

Ngatiporou, the district should be dealt with as the Commissioners may think equitable"; and after directions as to his duties with regard to loyalists and rebels the instructions concluded, "generally the object and hope of the Government is, by means of the Commission, to settle promptly and amicably the long-agitated titles of the district, and to secure cordial loyalty as far as possible for the future."

It will thus be seen there was up to this time no desire to secure land to cover war expenses, or beyond that required to satisfy the Defence Forces of both races who had assisted in quelling the rebellion. Mr. Richmond, in his speech of the 24th August, 1869, to the House of Representatives, apparently without knowledge of Mr. Atkinson's report of the 7th July, 1869, but confident that "the clear instructions that the Government should not acquire more land than was absolutely necessary for the Defence Force" had been adhered to, anticipated that something like 20,000 acres in all would be reserved for the Government. It would almost seem as if Mr. Richmond, as a matter of fact, had at some time discussed the probable area required with the Natives, as Mr. E. F. Harris, in a letter of the 14th March, 1877, after mentioning that one of three blocks given by Rongowhakaata to the Government was Arai, estimated to contain 5,000 acres, for military settlement, says that "upon inspection of the block Mr. J. C. Richmond, the then Native Minister, decided there was no site available for the purpose indicated; and an additional piece at Tapatohotoho, containing 600 acres, was given by Rapata Whakapuhia."

The Poverty Bay Commission duly sat at Gisborne on the 29th June, 1869. It does not appear that any block was, in terms of the deed, reserved by the Governor prior to the adjudication by the Commission, but at the opening of the Commission Mr. Atkinson stated he had good reason to expect that an arrangement between the Crown and the Native claimants might be satisfactorily arrived at. On the following day Mr. Atkinson stated he had succeeded in effecting an arrangement with Mr. W. Graham, who appeared on behalf of Aitanga-a-Mahaka and Rongowhakaata Tribes, by which a proportion of the ceded block should be given up to the Crown, in consideration of which he was willing to waive all claims to the remainder of the block. Mr. Graham then announced his acquiescence on behalf of the Natives, and stated that the three blocks following comprised the land over which the agreement was to extend, viz., Muhunga, Patutahi, and Te Arai.

We are not further concerned with Muhunga at present other than to state that its then area was assumed to be about 5,000 acres, more or less. The other blocks are described in the minute-book as follows:—

"Patutahi" [or, as it is named in margin, "Kaimoe"] "is described as situated on the west bank of the Waipaoa River, a block as yet unsurveyed; but the boundaries had been agreed upon, and were stated by Mr. Graham and pointed out upon the map produced. . . . The land was stated to be of very good quality, and in a position in the centre of the bay, and commanding all the main lines of access. The acreage is estimated at [subsequently the blank was filled in "fifty-seven thousand acres, more or less"].

"The Arai Block, adjoining the Patutahi Block on the western side, is also as yet unsurveyed, but the boundaries were stated and pointed out by Mr. Graham. This block was stated to command the sole other line of access into the district, except the coast road, which, however, is capable of a separate defence. Acreage estimated at [about 735 acres, more or less," subsequently filled in].

The claims preferred within these three blocks were to be adjusted as they arose. It will be noted that, though the boundaries of the unsurveyed land were stated and pointed out, no note of them was taken in the minute-book, nor does any record, as far as we can ascertain, appear to have been kept. The map used by the Commission was a general one of the district, upon which the various supposed tribal boundaries were plainly marked, but there is nothing on it beyond a colouring (apparently done either then or subsequently) to indicate the position of the 57,000 acres referred to by the Commission.

⁶ *Hansard*,
p. 681.

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Commission,
p. 1.

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