

666. Were you in the Native Land Court when the appointment of successors to Taurua was made?—Yes; I was present.

667. Do you know who applied to be appointed successors?—Yes.

668. Did Mr. Williams apply?—No; Williams had not arrived there at that time, but some of the younger relatives of Taurua applied—his younger brother applied.

669. Did Williams apply to be appointed?—Yes; I heard that he had the administration of Taurua's will.

670. Do you trust Williams?—I had nothing to do with him; he was conducting matters for other persons.

671. I mean generally: do you trust Williams generally?—I believe myself he would be honest in some transactions, but I would not trust him in every transaction.

672. Do you know that he witnessed the agreement between Ross and Taurua about this acreage?—Yes; I did hear that he was a witness.

673. Why did you not ask Williams about it, if you knew that he was a witness?—I did speak to Williams about it.

674. You thought if Williams witnessed it it would be all right, did you?—No; I have already stated that I did not approve of it, because there was only one name in the paper; there were seventeen in the grant, and one man's name only in that agreement.

FRIDAY, 18TH JULY, 1890.

WIREMU NGAPAKI TE PURUKORA, of Whenuakura, examined.

675. *Mr. Levi.*] What tribe do you belong to?—Te Pukorokoro.

676. What position do you hold in the tribe?—I take part in the deliberations of the people; I am a director of the people; I sometimes act as their spokesman or delegate.

677. Are you in any of the Crown grants of the Native reserves?—Yes.

678. Are you joined in any leases?—Yes.

679. Do you take any prominent part in dealing with Native reserves?—Yes.

680. How long have you taken a prominent part?—I commenced to take an active part in these matters in 1873.

681. What leases did you sign to Europeans?—I signed four, one of which expired last year.

682. Tell us about the other three?—One was a lease to Pennington: it is now in the possession of Symes.

683. Which Symes?—Albert Symes (No. 17).

684. Any other?—Another is Walter Symes (No. 16). The other is William Wilson.

685. The fourth or remaining one?—That was a lease to Aksup; that is the one that has expired.

686. Do you remember the negotiations for these leases?—It is very long ago. I remember some of the negotiations; some of them I have forgotten.

687. Do you remember how the rents were fixed?—I know that with regard to Albert Symes we fixed it at 4s. an acre for the first period.

688. Did they consider that at the time a high or a low rent?—We thought that was a good rent, considering the improvements.

689. What do you mean by considering the improvements?—Because we understood that the Natives were to have the sole benefit of the improvements at the expiry of each lease.

690. Did that apply to all these leases?—In my opinion, that element was considered to be in all these leases.

691. What was the condition of Albert Symes's place at the time it was leased?—It was a very fertile piece of land; we had cultivated it from childhood: I myself had done so.

692. What had you done to it when you leased it?—We had felled and cleared some bush; we had planted potatoes; and sown grass-seed.

693. Had you any bush on it at the time?—Yes, there was bush on a portion of it.

694. What improvements have been made on the land since it was leased?—Certain fences have been erected.

695. What fences are they—furze-hedges?—Yes. There are some instances of wire-fencing, I believe, put up.

696. Have there been both boundary and dividing fences?—The side fronting the road has been fenced; the other portion has a river boundary, but there have been subdivision fences erected.

697. Have any of these fences been erected within the last six years?—All the furze-hedges were planted more than six years ago; but one wire fence has been erected within the last six years—within the last year.

698. What time last year?—I cannot state the month, but I know it was put up ("built") last year.

699. Was that before or after the arbitrators sat?—It was just about the time that the arbitrators sat.

700. What is the length of this wire fence?—I should think it is about 30 chains in length.

701. How many wires in it?—Seven.

702. Are there other improvements that were made in the land since, besides the fencing?—There are two houses on the land.

703. What kind of houses?—One is a shed, the other has been used as a dwelling-house; but I will explain about these houses: the dwelling-house was built by the first occupant; it has recently been added to by the present lessee.