

48. Then Mr. Walsh interviewed you?—I called on purpose to see whether the mistake would make any difference.

49. And you interviewed Mr. Walsh as to the statement you had made?—Not altogether. I only asked him whether it would make any difference.

50. You wanted Mr. Walsh's opinion whether it would make any difference whether you told the truth or not?—No; whether it would make any difference if I said I was paid by cheque or the correct way that I was paid.

51. But why should you ask a question of that kind?—I am not often in town. I am a bushman. A bushman does not go to town frequently, and I made this statement unthinkingly—

52. Mr. Sherwood, you are making a most extraordinary statement. What can one do with a man who says one thing to one man and another thing to another?—I did not say one thing to one man and another thing to another.

53. You have acknowledged it?—I acknowledge that I made a mistake; but as soon as I made the mistake and knew what it meant I acknowledged it.

54. Surely you have a little memory, Mr. Sherwood?—Yes, I have.

55. It was a mistake with regard to the fact?—Yes.

56. You told one man you were paid in cash, and then afterwards you say you were paid by cheque?—No; I told this man that I was paid by cheque. I told the man who overhauled me that I was paid by cheque.

57. How much bush did you fall?—That is more than I can say. I never measured it.

58. Can you tell whether it was over an acre?—The bushfalling—not the scrub-cutting. We were there two half-days bushfalling.

59. How long were you at work with Williams and young Walsh?—I cannot tell you.

60. Cannot you say whether it was a week or a month?—We did not work properly; we thought that the Government—

61. What was the whole amount of money that you received from Walsh for your work?—I received from Walsh altogether for work £21.

62. Twenty-one pounds?—Yes, £21.

63. And how much did your partners receive?—I do not know.

64. There was no division between you and your partners?—No; no division whatever. I do not know what his son got or what the other man got.

65. You are sure that you were working with Williams and that it was a partnership job?—Yes.

66. Did you not say in the first instance that you were simply employed by Walsh, and that you had Walsh's son at work with you?—No.

*The Chairman:* I think the report to the Commissioner of Crown Lands had better be read. [The Clerk then read "Report of Result of Mr. Skinner's Inquiries to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, New Plymouth.]"

67. You have heard that statement, Mr. Sherwood: can you say whether it is correct or not?—A portion of it is correct, and portions of it I never made use of.

68. Will you mention the portions that you did not make use of?—I did not make use of the words that I was working for wages.

69. But you have just told the Committee that you have made a mistake—that you did make use of those words?—I meant a mistake in the way I was paid by cheque or by notes.

70. Did you not tell the Committee a few minutes ago that you stated you were working by the hour?—I said that I may have said so off-handed.

71. What is the difference?—The mistake was not made in that way. I said I got about a shilling an hour.

72. Did you tell him the amount you were paid, the amount you received between yourself and your mate, Walsh? Did you tell him the amount you received was £25?—Between the two?

73. Yes, between the two?—No.

74. Did you say that you received £25 yourself?—I said that I received £21 after paying all store expenses.

75. Did you say no stores were paid for by Walsh?—No.

76. Then, do you say that Walsh paid Taylor your account for stores?—He must have.

77. If Taylor says he did nothing of the kind, have you anything to say to that?—Well, as long as he does not bill me it is all right.

78. Then you say now you do not know whether Walsh paid for your stores or not?—I think the little things we had from Taylor were put in Walsh's account.

79. In this interview that you had with Mr. Skinner—the man who interviewed you—did you refer to more than one mate that you had?—Yes, I said there were three men in the contract.

80. You told him that?—Yes, I told him that.

81. You did not tell him that the work was simply done by Walsh and yourself?—I said that the other man was not much good at the work, and he was not.

82. *Mr. Witty.* Have the Government paid you for that three weeks yet?—No, I told Mr. Skinner to pay Mr. Walsh, because he must take into account the money he paid me for the time I was hanging about the place waiting.

83. If so, at what rate would he be paying you by the hour?—I think Mr. Walsh has paid me about a shilling an hour.

84. Including the three weeks?—Yes.

85. Then, you do not expect it from the Government as well?—No. I told him to pay Mr. Walsh.

86. The three of you have been paid £75?—I do not know about the others.

87. How much underscrubbing was done?—I cannot say. I never measured it.

88. But you must have a rough idea?—I could not say. We were not going on straightforwardly. There was the cattle running about, and we could not go straight on with the work.

89. Was that in the contract?—No, he simply came and asked us to allow the cattle through the bush, and to scrub a bit here or there.

90. But, surely, you must have some idea as to the area? Did you scrub the half of it?—I think we must have done more than that.