

PENI TE UAMAIRANGI examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] Where do you live?—At Te Waipatu, near Hastings.
2. Do you work on your land?—Yes; I do farming and other things.
3. Do you know that Mr. Ngata, a member of the House of Representatives and a member of this Commission, has asked you to come here to give evidence?—Yes, a policeman informed me of that fact at 7 o'clock last evening.
4. How long have you been in this district?—From my birth. I do not know my age.
5. Was Mr. Williams here when you were born?—He had not yet come. I was born before his arrival.
6. Do you remember the time when Mr. Williams came here?—Yes.
7. Do you remember the school being started at Te Aute?—Yes.
8. Did you attend that school?—No. I was educated at Otaki School.
9. Do you wish to make any statement on behalf of the Maoris?—In the year 1851 I returned from Waikato, where I had been to bring back some of our people who had been taken prisoners in war in former years. I went to Mangere, near Onehunga, for them in the year 1851, and I returned in the following year, and brought back thirty prisoners. When I arrived here Mr. Williams arrived also, and he asked the Natives here to give him children to take to Otaki School. I consented to go to school, and I went to Otaki.
10. How many went with you to school?—There were fourteen males and one girl. When I use the word "children" I mean we were well-grown lads and young men. We arrived at Otaki, and in the following year, in 1853, Mr. Williams returned to Hawke's Bay, and brought me with him. In 1854 Mr. Williams brought all the Hawke's Bay people back from the Otaki School. I left Mr. Williams and the other Hawke's Bay people at Te Aute, and came on to my own kainga at Waitangi. It was at that time that Te Aute was handed over by my parents and grandparents for a college to teach the children. I cannot tell you the month of the year, but I know Te Aute was handed over for the benefit of the children.
11. Were you present at any meeting when the Natives stated for what purpose the land was given?—The principal reason that I heard why Te Aute was given was that it might be a kainga, or place at which the children could be educated; that they had given this piece of land to be a permanent place for a school. I may say that during the time that Karaitiana was a member of Parliament the Natives sent a petition asking that the land should be returned to them. It was the Te Aute people who objected and who sent the petition, but out of consideration for Mr. Williams, and owing to the fact that the land had been given by their grandparents, who were dead, they did not follow the petition up, and it came to nothing.
12. Did you sign the petition?—I do not think so. I do not remember.
13. Why did they want the land given back at that time?—I do not quite know what the grounds of the petition were.
14. Was there a school there then?—Yes.
15. Were the Natives satisfied with the school?—Yes.
16. The children were being taught?—Yes, they were well taught.
17. Who was teaching them at the school?—I cannot tell you.
18. Who was farming the land?—It was being used by Mr. Williams for farming, and for growing sheep and cattle.
19. Do you know to whom the Natives intended to give the land—to the Queen, or to anybody else?—They gave it to Mr. Williams himself. He was the man they gave the land to.
20. Was any condition attached to the gift?—All I know is that the principal condition attached to the giving of the land was that it was given to maintain the children at the school.
21. Have the Natives had any complaints to find about the way in which the school has been carried on?—Yes; I have heard some objections. One objection is that when they have sent the local children there—the children of the donors of the land—they have found the school all taken up with children from other districts, and that there was no room for their children. I have heard grumbling at that.
22. What did the Natives wish their children to be taught at that school?—They did not know anything about this technical education. That is a thing that has only recently sprung up.
23. When the land was first given was there anything said about what the children were to be taught?—Yes, that they were to be educated to be like Europeans. All I heard was that they were to go to school and learn the knowledge of the Pakehas, and to become like Pakehas.
24. Did you hear anything about them being taught to make garments out of wool?—Yes; they were to be taught weaving garments, and blacksmithing, and carpentering, and all other trades.
25. Have you heard it has been said it would be better to cut the estate up into farms: have you or the people you have been talking to any opinion on that subject?—Yes, I have heard that mentioned recently. I do not know whether it would be a good thing or a bad thing.
26. Do the Natives know about the leases which were given to the Archdeacon?—Yes, we heard about them in recent times.
27. You know he was paying rent for the estate?—Yes, that is what was told to us.
28. Do you know the rent that has been paid?—No.
29. Have you ever heard the Natives complaining in any way about the granting of leases to the Archdeacon?—Yes; I have heard the Maoris asking to be informed as to the amount of rent paid.
30. Have they ever applied to the trustees or to the Archdeacon for particulars?—No; I do not think we did that.
31. Did you ever seek information from the persons who could give it?—No.