

209. Whose name did the deed bear as purchaser; was it Mr. Taylor's name for himself or the Government?—The land was conveyed to H. S. Taylor absolutely.

210. Was there only one deed prepared or more for that transaction?—I translated one deed. I saw another deed which seemed a skeleton deed, and was signed "Wahanga."

211. Do you know whether Wahanga was alive when you saw his signature on the skeleton deed?—He was not. By the writing I think it was signed by Poari Kuramate.

212. How did you come to see the deed: was it submitted to you in the way of business?—I simply saw it in Mr. Worgan's hand for a minute. I caught sight of it.

213. Can you describe the deed at all to the Court; give any particulars as to its contents?—I cannot.

214. How do you know that it was a skeleton deed, or anything about it?—I call it a skeleton deed because there were certain blanks which were not filled in.

215. Can you give any more particulars about the deed?—I took a glance at the deed. My business having much to do with the kind of deeds, I was perhaps more expert in telling at a glance what sort of deed it was. It purported to be a conveyance to some person whose name was not mentioned, and to be signed "Wahanga."

216. Will you state to the Court what fee (if any) you received for this transaction?—I think I received £20 or £25. I am bound in a certain way to obtain a confirmation of the deed by the parties ordered to succeed, by the Native Land Court.

217. You say this land was defined in the deed; when was it surveyed?—The land was fully described on the deed, in accordance with a memorandum given by Mr. Worgan. I believe it had been surveyed, as the boundaries were taken from the map. I saw a standard map in Mr. Worgan's possession, from which they were taken. Some of the blocks had natural boundaries, but I am not certain whether this was one or not. I heard Mr. Worgan call it a standard map, but I do not know whether it was one or not. It was one of several blocks. I do not know whether they were connected. One or two were connected. A letter was sent to Mr. Worgan by the Natives, asking for particulars about the land, and stating that they wished to sell it. Mr. Worgan supplied them with particulars, which were given to me, and from which were described the land in the deed.

218. Was the memorandum given to you?—It was given either to Mr. Taylor, myself, or the Natives.

219. In this particular case, can you produce the letter alluded to?—No; all the papers are in the hands of Mr. Taylor. Original letters from the Natives, applying for the allotment, would be in Mr. Worgan's hands.

220. You stated in your evidence that the Natives, before Mr. Taylor's purchase of the land, did not know where the land was; is it so?—Yes.

221. How did you contrive to explain to them the contents of the deed under those circumstances?—When Mr. Taylor purchased the land, the description thereof formed part of the deed as furnished by Mr. Worgan, which I translated to them before the execution of the deed.

222. Were you aware at this time that all such sales would have to be examined into by a commissioner, under the Native Lands Frauds Prevention Act, who would have to certify that they were according to equity and good conscience, and that without such certificate they were absolutely null and void in law?—I am aware of the existence of the Native Lands Frauds Prevention Act, and was, I believe, at that time; but my knowledge was only a superficial one, as I had never seen the Act, but was of opinion that these lands did not come under its operation. Notwithstanding, the purchase was completed, to the best of my knowledge, in equity and good conscience.

223. Do you know the land in question?—I know where the land is now.

224. What do you conceive to be its value per acre?—From 30s. to £2, at the present time; it was not so at the time it was purchased; at least I do not think so.

225. What price was paid for it?—15s. was paid for this portion of it, with a doubtful title.

226. In what respect did you consider the title doubtful?—Inasmuch as it is necessary to get a deed of confirmation. There is a risk in getting this deed.

227. Must not the deed of necessity be confirmed before the land is conveyed?—The title is a good holding title without the deed of confirmation.

228. Are you aware whether the allotment of this land was withheld?—At the time I could not understand certain matters, but which are fully explained in Mr. Worgan's report.

229. If the land had been allotted, do you think it would have sold for a better price?—I am quite satisfied that had the land been allotted to the persons named in the award of the Compensation Court, and they had been allowed to deal with their separate blocks of land, I could have obtained from £1 to £1 10s. per acre, and possibly in some cases £2, according to the allotment.

230. *Mr Booth.*] With reference to land sold by Horopapera Pukeke, can you give the Court any information?—Horopapera Pukeke is one of the persons referred to by me in my previous evidence, Mr. Taylor having purchased his land through me.

231. What price did Mr. Taylor give for his land?—I am not quite sure as to the amount, and I would rather decline answering questions of that nature.

232. Was the deed made out in Mr. Taylor's name, or in Mr. Taylor's name as agent for the Government?—I know nothing about the Government at all. Mr. Taylor purchased absolutely from Horopapera Pukeke.

HOROPAPER PUKKEKE was sworn, and deposed:

233. *Mr Booth.*] Do you recollect selling a block of 400 acres of land in confiscated land to Mr. H. S. Taylor?—Yes.

234. What price did you receive for that land?—£300.

235. Were you advised by Mr. Worgan to sell that land to Mr. Taylor?—I was not.

236. How was that payment made to you for that land, in cash or how?—£100 in cash, and we spoke of the remaining £200 in bills.