

subsequently given him for the assistance he afforded the Government to purchase land in the Wairarapa. Manihera Rangitakaiwaho was also given a grant for the same reason. Never heard that Raniera's reserve was specially excepted from the sale. The deed is missing. Cannot say whether there is a copy. The land alluded to in my letter as having been raised by the earthquake is a strip along the margin of the lake in the Kahutara Block.

By Mr. Menteath : I bought the land as well as the water in 1876—i.e., the fishing rights, and the land under the water and on the margin of the lake. Hiko was induced to sell the lake. He went to Wellington about the disputed boundary of Pukio, and when there he was induced to sell. I know of the Pukio dispute. Hiko claimed a large parcel of land occupied by Mr. Coleman Phillips. Hiko claimed the swamp, and wanted the matter settled. He declined to enter into negotiations about the sale of the lake until the Pukio difficulty was settled. Government gave him an annuity of £50 per annum ; this was merely a restoration of a former payment of the kind that had been stopped. Hiko retained £400 for his share of the lake purchase-money. This amount was afterwards spent by Hiko, or rather by his son-in-law, Wi Hutana, in the erection of a sawmill at Pukio. The mill was intended to be for the benefit of the people, but I cannot say whether they participated in the proceeds. Hiko held the chief mana over all the lakes, and also a right in common with others in the lower lake. I was guided by Manihera Rangitakaiwaho in going to Hiko. In the lower lake Hiko and Arihia had the control. Took Hiko, Manihera and Wi Kingi's opinion as to whose signatures were necessary to the deed. Hemi and self were down the valley and Hemi asked Raniera to sign the deed, which he promised to do, but he afterwards evaded doing so. I did not ask Piripi to sign. All that Piripi said was that he was *pouri* about Hiko's action about the lake, and his not consulting the people. Hiko said that Maraea Toatoa's name should be obtained, but he ignored Piripi's right to both the upper and lower lake. Said he belonged to the coast. Never heard from the Natives that Piripi te Maari had *he take*, but he was admitted by the Native Land Court. Piripi protested from the first about the sale of the lake on account of the people. The Government desired to acquire the lake. The settlement of the Pukio difficulty had nothing to do with the lake question. A pension was paid to Hiko formerly and restored to him after the settlement of the lake question. I do not consider that the object in giving Hiko a pension was to raise his position. Piripi te Maari is a Kaiwakahaere, but not the principal chief. Hiko's was an ancestral *take*, but not a mana Kaiwakahaere.

Hoani Paraone Tunuiarangi : I desire to make an explanation relative to the statement I made the other day concerning Te Maari o te Rangi. I should have stated that he was located at Ngaivii. I have written a statement showing how the various parts on the coast-line were occupied in former times, and also the country adjacent to the lakes. I have included the names of the hapus on the coast line, for the reason that the people owning fishing rights in the lake use to interchange presents of eels with them for saltwater fish. The people on the coast also assisted to defeat the Ngatiawa at Kakaimakatea, and defended the lakes.

Piripi te Maari explained that the list handed in by Tunuiarangi ought not to be accepted as a full list of all the owners of the lake.

Commission adjourned to the 6th May to the Government Buildings, Wellington.

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, WELLINGTON, WEDNESDAY, 6TH MAY, 1891.

Commission resumed.

Mr. Marchant appeared, and was informed as to the nature of the allegations contained in the petition. Asked for time to look up the particulars. Application granted.

George Sisson Cooper (sworn) : I was acting in the Wairarapa as Assistant Land Purchase Commissioner, but I am not acquainted with the purchases made during the year 1853. I was in Taranaki at that time. The Chief Commissioner, Mr. McLean, went to Wairarapa in 1853 to purchase land, and, as the Natives were opposed to selling their land, he commenced operations by buying up small parcels on which the settlers' homesteads were situated, and for this purpose he went about amongst them and ascertained their wants. I think Mr. McMaster's homestead was the first parcel that was sold by the Natives, and after that some other homesteads were acquired. This created a spirit of emulation amongst the Natives, and those who had at first stood aloof began to evince a desire to sell through a feeling of rivalry towards those who had derived money in this way. The first large purchase was made on the west side of the lake (Turakirae Block) ; the second purchase was on the east side (Turanganui Block), but I am not acquainted with the particulars relative to the acquisition of either of these blocks, as the purchase took place before I came to the district. In 1855 I paid the last instalment of the purchase-money on both the east and west blocks. I wrote out the receipts and inserted a description of the boundaries. The margin of the lake was supposed to be the boundary of these purchases. No question had arisen at that time relative to the boundaries. All that I had to do with the matter was to pay the last instalment of the purchase-money. No question was raised at that time relative to the highest flood-line being the boundary of the sold land, or that Government had not acquired the low-lying land. There was no dispute at that time to raise the question. The Natives used to open the lake sometimes, but it usually burst open on reaching a certain height. I believe that the boundaries in the receipt for the last payment for the Turanganui Block are correctly copied from the original deed of sale. I was not present at the Tauherenikau sale, and cannot give any information about it. Was present at the sale of the Kahutara Block. The deed is in my handwriting, but the purchase was negotiated by Mr. McLean. No dispute or difficulty occurred at the sale. The Natives were quite willing to sell. No question arose with the Natives that I am aware of about withholding the low-lying land. All the block is liable to be flooded, and practically it is all low-lying land. I know nothing about the sale of the Taheke Block. Do not consider it is any proof in support of the Native contention that