

315. Who was Mr. Woon?—Mr. Woon was the clerk who had charge of the records in Gisborne.

316. He was not with you at Porangahau?—No, he was not there.

317. You did not see him till you went to Gisborne?—No.

318. Did you take Mr. Brooking with you to Gisborne?—Yes; he was travelling with me.

319. Can you say from your memory whether anything with reference to Owhaoko was done at Porangahau on the 1st or 2nd December? Do you remember whether anything was done?—If I may be allowed a little time I will explain this. At this Court at Porangahau I was engaged on a matter of subdivision—a separate matter from the Owhaoko altogether. During the sitting of that Court a gentleman named Maney came in incidentally with the plan of Owhaoko No. 1 and Owhaoko No. 2, containing twenty-one thousand acres odd, which was the correct plan of the sketch of the thirty-eight thousand acres. At this time I gave this plan to Mr. Brooking, telling him to make a memorandum in the book to the effect that the plan was received from Mr. Maney. He took the trouble to travel from Napier to give this plan over to me, as being the correct survey, and it was, I thought, proper for me to receive it. I handed this plan to Mr. Brooking, telling him to make a minute of it—to make a few words of a minute; and I passed over to the disputed blocks at once that I was engaged upon at Porangahau. The Court disposed of them and was adjourned, and we travelled to Napier, and from Napier to Gisborne. When I arrived at Gisborne I saw the principal clerk, Mr. Woon, and I said, “Mr. Woon, remember we have got a correct plan. Make out a memorial of ownership, and I shall sign it.” I did so.

320. *Hon. Sir R. Stout.*] On what date?—The date of it was some time in December—some few days afterwards; I think, the 20th December, 1876.

321. *Mr. Bell.*] That is the memorial of ownership ordered that was referred to some little time ago in the books, for the 38,000 acres—“that the memorial would be given directly a correct plan was produced?”—Yes.

322. You told Mr. Woon to make it out, and signed it at Gisborne. Did you see this minute-book when you instructed him?—No, I wish I had.

323. You have told the Committee that you instructed Mr. Brooking to make this minute. Did you see it?—No.

324. Looking at it as it appeared originally in Mr. Brooking’s handwriting, was it correct?—It was absolutely and completely wrong.

325. It was ordered for 164,500 acres?—Yes; and I had instructed the Clerk to make it for 28,000 acres.

326. Now turn to page 417. You will see continuation of this Owhaoko. In whose handwriting is that?—Mr. Woon’s.

327. And therefore made at Gisborne?—Yes.

328. As altered—taking these pages, 413, 414, and 417, together, as altered by Mr. Woon—is the minute a correct statement of what the Court had done?—Only part of Mr. Woon’s statement here is correct according to the order. What I wanted Mr. Brooking to make a minute of was simply confined to No. I. and No. II., and not to Owhaoko itself. I stated just now that this minute, “164,000 acres,” is, I may say, a blunder.

329. A blunder of whose?—A blunder of the Clerk’s.

330. That, however, was the acreage which had appeared upon the sketch-plan, Mr. Rogan?—Quite so. But I never ordered this.

331. That is not the note which you directed your Clerk to make?—Certainly not.

332. I understand you to say that the minute on page 417 is a correct minute of what you wanted down?—It is not a correct minute; it is only partly correct.

333. But what part of it is correct?—Owhaoko No. I.; School Reserve, Owhaoko No. II.

334. Then is it correct now? Have you to complain of anything?—I have to complain of this, that it was absolutely unnecessary for the Clerk to make any minute at all. It is impossible for any one not acquainted with the facts to understand how it is made.

335. Did you order Mr. Woon to make any alterations in the book?—No; you will see that these memorials were made of Owhaoko No. I. and Owhaoko No. II. Mr. Woon’s entry was only a minute of them.

336. *The Chairman.*] Mr. Woon would seem to have repeated unnecessarily?—Yes.

337. *Mr. Bell.*] What did you do about the big block? What was your determination about the large block?—I had no determination about the matter. The bringing from page 136 to page 413 of the 164,500 acres is simply confusion. My determination was that, when the plan of these 164,500 acres came before me, that I should make a memorial of ownership.

338. To whom?—In favour of the persons whose names we ascertained in the investigation.

339. Then, had you determined the question of the title, subject to the plan?—Yes, to the best of my ability.

340. When did you make a determination as to the title?—That was determined on the 1st August, 1876.

341. What was your determination then? What question did you determine with reference to the large block?—I determined to order a memorial of ownership for Renata Kawepo and the others whose names are in the memorial, as stated in his evidence.

342. Then you had determined the question of title on the first case, subject to the production of a proper plan?—Yes.

343. Then, did you direct the words “No order,” &c., should be inserted in the minute-book, page 417?—No, I did not direct him to do this at all. The Committee will see that the statement I have made that there was a mistake is shown here. What I ordered was that, when a correct plan of this block came before me, I should make a memorial of ownership; and it was impossible for me to do anything without such plan.