

with any negotiations for Native lands. Mr. Charles Brown, a half-caste, acted as my interpreter throughout the transaction. I have no desire whatever to acquire any interest in land on the south side of the Mokau River, and have never tried to do so. My attention has been called to a report of a speech made by Mr. Hamlin in the House of Representatives, as reported in *Hansard*. I never saw the telegram referred to in his speech as having been sent to a person at Waitara, but I know something of its history. It is a telegram which was sent about June, 1882, by Mrs. Brown to her husband at Waitara; it had no reference to me whatever or to my transactions. Jones, acting in conjunction with the Natives, had endeavoured to get Mrs. Walker's name excluded from the title to the Mokau-Mohakatino No. 1 Block. In consequence of Rewi's and Taiaroa's interference Mrs. Walker's name was inserted as an owner of that block, as she had a right to be. It was in consequence of this attempt to exclude Mrs. Walker from the Mokau-Mohakatino Block that the telegram in question was sent. The person named "Maggie" in the telegram is Mrs. W. H. Grace. The telegram was sent by Mrs. Brown in my wife's interest, but without my knowledge. The telegram may have been signed by Mrs. Walker also; she can, however, speak for himself. Previous to Jones's interference with Mrs. Walker's right to the land, we had been on friendly terms with him. I attribute Jones's opposition to the passing of the block in which I was interested through the Court to a desire to prevent the coal being worked on that side of the river.

My attention has been called to a paragraph in the *Wellington Evening Post* stating that Major Brown was at Waitara during the sitting of the Commission in the interests of Russell and Morrin. Major Brown was not there as my agent, nor did I give him any instructions to oppose Jones's interests in any way.

During the time Rewi was living with me at Waitara I was in constant communication with the Native Minister, who wished the influence of Mrs. Walker and myself with Rewi to get the King country, including the Mokau District, opened up. I sometimes received two or three telegrams a day from the Native Minister on this matter. It was while Rewi was staying at my house that the meeting between Sir George Grey and the King-country Natives took place at Waitara. It was during that meeting that Rewi consented to meet Sir George Grey, and I and Mrs. Walker went with him on that occasion. I have a letter from Mr. Sheehan, then Native Minister, thanking me, in his own name and on behalf of the Government, for being instrumental in bringing about that meeting, and also a subsequent and more important meeting, with the chiefs of the Maniapoto.

CHARLES BROWN, having been duly sworn, gave evidence as follows:—

I am Major in the Taranaki Militia, and am residing in New Plymouth. I do not know much of the Natives at present residing at Mokau. About June, 1886, I was requested by Te Oro and Tumutaia to put a notice in the New Plymouth papers to warn Europeans that they would not agree to give up their land to Jones, and I had notices to that effect inserted. I was subsequently requested by others of the Mokau Natives to insert similar notices, which I did not do.

About October, 1887, several of the Mokau Natives signed an authority for me to appear on their behalf before the Native Land Court to represent their interest on an application made by Wetere and others for a partition of the Mokau-Mohakatino No. 1 Block. The Native who principally acted in instructing me was Hirawanu, otherwise Tukutataiheke. The application was heard before Judge Wilson in October, 1887; it was on that occasion that the topographical map, certified by the Chief Surveyor, was placed before the Court; the application was dismissed by the Judge for reasons stated by him. Hirawanu was examined before the Court on that occasion. My instructions were to oppose anything that would confirm Jones's lease. The question of Jones's lease was not again gone into upon that occasion. The case was dismissed owing to objections as to the sufficiency of the survey. I have previously, at the request of some of the Natives, written a letter to Mr. Ballance, which was signed by them, complaining of Jones's conduct towards them in killing their pigs and striking one of the owners of the land. I know nothing about that except from their own statement. I have acted as agent for Neville Walker in getting the signature of one of the owners of a block north of the Mokau, for which he was in negotiation.

That is all I have done for Walker previous to 1887. I attended with Mr. Walker before Chief Judge Macdonald to assist him in the proceedings relative to Mangaoera and Mangapapa Blocks, which were then taken before the Court, with respect to which he was carrying on some negotiations with the Natives. I have never on his behalf interfered in any way with the Mokau-Mohakatino No. 1 Block. I have never been asked by him to do so, nor by any other person except the Natives; in fact, Mr. Walker made it a condition before we left Waitara on his business that, while so employed, I should not interfere in any way in Jones's business. Te Rerenga was present to the best of my belief, and it was explained to him. The reason that Mr. Walker gave was, that he did not wish Jones to have any excuse for interfering on his side of the river; he thought that they could each very well attend to his own business without interfering with each other.

I saw Mrs. Walker at Waitara about twelve months ago. I believe she is one of the owners of the Mokau-Mohakatino No. 1 Block. She told me in Wetere's presence that Jones and Wetere wanted her to sign Jones's lease, and asked me what I would advise; she said Wetere wanted her to sign. I said I doubted whether it would be right under the Act of 1886, but recommended Wetere to telegraph to the Chief Judge, which he did, and showed me the telegram before he sent it.

I am not acting for Messrs. Morrin and Russell, or for any other European in connection with Mokau-Mohakatino No. 1 Block. I have never attempted to dissuade Natives from signing Jones's lease.

I was at Waitara on the afternoons of the second and third days of the sitting of the Commission there. On the first occasion I was informed by Mr. Butler that the sitting was over. Te Oro spoke to me about the matter after he had given his evidence. I did not see him before. I did not speak to any of the Natives, who were examined before the Commission, before they gave their evidence. I may have talked to some of them afterwards, but I did not ask them any questions as