

fore require to get such prices for the whole of the block as would average, say, 30s. per acre, so as to cover cost of acquisition, surveys, administration, &c. I want you, therefore, to have a very careful valuation made of the block, and the sooner we set to work the better. Your two Crown Lands Rangers might possibly undertake the work, one valuing one portion of the block and the other doing the balance; or you might find it more convenient to instruct some of your Surveyors to make the necessary valuations. If, however, you do not consider either of the above proposals convenient or advisable under the circumstances, then if you will nominate one or two good valuers whom we could rely upon I will endeavour to obtain authority for the valuation being made accordingly. Of course, I would prefer to have this valuation made by our own officers, but if you think it would take them off their Rangers' or Surveyors' duties for too long a period, then I must get authority to have the work done by some outsiders. Some of the persons holding mortgages over this block are resident in England, and others in New Zealand, and the mortgages alone must amount to over £20,000. It is therefore necessary that there should be left for payment to the Maori owners a certain proportion of the price paid by the Crown. I am therefore personally inclined to agree to the price of £1 per acre being paid for the whole block, because I think that, with the coal, timber, and other advantages, the Government would probably be able to afford such a high price as £1 per acre. I shall be glad of your advice and report as to what you propose should be done as soon as possible, as no time must be lost in making this valuation.

WM. C. KENSINGTON, Under-Secretary.

F. Simpson, Esq., Commissioner of Crown Lands, New Plymouth.

No. 68.

Department of Lands, Wellington, 7th February, 1910.

Re Mokau-Mohakatino Block.

WITH reference to my memo. to you of the 29th ultimo, I am not sure whether the closing part of my memorandum is sufficiently clear. I want the report of the Crown Lands Rangers to be quite untrammelled as to any ideas I may have as to the worth of the block, and in their report and your report upon the same I wish the recommendations to be also quite untrammelled by any supposititious values.

WM. C. KENSINGTON, Under-Secretary.

Commissioner of Crown Lands, New Plymouth.

No. 69.

District Land Office, New Plymouth, 12th March, 1910.

Mokau-Mohakatino No. 1 Block.

IN accordance with your instructions of 29th January last, I have the honour to report as follows:—

The area of all subdivisions of this block give a total area of 55,837 acres, but for the purpose of considering the compensation to the owners this area will be reduced as follows: Crown land, 185 acres; area awarded to Crown for survey liens (but orders not issued), 5,152 acres 3 roods 25 perches; Native burial-ground, 4 acres: total, 5,341 acres 3 roods 25 perches: leaving a balance of 50,495 acres and 15 perches.

The attached litho. (marked "No. 1") [Exhibit No. 72] shows the several classes of country; and, summarizing the reports by Messrs. Tolme and Twiss on the prairie values at which the land could be disposed of after subdivision, and making provision for the usual preliminary roading, as in the case of Crown lands, it works out as follows:—

Acres.		£	s.	d.
4,700 (coloured blue) at 7s. 6d. per acre	...	1,762	10	0
30,671 (coloured blue) at 15s. per acre	...	23,003	5	0
5,776 (coloured purple) at £1 per acre	...	5,776	0	0
2,160 (coloured yellow) at £1 5s. per acre	...	2,700	0	0
1,497 (coloured yellow) at £2 per acre	...	2,994	0	0
148 (coloured yellow) at nil.				
1,000 (coloured blue) at £1 15s. per acre	...	1,750	0	0
3,859 (coloured green) at £1 10s. per acre	...	5,788	10	0
685 (coloured red) at £2 per acre	...	1,370	0	0
50,496 acres.		£45,144	5	0

£45,144 5s. being the total value at which the land could be disposed of by this Department to the public.

Taking the total area of 50,495 acres, this gives a value of 17s. 10d. or 18s. per acre, at which we could dispose of the land after subdivision, survey, &c., as is the usual case with Crown lands; but before this could be done there is the cost of survey, &c.—say, 3s. per acre—and the necessary loans to be raised under the Government Loans to Local Bodies Act for the preliminary roads—say, 5s. per acre—making a total of 8s. per acre to be deducted from the 18s. per acre above mentioned, thus leaving the margin of 10s. per acre for the purchase, &c., of the land, which, taking the area of 50,495 acres made up as above mentioned, amounts to £25,247 10s. From some points of view this value of 10s. per acre may appear low, but as against this I can only draw your attention to the very large area of over 35,000 acres which Messrs. Tolme and