

EVIDENCE TAKEN BEFORE WAIRARAPA LAKE COMMISSION, GREYTOWN,
APRIL, 1891.

FORESTER'S HALL, GREYTOWN, 15TH APRIL, 1891.

Commission opened in pursuance with the *Gazette* notice. Commission read out.

Mr. Menteach appeared as Counsel for the Natives, and asked for as long an adjournment as could reasonably be granted in consequence of the absence of Piripi te Maari and others.

The Commissioner stated that he had also received a telegram from Piripi te Maari and others asking that the enquiry be adjourned till the 20th instant, to enable them to complete some business then under discussion before the meeting at the Wairoa, and as it was evidently impossible to proceed during their absence, proceedings would be adjourned till Monday, the 20th June.

GREYTOWN, MONDAY 20th APRIL, 1891.

Commission resumed. The majority of the Natives interested in the lake question having returned, the Commission was read out, and the parties invited to proceed with the business.

H. P. Tunuiarangi, on behalf of the persons present, stated that they were not prepared to proceed for the reason that Mr. Menteach, who had been engaged by them to conduct the case, was absent, and so was Te Watahoro, who had taken an active part in the matter. Another difficulty was that the people had only just assembled, and had not had an opportunity of discussing the best mode of conducting the proceedings, and as they were unaccustomed to an inquiry of this kind, they would be obliged if the Commissioner would indicate the best course to pursue, so that they might be able to conduct the case themselves in the event of anything interfering with the solicitor they had engaged doing so.

Piripi te Maari corroborated Tunuiarangi's statement relative to the cause that prevented them going on with the case. He asked that further proceedings be adjourned till to-morrow to enable them to discuss and arrange matters amongst themselves.

The Commissioner stated that as they were evidently not ready to proceed, there was no help for it but to concur with their applications and adjourn till to-morrow, but it was hoped that they would be ready to go on then. As regards the mode of procedure and the nature of the evidence required. The matter for inquiry before the Commission was confined to the allegations contained in the petition, and what was needed was that evidence should be produced in support of and against such allegations to enable a correct view of the circumstances being formed.

Proceedings adjourned till Tuesday, the 22nd instant.

TUESDAY, 22ND APRIL, 1891.

Commission resumed at 10 a.m.

Te Watahoro (J. A. Jury) explained that they were not yet prepared to go on with the inquiry owing to Mr. Menteach not having arrived, but they had received a telegram from him to the effect that he would arrive by the morning train, they were therefore impelled to ask for an adjournment till 2 p.m. to enable them to gain time to discuss the question with their solicitor. Adjournment granted.

Commission resumed at 2 p.m. and adjourned till 3 p.m., at the request of Mr. Menteach, to give the Natives time to discuss several matters relative to the proceedings before the inquiry. Adjournment granted.

Commission resumed at 3 p.m.

Mr. Menteach explained that he was not yet ready to proceed owing to Mr. Pownall's absence, as he had been employed getting up the case, and had all the papers on the subject; he would therefore have to ask for an adjournment till to-morrow. Application granted on the understanding that this would be the last adjournment asked for.

Proceedings adjourned till Wednesday, the 23rd instant.

WEDNESDAY, 23RD APRIL, 1891.

Commission resumed at 10 a.m.

Mr. Menteach appeared and stated that, owing to various circumstances, matters had not progressed so favourably as anticipated, and he had to announce that they would not be prepared to go on during the forenoon. The Natives were now holding a meeting to discuss matters, and he hoped that it might lead to something definite being accomplished by 2 p.m.; he was therefore unwillingly compelled to ask for an adjournment till then. Adjournment granted.

Commission resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Pownall addressed the Court on behalf of the Natives, and indicated the course he proposed to pursue in conducting the case.

Piripi te Maari (sworn): My name is Piripi te Maari, and I am an owner of the Wairarapa Lake. I know of the sales that took place in the year 1853. Turakirae was the first sale to the Government. It was made in 1853. I know the boundaries. Have them described in a book. The information was copied from other papers, and some of it is written down from my own knowledge. [Witness read out the boundaries.] Commencing at Turakirae, Orongorongo up that river to the source, thence turning to Mangatamahine, thence to Ngapaiaka, thence to Haututu, thence to Ngapewa, thence to Te Aka a te rangi, thence turning eastward, thence to the Rere o Mahanga, thence to the Toko a houmea, thence to Otaura, thence to the Taukati, and thence down that stream to its mouth at the lake, thence to Kiriwai to the sea, and on to the starting-point at Kiriwai: the lake boundary was the high-water mark. After the sale an earthquake happened, and raised the land on the margin, leaving a strip of dry land along it. The other sales, three in number, were all bounded by high-water mark. The Turakirae and Turanganui sales took place before the earthquake. The upheaval of the land along the margin of the lake has left a strip of