

## MEIHA KEEPA TE RANGIHIWINUI SWORD.

*Witness*: I am a chief of Muaupoko and other West Coast tribes. I reside at Wanganui. I know the Horowhenua Block. It was put through the Native Land Court in 1873. I acted for my hapus, with Mr. Cash, when it was before the Court in 1872 and 1873. I was the spokesman of all the tribes on my side. The counter-claimants were Ngatiraikawa, Ngatitōa, and Ngatiawa. The land was awarded to me, the Muaupoko. A certificate of title was issued to me. The members of my tribe to the number of 143 were made registered owners. My name was on the back of the certificate as well as being in the body of it. Long after the land was put through Court I leased parts of the land, sold timber on it, mortgaged and sold parts of it. The tribe approved of my dealings with the land. I applied for partition of the land. The subdivision Court sat in 1886 under Judge Wilson. Mangakahia was the Assessor. I was the first to go to Palmerston. I was ill. Went against the advice of my doctor. I was on crutches. First went to Awapuni. When the Court arrived at Palmerston I proceeded to that place, and lived in Mr. Palmerson's house. The Muaupoko were lodged in a barn. Ihaia, Rangimairehau, Noa, and all Muaupoko except those at Parihaka were present. Hoani Puihi was one. Wirihana Hunia, Raniera, and all the resident Muaupoko were at Palmerston. None of the chiefs were absent. Waata Muruahi and some others, whose names I forget, were at Parihaka. The tribe assembled at Palmerston for the purpose of subdividing the Horowhenua Block. We discussed the division of the land in Palmerston. McDonald was acting with me, and on behalf of the Manawatu Railway Company. Palmerson was also friendly with me. We first discussed the piece for the railway and No. 2. Palmerson made the necessary calculations. The Court was not sitting at that time. We first discussed the part of the block inland of the railway, and that portion of No. 2 which extended west of the railway. McDonald conducted the proceedings, and acted as our interpreter. On the second day the surveyor obtained a map. I mean Mr. Palmerson. Before the map arrived we had decided Nos. 1 and 2. I then made a division near Ohau for the descendants of Whatanui. I placed the 1,200 acres there because the land was my own. When Pomare and Heni heard this, they came to me, and said, "We have heard that we are to be placed at Ohau. We will not have the land, because it is stony. We want the land beside the 100 acres at Te Raumatangi." I then consented, and said, "I will give you the land where you wish it to be." After this Lewis arrived, and said, "I have come to read to you your agreement with Sir D. McLean, and to ask you not to give the land away from the lake. I told him I had already consented, and he was pleased. After that we went to the Court—all the Maoris and McDonald. When we entered the Court, I stood up to explain that we had arranged about Nos. 1, 2, and 3. I said to the Court that the descendants of Whatanui had refused the 1,200 acres at Ohau, and I had agreed to give it to them at Raumatangi, where they wished to have it, and that Mr. McDonald would explain matters and make the applications for the orders in respect to the awards. McDonald stood up, and applied for an order for the railway line—76 acres. The Court challenged objectors. None appeared, and the order was made for it in my favour, to be transferred by me to the railway Company. After that No. 2, the 4,000 acres, was placed before the Court. The Judge called for objectors. There were none. The order was made. No. 3 was for descendants of Whatanui—the parcel near Raumatangi. It was first No. 3, and subsequently altered to No. 9. Objectors were called for by the Court. None appeared at that time. The order was made to me to convey to the descendants of Whatanui. This was at Mangakahia's Court. I paid £3 for the three orders. I offered to put the 1,200 acres into Lewis's hands outside the Court, but he said: "No; you had better go to a lawyer to arrange for the conveyance." I was afraid of the expense. That was all that was done on that date. News came that Mangakahia's wife was ill, and he went away. After the Assessor left we went on arranging the different divisions with our surveyor outside the Court. Lewis telegraphed for Kahui Kararehe, a Taranaki Assessor. While waiting for the Assessor we arranged the divisions, large and small, until they were all finished. Our surveyor mapped them out. No. 4 was for the Hamua, of Wairarapa. I forget how many. The area of this division was 500 acres. It was agreed to. After No. 4, No. 5 was considered. It was a small piece for Tamati and Kotuku. It was four or five acres, I do not remember exactly. Then No. 6 was dealt with. I cut off that piece, because it belonged to my ancestors. It was for those who were omitted from the title. I told Palmerson to lay it off on the plan. I decided the area—4,600 acres. I proposed to the tribe that it should be cut off to make provision for the people who were not in the original certificate, but ought to have been. It was my own suggestion. The tribe agreed to it. It was to be in my name. The name of the locality was Hamoana. Then came No. 7. It was for Te Peeti, Hoani Meihana, and Waata Tohu, and contained 300 odd acres. Scomething over 100 acres each. The next block was No. 8. This was for Mere Karena and Te Ruaohata and another. I cannot remember the area of it. About 100 acres each, or a little less. The tribe agreed to all these allotments being made. The next discussed was No. 9, which was formerly No. 3. It was then it was called No. 9, and Rangimairehau's block named No. 3. I mean a large block that was afterwards awarded to a number of people—105 acres each. I then told my tribe that I had a burden upon me. My trouble was that an action had been brought against me in the Supreme Court at Gisborne and that I had not attended the Court. I asked them if they would take my burden on their shoulders. Rangimairehau consented, and asked what area it would take to relieve me. I told them that the debt had been incurred in connection with Whanganui lands. I remember the amount, and told the people what it was. I said Palmerson would calculate what area would be necessary to pay it. It was £2,900 odd. Palmerson inspected the land and valued it at £4 an acre, and said that 10s. would be necessary for survey, leaving £3 10s. an acre available. Palmerson figured it out, and found that it would take 800 acres. The tribe consented to take my burden upon their shoulders, and said they would give me the land. It was put in my name to enable me to convey it to Sievwright and Stout. I did so, and they sold it. None of the tribe dissented. There was not one who objected. No. 11