

3. Was the price excessive?—*Answer*: Not under the circumstances.

4. Was Mr. Russell, M.P., responsible for the completion of the sale of this portion of Runanga to the Government?—*Answer*: Yes; by reducing the price from £4, which had been asked by the previous owner, to £2 10s. per acre.

5. Did Mr. Russell, M.P., use undue influence as a member of Parliament to effect the sale?—*Answer*: No.

6. Did Mr. Russell, M.P., conduct the negotiations in his own name?—*Answer*: No; all the negotiations were conducted by him in the name of Thomas Ballin, the previous owner; and Mr. W. C. Kensington, then Under-Secretary for Lands, stated in evidence that he did not recognize Mr. Russell as the owner.

The Committee recommends that the provisions of section 59 of the Land for Settlements Act, 1908, should be extended so as to enable lands acquired not only under paragraph (b) of section 6 of the Lands for Settlements Act, 1908, but also lands acquired under paragraphs (c) and (e) of section 6, to be held under the same tenure as neighbouring Crown lands.

The minutes of evidence and proceedings, correspondence, &c., are attached hereto.

31st October, 1912.

EDWARD NEWMAN,
Chairman.

DETAILS IN CONNECTION WITH THE PURCHASE AND FENCING OF PART RUNANGA No. 1A.

Area acquired, 1,404 acres 2 roods 22 perches. Price £3,510 10s.

Report by Assistant Surveyor H. E. Walshe, who surveyed same, and subdivided Crown land adjoining.

	£	s.	d.
Unimproved value of land acquired as it stands	693	9	0
Additional value to Crown on account of road frontage and access provided to Crown land, also by giving better homestead and yarding sites, 2s. per acre on 19,000 acres	1,900	0	0
Extra fencing and road formation saved	948	12	0
Fencing on boundary between land purchased and Crown lands, 416 chains, at 10s. ..	208	0	0
Total	£3,750	1	0
Against this is cost to the Department of fencing one side of road between road and private land, ten miles (this was a condition of purchase, and contract for same was let at £59 14s. per mile)	597	0	0
Had the roadway been taken, and the 1,404 acres 2 roods 22 perches not been purchased, the cost to the Crown would have been—			
Fencing both sides of road, ten miles	1,194	0	0
Value of 80 acres in road	40	0	0
77½ chains access-roads from Waipunga Road to Crown sections, forming and fencing	215	0	0
Total	£1,449	0	0

In addition to this sum there would have been a claim for severance of property.

Department of Lands, Wellington, 29th August, 1912.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY, THE 5TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1912.

The Committee met at 11 a.m. pursuant to notice.

Present: Mr. E. Newman (Chairman), Mr. Coates, Mr. Guthrie, Mr. MacDonald, Hon. Mr. Massey, Mr. T. W. Rhodes, Mr. Robertson, Mr. R. W. Smith, Mr. Statham, Mr. Witty.

The order of reference referring Paper 226 C to the Committee was read by the clerk.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr. Guthrie, That a sub-committee consisting of Mr. Coates, Mr. Statham, Mr. Witty, the Chairman (Mr. Newman), and the mover, be set up to consider Paper No. 226 C, "Details in connection with the Purchase and Fencing of Part of Runanga No. 1A Block."

The Committee then adjourned.

THURSDAY, THE 12TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1912.

The sub-committee met at 10 a.m. pursuant to notice.

Present: Mr. E. Newman (Chairman), Mr. Coates, Mr. Guthrie, Mr. Statham, Mr. Witty.

A copy of the notice of meeting sent to Mr. Russell, M.P., and his reply thereto were read by the clerk.

The Under-Secretary for Lands was in attendance.

Harry Edward Walshe, Assistant Surveyor, Lands Department, attended the meeting and gave evidence.