

and he proposed to go and see Hiko. I informed him that Hiko had been sent for, but had not come. Mr. Maunsell went to the Waitapu, where Hiko was, to fetch him, and promised to return if Hiko would attend the meeting, but neither of them came. Hiko explained his action afterwards to us. Mr. Maunsell, on his return to Greytown, put a notice in the newspaper that the lake had been acquired, and invited the settlers to attend a dinner at Te Waihenga to celebrate the circumstance, but we put a notice in the paper contradicting it, and nothing came of Mr. Maunsell's invitation. In 1881 Hiko invited us to go to his place; self and others of the Rakaiwakairi hapu were invited to Tawhitinui, where he was then living. He told us then that the sale of the lake was not made by him, and that he had cautioned Hemi before going to Wellington that if they were urged by the Government to sell the lake they were not to consent, but on their arrival at Wellington, when overtures were made to them to sell, Hemi te Miha was the first to consent. Hiko then said to us that we should be united in objecting to the sale of the lake, because it was Hemi who had consented against the wishes of the people. In the same year as this conversation took place, we applied to the Native Land Court to consider our claim. The cause that led Hiko to sell the lake was through jealousy against Raniera te Iho. Mr. R. Barton was authorised before Mr. Maunsell. He interviewed the Natives in 1872, with a view to effect an arrangement to open the lake. He spoke to self and Raniera te Iho on the subject, and we made it known to the meeting at Te Waitapu. The Rakaiwakairi were present, and amongst them were Hiko and Hemi te Miha. The meeting decided that it was not advisable to sell the mouth of the lake. We did not go to Hiko about the matter. Afterwards Mr. Wardell was authorised to negotiate with the Natives for opening the lake. He convened a meeting of the Rakaiwakairi hapu at Featherston; Hiko, Hemi, Manihera, and Hohaia were present. Self and Raniera te Iho were absent at Wanganui. Raniera returned in time to be present at the latter end of the meeting, but I was too late. The meeting decided that the mouth of the lake should not be disposed of. Mr. Maunsell did not consult us before the sale was made by Hiko. Raniera, self, and others did not know that Hiko and Hemi had sold the lake. The people were much annoyed at not being consulted. No chief or other person had a right to open the lake, or consent to it being opened. Hiko's right over the lake was not superior to that of others. Each hapu and their chiefs had the right over their respective localities. There were several Courts held about the lake. It was in 1881 that the Government claimed the lakes before the Native Land Court. Hiko and others were present. After the claim was called on, I applied on behalf of the Natives that our claim should be withdrawn. The solicitor for the Government then applied that the claim should be dealt with on the Government application. Judge Brookfield asked the solicitor to state the nature of the Government claim, and was informed that Government had bought the interest of seventeen persons in the lake. The Court consented to hear the Government claim, and the Judge pointed out that it conflicted with the Treaty of Waitangi. The Judge consented to grant an adjournment on the application of the solicitor, to enable the question of jurisdiction to be submitted to the Supreme Court. The Judge recommended the Natives to employ a solicitor, and Sir Robert Stout was retained by Raniera te Iho, but I am not aware what took place afterwards. The old mark of the awapuni can be seen on all the blocks, both Turakirae and Turanganui. We consider all the land below high-water mark belong to us. The low-lying land in the Turanganui Block is a large block. The settlers have possession of it, and also of the same class of land in the Turakirae Block. The largest area is on the east side of the lake. I know the parts that are covered with water; it is all good land, and is not much damaged through being submerged by the waters of the lake. The land, when flooded by the lake, is not fertilised by it, but it is by the river flood, which deposits a silt. Hiko told me that the balance of £500 in his possession should be distributed amongst all the persons interested in the sale (*hei korero nui tera nana*). The Natives never consented to sanction Hiko's sale. The reason why the Natives do not desire the lake to be opened is that it is necessary that it should be flooded to bring the eels out of the other lagoons, and places inland where they resort. The eels are attracted by the smell of the salt water to go down to the bottom of the lower lake next the sea, and the Natives can tell when fishing where the different kinds of eels come from.

*Edward S. Maunsell* (sworn): I live at Te Waihakeke. Was formerly the Government Agent in the Wairarapa district. While I was acting in that capacity I was instructed by the Government to try to negotiate with the Natives to acquire the lakes. Do not remember the date correctly, but think it was in 1874 that Manihera Rangitakaiwaho asked me to go to Wellington to see Sir Donald McLean, not about the Wairarapa Lake alone, but about Moroa and other matters in which he was concerned. At a previous interview at Sir Donald McLean's house, at which Manihera was present, he requested me to undertake the acquisition of the Native fishery-rights in the lake. After self and Manihera returned to the Wairarapa, I met him a few days afterwards at Papawai about the lake question. Manihera told me that he had spoken to Hiko about selling the lake, and suggested that I should see Hiko about it, and obtain his consent to sell the lake, as Hiko's consent would be accepted. I went to the Waitapu, and met Hiko there, and asked him if he would sell the lake to the Government. He declined at the time, and remarked that he could not entertain the proposal then until the boundary of Pukio was settled between the Government and the Natives. I reported the result of my interview with Hiko to the Government, and the next time I saw him he expressed a wish to go to Wellington with Hemi te Miha about Pukio, to see Sir Donald McLean. Mr. Clarke, the Under-Secretary, wrote suggesting that four representatives of the Natives should go with me to Wellington to represent the lake question, and Government would pay the expense. Manihera Rangitakaiwaho suggested that himself and Komene Piharau should represent one section of the owners of the lake and Hiko suggested that himself and Hemi Miha should represent the other section. We all proceeded to Wellington, and met at Mr. Halse's office. I had a meeting with the Natives at the Native Hostelry, when Hiko gave his consent to the sale of the lake. I told Manihera that Hiko had consented to sell the lake, and upon that they asked me to obtain £20 to spend in Wellington, and the money was paid them