

1904.
NEW ZEALAND.

LANDLESS MAORIS OF THE NGAITAHU TRIBE

(REPORTS IN REFERENCE TO LANDS SET APART FOR).

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated the 18th August, 1904.

Ordered, "That there be laid before this House the reports of the Survey Department in reference to the lands set apart for landless Maoris of the Ngaitahu Tribe at Waiau, Lord's River (Stewart Island), Tautuku, and Wairaurahiri."—(MR. PARATA).

LAND FOR LANDLESS NATIVES AT WAIU, ALTON, AND ROWALLAN DISTRICTS.

Department of Lands and Survey, District Office, Invercargill, 18th July, 1903.

Land for Landless Natives, Waiau.

IN compliance with your wire, and various communications upon this subject, I have now to send the attached particulars. Personally I have never traversed the bush within the blocks surveyed for landless Natives in Alton and Rowallan Districts, although I have gone along the beach on several occasions and passed through the bush to the north where the land is generally very valueless, being covered to a great depth with moss, and I may say the opinion I formed of the country now surveyed, which can be found in my annual report 1882-83, extract from which is attached, appears to be fairly accurate when compared with the reports of the surveyors who actually made the subdivision.

I attach a copy of Mr. John Robertson's general report upon the two surveys—viz., Rowallan and Alton—and a copy of a general report by Mr. Treseder, who laid out most of the roads. I also attach a similar report from Mr. A. McGavock, County Engineer for Wallace, who at the time of subdivision, &c., acted first as Mr. Treseder's assistant, then, later on, as Mr. Robertson's assistant. From the information now supplied, I think the Commissioners will have little difficulty in coming to a decision.

JOHN HAY,

The Surveyor-General, Wellington.

Commissioner of Crown Lands.

EXTRACT FROM ANNUAL REPORT OF 1882-83.

Being the Opinion of the Chief Surveyor for Southland, Mr. John Hay, of the land at Waiau now proposed to be set aside for Landless Natives, given in a Report of Exploration in the Fiord County made by him when District Surveyor.

The land between Sandhill Point and the big bight in Te Waiwai Bay, a distance of, say, eight miles, is similar in quality and breadth to the preceding block, but considerably steeper, and covered with a mixed bush probably of an improving nature. Immediately behind Mussel Beach I noticed some good red-pine, which appeared to run up the spurs some distance towards the Hump. I presume a report has already been made on the land from the big bight in Te Waiwai Bay to Waiau Mouth, a distance of eleven miles, but I may mention that it is similar in quality and breadth to that between Waiau Mouth and Orepuki. Between Te Waiwai Bay and the east arm of Hauroto Lake it appears to be poor, mossy, ridgy land, covered mostly with birch. There is some red-pine on the spurs adjacent to the south side of the east arm of the lake, but no great quantity. It will be seen that there is a strip of good land, in breadth about one mile, running along the coast from Waiau Mouth to Big River, which will at some future date, no doubt, be used for settlement.

Invercargill, 10th September, 1899.

Land for Landless Natives, Alton District.

HAVING now completed the survey of land for landless Natives in the Alton District, I take this opportunity of making a short report thereon.

Roads.—The roads in nearly every case are laid off over fairly level country, and, excepting that in many places the land is wet and boggy, no great expense need be incurred in their construction.

There should be no difficulty in obtaining the necessary gravel, as, although not appearing on the surface, indications of its existence are plainly visible in most of the creeks.

The beach is again available for such sections as have a frontage to it, and at low tide a better road could not be found. All the sections in this district which have frontage to the beach have also frontage to the main road at the back, so that the high terraces which overlook the beach need not prevent an outlet.

Soil.—All sections fronting the beach are good, and are capable of growing any of the crops generally grown in Southland. The land, however, deteriorates as it goes back, but not to such an extent as in the Rowallan District.

Along the eastern boundary the timber is very good, chiefly rimu and matai. The trees appear sound and of good shape. In the bush sections the timber is again chiefly white-birch, with a few black-birch. Ironwood is plentiful along the coast and for some distance inland.

Character of Country.—The country in this block is generally of a broken nature, although by the larger streams there are extensive flats.

Reserves.—Reserves have been left where thought advisable, and surplus areas exist in ten cases along the northern boundary.

Streams.—The Rowallan Stream and the Grove Burn run through the block; most of the available water in the Grove Burn is diverted into a water-race and carried to the coast, to be used in the mining claims there. The length is about fifteen miles, and another one is being constructed on the opposite side of the same stream.

Mining.—There are several claims being worked on the coast by ground-sluicing, and fair returns are being obtained.

General Remarks.—Pigeons and kakas are fairly plentiful, but there are no ground-birds. There are also a few cattle and pigs.

Although this last season has been a very fair one, I am informed that generally the district is a very wet one, and I should judge so by appearances.

JOHN A. ROBERTSON, Surveyor.

SIR,—

I have marked the sections I consider suitable for settlement, and have marked prices on sections which I consider are quite high enough, as want of access and market for produce in my opinion make sections of very little value. There are one or two sections more that could be settled upon, but taken as a whole the country is not at all suitable for farming purposes, as the ground is pretty broken and the timber very mixed, while a great portion of the land is covered with moss to a depth of from 6 in. to 18 in., and the soil is mostly clay. All the sections are well watered, but the climate is very wet and burns hard to get, and I consider the land unsuitable for the purpose for which it was set aside, being far too rough and broken and soil of a poor nature.

As it is some years since I was on the ground, and I did not cut up the land into sections, I may be slightly out in my recollections of the country, but I think my valuation a fair one. The portions along the coast originally had some grass on the open portions, but a great portion of this has been washed away by mining, and a good many of these sections are greatly cut up by water-races which run through them. The timber is very mixed, but there is some good red-pine on portions, but want of outlet and soft nature of ground make it of little marketable value.

J. H. TRESEDER,
District Road Engineer.

John Hay, Esq., Chief Surveyor, Invercargill.

SIR,—

Wallace County Offices, Otautau, 13th July, 1903.

In answer to your request for a report on the land that has been surveyed for landless Natives on the west side of the Waiau-Clifden Main Road, I have to state that I was employed by Mr. Treseder on the triangulation and road surveys, and afterwards by Mr. Robertson in cutting up the different blocks, and have therefore a knowledge of the ground.

With the exception of sections marked on plan (portions of some of which are first-class land) the bulk of the land is, in my opinion, not fit for settlement, being clay subsoil covered with moss.

The country is very broken, and the cost of roadmaking would be considerable; across some of the larger streams it would be impossible to make fords on account of the height and steepness of the banks, they would in consequence require to be bridged.

I have marked what I consider a fair price for sections, which are with few exceptions as I have described. For settlement purposes I consider they are almost useless, and I am of opinion that were the Government to offer them for nothing, and undertake to give tenants access to the different sections, it would be impossible for settlers to make a living.

With regard to the timber, it is for the most part an inferior class of birch, but there are occasional patches of red-pine and miro suitable for sawmilling purposes.

If there is any further information I can give you, I shall at any time be happy to do so.

I have, &c.,

ARCH. MCGAVOCK,

County Engineer.

John Hay, Esq., Chief Surveyor, Invercargill.

LANDLESS NATIVES, SOUTHLAND.

Extract from Report of Chief Surveyor, Southland Land District, for the Year ending 31st March, 1902-3.

In the early part of last summer I inspected the survey operations beyond the Waiau River known as the Landless Natives' Block. I am sorry to say that a large proportion of this land is of little value, being mostly carpeted with a covering of moss varying from 12 in. to 24 in. deep, then densely overgrown with valueless birch timber with occasional patches of fair red and white pine, and a little sprinkling of totara; but owing to the inaccessible nature of the country the last-mentioned timbers are of no commercial value. Taking the inaccessible nature of the country into consideration, its excessively wet climate, and the poor quality of the land, I fear that the selection has not been all that could be desired for settlement purposes or for landless Natives.

I cannot speak in any other terms than praise of the energy and courage displayed by Messrs. Lilliecrona and Otway in carrying out their work of subdivision under such unfavourable conditions. Obtaining supplies, I found, necessitated a good deal of swagging—over twenty miles at times—from the coast to the camp. The delays caused by the non-arrival of the cutter through intervening periods of inclement weather delayed the provisions, these delays extending from one to four months, and thus supplies had to be swagged from a locality known as "Blue Cliff," near the Waiau River, a distance slightly under forty miles. I was pleased to find that the work had been carried out as satisfactorily as could be desired in the face of unusual difficulties, and a notoriously wet climate, of which the moss-covered nature of the ground afforded ample evidence.

LAND FOR LANDLESS NATIVES AT LORD'S RIVER, STEWART ISLAND.

Department of Lands and Survey, District Office, Invercargill, 2nd September, 1904.

Landless Native Surveys around Lord's River, Stewart Island.

IN compliance with your request, I have to report in connection with the above subject as follows:

The whole block is densely covered with bush, some of which is suitable for sawmilling. The country is hilly, but does not attain any great altitude, and the soil is generally classed from fair to good. Personally, I agree with what may be gathered from the classification-sheets. I have been through most of this country, and consider the land fair to medium, and in some places good. I further consider the land suitable for the purpose for which it has been surveyed, because I do not think any better bush land can be found (with the exception of the land immediately to the west) for settlement purposes in this land district. One great advantage this land possesses, I should think, from a Native point of view, is the good fishing-ground in the immediate vicinity, and the excellent harbour and boat-harbours within the boundaries of the block.

The Surveyor-General, Wellington.

JOHN HAY,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

LAND FOR LANDLESS NATIVES AT TAUTUKU.

Dunedin, 17th November, 1903.

Sections 17, 18, 22, 23, and 24, Block XI., Tautuku Survey District.

I HAVE to report on Sections 17, 18, 22, 23, and 24, Block XI., Tautuku District. There is a certain amount of clearing on each of Sections 17, 18, and 22-24, but these clearings are now so badly covered with undergrowth that they are not of any value. Each section contains a proportion of milling-timber. A certain amount of expense has already been gone to in making a road to the frontage sections, and there is a little grass on each of the clearings. To enable holders of sections fronting the main road to increase their holdings if they should desire to do so, I would suggest that Sections 17 and 18 (grouped), 22, 23, and 24 be opened for selection optionally at 5s. per acre and that 19, 20, and 21 be withheld from sale in the meantime. The reason for suggesting that 17 and 18 be grouped, is that there is a deep steep gully running along the whole frontage of Section 17, and this gully to some extent blocks the entrance to the larger part of the section. Better access could be got to it through Section 18. These may be described as rough, broken, bush sections with a fair aspect generally, situated about twenty-three miles from the proposed new railway-terminus at Ratanui, and within one mile of a school and post-office. Timber, red-pine and kamai.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Dunedin.

E. O'NEILL,
Crown Lands Ranger.

LAND FOR LANDLESS NATIVES AT WAIRAURAHIRI.

Department of Lands and Survey, District Office, Invercargill, 13th July, 1903.

Land for Landless Natives, Wairaurahiri.

As requested, and in conformity with the Commissioner's desire, I now forward herewith all the most reliable information obtainable in reference to the block on the east side of the Wairaurahiri River, which will enable a decision to be arrived at.

The tracing shows the block subdivided by Mr. Lilliecrona, but unfortunately he has not left any general report on the country, although he sent in classification-sheets. I have marked all the sections which he valued at 7s. 6d. per acre. He does not mention anything about the moss-covered nature of the country, but nevertheless it is of this nature. Mr. Lilliecrona told me when I visited his camp that at nearly every setting-up of the instrument he had to drive in pegs upon which to place the tripod, so as to afford a steady foundation, and this had to be done solely on account of the mossy carpeting I referred to in my annual report.

Knowing that Mr. Otway, who surveyed the block west of the Wairaurahiri, had a good knowledge of the block under review, I asked him to kindly furnish me with a report, which request he has complied with. I attach copy of same, from which it will be seen that the great portion of the country is quite unsuitable for settlement, or landless-Natives purposes.

In January, 1902, I walked through this block from the coast along centre road-line to Lake Hau-roko, and upon the knowledge then gained my remarks were based which were quoted by you. In this distance there are no doubt small patches of fair land, but undoubtedly the area of such is so infinitesimal that they are not worth consideration. There is also some fair timber in places, but it is of no commercial value owing to the inaccessible nature of the country. The area coloured red is mixed in quality, of a peaty or mossy character in places, but on the whole may be termed fair land; but to the north of this the country is not suitable for settlement or for landless-Natives purposes.

It will now be seen from what I have said, and from the report attached, that apparently an error of judgment has been committed in having the land set aside and surveyed for settlement purposes.

In a few days I will send you a report on the block lately subdivided west of the Wairaurahiri River by Mr. Otway, when I have received his classification-sheets and report.

The Surveyor-General, Wellington.

JOHN HAY,
Commissioner of Crown Lands.

GENERAL REPORT.

Blocks V., IX., XII., and XIII., Rowallan Survey District, being Land set apart for Landless Natives along Eastern Side of Wairaurahiri River.

Block IX.

THIS block has been subdivided into sections varying in extent from 170 acres to 490 acres. The whole is covered with dense forest of a mixed nature, the principal timbers being birch of various kinds, rimu, rata, miro, with a little totara in places. The country is mostly broken, with terraces towards the river. The soil is generally of very poor quality, the only fairly good land being a few patches on the ridges and along the river. The greater portion consists of a dense mass of peat and moss, varying in depth from 1 ft. to 2 ft.

Block XII.

This block has been subdivided into sections of from 140 to 342 acres in extent, and is also covered with dense forest, the principal timbers being those enumerated in Block IX. The land consists of a series of terraces rising from the river towards the centre and falling away towards the east. As in Block IX., the soil is generally of a very poor quality, with patches of good land along the river. The formation is mostly peat and moss, with granite boulders underneath.

Block XIII.

This block has been subdivided into sections varying in area from 104 acres to 330 acres. This land is also forest-clad, but the bush bordering on the coast is of a much lighter nature. The principal timbers are the same as those given for Blocks IX. and XII. The land consists chiefly of terraces rising from the coast northwards, and becomes very broken towards the north-east boundary of sections. The soil is generally of an inferior quality, being similar to that of Blocks IX. and XII., with a few patches of good land immediately near the coast. Formation, peat and moss as before.

Block V.

This block has been roaded, but has not been subdivided. The area is roughly 3,000 acres. The land is covered with dense forest of a similar nature to that described in the subdivided blocks. The land consists of a series of terraces which rise gradually from the river towards the east, attaining an altitude of 1,700 ft., and becoming very broken near the boundary. The soil, like that of the other blocks, is generally very poor in quality, consisting of peat-and-moss formation, with granite boulders beneath. There are a few patches of fairly good land on the lower portions of spurs.

General.

The block as a whole is exceedingly difficult of access, the distance from its centre to the formed road³ at Waiau Mouth being thirty-five miles. The timber in places is fairly suitable for milling purposes, but milling operations could not be successfully carried on for want of proper access by road, while access from the sea is out of the question, except on very rare occasions. The land, if cleared, would grow grass fairly well, but clearing would be a difficult undertaking owing to the peaty and mossy nature of the surface, which, being always wet and damp, would make it impossible to secure a good burn.

After three years experience of this locality, I am of opinion that the rainfall is as great as, if not greater, than that of any other part of New Zealand. It is also doubtful whether grass would last very well in such a country.

The conditions under which settlement would have to progress make this locality quite unsuitable for Native occupation, while the very inferior quality of the soil generally makes it unfit for settlement of any kind.

C. OTWAY,
Authorised Surveyor.

GENERAL REPORT.

Blocks III., V., VI., VII., VIII., IX., XI., XII., XIII., and XIV., Waitutu Survey District, being Land set apart for Landless Natives West of the Wairaurahiri River.

Block III.

THIS block has been subdivided into sections varying in extent from 276 to 354 acres. The whole is covered with dense forest of a mixed nature, the principal timbers being birch of various kinds, miro, and rimu. The country is mostly undulating terraces near the river, and hilly and broken towards the western boundary. The soil is generally of very poor quality, papa formation with a covering of peat and moss, varying in depth from 6 in. to 2 ft. The whole is well watered. Altitude, from 500 ft. to 1,000 ft.

Block V.

This block has been subdivided into sections from 30 to 584 acres in extent, and is also covered with dense bush, the principal timbers being similar to those enumerated in Block III., with some good milling-timber in places. The land is flat, undulating, and hilly, rising gradually from Lake Poteriteri. The land throughout this block is of fair quality, varying in formation considerably; light and heavy soil on papa, with a covering of peat and moss. Elevation, from 100 ft. to 1,000 ft.

Block VI.

This block has been subdivided into sections, varying from 133 to 381 acres in extent, and is also forest-clad, chiefly birch of various kinds, and a little rimu, miro, and totara in places. The country is flat, undulating, and broken. The land varies in character from patches of fair soil on papa formation to very inferior, with a covering of peat and moss. The whole is watered. Altitude, from 300 ft. to 1,600 ft.

Block VII.

This block is situated immediately on the east shore of Lake Poteriteri, and has been subdivided into sections varying in extent from 293 to 338 acres. Rising abruptly from the lake, and undulating towards the eastern boundary. The whole is covered with dense bush, principally birch, with a little rimu, miro, and totara in places. The soil is fairly good, on papa and granite formation along slopes near lake, but very inferior towards back boundary, with a covering of peat, moss, and boulders beneath. Warm and sunny aspect; well watered; altitude, from 100 ft. to 800 ft.

Block VIII.

This block has been subdivided into sections from 19 to 362 acres in extent, and is covered with dense bush of a mixed nature, principally birch of various kinds, with a little rimu, miro, and totara in places. The whole block is mostly broken, with flats along road and terraces in places along the river. The land varies considerably from very inferior with peat and moss to patches of heavy and fair soil on papa formation; well watered; altitude, from 400 ft. to 1,300 ft.

Block IX.

This block is situated to the east of Lake Poteriteri and Waitutu River, and has been subdivided into sections from 20 to 450 acres, and is also forest-clad with mixed bush similar to that described in Block VII. The country is mostly broken with steep slopes along the lake, terraces near the river, and undulating towards eastern boundary. The formation and nature of soil are similar in every respect to Block VII.; well watered; altitude, 100 ft. to 1,000 ft.

Block XI.

This block is situated to the west of the Wairaurahiri River, and has been subdivided into sections varying in extent from 236 to 366 acres. The whole block is covered with dense bush, principally birch, kamahi, rimu, miro, and a little totara in places. The country is mostly undulating and broken, with terraces towards the river. The land is generally of very poor quality, with peat and moss. There are patches of fairly good soil on some of the spurs and in places along the river and western road. The whole is well watered; altitude, from 300 ft. to 1,000 ft.

Block XII.

This block is situated along the coast and Waitutu River, and has been subdivided into sections varying in extent from 200 to 409 acres. The whole is forest-clad, the principal kinds being similar to those mentioned in Block XI., with some good milling-timber in places along Main Coast Road. The country consists of a series of terraces rising from the river, and undulating and broken towards eastern boundary. The land is generally of a very poor quality, with a covering of peat and moss, varying in depth from 1 ft. to 2 ft. There are a few patches of fairly good soil on the spurs and along the river in places. The whole is well watered, and at an altitude of from 10 ft. to 500 ft.

Block XIII.

This block is situated immediately along the coast, and has been subdivided into sections from 20 to 460 acres. The whole is covered with dense bush, principally birch, kamahi, rimu, rata, miro, and a little totara, with some fair milling-timber in places along Main Coast Road. The country consists of a series of terraces along the coast, and undulating and broken towards the northern boundary. The land throughout is of a very inferior quality, with a covering of peat and moss. The whole is well watered, with an altitude varying from 70 ft. to 500 ft.

Block XIV.

This block is situated along the coast and Wairaurahiri River, and has been subdivided into sections varying in extent from 38 to 376 acres. The whole is forest-clad, similar in nature to that described in Block XIII., with some good milling-timber in parts along the Main Coast Road and up the Wairaurahiri Valley. The country consists of terraces rising from the river and falling to the west, undulating and broken to the north. The land, as in Block XIII., is generally of a very poor quality, with a covering of peat and moss, varying in depth from 1 ft. to 2 ft. There are a few patches of fairly good soil in places along the river, and in parts of sections to the north and west. The whole is well watered. Altitude, from 10 ft. to 750 ft.

General.

As a whole, this block is exceedingly difficult of access, the distance from Papatotara Post-office varying from thirty-three to fifty-five miles, twelve miles of which is along the beach, and the remainder over a rough and broken track.

The timbers in places along the coast and other parts of the block are fairly suitable for milling purposes, but milling operations could not be successfully carried on for want of proper access by road, while approach by sea, owing to danger in effecting a landing, could not be taken into account. The country, if cleared, would carry grass very well, but clearing would be a difficult and anxious undertaking, owing to the exceptionally wet climate, and the peaty and mossy nature of the surface, which, being always wet and damp, would make it next to impossible to secure a good burn. It is also doubtful whether grass, when grown, would last very well in such country.

As regards the climate, I may say that, after over three years' experience, I have found the rainfall excessive, and consider it as great as, if not greater than, that obtaining in any other part of the colony.

With reference to prices, I have taken 5s. per acre as a basis of valuation, but consider that this basis is much too high, my personal estimate of the value of the land being an average of about 1s. per acre.

My remarks given in the report on the block surveyed by Mr. T. G. Lilliecrona with reference to its suitability for Native occupation or settlement apply equally to this block.

C. OTWAY, Surveyor.

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