

30. *Mr. Wright.*] I understood from the Chairman that you were requested to give the Committee the matter bearing on Mr. Rhodes's scrip?—There is nothing more to say on that. There is a telegram from Mr. Elliott to Mr. Williams, dated 2nd December, 1879 [read, marked "A"].

31. Any other?—There is one from Mr. Elliott to Mr. Baker, dated the 2nd December, 1889 [read, marked "B"]; another, from Mr. Whyte to Mr. Baker, dated the 3rd December, 1889 [read, marked "C"]; a telegram, dated the 6th December, 1889, from Mr. Williams to Mr. Elliott [read, marked "D"]; a telegram, dated the 7th December, 1889, from Mr. Whyte to Mr. Baker [read, marked "E"]; a telegram, dated the 7th December, 1889, from Mr. Baker to Mr. Whyte, [read, marked "F"]; a memorandum, dated 13th December, 1889, from Mr. Elliott to Mr. Baker [read, marked "G"]; a telegram, dated the 18th December, 1889, from Mr. Elliott to Mr. Williams [read, marked "H"]; a telegram, dated the 18th December, 1889, from Mr. Williams to Mr. Elliott [read, marked "I"]; a telegram, dated the 19th December, 1889, from Mr. Elliott to the Receiver of Land Revenue, Christchurch [read, marked "K"].

The *Hon. the Premier*: I may state that this is a very important communication.

*Witness*: A telegram dated the 19th December, 1889, from Mr. Williams to Mr. Elliott [read, marked "L"]; a telegram dated the 21st December, 1889, from Mr. Whyte to Mr. Baker [read, marked "M"]; a telegram, not dated, probable date 23rd December, 1889, from Mr. Baker to Mr. Elliott [read, marked "N"]; a telegram, dated the 23rd December, 1889, from Mr. Baker to Mr. Whyte [read, marked NA]; a telegram, dated the 24th December, 1889, from Mr. Whyte to Mr. Baker [read, marked "O"]; a telegram, dated the 24th December, 1889, from Mr. Whyte to Mr. Baker [read, marked "P"]; a telegram, dated the 24th December, 1889, from Mr. Elliott to Mr. Baker [read, marked "Q"]; a telegram, dated the 24th December, 1889, from Mr. Baker to Mr. Whyte [read, marked "R"]; a memorandum, dated the 24th December, 1889, from Mr. Baker to the Manager of the Bank of New Zealand, Christchurch, [read, marked "S"]; a telegram, dated the 27th December, 1889, from Mr. Whyte to Mr. Baker [read, marked "T"]; a telegram, dated the 28th December, 1889, from Mr. Baker to Mr. Whyte [read, marked "TA"]; a memorandum, dated the 17th June, 1890, from Mr. Elliott to Mr. Baker [read, marked "U"].

*Mr. Tanner*: Read the statement of the 17th June, 1890. It seems to me that, after all these irregularities, there should come up somewhere definite instructions.

32. *Sir R. Stout.*] Is there any correspondence between the Auditor in Christchurch and the department here?—I think there is something in relation to Mr. Wason's scrip. The Under-Secretary would have all the papers with all the connecting links in.

*Mr. Tanner*: I should very much like to have that letter of the 17th June, 1890, read again. [Letter read.]

33. The *Hon. the Premier.*] Do you produce the correspondence with the Auditor-General on the surcharge to Williams?—No; that is in the Auditor-General's office. I have no access to it. I am not an officer of the Audit Department.

34. *Mr. A. E. G. Rhodes.*] The scrip was good in Auckland, was it not, at the time it was issued?—Yes; your scrip was good for Auckland.

35. I am only speaking of my scrip?—Yes; it was good.

36. Could the balance have been sent back to Auckland after the taking of the £500 limit?—Yes.

37. How long before any objection was taken to them by the Government, or any objection to Mrs. Rhodes using them?—About May, 1892. It had been examined and passed as correct. It was only other discoveries that led up to this.

38. Had it become bad?—Yes, that scrip became unusable two years after the date of issue; the scrip is dated the 28th January, 1890. I presume it became invalid on 29th January, 1892, that is, two years afterwards. When I discovered the irregularity the scrip was dead. Mr. Barron, of the Lands Office, can give you the whole of the information that is obtainable on the subject.

39. *Mr. Wright.*] I should like to know whether the original reports by Baker and Williams, on the Rhodes case, are in this correspondence?—No. The Under-Secretary, with all the papers on the subject, will be here presently; he has all the office correspondence.

Mr. A. E. G. RHODES examined.

*Witness*: I can only say that the only scrip transaction I ever had was this: that when requested by the Hon. Mr. Whyte to buy certain scrip, I refused to do so unless it could be clearly shown that the scrip was good. Mr. Whyte was aware from the newspapers that certain of my friends had been buying land. He asked me if I would use scrip. I said I had no objection, provided the department held that it was correct.

40. *Sir Robert Stout.*] What is the date?—That was the commencement of February, 1891, just after the appointment of the present Ministers. The scrip was posted to the Bank of New Zealand, and Mr. Whyte drew upon me for the money.

41. What date was that?—It would be about the commencement of February.

42. *Sir John Hall.*] What followed after that—having refused, unless the department certified that the scrip was correct?—I beg your pardon; I am wrong. I will give you the exact date. Mrs. Jessy Rhodes was purchasing Government land for cash, and must have made this application at the end of January, 1891. They were about to sail for England. It was on the 9th February that Mr. Whyte telegraphed to me to the effect, "Have you received scrip: is purchase completed?"

43. Had you any communication with the Land Office?—I had no communication with the Land Office as yet. He told me he had sent the scrip, and he wished to know if I had received it. I telegraphed back to him. The land-orders then arrived. It was on the 9th February that he drew on me; and I borrowed scrip from the Bank of New Zealand and applied to the Commissioner.

44. *Sir R. Stout.*] What is the date of the draft?—I do not know. It was on the 11th February that I paid Mr. J. H. Latham's, the gentleman who drew on me through the Bank of New