

borrow money to make the improvements, on the security of his freehold farm a little lower down. He was paying for that money 10 per cent., but, reckoning the value of improvements at 8 per cent., it comes to 4s. per acre per annum, which, added to the 5s. 6d. per acre of unimproved rental, gives 9s. 6d. per acre; besides which there was the loss on the excessive rent he had previously paid. That is the only one of my valuations to which exception has been taken. I would have put a rent of 6s. on it, but that there was no available water on the farm.

“70/88A.

“New Plymouth, 24th March, 1888.

“Re memo. from Public Trust Office, 2nd February, 1888; Sections Nos. 142, 144, 145, Block IV., Waimate; R. O. Hendy: About 102 acres cultivated and laid down with mixed grasses. Balance of 214 acres cleared of fern and tutu, and surface sown with grasses. Land divided into eleven paddocks, with the best furzes in the district. Over 320 chains of bank and furze fences, and 98 chains of posts and wires. Sheep-dip, arsenic foot-trough, heavy stock-yard, sheds, small house, &c. Good land, but has no water on it, excepting in swamp next to Section 143. Value of improvements, about £790. Fair annual rental, unimproved, 5s. 6d. per acre.

“R. C. Hamerton, Esq., Public Trustee, Wellington.”

“G. F. ROBINSON, C.L.R.

3138. *Hon. the Chairman.*] Had you any connection with the confirmed leases?—I have never had any connection with the confirmed leases.

PARATENE NIKOREMA examined.

3139. *Mr. Sinclair.*] Where do you reside?—Waihi.

3140. What hapu do you belong to?—Ngatirawhirui.

3141. What reserves are you in?—Turangi and Waihi.

3142. Is any of your land leased?—Yes, portion of it is leased to a European.

3143. Who leased it?—Mr. Rennell.

3144. Is there much or little of this reserve leased?—The bulk of it—that is, the larger portion is leased.

3145. Did Mr. Rennell call you all together to arrange as to what portion should be leased?—No.

3146. Did you attend any meeting at which Mr. Rennell explained to you what was to be leased and what portion was to be retained by you?—I was present at a meeting with Mr. Rennell.

3147. Did the people at that meeting consent, or did any of them consent?—Not one agreed.

3148. Were they told that the law provided that the Public Trustee should lease the land?—Yes, we were told that, but we did not agree to it.

3149. Were you told that he might lease the land whether they—the Natives—consented or not?—Yes.

3150. Are you quite certain that none of them consented?—None of them agreed to it.

3151. What part did you take in the war that took place on the Coast?—I took the part of the Queen.

3152. Who did you serve under?—Mr. Parris.

3153. Who else?—Under Captain Good.

3154. Did the whole of your hapu serve under them?—Yes.

3155. Did the Government ever make a promise to you and the other Natives in connection with their loyalty?—Yes.

3156. Who made the promise—was it Sir George Grey or Mr. McLean, afterwards Sir Donald McLean?—The first was Governor Gore Brown; then Mr. McLean.

3157. And who afterwards?—Sir George Grey.

3158. Is it the wish of the whole of your people that they should retain control of their land?—Yes.

3159. Is that one of the reasons for sending you down here?—Yes.

3160. Do they believe that they are quite capable of managing the land themselves?—Yes.

3161. Do they think they could lease them?—Yes; there would be no trouble at all about it.

3162. *Mr. Rennell.*] Do you mean to say that I have not consulted you on all matters as the head of your particular hapu?—You did come and consult me, but I could never agree without the consent of my people.

3163. You have referred to a meeting where the question of leasing was discussed: did I not hold a second meeting at Te Kuiti?—Yes.

3164. Was it a general meeting, at which Ngatirawhiri were represented?—Yes, there was a number of the Ngatirawhiri present, but we did not agree to lease the land.

3165. But after the leasing, did we not hold a second meeting at Te Kuiti?—Yes; but we did not agree.

3166. When we met to define the interests on the block?—I did not know what your award would be; but the Maoris did not agree to it.

3167. Do you mean that they did not agree to my definition of the interests?—Some did not agree.

3168. Were the majority in favour of it?—Very few people agreed.

3169. Can you read and write?—I cannot read or write.

3170. How then can you manage to do all this business in regard to land?—There are many of my tribe who can read and write. It would be for the Court to say what should be done with the land.

3171. *Mr. Mackay.*] How many grantees are there in Ngatirawhiri—in the block of which you are chief?—I cannot remember, but no doubt Mr. Rennell could give you the information.

3172. Can you say within two or three?—I believe there are, in the block in which I am interested, forty-six or more.