

1907.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE UREWERA DISTRICT NATIVE RESERVE:

REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED UNDER SECTION 10 OF THE UREWERA DISTRICT NATIVE RESERVE ACT, 1896," AND ORDER MADE THEREON BY THE MINISTER OF NATIVE AFFAIRS.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives in compliance with a promise made to Mr. Herries, M.H.R.

REPORT.

REPORT of the UREWERA DISTRICT NATIVE RESERVE COMMISSIONERS to the Hon. JAMES CARROLL, Minister of Native Affairs, upon the Forty-nine Appeals in regard to the Ruatoki Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Blocks, referred to them for Inquiry and Report as per Notice in the *New Zealand Gazette* dated the 10th Day of January, 1907, under the Provisions of Section 10 of "The Urewera District Native Reserve Act, 1896."

SIR,—

Wellington, 10th June, 1907.

As the Commissioners appointed by you under the provisions of section 10 of "The Urewera District Native Reserve Act, 1896," to conduct the expert inquiry directed by you to be held into the several appeals, numbered respectively from 173 to 221, inclusive, in regard to the Ruatoki Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Blocks respectively, as published in the *New Zealand Gazette* dated the 10th day of January, 1907, and to report to you thereon for your consideration and decision as in the said section 10 provided, we have the honour to report as follows:—

We opened the inquiry into the Ruatoki Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Blocks, before this Commission, sitting at Whakatane, on the 4th day of February, 1907, and adjourned the inquiry from that date until the 6th day of February, 1907, on which date the inquiry was resumed and continued during subsequent days until the 7th day of March, 1907 (the Commission having, however, also been occupied at intervals between the above-mentioned dates in dealing with other cases within the Urewera District Native Reserve which were also before us for inquiry), since which last-mentioned date we have been engaged as members of the Commission of inquiry into the appeals in regard to certain other blocks of land within the said Urewera Reserve, and in framing our report for your consideration and decision. The minutes of the proceedings and of the evidence taken before this Commission are herewith transmitted.

As the result of our investigations and deliberations, we have the honour to submit to you the following report and recommendations upon the several appeals referred to us for inquiry, as set out in the schedule to the notice published in the *New Zealand Gazette* of the 10th day of January, 1907.

We are pleased to be able to inform you that each of the persons in the several contesting cases appearing before us maintained a most creditable and amicable demeanour throughout the entire duration of the inquiry.

We have weighed and considered all the evidence given before this Commission, and the evidence given at the previous hearings of the Ruatoki Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Blocks by the Native Land Court and by the Native Appellate Court, together with the decisions of the said Courts, the awards establishing the "takes" or grounds of title, and the proceedings held upon the settlement of the lists of names and definition of the relative interests of the owners by the said Courts.

We have also perused the minutes of evidence and proceedings contained in the books of the previous Commission, but we regret to state that we have been unable to find any judgment by the said Commission in the said minute-books upon the evidence submitted before it for consideration, nor is there any entry in the said books of the proceedings held upon the settlement of the lists of names and definition of relative interests to show how the making of the orders by that Commission for the Ruatoki Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Blocks, within the Urewera Reserve, as published in the *New Zealand Gazette* No. 30, of the 5th day of June, 1903, was arrived at by the said Commission.

The position being as above set out, we have at this stage the honour to state that we have ascertained the following particulars:—

1—G. 4A.