

These blocks were originally to have been surveyed as one block, but owing to disputes between the Herekino Natives and those at Ahipara it was divided into three.

When Puhipi (Te Whare Mati) came to Auckland in about May, 1874, he received £100 on account of the Takahue Block, but on his return he paid the Herekino Natives out of this sum £45, keeping £55 for the Takahue. I merely mention this as in the Government account it appears that the £100 is an advance solely on account of Takahue, and the officers negotiating might be confused.

I am not quite certain whether it was £20 or £25 I paid as a first advance on Te Uwhiroa, but I have made these calculations for the greater sum : if I am wrong it is easily put right.

THOS. McDONNELL.

No. 85.

Lieut.-Colonel ST. JOHN to Mr. J. B. KEAST.

(Telegram.)

Maketu, 9th April, 1875.

No. 19. Send to Mr. J. W. Preece, Auckland, all papers relating to Takahue, Uwhiroa, and Te Puwhata, &c. Is to complete the purchase of more blocks in Victoria Valley.

J. B. Keast, Esq., Wellington.

J. H. H. ST. JOHN.

No. 86.

Lieut.-Colonel McDONNELL to Mr. H. T. CLARKE.

SIR,—

Empire Hotel, Wellington, 9th June, 1875.

I have the honor to respectfully call your attention to the unsatisfactory position I at present occupy.

It ought to be remembered that in the purchase of the Victoria Valley Block I succeeded in effecting a saving of over £1,266, as I was authorized to offer 3s. an acre if I could not get it for less.

Secondly, on the Mangakahia lands I effected a saving of over £2,000, as agreements had been entered into for these lands for 2s. 6d. per acre; but, when afterwards negotiating the price for Tutamoe and Kairara, the same figure, 2s. 6d., was demanded, but I was able to induce the owners of the lands at Mangakahia to forego the 2s. 6d. an acre, and accept over the whole at the rate of 1s. 3d. per acre, after which I purchased Tutamoe and Kairara at the same rate. The long-vexed question of "One," the Rev. Mr. Baker's claim, I was fortunate enough to arrange, after many officers and surveyors had failed in settling the difficulty and in surveying the ground; and, after the pains I have taken in all my negotiations, it is extremely disheartening that the result of my work is bestowed on another to reap the benefit of.

My position stands thus: I have had less power given to me than any other Land Purchase Agent, but have had more difficulties strewed in my path. See my letter of the 19th June, 1874, dated from Ohaeawai. Nevertheless, by dint of borrowing from private people, and once at 25 per cent.—I, not the Government, paid the interest—I was enabled to purchase some very valuable land, very different from a great deal that has been purchased North of Auckland simply, it appears to me, for the sake of the commission; and although I effected a saving to the Government of a considerable sum of money, my reward, as yet, has been my removal from these negotiations, and I have had the mortification of seeing another person put into my place to reap the benefit of my labour and experience; and the injustice of this I feel deeply.

Trusting the Government will be pleased to cause things to be placed on a different footing as regards myself,

H. T. Clarke, Esq., Under Secretary, Native Office.

I have, &c.,

THOS. McDONNELL.

No. 87.

Mr. E. T. BRISSENDEN to Sir D. McLEAN.

SIR,—

Herd's Point, 24th June, 1875.

I have the honor to forward you a report of my transactions as Land Purchase Agent for the General Government for the year ending this 24th June.

I also enclose a report from Percy Smith, Esq., on the quality of the several blocks surveyed under his supervision, which may be of use to the Government.

The Hon. Sir D. McLean, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

E. T. BRISSENDEN.