

Block, Victoria Valley, I have the honor, by direction, to inform you that his Honor the Superintendent of Auckland has signified his approval of the acquisition of this block on the terms which you mention as likely to be accepted by the Native owners, viz. 3s. per acre.

I am therefore directed to request that you will, without delay, enter into negotiations for the purchase of the block in question, taking at the same time the utmost care as to what Natives you deal with and how you deal with them, so as to make certain of securing to the Crown a safe title. In mentioning the rate of 3s. per acre, it is to be understood that this is to be the maximum price, and your endeavours should be directed to reduce it if possible. I have also to recommend you to obtain information from every available source, so as to obviate any future complication.

I append for your guidance a copy of an extract from instructions issued to you in November, 1871, by the Hon. Mr. McLean, which will apply to the present case.

Lieut.-Colonel McDonnell, Auckland.

I have, &c.,
J. H. H. ST. JOHN.

Enclosure in No. 22.

IN purchases of this nature it is of the utmost importance that careful inquiry should be made among the Native owners as to the prospects of completing the transaction without incurring the chance of any future trouble or disagreement.

You will therefore have to pay special attention to this, as the Government do not desire to acquire any land from the Natives, however valuable it may be, if the acquisition is attended with any risk of disturbance or revival of feuds among themselves.

You will proceed to examine this block and report fully upon its capabilities, whether for grass or corn land, for timber, water, and any other points which it is desirable to be fully aware of.

You will also have the goodness to furnish the Under Secretary, Native Office, with a rough sketch of it, as accurate as the circumstances will allow you to make, giving its proper boundaries; and in enumerating the latter you will be very careful to ascertain that no mistake can in future occur between the proposed sellers and the Government, but that a clear definition is given of the area with its limits.

You will also give me a clear idea as to what reserves it will be necessary to make for the Natives—in the case of these, discriminating most carefully their acreage. I have to request that you will lose no time in acquiring the information and forwarding a report of it to the Government.

Should anything in the transactions occur affecting the Natives, I have to request that you will forward to me a report.

DONALD McLEAN.

No. 23.

Native Office (Land Purchase Branch), Wellington,
30th January, 1874.

(Circular.)

It is deemed highly advisable that, whenever practicable, transactions remaining incomplete for the purchase of Native lands should be brought to a close: Land Purchase Officers are therefore requested, before beginning any fresh negotiations, to use their energies to conclude those on which they have already entered.

It is however left to their discretion how far they are to act in the above manner, as no advantageous offer should be lost; but generally they are instructed to devote their exertions to bringing to a complete end the arrangements for the purchase or lease of Native lands which they have initiated.

H. T. CLARKE,
Under Secretary.

No. 24.

Lieut.-Colonel McDONNELL to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Auckland, 5th February, 1874.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of circular dated 30th January, 1874, requesting that wherever practicable all transactions remaining incomplete for the purchase of Native lands should be brought to a close, and to state that as far as I can I will endeavour to carry out the above instructions.

H. T. Clarke, Esq., Native Office, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
THOS. McDONNELL.

No. 25.

The UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department, to Mr. BRISSENDEN.

Native Office (Land Purchase Branch), Wellington,
12th March, 1874.

SIR,—

It has come to the knowledge of the Hon. the Native Minister that there are several considerable blocks of forest land to the North of Auckland which it is desirable that the Government should procure for public purposes. I am therefore desirous to request you that you will proceed to