

PAPERS RELATIVE TO
THE NATIVE INSURRECTION.

1 E—No. 3.

No 1.

INSTRUCTIONS TO DISTRICT LAND PURCHASE COMMISSIONER RELATIVE TO PURCHASE OF LAND
FROM THE NATIVES AT TARANAKI.

Chief Land Commissioner's Office,
Auckland, August 26th, 1857.

SIR,—

I have the honour, by direction of His Excellency the Governor, to convey to you the following Instructions for your guidance, in conducting the purchase of Land from the Natives in the Taranaki Province.

1. In order to facilitate your negotiations, it will be necessary for you to study with great care the history and genealogy of the Taranaki tribes, from their early location at Ngapuketurua, on the banks of the Waiongona River, up to the date of their dispersion and conquest by the Waikato; also to make yourself acquainted with the subsequent migrations, inter-marriages with foreign tribes, and other changes affecting title, that have occurred amongst the Ngatitama, Ngatimutunga, Ngatiawa, Ngamohi, Taranaki, Ngatiruanui, Ngarauru tribes, from that period up to the present date.

2. Having well fortified yourself with this general knowledge, which will greatly facilitate your future operations, you should devote your attention to a careful and minute investigation of the rival claims of the several sub-divisions of those tribes in such localities as they are most anxious to cede to the Government, bearing in mind that the object of your investigations should not be confined to acquiring a knowledge only of the Natives actually residing on the land, but should be extended to those also who are inter-married among neighbouring tribes, as well as to those who are living in distant districts of the Colony.

3. In pursuing your enquiries amongst the resident Natives, you should not appear to attach much weight to the claims of absentees, as it may be assumed that they have acquired a vested interest in lands elsewhere, and should not now be considered as having an equal claim with their relatives who remain in actual possession of the soil.

4. At the same time I am desired to state that it is His Excellency's wish to have a separate investigation of the claims of absentees instituted at the places where they reside; when they will be settled with, in proportion to the relative merits of their claims, on a basis which will fully preserve the distinction which should be made between resident and non-resident proprietors.

5. To acquire a knowledge of the state of Native Title in your district is a preliminary of such urgent importance, that I cannot too earnestly request your attention to it; and I believe you will generally find the Natives willing to communicate all that is requisite on this head, if you will only lead them to the subject, by referring to their past history—their feuds, wars, bravery, defeats, conquests—or any other subject of personal or tribal interest that may encourage them to converse freely and without reserve on the Land question.

6. A record of all claims submitted by the Natives should be noted by you in a book kept expressly for that purpose, more especially in those cases where conflicting interests have to be dealt with; and great care should be taken not to give too much prominence to that class of claimants who are frequently the first to offer their lands for sale, from the fact of their title being in many instances very defective. The actual owner, in contra-distinction to the class to which I have just referred, seldom makes a noisy or boasting demonstration of what his claims really are; it may therefore be inferred from his silent and uncompromising demeanour, that his rights are not to be trifled with, and that without his acquiescence, it will be impossible to make a valid purchase. This class of claimants it will be your duty to search out, as they will be the least likely, from feeling secure in the justice of their cause, to press themselves upon your notice.

7. Having thus adverted in general terms to the preliminary duties devolving upon you, I have now to direct your attention to the more practical part of your operations, including those of a financial nature.

8. I have applied for, and obtained, the sanction of the Government to have the sum of three thousand pounds (£3,000) placed at your disposal whenever an opportunity offers for transmitting it to the Sub-Treasurer at New Plymouth, to be drawn from him on your requisition, as you may need it for land purchases, and to be accounted for by you to that Officer from time to time as the disbursements take place.

9. Duplicates of such Accounts must also be duly forwarded to this Office, with certified vouchers, showing how the expenditure was incurred, and the extent of land obtained by you to represent such expenditure.

10. It may be requisite for you to retain the original Deeds at Taranaki, and to have them registered in that Province; but in all such cases duly certified copies, with translations, must be transmitted with the duplicate accounts for registry in this Office.

11. It is of importance that the Government should be kept constantly advised of the actual and probable liabilities that may be from time to time incurred for the acquisition of land in Taranaki, in order that provision may be made for any sudden demands under particular emergencies,—such as an unexpected and unanimous offer by the Natives to sell land, for which a large sum may be called for. You will therefore furnish monthly accounts of your disbursements, together with an approximate estimate of what may be needed for this service in each ensuing month.

12. From the great difficulty of obtaining land at New Plymouth, and the numerous claimants that have to be satisfied before any valid purchase is concluded; it will, no doubt, be found necessary