

220. *Mr. Cuthbertson.*] You have expressed the opinion that the Government should have under- *Mr. W. A. Murray*
taken the duty of draining this swamp; if you had never seen the swamp, and knew no more about it
than the other members of the House who had never seen it, would you, if a proposal of that kind had
appeared upon the Estimates, have voted the money for such a purpose?—If I were in the position of
some members, I should support any proposal the Government made. *6th Oct., 1875.*

221. *Major Jackson.*] You have referred to the Government having drained Douglas and Walker's
swamp. Do you know the circumstances under which it was drained?—I understand the road was
made for military purposes, and it had the effect of draining the swamp.

222. How much did the Government spend upon it?—I do not know.

223. Are you aware that an outside Board, not interested in the work otherwise than in getting a
road to Cambridge, contributed towards the cost?—I am not.

224. The port for the settlers was Alexandra?—Yes.

225. And in the summer months the river used to be blocked?—Yes.

226. And that they had to cart from Hamilton, a distance of twenty-four miles?—Yes.

227. Are you aware that from Cambridge to that place is about eight miles?—It is about eleven
miles.

228. Are you aware how the Government had the work done?—By the Armed Constabulary.

229. As a military road?—To a great extent.

230. Do you think it was useful as a road of that kind?—No doubt.

231. And it was a necessary road for that purpose?—Yes.

232. Do you know how long it took to come round from Cambridge before this road was made?—
About a day and a half.

233. And how long did it take to come across when the road was finished?—Two or three hours.

234. That, from a military point of view, would be a vast saving of time?—Yes.

235. Therefore, you think the road was necessary, even supposing it was dry land?—I think it
was of equal advantage to Douglas and Walker.

236. How long was the land sold before the road was made?—About two years.

237. *The Chairman.*] Was that road made for military purposes, or to assist the Company in their
drainage purposes?—For both purposes, I think. The Government benefited the settlers by providing
a road to Cambridge, and Douglas and Walker benefited by getting the swamp drained.

238. *Major Jackson.*] Are you aware that Douglas and Walker had made a road within three miles
at their own expense first?—I am not.

239. Are you aware that they said, if the Government would give them £300, they would make
the road right through?—No.

240. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Do you consider making this road through the Piako Swamp would have been
an important part of the arterial drainage of the swamp?—Yes; the road drains from the main drain.

Major HEAPHY, being in attendance, was examined as follows:—

241. *The Chairman.*] The Committee wishes to take your evidence as to the sale of the Piako *Major Heaphy.*
Swamp to Mr. Thomas Russell. Do you know anything of that transaction?—I know nothing of the
transaction. I should like to know exactly what the Piako Swamp is understood to be.

242. It is the great swamp between Hamilton and the head of the Piako navigation?—I have heard
it called the Eastern Waikato Swamp. My knowledge of it was limited to about five years back. I
have known nothing of it lately.

243. Do you know any portion of the swamp that has been agreed to be sold to Mr. Thomas
Russell?—I know nothing whatever of the sale transaction, neither have I seen the plans before this
morning. I know the locality geographically, inasmuch as I examined it to see whether it was fit for
the location of military settlers in 1865.

244. Are you acquainted with the boundaries of the block agreed to be purchased by Mr. Thomas
Russell?—Only approximately. I have not seen them defined upon the ground.

245. How much of this purchase of 80,000 acres are you acquainted with?—I have some acquaint-
ance with the whole of the land, but I can only speak with confidence about one-half of that area.

246. Which half is that?—Close to the military settlements of the Waikato.

247. At what period of time were you acquainted with this land, or obtained your knowledge of
it?—Up to 1866.

248. Will you describe the character of the land with which you were acquainted. I merely mean
the land within this purchase or agreement to purchase?—I examined it on the eastern side of the
dry land near Hamilton, which would, of course, be on the western side of the swamp, with a view of
seeing how far into the swamp I could survey land for the military settlers. I saw it during all
seasons of the year—both summer and winter.

249. What was the character of the land at that time?—I surveyed all the dry land that was
available into sections for the military settlers. The surveyors whom I employed being on contract
were anxious, perhaps, to make a larger survey than they might otherwise have done; or, perhaps, if
they had had a smaller one, took the surveys in some cases further into the swamp than the military
settlers liked. The colonel of the Militia regiment located at Hamilton refused to have some of the
sections on account of their being too swampy for settlement.

250. Those sections so surveyed were actually taken up by the settlers?—No; I think they were
rejected. There was a long altercation between the colonel of the regiment and myself, with respect
to some of these sections. I thought them sufficiently dry, and he thought they were too wet.

251. In point of fact, those sections, so surveyed, form part of the purchase of Mr. Russell?—
do not know whether they have been purchased privately since.

252. Do you not know what has become of these sections?—The information is all in the Survey
Office at Auckland. I have had no knowledge of the land since 1866.

253. Then you do not know whether they form part of the block agreed to be purchased by