

The Commission adjourned from Kaiapoi on the 21st May, to meet in Wellington on the 27th of the same month. From Wellington, it was further adjourned on the 27th of May, to meet again on the 11th August in Auckland, where the Commissioners considered it desirable to hold a sitting, in order to obtain the evidence of the Chief Judge of the Native Land Court, Mr. Fenton, in connection with the proceedings of that Court in dealing with the order of reference to it of the Ngaitahu deed or arrangement, at its sitting in Christchurch in 1868; also, to obtain further evidence from Mr. Commissioner Kemp with reference to the Ngaitahu purchase.

The Commission met in Auckland pursuant to adjournment, obtained the evidence of Messrs. Fenton and Kemp, and, on the 16th day of September, adjourned, to sit again in Wellington on the 28th October, hoping that arrangements might then be made for resuming their work, and holding such sittings in the Middle Island as might be necessary.

The Commission sat in Wellington on the 28th October; but, in consequence of Parliament being then in session, it was found inconvenient to arrange for proceeding at once with our inquiry in the Middle Island, and, at the request of Mr. Tairaroa, who was a member of the General Assembly, and could not leave his parliamentary duties to attend the sittings of the Commission, a further postponement was decided upon. As, however, there were maps to be prepared for the use of the Commission, and witnesses whose evidence might be taken in Wellington, the Commission continued its sitting there, and obtained important evidence from Sir George Grey, Hon. Mr. Mantell, and Mr. Alexander Mackay on the subject of our inquiry.

On the 5th November the Commission adjourned to Otaki, to obtain important evidence from the chief Matene te Whiwhi, who from physical infirmity was unable to travel to Wellington.

The sitting in Wellington was resumed on the 11th November, and continued to the 6th December, when we adjourned to the 13th January, 1880, as the earliest date at which it would be possible to make arrangements for proceeding to the Middle Island for the purpose of resuming our inquiry by the examination of resident Native witnesses.

On the 13th January, accordingly, the Commissioners again sat in Wellington, and proceeded to make arrangements for holding sittings in the Middle Island. The 2nd February was fixed for a sitting at Akaroa, to take evidence in reference to the purchase of the Akaroa Block by Mr. Hamilton in 1866. That date was fixed as the earliest which would allow time for giving the necessary notices. In the interval, the Hon. Mr. Mantell was recalled, and gave further evidence before the Commission in Wellington.

On the 20th January we received a letter from the Hon. the Native Minister, Mr. Bryce, requesting to be informed of the progress made by the Commission. A copy of the letter, and our reply thereto, we beg to enclose for your Excellency's information.

On the 26th January, Mr. Bell, of the firm of Izard and Bell, waited on the Commission and stated that in consequence of severe illness, Mr. Izard, the counsel for the Natives, would be unable to attend the sitting notified to be held at Akaroa on the 2nd February, and requested us to postpone the Akaroa case. After communication with Mr. Tairaroa, then at Otakou, we decided to proceed to Akaroa, in pursuance of the notice given, in order to explain to the Natives who might attend the reason for postponement.

Notice was then given of a sitting to be held in Dunedin on the 16th February, for the purpose of the inquiry into the Otakou and Murihiku purchases. The Commissioners accordingly sat *pro forma* at Akaroa on the 2nd February, and adjourned to Christchurch, where we sat from the 5th to the 10th February, obtaining important evidence from the Rev. J. W. Stack on the subject of Native reserves, schools, and other matters.

From Christchurch we proceeded to Dunedin, and, on the application of the counsel, adjourned the sitting to Port Chalmers, where we sat from the 18th to the 20th, examining a number of Native witnesses, and receiving the evidence of Judge Symonds, the officer employed by the Government in the negotiating the purchase of the Otakou Block in 1844.

The Commission next sat at Waikouaiti, from the 26th February to the 4th March, and took the evidence of a large number of witnesses, adjourning thence to sit on the 8th at Christchurch, where we hoped to obtain further evidence from the Rev. Mr. Stack, but were unable to do so, in consequence of his absence on his clerical duties.

The Commission proceeded from Christchurch to Akaroa, where it sat from the 12th to the 17th of March, taking important Native and European evidence; and from Akaroa we went to Riverton, finding it necessary to do so in order to obtain evidence which we considered of importance, in connection with the inquiry into the Murihiku purchase, from persons who could not come to Waikouaiti.

The Commission sat at Riverton on the 24th and 25th of March, adjourning thence to sit again in Christchurch on the 2nd of April.

At Christchurch more evidence was taken, and it was our intention to obtain evidence there from the Hon. W. Rolleston and the Hon. Major Richmond; but, in consequence of arrangements made for the purpose falling through, we were prevented from doing so. From Christchurch we adjourned on the 5th of April to Wellington, to sit again on the 12th.

On the 13th April we received a letter from the Hon. the Native Minister, Mr. Bryce, suggesting the suspension of our proceedings until after the meeting of Parliament. Copies of that letter, with our reply thereto, and Mr. Bryce's rejoinder, we beg to enclose herewith for your Excellency's information.

Considering it necessary that we should meet to collate the evidence taken, and decide upon what further evidence we should obtain, we determined to adjourn to Auckland, to meet on the 10th May. We met accordingly on that date, and found that the work connected with the collation of the evidence and putting into shape the records of our proceedings occupied a longer time than we anticipated. On the 16th June we adjourned, to meet again on the 19th July to complete the work.

On the 28th June we were informed, in reply to our requisitions for imprest advances on account of expenses, that the Government cannot authorize any further advances on account of the Commission; and subsequently an account, made up partly of items of expenses incurred for which a refund was asked, was presented by one of the Commissioners and refused payment with a similar intimation.