

As to the possession, the facts of the case are, that when King returned to Taranaki from Waikanae in 1848, being in fear of an invasion of the Waikatos from the North, he asked permission of Tamati Raru, Teira's father, to build a pah upon the piece of land on the South bank of Waitara, now sold to the British Government. Permission was granted, and King's pah was erected on the South bank, his cultivations being on the North bank. King's followers have, however, encroached with their cultivations upon the South side of the river; and these encroachments have been, for a long time, a source of continual dissension.

After the Governor's conditional acceptance of Teira's offer, the District Land Purchase Commissioner, Mr. Parris, made careful inquiry into the validity of the rights of Teira, Rawiri Raupongo, Retimana, and the other sellers. This inquiry was prolonged till the close of the year 1859; not from any doubt that existed as to the title, but in the hope that the opposing party might be brought to reason. In the frequent interviews which he had with the District Commissioner, King never pretended to deny the right of property, but insisted upon his own right of putting a veto upon all sales at Waitara. In this he was supported by a number of Natives who have gradually gathered about him since his settlement at Waitara; and who, as they have been, like King himself, enjoying the use of the land, without any claim to share in the proceeds of its sale, were naturally averse to its alienation.

A large section of W. King's tribe residing at Queen Charlotte's Sound, including Roopama te Ore and his followers, affirm the right of Teira's party.

It was at length decided to pay an instalment of the purchase money, full notice being given to King. The transaction is officially reported by Mr. Parris in the following letter:—

New Plymouth, 4th December, 1859.

SIR,—

I have the honor to inform you that on Tuesday, the 29th ultimo, I paid an instalment of One Hundred Pounds to Teira and others for their land at Waitara.

On Friday, the 25th ultimo, I went to Waitara to inform William King that I purposed doing so.

On Tuesday, the 29th, he came to town with a party of about thirty to oppose it. I prevailed on them to meet Teira's party and discuss the question, which was done in a very orderly manner in the presence of a very large audience of Europeans.

W. King avowed his determination to oppose the sale, without advancing any reason for so doing, upon which I put a series of questions to him which I called upon the Rev. Mr. Whitely to witness, viz. :—

Q. Does the land belong to Teira and party?

A. Yes; the land is theirs but I will not let them sell it.

Q. Why will you oppose their selling what is their own?

A. Because I do not wish that the land should be disturbed, and though they have floated it, I will not let it go to sea.

Q. Show me the correctness or justice of your opposition?

A. It is enough, Parris, their bellies are full with the sight of the money you have promised them, but don't give it to them. If you do, I won't let you have the land, but will take it and cultivate it myself.

Teira stops in town since he received the instalment, considering it not safe to stop at Waitara.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) ROBERT PARRIS,
District Commissioner.

The Chief Land Purchase Commissioner,

&c., &c., &c.,

Auckland.

On the same occasion a document setting forth the boundaries of the Block was read to the assembled Natives by Mr. Parris. Appended to the document was a declaration on behalf of the Governor, that if any man could prove his claim to any piece of land within the boundary described, such claim would be respected, and the claimant might hold or sell, as he thought fit. No such claim, however, was put forward.

Soon after the receipt of Mr. Parris's letter of 4th December the Governor in Council gave directions for the survey of the land. Accordingly, on the 20th February, the survey was attempted by a small unarmed party, but was put a stop to by a crowd of King's people.

The Governor thereupon proceeded to Taranaki, where he arrived on the 1st March, and immediately despatched a message to William King, requesting that, to prevent misunderstanding, he should come into the Town, and learn the Governor's intentions, and offering a safe conduct. King, however, refused to come.

It was now finally determined to carry the survey by a military force, and on the 5th March troops were moved down to Waitara and occupied a position on the purchased block.

The following Manifesto had been previously published in the Maori language, and widely circulated by special agents amongst all the Tribes in the Northern Island.—

MANIFESTO.

1. When the Pakehas first came to Taranaki, there were no Natives at the Waitara. The Ngatiawa had been dispossessed by the Waikato.

2. The Waikato transferred their rights to the Government, and received a payment for the land.

3. Afterwards the Ngatiawa returned and occupied the land; the Government acquiesced in this occupation.

4. In March, 1859, some of these occupants, Te Teira and others, openly offered to sell to the Government their claims to a portion of the land at Waitara.