

I at present simply remark that it seems to me peculiar that a Judge should, knowing that there were other owners to the land, have, without their consent, stated that he would order a memorial to be issued to the people present. There is nothing on the face of the proceedings of the Court to show that the Natives were served with the notices of the intention of Renata Kawepo and the two others to bring this claim for land before the Native Land Court; nor does any evidence seem to have been taken as to the date or the service of any notices.

The map that was stated on the 16th September by the Judge to be on its way from Auckland, showing the boundaries of the Kaimanawa-Oruamatua Block, seems to have arrived two days later, for on the 21st there is a minute as follows:—

TUESDAY, 21st Sept.—*Oruamatua and Kaimanawa*.—Plan produced.
The Court opened at 11 a.m.

Present ... } The same.
Place ... }

Order: Memorial of ownership for Oruamatua and Kaimanawa Block, 115,100 acres, ordered in favour of Renata Kawepo, Karaitiana te Rango, Ihakara te Raro, Te Retimana te Rango, Horima te Ahunga.

The memorial was issued on the 21st day of September, 1875, for this land. So far as Kaimanawa-Oruamatua Block is concerned nothing seems to have been done further, though I understand it has been leased by Renata Kawepo and his people, who were declared the owners.

On the 14th December, 1875, Heperi Pikirangi and several others wrote letters to the Chief Judge Fenton and to Sir Donald McLean, then Native Minister, complaining of what had been done regarding their lands at the sitting of the Native Land Court. The letters are similar. The copy to Judge Fenton is as follows:—

Te Rinopuanga, Patea, 14th December, 1875.

TO MR. FENTON,—

Greeting. This is a request to you to hold a sitting of the Native Land Court to adjudicate upon our lands which were brought before the Court held at Napier. The names of the lands are, Ohaoko, Mataipuku, Papakai, Ruamatua, Whangaipotiki, Ohinewairua, Oarenga, and Kaimanawa. We were too late for the first Court, the reason being that we only received the notices on the 13th, and on the 16th the Court sat. We travelled night and day, but did not arrive in time for it; and therefore we send in this application. Friend, Mr. Fenton, do you accede to this request; and if the letter reaches you answer it, so that we may be aware of your decision on the subject. This is all from

HEPERI PIKIRANGI TE HAU
And 25 others; rather, from all of us.

Both letters state that they only received at Patea the notices of the sitting of the Court on the 16th on the 13th September, and that, though they travelled night and day, they did not arrive before the sitting of the Court had been concluded. There is nothing whatever in the papers to show that this is not the fact. Judge Fenton minutes the letter, "Acknowledge, and send forms." This was in February, 1876; and, according to the minute in the handwriting of Mr. Hammond, a clerk of the Court, the forms seem to have been sent on the 27th February. All through the papers and down to the present time the Natives have kept repeating that they only got the notices on the 13th of the Court to sit on the 16th September; and there is no minute nor anything to show but that their statement is absolutely correct. It may be noted that, regarding this Owhaoko Block, it seems to have been imagined by the Chief Judge, from the minute on the papers dated the 16th June, 1876, in Mr. Hammond's handwriting, and marked "File" in the handwriting of Mr. Fenton, that Owhaoko is an adjourned claim, and that the memorial was only authorized over the Kaimanawa-Oruamatua Block.