

Dated this            day of           , 1907.—(Signed) GEORGE HUTCHISON    [Receipt handed in—Exhibit R.] It is not stamped, I notice.

78. Then you were not in a position, in the absence of Mr. Hutchison—that is, somewhere about 5th November, 1907—to fill up the ordinary voucher and sign it for any amount that should be paid to Mr. Hutchison?—Sign it as the claimant?

79. Yes?—No, not apart from that document.

80. You recognize that that document would not be sufficient for the Government?—I did not recognize it then, but I understand it now. I did not know at that time that they insisted on a formal voucher.

81. When you made the suggestion that Mr. Symes should receive 10 per cent. of the whole amount, was that done under the written authority of Mr. Hutchison?—No, not under written authority—it was merely oral.

82. A verbal request to you?—Yes. I did not know Mr. Symes had any connection with the matter until Mr. Hutchison mentioned it.

83. When did the Durie question arise as to portion of this claim?—It was in my original instructions that this claim was extant—before Mr. Hutchison went away. It was dated 14th November, 1906, and stated that the Duries had no estate or interest in the land in which the reference and the awards were made, and they in no way contributed to the amount to uplift the award. Mr. Muldrock, of Whangarei, was more conversant with the details, as they were intrusted to him at the time by Mr. Hutchison.

84. Was there a difference of opinion between the Duries and Mr. Hutchison as to what they were to receive?—My instructions were that they were not to be paid anything.

85. Did they claim anything?—Yes, it was held up for seven or nine months after the vote was passed.

86. Was the claim made by the Duries responsible for the delay?—Yes. I had considerable correspondence with the Government touching Durie's matter. I think that was the cause of the delay from December—when I got the letter which has been put in—till August.

87. Who received the £134 17s. which was finally paid?—I did.

88. Did you receive that direct from a Government Department?—Yes.

89. You did not receive any communication in connection with the payment from Mr. Symes?—No.

90. In regard to the £125 of legal claims, which Mr. Hutchison says in his petition were expenses incurred by him, that amount has not been received at all?—No.

91. In your evidence you stated that you voluntarily offered, in reply to a letter from Mr. Symes, to pay a lump sum of £40 for getting the £134 and the £125—the two amounts?—Yes.

92. You paid Mr. Symes £6 15s., being 5 per cent. on the £134 17s.?—Yes.

93. According to the lump sum offered to Mr. Symes, that left him a prospective payment of £33 5s., providing he got the £125?—Yes.

94. Do you say his influence was responsible for the payment of the £134 17s.?—It depends on what you mean by "influence." I think his work had something to do with it. I do not know precisely what he did. I know from his letters that he was taking the necessary steps.

95. Do you think that his influence with the Government had anything to do with the payment of the £134 17s.?—No, I do not think so.

96. With a prospect of £33 5s. on the £125, if he had had sufficient influence with the Government to get the one amount he should have been able to get the other amount too?—If his influence had been of any account I presume he would have got the £40.

*Mr. Myers.* We do not suggest anything of that nature.

97. *Right Hon. Sir J. G. Ward.* Why do you say you had no confidence in Mr. Hutchison's methods, as being too strenuous?—His methods always struck me as being rather strong-handed, and it did not appear to me that that was necessary.

98. In making that statement you do not suggest that it was political strenuousness?—I do not know that I was sorting them out—I was referring to his methods generally.

99. *Hon. Mr. Millar.* Do you consider, Mr. Haddow, that it is part of the duty of a member of Parliament to attend to the private business of his constituents?—No, I should not say it was.

100. Well, then, was it not the private business of Mr. Hutchison, after Parliament had voted the money, to claim that money himself?—Yes.

101. And when you offered the commission to Mr. Symes you understood the money had been voted by Parliament and he had only to collect it?—Yes.

102. You were offering 5 per cent. for collecting the money?—Yes.

103. That had nothing to do in connection with promoting the petition?—The petition had gone through. I thought Parliament had voted the money. I thought I was dealing with a land agent who understood this transaction because he lived on the scene, and I believed he was familiar with these leases from childhood, and knew the position.

104. When you offered him that commission it was simply for his services for collecting the amount and forwarding it to you?—Yes, as an ordinary agent, just as I might have got a solicitor in Wellington to do the same thing.

105. *Mr. Massey.* Do you consider that where the payment of public money is involved such business is public business?—Well, I should say it was very difficult to distinguish. It is, of course, connected with the public, seeing that the money had to come out of the public purse; but, seeing that it was first put into the public purse by individuals who were asking for its return, it is hardly public money.

106. Is it private or public, seeing that Parliament had a petition for the return of the money?—Well, if it has to go through by petition it has to be done in a public way.

107. And that is public business?—Yes.

108. I understood you to say you would have been willing to pay another £33 5s. if he had obtained the other £125?—No; I said Mr. Hutchison apparently would have been. I refused to trouble further with the matter.