

On consulting with the Inspector of Surveys and the Judge of the Native Land Court on this occasion, the arrangement was made that all applications for land to pass the Court should in future be sent to me, and that I should then forward them to the Native Land Purchase Officer for the district, for remarks as to whether the Government held any lien on the land, and after the application had been returned to me to conclude the necessary inquiries, and refer to the Judge, in accordance with clause 38, "Native Lands Act, 1873," I would send them on to the Inspector of Surveys or his Deputy, to carry out the surveys in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

There are no surveys out on my authority at the present time, excepting Mr. Skeet, in the case of Tuakau Block, and as this survey is nearly completed, I consider that it would be better to furnish it; at the same time, Mr. Teasdale should conclude his surveys of lands under offer to Mr. Wilson, Mr. Teasdale being instructed to define on his plan all the land Mr. Wilson considers he has a claim to.

On the part of the Government I state the above opinion with the more confidence, feeling it to be the only solution of the matter, knowing as I do that the dispute between the Natives is one of long standing, and a simple plan now offers itself of adjusting it by both parties bringing their case in a clear manner before the Land Court.

With regard to Mr. Wilson's request that these lands be proclaimed under the Public Works Act, I should perhaps be going beyond my province in giving an opinion; if I did, it would be adverse to such a course, considering the complicated state of the title, &c. Such a proceeding would most probably be looked upon by the Maoris of the Ngatiporou District as buying land by Act of Parliament.

The Hon. the Native Minister.

I have, &c.,  
S. LOCKE.

#### No. 4.

Judge ROGAN to the UNDER SECRETARY, Native Department.

SIR,—

Native Land Court Office, Napier, 6th September, 1876.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of Mr. Wilson's annual report of land-purchase transactions during the past year.

In reply to the first paragraph of the report, I wish to state that Mr. Wilson has never made any application through me, nor was it necessary for him to do so. The Chief Judge is the administrative officer in whose office claims are arranged for proclamation in the *Gazette*, and the time and place for hearing are also fixed by him; then it afterwards becomes my duty to hear the claims published in the notices.

With regard to the statement in the report to the effect that twenty-three blocks of land were ripe for passing through the Court, containing 270,000 acres, I can only say that I know nothing whatever of them.

I have had a vellum tracing prepared of the whole district, which may be interesting as it exhibits every block of land passed by the Court of Commissioners and Native Land Court from the commencement to the present time. Mr. Wilson may be asked to furnish a list of the twenty-three blocks and mark them off on the tracing if he can; the same remark applies to the fifteen new blocks, said to contain 101,037 acres, and stated in the second paragraph of the report to have been purchased.

I also enclose a schedule of all the blocks of land which have passed the Native Land Court in the Poverty Bay District since the Government Agent arrived, which will form a key to the sketch. It will be seen that during this period 328,000 acres in the Poverty Bay District have passed through the Court, nearly the whole of which I believe to be in the occupation of Europeans. I do not know whether Mr. Wilson reckons any part of those 328,000 acres among the lands which he states he has acquired for the Government, but, if so, the fact must be that he has advanced money to Natives who have turned out to be not the real owners of the land, and although money has been paid no land has been acquired in return. My own conviction is that this has been done to a very large extent, and that the real object of the unfounded charges which Mr. Wilson has brought against me is to screen his own blunders in advancing money to Natives who have had no real claim whatever to lands which they pretended to own.

I deem it unnecessary to notice Mr. Wilson's vague and ridiculous charges of complicity on my part with private individuals. Neither the Government nor any one else has ever attempted to dictate to me in the discharge of my duties as Judge, and I can confidently appeal to my past career as a sufficient refutation of the imputations referred to.

With regard to the only special case adduced by Mr. Wilson—that of the Waingaromia Block—I enclose a special report and copies of the notices, which were taken to the Natives interested by Captain Porter. It will, I think, sufficiently appear from these that every facility was given to all claimants to obtain a proper hearing. In point of fact, an adjournment of that case for two months was granted at the request of the Natives whose claims were supported by Mr. Wilson.

I also enclose copies of two reports already sent by me to the Native Office, one relating to the Tologa Bay Court and the other to the Puremungahua Block.

In conclusion, I may be allowed to point out that during the last eighteen months, I have adjudicated upon numerous claims, involving upwards of 500,000 acres of land, including the 328,000 acres at Poverty Bay before mentioned, and there have been only three applications for rehearings. Two of the rehearings have taken place, and my decisions have been confirmed, and the third application is still pending. These facts I regard as a complete vindication of my action as Judge, and as conclusive evidence that I have acted as fairly as I could to all parties.

The Under Secretary, Native Department,

I have, &c.,  
J. ROGAN,  
Judge, Native Land Court.