

proceedings in No. 32 at pp. 68, 70, are in themselves confirmatory of the withdrawal of 305E, and they show that the claimants eventually were allowed 24,259 acres, which was divided equally among them. Webster and his partners subsequently, 1st January, 1845 (p. 85), mortgaged their respective shares to Robert Campbell and Andrew Blowers Smith, and (p. 86) the whole eventually came to one W. S. Graham. This land had apparently (p. 68) cost the three adventurers £10 in cash, and in goods £57 15s., or £190 5s. if these were counted as in other cases at three times Sydney prices. The fact is not, however, expressly stated.

51. Of the 101,800 acres above mentioned, one claim, Piako, 305K, stands for 80,000 acres. This claim has been found on examination to represent a genuine purchase of only 7,500 acres (p. 82). Another claim, Point Rodney, 305G, stands for 10,000 acres. The Commissioners allowed 1,944 acres, but the Natives, whose evidence was not taken, denied the purchases afterwards, and Mr. Dacre never obtained possession (p. 73). A third claim, Mercury Island, 305J, stands for 6,000 acres, but Webster could only prove (p. 63) purchases of two small pieces of the island. Some 80,000 acres in respect of these three must therefore be written off the 101,800 acres.

52. The remaining five claims for 5,500 acres were allowed to the extent of 3,037 acres, three early ones, 305, 305A, 305C in full; two later ones, 305B, 305I, to the amount of about one-third of the quantity claimed. The appendices to the enclosure to this letter give the results of the whole inquiry conveniently in a tabulated form.

53. It is evident that, with the approach of annexation, land speculation became more reckless, and the documents presented to the Natives for signature became more and more inconsistent with the actual transactions. Of the purchases above mentioned, the Commissioners' allowances were as follows:—

305B.	November, 1839.	Of 1,500 acres claimed, only	550 acres were allowed.
305G.	May, 1839.	Of 10,000	" 1,944 "
305J.	May, 1839.	Of 6,000	" two small pieces were allowed.
305K.	December, 1839.	Of 80,000	" 12,674 acres were allowed.

54. This last, Piako, is the most remarkable case of all; it is dated the 31st December, 1839: the map (p. 114) alleges a purchase of 120,000 acres; the quantity actually claimed was 80,000; the whole block was found on survey to contain 18,000 acres, the Commissioners were only able to allow 12,674 acres. The Natives would never admit that Webster had purchased more than 7,500 acres, and the Government had to make good the difference to the grantee, by purchasing the requisite land (pp. 82, 94, 95, 96, and p. 20 of appendices to the enclosure in this letter). Similarly the 1,944 acres allowed in 305G were claimed by the Natives (p. 93), and Mr Dacre had to be compensated with land-scrip at 15s. an acre. Again, in 305I, the Government had to complete the transaction by a payment of £300 (p. 79); in this case (p. 78) Webster promised the Natives a schooner in consideration of their admitting his claims before the Court; but, having subsequently regained possession of the vessel under pretence of repairing her, it was never afterwards returned to them.

55. In view of the careful investigation of his claims by the Commissioners, and of their review by the Governor in Council and by Commissioner FitzGerald, and the increase of the original awards (p. 71, 72) to 41,924 acres, it is curious to find it stated in the Senate Report of 1887 that (p. 109) he has had no day in Court, and (p. 110) that he never got an acre of land in New Zealand.

56. As the rule limiting grants to 2,560 acres was enforced against British subjects, but was relaxed in favour of Webster and his assigns, and one or two others (see paragraph 10 of Sir R. Stout's opinion enclosed in this letter), the fact that he was treated with exceptional liberality will no doubt now be admitted.

57. But it is unnecessary to go further into details; the tabulated results of the inquiry show that in every claim, except those which were withdrawn or disallowed, the whole or part of the land was allowed to Webster and those who had bought from him, and these with the foregoing observations should suffice to satisfy any reasonable person that so much of his claim as was genuine was given in his favour half a century ago.

I am, &c.

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