

474. But did you pay rent?—Yes.

475. To whom?—To Karaitiana te Rango.

476. You paid it to him?—Yes.

477. Did you pay it to him to be distributed amongst those Natives who signed the lease; I mean those who signed the agreement—not the lease?—It was generally understood that he attended to the subdivision, if there was any, of the rent.

478. But did you expect that these men who had signed the agreement to lease would claim part of that rent?—I do not know. I know what did happen, if you want to know that. Karaitiana used to make such a subdivision of it as he thought fit; and on one occasion there was a complaint from one of them who did not get his share: but he was one of my present grantees.

479. Then you did not know, as a point of fact, how he distributed that money at all?—He never distributed it to any persons who are not now named in the memorial of ownership.

480. I have not gone so far as that. I am speaking of the memorandum. You had in that memorandum fourteen men to sign it; but Renata was not in it?—Yes; his name was not in it.

481. And you paid the rent that you had agreed to in that memorandum to Karaitiana to distribute?—Yes.

482. What was the intention in paying it—to be distributed among these fourteen men?—I did not know to whom it was to go.

483. But in paying it to Karaitiana did you expect that he was to keep it all himself, or to distribute it amongst those who had signed the memorandum?—I know that the rent then paid was not distributed outside the people who granted me my present lease.

484. And you took it for granted that the Natives interested would get the money?—Yes.

485. And did you hear from any of the other ten names written upon your lease, out of the fourteen—did you hear any complaint of them not receiving the money?—Only in one case—that of Retimana te Raro, who is one of my present lessors under the memorial of ownership.

486. Then you paid the rent from 1868 to 1875, when the thing passed through the Court, to Karaitiana?—Yes.

487. And since that time to whom did you pay it?—By direction of the Maoris, to Renata Kawepo.

488. By direction of whom?—By direction of the lessors.

489. Is Karaitiana one of the lessors?—Yes.

490. *The Chairman.*] Have you anything else to tell us?—I wish to say that I always knew Renata Kawepo had an overlordship over the property, even in the past, when I had not got his signature to the memorandum.

491. *Mr. Montgomery.*] Was he residing there?—No; he was not living there. He was up there though, I think, on two occasions—certainly on one.

492. What was his claim, in the opinion of the Natives, if he were not residing upon the land?—That has been recently investigated by the Court.

493. Can you not give us something, apart from that?—No, I cannot. Any opinion that I might give upon that point would be very vague, you know.

494. *Mr. Stewart.*] The question is, what colour of right did he put forward to this land, or what title had he to this right, before it was investigated?—In 1867, when I was negotiating with the Maoris, in the absence of Karaitiana, who was at Owhiti near Napier, for a portion of what is known as Owhaoko, Karaitiana returned to Patea, and said, “You shall not let him have Owhaoko, because that would displease Renata; but, if you like, we will rent him Oruamatua, which will not displease Renata.” So that he evidently had a say in it.

[ADDENDUM to Captain BIRCH'S Evidence.]

Azim S. Birch, Wellington Club, Wellington.

SIGNATURES to agreement 1867, are: Karaitiana Terango, Horima Teahunga, Kakapa Tehokemutu, Aperahama Teahunga, Ihaka Tekonga, Rota Tewhakaihopo, Te Awaawa, Te Taiimu Pirimiha, Tamakaitangi Heperi, Terangihumui, Tehirauka Teraro, Wereta Patea, Rawiri Pikirangi, Hika te Rangi, Whakamanunu, Ihakara te Kohiti, Hohepa te Atarau, Henare te Ratarewa, Eruini Matarewa, Hoani Nga Muka, Kingi Topia, and Kieta te Rango.

WILSON AND COTTERILL.

FRIDAY, 9TH JULY, 1886.

Mr. BRIDSON examined.

495. *Mr. Bell.*] What is your name, Mr. Bridson?—William Bridson.

496. What are you?—At present, Registrar of the Native Land Court at Wellington.

497. How long have you been in the Native Land Court Department?—Twenty-one years.

498. In what capacities?—I was sent to Auckland by the Hon. Mr. Mantell in 1865, and I was then Registering Clerk in the Native Land Court in Auckland, under the late Chief Judge, Mr. Fenton.

499. And did you remain with the Chief Judge at Auckland until you became Registrar?—Yes—until I was sent to Wellington. I remained there as Registering Clerk.

500. Who was the Chief Clerk?—Mr. Dickey.

501. You were, then, Registering Clerk when the Native Land Act of 1873 was passed?—Yes.

502. And came into operation?—Yes.

503. I want you to look at the Act of 1873. You were aware of the practice of the Native Land Court, were you not, under that Act?—Yes, as regards registering titles and certificates of title to the memorials of ownership, and so on.

504. And the correspondence of the Court?—The correspondence of the Court was chiefly in the hands of the Chief Clerk.