

Witness Our Trusty and Well-beloved Sir Bernard Cyril Freyberg, on whom has been conferred the Victoria Cross, Knight Grand Cross of Our Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of Our Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Knight Commander of Our Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Companion of Our Distinguished Service Order, Lieutenant-General in Our Army, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over Our Dominion of New Zealand and its Dependencies, acting by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council of the said Dominion.

[L.S.]

B. C. FREYBERG, Governor-General.

By His Excellency's Command—

W. E. PARRY,

For the Minister of Maori Affairs.

Approved in Council—

T. J. SHERRARD,

Clerk of the Executive Council.

To His Excellency the Governor-General, Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Freyberg, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

MAHIA BLOCK

1. The report which we now have the honour to make relates to the Mahia Block and is our third and final report upon the matters which we were directed by Your Excellency's Commission of the 13th August, 1947, to inquire into and report upon.

2. We held sittings at Wairoa on the 8th, 9th, and 11th days of March, 1948, when Mr. F. C. Spratt appeared on behalf of certain Maori claimants, Mr. Mafeking Pere for other claimants, and Mr. F. W. Nolan for the Crown Lands Department. On the 10th March we visited the Peninsula at the request of the representatives of the parties and made an inspection from various points to which our attention was directed. We also contemplated a trip some distance out to sea to view the points which are now said by the Maoris to be Pukewhatu and Pakake-a-Mahere, but this visit became unnecessary as Mr. Nolan, after hearing the evidence, said he would be prepared to admit that these two points could, and that the Pukewhatu on the Crown line could not, be seen from the seaward on the western side of the Peninsula.

3. We have found the case to be one calling for careful examination by reason of—

- (i) The great lapse of time between the original transaction and the making of the Maori claims ;
- (ii) The manner in which the claims have on different occasions been presented and developed ;
- (iii) The apparently careful and orderly sequence of the place-names in the description of the boundaries in the deed of sale ; and
- (iv) The absence of plans and other documents which were lost and destroyed by the earthquake and fire in Napier and on the East Coast on the 3rd February, 1931.