

had instructions to direct the surveyors according to the Native Lands Act. Mr. Locke informed me, in the presence of Sir D. McLean, that he had authorized the surveyors.

In October, 1874, Robert Cooper came to me; it was prior to the 27th. He requested me not to interfere with two blocks of land, for which he said he was in treaty—Mangataikapua and Waitangi. I informed him that I was then negotiating for the country beyond that towards Tolago. About the middle of February, 1875, Mr. Locke arrived from Napier. At that time no authority had been given to survey Waingaromia for Cooper. I informed Mr. Locke of my negotiations immediately on his return from Napier, and showed him, as well as I could, boundaries on the map in Mr. Baker's office. Some time between Mr. Locke's arrival in February, and Sir D. McLean's arrival in April, authority was given by Mr. Locke to Pita te Huhu, the Native who was professing to sell to Cooper, to have the land surveyed. This Native came to me in February, about a fortnight after I had completed my agreement for the land, and told me that he claimed the land now known as Waingaromia 1 and 2, and that he would be no party to the transaction between myself and the other Natives; that he had heard I was going to survey the land, but he should survey it too, and sell it to another party. I knew before that, that this Native and other *hapus* besides his had claimed; but, so far as I could make out, his boundary was the Nakahaka Ngarara River. The matter had been discussed at a meeting as far back as 1873. I think Mr. Locke's action in authorizing these surveys of land, already under negotiation to the Government, was calculated to cause difficulty and inconvenience; I think it was also contrary to his duties under the Act. I do not impute to Mr. Locke, and have never intended to impute to him, any wrong motive or intentional partisanship in the matter; but I think he overstepped his duty. The Native Minister gave directions in April, 1875, that no further surveys should be authorized to clash with Government ones.

In a letter to the *Poverty Bay Standard* of 24th July, 1875, Mr. Cooper claims that he treated for the land two years ago, and that authority was given by the District Officer to Mr. Campion to proceed with the survey ten months ago. Mr. Campion told me in Wellington that he had no such authority. In May, 1875, Cooper asked me to buy him out (of Waingaromia 1 and 2), but I refused. About this time Mr. Read and Mr. Cooper came to an arrangement. Mr. Read told me so. Mr. Read first came to me and said he had been telling Cooper he had better take £1,000 from me to withdraw, but he said Cooper wanted £6,000. I declined that proposal. On 22nd June, 1875, Mr. Read asked me to purchase land surveyed by Cooper, stating that the business was his own. He said the area was 100,000 acres, 50,000 of which was on the land I had agreed for with the Natives. I expressed my willingness to treat with him for the land not included in my previous negotiations. But the 50,000 acres turned out afterwards to be only 5,000 or 6,000.

On the 7th July, Mr. Locke and Mr. Read had an interview with me. They wished me to pay money to Cooper and Read for the land for which I was already in negotiation; they said they wanted an answer immediately, as the Judge was going to put the land through the Court. I think it was Mr. Locke said that. That would mean upon Cooper's application, as I had not been able to get my surveys done. The Natives who sold to me would in that case have to appear as counter-claimants. I refused, saying I would buy any land outside my negotiated land, but that inside my boundary I would not recognize their interference. Mr. Locke urged me to purchase from Read and Cooper much more strongly than did Read. [Here that part of Mr. Locke's reply to Mr. Wilson's report, referring to this conversation, was read to the witness.] It is not true that any proposal was made for them to go out on repayment of their bare expenses; they wanted me to reimburse Cooper for the trouble he had taken in opposing the Government. So far as I know, the reason the matter fell through was that I refused to entertain it. After conversation, I wrote on the same day to Captain Read, asking him for particulars in writing of the lands he wished me to purchase. He gave me no answer until the 12th July, by which time the matter had assumed another aspect, owing to the proceedings of the Native Land Court.

The Commission adjourned at twenty minutes to 6 p.m.

#### THURSDAY, 2ND NOVEMBER, 1876.

The Commission resumed at 10 a.m.

Before going on with the evidence, Mr. Wilson was asked whether there was any written communication from Sir Donald McLean, directing the alteration of system as to surveys referred to in his evidence of yesterday, as having taken effect from April, 1875. Mr. Wilson replied that he had no written communication on the subject, but, as a matter of fact, from that time no surveys were authorized which might clash with Government surveys. There was correspondence on the subject between Wellington and Auckland.

[Continuation of Mr. Wilson's evidence.]

After I was informed by Sir D. McLean that Mr. Baker was to have charge of surveys, I was laid up with illness and incapacitated from business; I was also delayed by the necessity of moving my office across the river and by the preparing of annual returns for Parliament. I completed those before returning to local work. About the 19th May, I made requisitions on Mr. Baker for a number of surveys. Mr. Baker knew before this that I required surveyors, and he had been in communication with Mr. Leonard Simpson, who was engaged by me. During the time I had to complain of not getting surveyors, which caused me to send to the Native Minister the telegram of 1st April referring to some influence which thwarted me, I made no application to Mr. Baker on the subject. I did not consider it my business to do so; it was his business to inform me that he had given instructions to the surveyors which hindered my operations, and Mr. Heale expressed his regret to me that Mr. Baker had not done so. On 25th February, when I asked Mr. Heale for two parties of surveyors, he said that Mr. Baker represented him as Deputy Inspector of Surveys, and spoke of the difficulty which might arise from his clashing with Simpson, who was acting for me in the Land Purchase Department. I said, "I suppose I am to go on with Simpson as before," to which Mr.