

discuss the Ahuriri deed of purchase. If Mr. McLean had any doubts as to their rights, he wisely kept them to himself; to have questioned Moananui's rights in the "Maara-a-Tawhao" would have been suicidal to the enterprise McLean was engaged upon—that of purchasing a block from Hapuku and another from Moananui (or Tareha) (sworn enemies) in such a manner that neither could feel or assume that he was being belittled. It must be remembered that this purchase took place at a time when the rights and feelings of the Natives (particularly those of "friendly" Natives) had to be respected.

42. Mr. McLean had a reputation for fair dealing; he resorted to no tricks to cover up his meaning, so that when we find present-day people—Government officials and Maoris—at variance regarding the actual meaning of a McLean matter we have only to look to his formal deeds and clearly worded reports for a true picture of what he actually did in that matter.

43. It is felt that the first thing necessary to a full understanding of the correspondence regarding this purchase is a realization of what is meant by the word "Ahuriri." It was freely used by the Land Purchase Officers in their official reports, and from both the Maori and Native Land Court viewpoint it was often very loosely used.

44. Ahuriri in its correct application is the name given to the opening by which in 1851 the waters of the Tutaekuri River and the swamps adjoining its lower course made their way to the sea. It was the entrance to what was known in later years as Port Ahuriri. This was the Maori conception of Ahuriri. It was also the European conception of the meaning of the word when used alone, as its use in the following instances and in official correspondence generally will show.

45. Extract from Colenso papers (Hocken Library, Dunedin) :—

Waitangi, 19th December, 1850.

"This morning Mr. McLean left for Ahuriri where a large meeting of Chiefs is now about to be held concerning the selling of the harbour and adjacent localities to the Government."

Extract from same papers (a few days later) :—

". . . Crossing Ahuriri Harbour and landing on the opposite shore I found Mr. McLean and the Chiefs very busily engaged." (NOTE.—This meeting was held on the Meance Spit.)

Extract from same papers (15th January, 1851) :—

"Mr. McLean is at Ahuriri"; and, later, "Mr. McLean came from Ahuriri to see me" (Colenso being unwell at the time).

Extract from a letter written by Colenso to the Rev. R. Cole from Waitangi (28th October, 1853) :—

I think you knew there was only one European built house at Ahuriri (proper) and that one a licensed public house; now there is another building there on this side of the entrance (the first being on the opposite side) which is also licensed for the same purpose.

46. In another part of his journal Colenso fears that a horse that he had brought from Gisborne may attempt to return by swimming across the Ahuriri Harbour.

These are instances of the correct use of the word "Ahuriri."

47. In 1856 the Ahuriri district for the registration of births, &c., extended from the Mahia Peninsula to Woodville. This appears to be the widest use made of the name, although Mr. McLean, in his letter of the 21st December, 1850, refers to "the central Ahuriri plains about the Waipukurau."

48. This tendency towards a loose use of the word no doubt prompted Colenso to add the word "proper" in his communication to the Rev. Cole, to ensure that the latter gentleman (who was connected with the London Office of the Missionary Society) might understand that Colenso was not referring generally to the district between Woodville and Mahia.

49. Apart from all these instances, the Maori signatories to the deed of cession put the meaning of the word, for the purposes of the deed, beyond all shadow of doubt when they say they have agreed to give up the boulder-bank from "Ruahoro to Ahuriri."