

1909.
NEW ZEALAND.

NATIVE LANDS AND NATIVE-LAND TENURE:

INTERIM REPORT OF NATIVE LAND COMMISSION, ON NATIVE LANDS IN MOKAU-MOHAKATINO BLOCK.

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

Native Land Commission, Wellington, 4th March, 1909.

To His Excellency the Governor.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We have the honour to forward a further report on Native lands.

MOKAU-MOHAKATINO BLOCK.

One of the first matters that we had to do was to investigate a block of land known as the Mokau-Mohakatino Block. This block has an interesting history. It is situated on the Mokau River, and was investigated by the Native Land Court, and the title ascertained on the 2nd June, 1882. After the investigation of title, Mr. Joshua Jones, who was residing in the Mokau district, entered into negotiations with certain owners for the lease to him of a block of land thus described:—

“All that piece of land situated in the County of Taranaki aforesaid, and containing by estimation 30,000 acres, more or less, known as the western portion of the Mokau-Mohakatino Block No. 1, being land awarded to the lessors at a sitting of the Native Land Court held at Waitara on the 2nd June, 1882, and which was described [as bounded] as follows in the lease signed by some of the Native owners to the said Mr. Jones: Bounded on the west by the sea, on the north by the Mokau River, on the east by a line drawn from the mouth of the Mangapohue Stream due south to the Mohakatino River, and on the south by the Mohakatino River; excepting and reserving thereof a block of 500 acres or thereabouts marked and specified on the plan of the land produced at the Native Land Court on the 2nd June, 1882, and on the plan drawn on the lease.”

We annex to our report a copy of the plan drawn on the lease. Mr. Jones did not obtain the signatures of all the owners to his lease, and there was no partition of the land, and consequently he had no title under his lease, as he had not obtained the signatures of all the owners. In 1884 a statute was passed by the Parliament of New Zealand entitled “The Native Land Alienation Restriction Act, 1884.” That Act was, as its title declares, an Act temporarily to prevent dealings in Native land by private persons within a defined district of the North Island. The land described in the lease was included in this district, and the Act provided as follows (see section 3):—

“After the coming into operation of this Act no person shall, either by himself or his agent, directly or indirectly negotiate for the purchase, or acquire, or contract or agree to purchase or acquire, from any Native, or from any person on behalf of any such Native, any Native land within the territory described in the Schedule to this Act; and any person committing a breach of this provision