commission read out.

Questions invited in regard to any portions of the Commission that were not fully understood.

John Bragg stated that he had been appointed, on behalf of the people present, to act as spokesman for the party. Desired to ask the Commissioner if the power conferred on him would enable all their claims to be settled out of hand. The Commissioner, in reply, stated that the authority conferred under the Commission was only a limited one—namely, to inquire into the condition of the Natives—as to the quantity of land owned by them, as to who were unprovided or insufficiently provided. These were the only matters that could be dealt with under the Commission; but, as it was desirable to obtain all the information on the subject, with a view to place the whole question before the Government, no objection would be made to receiving any other communication that would tend to supply such information.

John Bragg applied for an adjournment, to enable the people to prepare their lists of names. The Commissioner pointed out that the best plan would be to appoint a Committee to prepare the lists, as it was found if concerted action was not taken that the information needed was not fully furnished. After further discussion, it was finally agreed that a Committee should be formed, and that they should have the use of the room now in use for the inquiry. Inquiry adjourned till the 21st instant to enable the lists to be prepared.

THE BLUFF, SATURDAY, 21ST FEBRUARY, 1891.

Commission opened at 10 a.m.

The Committee handed in a list of names of the several families resident at the Bluff, Ruapuke, Stewart Island, Omaui, Fortrose, and Pukerau. Lists read out, and inquiries made relative to the several families.

Lists of persons omitted from Mr. Mantell's census of 1853 read out, and inquiry made relative thereto. It was pointed out by the Natives that a serious loss had been experienced by the relatives of these persons, through their names not being included in the original lists, as, had that been done, land would have been set apart for them, which would have descended to their families and relatives; but owing to want of action at that time to provide land for the purpose it was impossible now to recompense the persons concerned for the loss they had sustained, or set apart land in compensation of so suitable a character as could have been obtained at the time when all the country was unoccupied, and the range of selection of suitable land was consequently much larger. The Commissioner, while admitting the justness of the conclusions arrived at, informed the parties present that the information now submitted relative to the persons whose names were omitted in Mr. Mantell's list was outside the scope of the matters referred to in the Commission; but, notwithstanding this, as the information furnished was of an important character in connection with their claims for consideration for additional land, no objection would be raised against receiving it; and if, after consideration, it could not be embodied in the report submitted to the Governor, in pursuance of the Commission now in operation, it would be made the subject of a separate report.

Several persons having addressed the Court on various matters, the proceedings terminated, after thanking the Commissioner for visiting the district.

Commission adjourned to Te Karoro Native Settlement, to the 25th instant.

TE KARORO, WEDNESDAY, 25TH FEBRUARY, 1891.

Commission opened at Te Karoro.

Commission read out, and explained to the persons assembled.

Lists of residents furnished, also names of persons who were resident in the Otakou Block in 1844, but were not seen by Mr. Tuckett or Mr. Symonds. The Commissioner informed the parties present that it was intended to hold the principal meeting relative to the Otakou Block at Otakou Heads, on Wednesday, 4th March, consequently it would be advisable for every one to attend who could manage to proceed there.

Adjourned to Henley, the 26th instant.