

That this solicitor then fraudulently alleged that he had bought the property for himself, and not as solicitor for me, although he had charged me in the bill of costs for his services in purchasing for me, and was to receive a large bonus as well.

That in consequence of this dishonesty many years of litigation followed, with which your honourable House is not concerned.

That Flower was held guilty of misfeasance by the High Court, and ordered to pay a large sum of money by way of a fine.

That in 1904, in an action by your petitioner in the King's Bench Division for slander of title, a compromise was arrived at by which the property was to be handed over to me by the holder of the legal estate, Wickham Flower, upon the payment of stipulated sums of money. That I did not carry out this compact, and a further compact was made in 1906. This compact I also failed to carry out.

That these failures were in consequence of Wickham Flower having in 1894 procured a fraudulent report upon the value of the estate, and also, in dispute of my title, maliciously distributed these reports over London for the express purpose of preventing, and did prevent, my dealing with the estate; a fact that was clearly exposed in the London journal *Truth* of the 23rd June, 1898, and never denied by Flower. That after Flower's death in September, 1904, and during the term of the compromises before mentioned, I discovered in 1907 that the mischief done by the malicious reports of 1894 had followed the property, and, further, that these false reports were again repeated by the solicitors to the executors and others connected, I believe, with the Flower side. The consequence was that I was prevented from dealing with the property, and the executors became the owners of it by putting the mortgage up for sale at New Plymouth on the 10th August, 1907, and buying it in at £1 over the mortgage sum. There was no outside bidding, although there was ample money in Taranaki. The people were aware of the difficulties as to title.

That during the litigation in England, when Flower was held guilty of misfeasance in claiming the estate, the same decision held him to be a trustee for me of the property, with a mortgage of his own over it. At his death the executors stood in his position. There was no other trustee appointed.

That, finding my dealings had been thwarted by the circulation of the false reports, I consulted counsel, who advised that such dishonest conduct would be held by the Court to annul the compacts, and further advised me to enter an action for redemption and accounts. That an action was so commenced in the Chancery Division, but, Mr. Justice Parker having expressed his doubts as to the jurisdiction being in England, I allowed the action to lapse, and came to the Dominion for the purpose of recommencing it here.

That on the 1st November, 1907, Flower's executors had a motion before the Court to strike the action out, upon the ground that it was frivolous; but Mr. Justice Parker decided that it was not frivolous, and ordered it to proceed, leaving the question of jurisdiction to stand over for the moment.

That after my return to the Dominion in February, 1908, I lodged caveat over the property preparatory to commencing the action for redemption as advised in England. That the Court of Appeal in Wellington, on the 20th July, 1908, ordered the removal of caveat at the instance of a Mr. Hermann Lewis, prohibited me entering the intended action upon the ground that it would be frivolous, and refused me leave to appeal to the Privy Council. I would state that the President of the Court was Sir R. Stout.

That Hermann Lewis is a gentleman whose name, between Messrs. Travers and Campbell, the local agents for Flower's executors, and the firm of Messrs. Findlay and Dalziel combined, has been placed on the Land Transfer Register as owner of the Mokau property without any consideration having passed hands or security being given, he having, on the 12th June, 1908, gone through a form of purchase at £14,000, and mortgaged it back to the executors from whom he purchased the same day for the same amount of £14,000—a dummy transaction, in fact.

That upon the date of the registration of the alleged purchase and mortgage by Hermann Lewis, 12th June, 1908, there was then caveat lodged over the property. I humbly submit that there was irregularity in these acts of registration that should be inquired into.

That at the hearing in the Court of Appeal, upon the question of fraud being raised by the Bench, my counsel, Mr. Treadwell, replied that Hermann Lewis had been warned by him both verbally and in writing of the situation, and by Mr. Jones personally; that what he, Mr. Treadwell, had to say about the fraud would be proven at the trial; that neither my counsel nor myself had the remotest thought that I should be prevented from bringing the action.

That, having been refused trial of action and leave to appeal to the Privy Council, I laid the position before the Prime Minister, and he suggested to me, and in his place in Parliament on the 26th August, 1908 (*Hansard*) advocated, that my proper course would be to petition Parliament and have my case reported upon.

That I acted upon the foregoing suggestion, and the Public Petitions Committee of the Legislative Council in 1908 reported recommending the Government to appoint a competent tribunal to inquire into the merits of the petition, and that pending such inquiry steps be at once taken to prevent further dealings with the land. Parliament was about rising for the dissolution, or, I understood, the Committee would have completed the inquiry.

That in July last certain questions were put in your honourable House to the Prime Minister by the honourable member for New Plymouth, Mr. Okey, with regard to certain dealings with the title to the Mokau-Mohakatino Block. That the information upon which the questions were founded was furnished by your petitioner to that honourable gentleman. That on the 27th July the Prime Minister placed the Order Paper containing the replies upon the table. That the replies are evidently framed from information supplied by Dr. Findlay.