

699. How is that *Gazette* circulated amongst the Maoris?—The circulation of the *Kahiti* devolves upon the Native Office, I believe. The Native Land Court never took responsibility of it. It relied upon the *Panui*. It was an extract or a sheet out of the *Kahiti*, and the Court relied upon the circulation which of its own action it made for this *Panui*.

700. But is it not in your knowledge that the *Kahiti* has a considerable circulation—that these notices are contained in the *Gazette* as well as circulated in the manner you have mentioned?—Yes, I think so.

701. *Hon. Sir R. Stout.*] There is one question I should like to clear up. You have answered Mr. Stewart in reference to the correspondence on claims between the Native Land Court office at Auckland and claimants. Had you access, as Register Clerk, to that correspondence?—All the officers in the department would have access to the whole file of papers.

702. Was it usual for the Chief Judge to communicate with lessees of Native lands about granting to the Natives memorials of ownership or rehearings, or did he communicate with the Natives themselves?—It would be an unusual occurrence.

703. Do you know of any one occurrence that you can recall in all your twenty-one years' experience?—There is one cited in your memorial.

704. Is there any other case?—I know that the Chief Judge has been accessible to solicitors engaged for the parties.

705. I mean communication by letter with persons who were not owners and the simple lessees. Do you know of any case other than those mentioned in the memorandum during your twenty-one years' experience?—Yes, I think so. Where there was any difficulty about issuing the title the Chief Judge would be communicated with.

706. By the lessees?—By parties interested. I would not say lessees or purchasers.

707. Was it usual to recognize persons as being interested before the memorial of ownership was investigated?—No, of course it was not.

708. Was it not illegal to be interested before a memorial of ownership was issued?—Yes, it was.

709. Did the Chief Judge hold communication with persons whom he knew to be violating the law?—What I mean to say is this: If there was any obstruction or unreasonable delay in the title his assistance would be sought for the removal of that obstruction. I do not think parties would appear as interested to his knowledge.

710. Then how would he communicate with people who are not interested?—That would be a matter of assumption. He would assume that they were not.

711. There is only one other question. You attended the Native Land Court in a great many cases?—Yes.

712. Was it usual to allow barristers to appear for claimants and objectors at the same time?—I do not think so.

713. *Hon. Mr. Bryce.*] I should like to ask you a question about the use of the word "illegal." Sir Robert Stout asked the witness whether it was "illegal" for the Chief Judge to enter into correspondence with owners before 1873?—Yes, that is so.

714. Can you refer us to the law, or refer us to any law rendering it illegal?—I think the Act of 1873 makes it illegal.

715. But there is no penalty?—No, I do not know of any penalty.

716. *Mr. Stewart.*] Do you know of many instances in which persons had purchased the interest of Natives contingently upon their getting a title through the Court?—I know very little about these matters.

717. Where Europeans have purchased prospectively, so to speak, or contingently upon the Natives' title being adjusted, their interest in the land?—I have known of persons advancing money upon the possibility of their becoming owners.

718. Would the Chief Judge communicate with these persons?—I do not think so.

719. Or with lessees, tenants by lease, before the title was passed through the Court?—I do not think so.

720. *Mr. Bell.*] I wish to ask you this: Did you yesterday look at the file of the *Kahiti* for 1875?—Yes. You were in the office.

721. Did you notice that there was a copy missing before the 7th September?—Yes; you pointed it out.

722. Can you remember what was the *Kahiti* immediate preceding the 7th September?—I think you said it was May.

723. Did you not look?—Well, you pointed it out.

724. I want to call your attention to this matter. The *Panui* to which you have alluded were issued from the Native Land Court office in Auckland?—Yes.

725. In the case of the *Panui* dated the 9th in Auckland, how long a time do you suppose would elapse before that *Panui* would be circulated?—I think that within seven days the *Panuis* would be sent out.

726. From the day it would appear?—Yes.

727. Would you expect to have them sent out to every one?—Yes—whom the interpreter would consider entitled to receive them.

728. I understood you to say you sent bundles to the District Officers and those who were interested?—Yes.

729. That would be done within a week?—Yes. The *Kahiti* was printed in Wellington, and the *Panui* was sent from Auckland.

730. There is one question more. You have spoken of the practice of the Courts before the various Judges. Did the Chief Judge hold numerous Courts in the first instance—inquiries into titles—himself?—You mean in the early days of the Native Land Court? Yes, he had many Courts in the early days.