

113. *The Chairman.*] Do you say that that is a true and accurate account of the statement made by Mr. Sherwood, Mr. Skinner?—Yes, sir.

114. Did Mr. Sherwood make any reference to a man named Williams as having been a partner in this contract?—No. He said the name of Williams had been mentioned, but it had nothing whatever to do with the contract.

115. Williams had nothing to do with the contract?—Nothing to do with the actual working. He did not take part in the actual work in the bush—scrubbing or felling.

116. How did Sherwood say he had been paid—by cheque?—After the money was debited for the stores he was paid the balance. The total amount came to £25, but out of that had to be stopped the amount of the stores; then he received the balance.

117. *Hon. Mr. Duncan.*] What was the reference he made to Williams—that Williams had nothing to do with the contract?—Williams's name was mentioned by Sherwood, and he said Williams had nothing to do with it.

118. How is it that the contract submitted by Mr. Walsh is signed by Williams?—I do not know.

*Mr. Witty:* It has not been submitted; we have not seen it.

119. *Mr. Ell.*] Sherwood said that Williams did not take any part in the work?—That he had taken no part in the work.

120. Who did he say worked with him in doing the underscrubbing?—Walsh's son was his mate.

121. And nobody else?—Nobody else. That was Sherwood's statement to me.

122. *Mr. Laurenson.*] Did that £25 that they were paid cover Walsh's son's work?—It covered his own and his mate's—Walsh's son's—work. It was the total sum received for the work done on the subdivision of Rotokare.

123. Were they working under a contract, or by the hour?—At so-much an hour. There was no contract. Sherwood distinctly mentioned that.

*Hon. Mr. Duncan:* I would like to ask Mr. Walsh a question. This document that I have here reads, "Eltham, 30th August, 1904.—This is to certify that I took a contract from John Walsh of 112 acres, more or less, on the Rotokare Reserve, at £1 per acre, and I took Joe Sherwood and Tom Walsh as partners.—J. WILLIAMS." How is it that this was written on the 30th August, 1904?

*Mr. Symes:* Mr. Walsh explained that he got all the letters that he has produced this morning signed recently—he just got them the other day when he was coming down.

*Hon. Mr. Duncan:* He did not get any signed before?

*Mr. Symes:* No. He just got those to show that he had paid the accounts and that he let the contract.

124. *Mr. Witty.*] Did you see Mr. Walsh's son, Mr. Skinner?—No.

*Mr. Walsh:* In this report of his Mr. Skinner says that Sherwood told him I gave him (Sherwood) a cheque on the Bank of New Zealand, Eltham. Well, now, I assure you, gentlemen, that I never had an account at the Bank of New Zealand, Eltham, and therefore the statement must be entirely wrong. I think that in itself is sufficient to show that these men, if they gave Mr. Skinner this statement and the other statements, must have been either playing with me or with Mr. Skinner.

*Mr. Witty:* Where is Williams to be found?

*Mr. Walsh:* I could not tell you.

*Mr. Witty:* But you have seen him recently—to get that document dated the 30th August.

*Mr. Walsh:* He met me at the sale at Eltham.

*The Chairman:* Will you get your bank-book made up to date, and send it along?

*Mr. Walsh:* Yes.

*Hon. Mr. Duncan:* Signed by the manager?

*Mr. Walsh:* I suppose if he makes it up it does not make any difference who signs it.

*Hon. Mr. Duncan:* If you tell him what you want it for he will sign it as being correct to date?

*Mr. Walsh:* Yes.

THURSDAY, 20TH OCTOBER, 1904.

Mr. JOSEPH SHERWOOD examined on oath. (No. 3.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your name?—Joseph Sherwood.

2. What is your occupation, Mr. Sherwood?—I am a labourer, a sawyer, or anything—anything going.

3. Where are you residing?—I am on the Whenuakura works, above Eltham, in the Whenuakura Valley Road, coming down from the works towards Eltham.

4. *Mr. Symes.*] Not the Turakina Valley?—Yes, I think so.

5. *The Chairman.*] Do you know John Walsh?—Yes.

6. Where you employed by him? Was it two years or eighteen months ago?—I think we started on the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd June—that is, twelve months ago last June.

7. Will you tell the Committee the nature of the bargain between yourself and Walsh?—I beg pardon. I do not understand.

8. Well, what did Walsh ask you to do—what sort of work?—Felling bush.

9. Where?—At Rotokare Lake.

10. How many acres?—I think it was about 112, though I cannot swear for certain.

11. About 112 acres?—Yes.

12. Was there any contract between you and Walsh?—Yes, between my partner and Walsh. My partner signed the contract—that is to say, he was one of my partners.