

287. Well, then, what followed upon that?—He said they would see me through it, or something to that effect.

288. But what was he to see you through?—The consequences of this affair, whatever they might be. They did not seem to be very much at the time; at least, they did not seem to me to be much.

289. What was it he was to see you through?—All the expenses and everything that might happen in connection with this, seeing that they were merely using my name. That is what I understood.

290. Did he say so?—He led me to understand that.

291. Tell us what it was that led you to understand that?—I cannot tell you more than I have told you. He said that they would see me through it; that it was all right; and they would see me through it. As far as I can remember, those were the words.

292. You said, "Well, I hope it is all right, that there is nothing 'crooked' about it;" and he said it was all right, that they would see you through it?—Yes.

293. You said before that Mr. Henderson said he would see you through it?—Oh, I do not remember the words—"he" or "we." I looked upon Mr. Henderson as the manager of the National Mortgage and Agency Company.

294. Then, it was not Mr. Ritchie who was to see you through it, nor Mr. Henderson?—I do not know really who was to see me through it. I did not consider it at the time. I saw Mr. Henderson as the manager of the National Mortgage and Agency Company. I certainly did not think it was a private piece of business of Mr. Henderson's.

295. Only you told us that Mr. Henderson said he would see you through it, and now you do not know whether he said he would or the company would?—I think the word generally used was "we."

296. You had not seen Mr. Ritchie, so "we" could not have meant Mr. Ritchie?—I do not know that it could.

297. You understood somebody was to see you through it, and did not know who?—Oh yes; the National Mortgage and Agency Company. That is what I understood.

298. What did you mean by asking whether there was anything "crooked" about it? What did you expect could be "crooked" about such a transaction?—I merely wanted an assurance from them that they were not asking me to do anything illegal. I never thought that they would do so.

299. And they have not done so, have they?—Not as far as I know.

300. You know anybody may buy a run in his own name if they like?—I do not know.

301. There is no declaration required to be made on the purchase of a run?—I really do not know.

302. You did not make one?—I signed something. I do not know what it was.

303. And you did not care, I suppose?—Yes.

304. You were quite indifferent then, and are quite indifferent now, as to what you signed?—Yes.

305. And you signed everything, in point of fact, that you were asked to sign?—Yes.

306. But you knew you were taking the responsibility of this run on your shoulders?—I did not know that at all. I considered the National Mortgage Company responsible.

307. When you signed the lease of the run in your own name, do you mean to tell us you did not know you assumed responsibility?—I assumed that I was acting as agent for the National Mortgage and Agency Company, and I considered they were good enough. I never gave the matter much thought, as a matter of truth—I mean as to risk.

308. Did you read the lease before you signed it?—No.

309. Did you go yourself, or did anybody take you?—I went myself. I asked Mr. Henderson where I was to go to, and he told me to the Land Office.

310. Did not you get an intimation yourself where you were to go to?—I do not think so.

311. Did not you get a letter from the Crown Lands Office, Christchurch?—If I did do so I took it to Mr. Henderson. I do not say I did not get one; but if I did I took it to Mr. Henderson, as I took everything.

312. As you got an intimation direct yourself as to where the sale was to be, the other intimation would also be addressed to you. Can you tell us what it said?—The intimation? I really could not say I received it.

313. How could you, then, say you had taken it over?

*His Honour*: Anything he got he took over.

*Mr. Chapman*: It is most likely to have been sent direct to Mr. Henderson, because another communication was. Mr. Bacon's telegram—

314. *Mr. Haggitt*.] Then, you do not know whether you got an intimation or not, but if you did you took it to Mr. Henderson. You told Mr. Henderson you were going to the Land Office, and Mr. Henderson told you where the Land Office was?—If I did receive that letter which you say I received—[*Mr. Haggitt*: I did not say so]—I thought you did say I must have received the letter—if I did, I went over to Mr. Henderson. I did not know where to go to sign the lease without inquiring, and I must have received the information where to go from somebody, and to the best of my knowledge and belief it was from Mr. Henderson.

315. You are not even sure of that now?—No, I am not; but, if you have the letter, I can be sure. If I received the letter I went to Mr. Henderson with it first.

316. If you took the letter to Mr. Henderson, you asked Mr. Henderson where the office was; and, if you asked Mr. Henderson where the office was, Mr. Henderson told you?—Yes.

317. At all events, the thing you did was to go to the Land Office, and sign the lease there?—Yes.

318. Did you ever ask the company for the remuneration you were promised for signing this lease?—Never.