

125. Having provided for the descendants of Te Whatanui, and kept a piece yourself, what next?—When this was done they said, “What shall we do?” Some said, “We had better send these arrangements to some lawyer to be confirmed.”

126. What was done about the mountains?—There was a portion which was decided to be given by the tribe for the payment of tribal debts. There were divisions made, and these were numbered, and the numbers given for different tribes.

127. On what principle was this done? Was it out of consideration, or had they a right?—No, it was not because they had any right; it was given out of goodwill.

128. What did they do next? What did they do with the big block over the mountains?—There was 12,000 acres or more. That was the piece of land left after these different allotments.

129. What was done with that in Committee?—They named people who should have that block.

130. Was that settled in Committee, or left till they went into Court?—The Committee decided the persons who should have the block, and when they took it into Court it was confirmed. When I got into Court, Rauira got up and commenced to speak about it.

131. Was anything else settled in the Committee?—The Committee decided the people to whom this block should belong—viz., Ihaia Taueki.

132. Did they decide that the whole block should be in his name?—It was put in his name for others—for him to take care of. That was the way that block was arranged, and there were no objections raised.

133. These discussions occupied a long time, and there was still a big block with the lake in the centre; what about that?—That was what was left.

134. Had you any discussion about that?—Yes; we had a great deal of talk about that, and I was selected to have it put under my care.

135. In what capacity?—As caretaker.

136. Was that agreed to, or was there any dispute over it?—It was the tribe that did it—that selected me to take care of it. I never proposed that it should be put under my care.

137. When the title was put through in 1873, and 143 names were put in the certificate, who was made the caretaker at that time for the whole block?—It was my arrangement, because I knew what had happened in former dealings with land.

138. Knowing that, what did you propose?—I saw the Native Land Court appointed ten names, and those ten were put in to take care of the land; but afterwards it was found that they kept it for themselves. The Europeans said, “You are the ten names, and therefore the land is yours”; and the Natives suffered in consequence. The Government would put those names in, and the land was in their names, and made inalienable for the whole tribe. Then, some time after, the Government would release the land, and the Natives sold it, and the land was gone. I consented to my name being put in alone, lest others should deal with the land, and the names of the people to come below mine.

139. Then you were put in as sole certificated owner, and 143 names were put in the certificate?—That was done so that they could retain the land for themselves. Had it not been done, the land would have been sold and gone. That was the only piece of land left; that was the reason it was so arranged.

140. Did they propose to put you in again in the balance of the 15,000 acres in the same way? Yes; in the same way as before.

141. Why were you to be put in as before in regard to the 15,000 acres, having made all these disposals outside?—This land had been settled upon all over by their ancestors and themselves; everything was comprised in it; their ancient burial-grounds, their cultivations, houses, and homes &c. The lake was where they got their subsistence from—eels, crayfish, flounders, &c.

142. That was the great means of subsistence for the tribe, was it not?—Yes.

143. You were to be caretaker as before of the whole block?—Yes; that was the settlement come to in the meeting-house.

144. Did any one in the meeting-house object to that arrangement?—No.

145. Was there only one Committee, or numerous ones from day to day?—There was only one to divide the land out. The surveyor was Palmerston, and the interpreter was McDonald.

145a. Having made these arrangements out of doors, you went into Court?—Yes; we went to get our arrangements passed by the Court.

146. Were the Court sitting at that time?—At Palmerston.

146a. Who acted for you and your tribe in Court as mouthpiece?—McDonald.

147. In what capacity did he act?—He went into the Court to explain matters to the Court.

148. What happened in Court.—We went to get what we had arranged about the land passed by the Court. No. 1 was passed; there was no objection to that. No. 2 was agreed to, to be in my name.

149. Was it explained by Mr. McDonald?—Yes.

150. Was there any objection?—No; it was passed because it had been arranged by the tribe. No. 3 also was passed.

151. Did anyone object to any subdivision you had arranged in the committee-house?—No; it was passed as a voluntary arrangement by the Court. After No. 3 was passed we went back to the committee-house, and in the morning we returned to the Court. At that time, in consequence of the friction we had over this, McDonald ceased to act for us. I went into the box and read over the papers, and the agreements made in Committee, to the Judge; after which the Judge put some questions to me. I said to the Judge “There is nothing in this. There is a very short answer to it. McDonald has made a great deal of it. As I have no money, I give this land for the railway.” After I made a present of the land they wanted to give me some shares.