

738. Any questions asked as to the full rent or the renting-value of the land?—No such question was asked me, but a question of that nature was asked of some of my companions.

739. Have you any complaint to make about the administration by the Public Trustee?—I blame the Public Trustee for his inability to collect the rents that are due to us for our land.

740. What rents were they?—Walter Symes has not paid for a year. I believe it is a year since he paid. There are many others whose rents are due, but whose names I do not recollect.

741. You mean that you had not received Walter Symes's rent?—That has not been paid to us for about a year.

TUTANGI WAIOMI examined.

742. *Mr. Levi.*] What tribe do you belong to?—I belong to the Ngatiruanui hapu.

743. Where do you live?—At Otoia, near Patea.

744. What position do you hold?—I am one of the representatives of my tribe—one of the directors of the tribe.

745. What Crown grants of Native reserves are you in?—I am in the Crown grant for Otoia.

746. Have you signed any leases to Europeans?—Yes.

747. What Europeans?—Major Turner and G. Pearce; but we first of all leased the land to William Cowan and another European named Johns.

748. Was it the whole land or a part?—We leased a portion of the large reserve.

749. Was it the part that Major Turner has or that Pearce has?—A portion of it was leased to Cowan, but Pearce has it now.

*Hon. the Chairman:* No. 8, 168 acres.

750. *Mr. Levi.*] Do you remember the negotiations for these leases?—Yes.

751. Had you a prominent part in these negotiations?—I had.

752. How were the rents for the land fixed?—We leased the land to Major Turner at 3s. an acre, on the understanding that the whole of the improvements were to come back to us.

753. What arrangement was made in regard to Pearce?—The same arrangement was made with Cowan, but the land subsequently went to Mr. Pearce.

754. What was the condition of the land leased to Turner at the time it was leased?—Some of the land was covered with grass; other portions were covered with bush.

755. Was the larger part the part covered with grass or with bush?—There were various portions covered with grass. There was wood in different places. I cannot say whether bush or grass embraced the larger proportion.

756. What improvements has Turner made since the granting of the lease to him?—Major Turner has since grown wheat on the land, and has sown rape and turnips.

757. Has he made any other improvements?—He has erected fences.

758. Were these fences extensive? Were they boundary-fences, or division fences, or what?—He has erected one subdivision fence, but no boundary-fence.

759. No fences round the land?—There is no fence put round the land; simply, there is a subdivision fence.

760. Are there any other improvements that Major Turner has made?—I shall make a sketch of fences that have been made. Major Turner cleared a portion of the small scrub on the block.

761. Did he cut any bush?—No.

762. Are there any buildings on the land?—There is a small house standing on the land. It is not so large as this room.

763. What is it used for?—The house is used occasionally as a sleeping-place by Major Turner's son, who comes there occasionally, sleeps there, and then goes away again.

764. When was this house put up?—Previous to 1880.

765. Have any of the fences been put up within the last six years?—No.

766. What was the condition of the land held by Pearce at the time when it was first leased?—One portion was covered with grass, having been a cultivation of our own; the other portion was covered with bush.

767. What improvements have been made since that time on the land?—That lessee felled the bush.

768. Any other improvements?—He sowed grass on the portion cleared.

769. How many acres did he clear?—I never measured the quantity he cleared; I cannot tell the Committee.

770. Was it a large portion or a small portion of it?—It is not a large portion at all.

771. Are there any fences on this land?—There is one fence on this land. It was erected by the Patea Johns, who was a partner or a companion of Cowan.

772. Where did the fence extend to?—This land is in the bend of the Patea River, and this fence runs across the bend.

773. Is it a boundary-fence?—It is one boundary of the portion leased to him.

774. Are there any dividing-fences?—No.

775. Are there any other improvements?—No.

776. No buildings?—No.

777. Was that the only improvement?—A small piece of bush has been cut down, and part of it is sown in grass, and this boundary-fence. These are all.

778. How long ago were these improvements made?—The fence was erected in the year 1880, and the bit of bush was cleared shortly afterwards. The rest of the bush was cleared shortly before the Arbitration Court was held.

779. Was that a large piece?—I cannot give the area, but it is probably larger than the site of the whole of these Parliamentary Buildings. It may not be larger, but perhaps it is larger.

780. Has Major Turner or Pearce at any time renewed this or other of these leases?—They did make an application to me.