

POURAU STATION

Potae Family

WIREMU POTAE: Last sole owner of Pourau Station, he died in 1942, aged 84. He was the son of the renowned loyalist, Henare Potae, who, with Major Ropata, the famous Ngati-Porou chief, quelled and routed Hauhaus adherents of their tribe, strongly entrenched and greatly outnumbering their own supporters.



A family property which has remained in the hands of the original owners over 100 years, Pourau Station is an area of 3500 acres of low, undulating country, backed by steep, bush-clad hills, five miles south of Tokomaru Bay, on the Main East Coast Road. The first owner to farm the land—Hapi Kahu—felled and burnt the bush, sowing grass seed in the ashes. Since then, it has not been resown or topdressed, the sward being a mixture of grasses in which ryegrass and danthonia are predominant.

There is still an area of native forest in which are fine *pariris* and large *manuka* specimens. Plantations of *Pinus insignis* have been made, and a dam built in each paddock. A modern six-stall shearing shed of the 'stage' type has been built, and the alluvial loam-type soil grows good crops of maize and potatoes. Romney sheep and Aberdeen Angus cattle are the stock carried. There are three houses and shearers' quarters.

NOTES ON HENARE POTAE'S CONTRIBUTION TO RESTORING PEACE ON THE EAST COAST, 1865: The New Zealand Wars and Pioneering Period, Vol. II, James Cowan.

In July 1865, Henare Potae and the loyal Ngati-Porou—about 200 men, women and children—fortified themselves in an old pa on Te Mawhai, the headland at the south head of Tokomaru Bay. This was almost an island, joined to the mainland by a very narrow neck, while a little inland of this, the Hauhaus, largely outnumbering Potae's loyalists, were entrenched in a pa known as Pukepapa. Another fortified position held by Pai-marire, or Hauhau, adherents was the Tautini Pa. During August, Potae and nearly all his fighting men, who had asked for, and received, arms from the Government, went along the Coast gathering in the loyal Ngati-Porou, leaving only five fighting men and the women to defend Te Mawhai. Realising that the main fighting force was away, the Hauhaus attacked the pa early one morning at low tide, sealing the cliffs on the seaward side.

Three young women fought alongside the five men firing from the palisades, while other women reloaded or rolled stones on the attackers. When they were beaten off, 13 Hauhaus lay dead among the rocks, and Henare Potae returned to find the pa safe. He sent a whaleboat to Ropata at Waiapu seeking his help, which was quickly answered by Ropata marching south with his men to join forces with Potae. With 200 men they attacked the Hauhaus positions, garrisoned by 4-500. As they advanced upon Tautini pa the occupants fled into the bush, and Pukepapa was then attacked and captured, after most of the garrison had evacuated it by night. Later, on August 18th, Henare Potae, with 36 men was attacked on his way back from searching for rebels by a large body of Hauhaus at Pakura, and fought a sharp action on the edge of a swamp. Potae's force was outnumbered when Ropata, hearing the firing, came up with 90 men and, outflanking the Hauhaus, decisively defeated them.

FARMING ACTIVITIES ON POURAU STATION:

(Top) THE MORNING TEA BREAK at docking time.

(Centre) TWO OF THE SIX SHEARERS AT WORK IN THE NEW SHED. The raised shearing stage facilitates the gathering of the fleece in one piece, and saves the Reece-o's back muscles.

(Bottom) NEW SHEARING SHED UNDER CONSTRUCTION. The road in the background is the Main East Coast Road, five miles south of Tokomaru Bay.