

On the 18th February, 1908, a preliminary notice was sent to Mr. Black, informing him as to the Board's recommendation, a copy of which I appended to my letter 2459/115A of the 22nd February. I wrote that with the express intention of directing the Minister's attention to the special circumstances disclosed by the Crown Lands Ranger's reports, in cases of the run referred to, and two others, thinking that in dealing with the proposals contained in the reports they might possibly be missed. I would here remark that the Land Board adopted those proposals and recommended them for approval; and when the Minister's decision, as conveyed in your memo. of the 5th March, was received it was construed to be an approval of the Ranger's suggestions, but before sending Mr. Black final notice I considered it desirable to assure myself that such was intended, and if you remember I pointed out the matter to you on your visit to this office in May last, when you indorsed my opinion, and, in order to give it official authority, you noted in margin of report "Yes. Do this," and initialled your minute, meaning, include the offer of the 900 acres in notice, the *balance* of run to be subdivided into five or six portions as proposed by the Ranger.

HENRY TRENT,

Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Department of Lands, Napier, 14th May, 1908.

Mr. Robert G. Black, c/o Land Officer, Gisborne.

*Lots 1 and 2, Run No. 43, Blocks XII and XVI, Waingaromia Survey District.*

REFERRING to my memo. to you of the 18th February last, I have now to inform you that the Hon. the Minister of Lands has approved the recommendation of the Land Board that a lease of portion of the above holding, containing about 900 acres, be offered to you for a further term of twenty-one years on the same conditions as your present lease, and at an annual rental of about £79. I will be glad to hear at your early convenience if you will accept this.

It has been decided that the balance is to be subdivided for closer settlement, and offered under the provisions of "The Land Act, 1892." Due notice, fixing the date of opening of same for selection, areas, prices, rentals, &c., will be given in the local newspapers.

You are required to give up possession of the area to be subdivided on the 28th February, 1909.

The improvements on the whole of the run as at the 30th November last were valued at £13,743 7s. 6d., and this is the sum, subject to any necessary deductions or additions at the end of your lease, to which you are entitled in the event of not accepting the above offer.

H. G. PRICE,

For Commissioner of Crown Lands.

S.G.R. 27/16. Run 43, Waingaromia.

Gisborne, 3rd September, 1908.

DEAR SIR,— *Small Grazing-run No. 43, Waingaromia Survey District.*

I have to acknowledge your letter of the 19th August, informing me that "it has been finally decided that a renewal of the lease cannot be granted to you."

I have also your previous letter of the 14th May, 1908, in which you were good enough to inform me of the Board's earlier determination, and in terms thereof to offer me a part (900 acres) of the run for renewal. This letter and offer I understand, and still claim, to be a determination by the Board and offer made within its jurisdiction conferred by section 209 of the Act of 1885.

My time for election to accept or refuse the offer does not, I think, lapse until the term of my original lease is within three months of expiry. I prefer to take further time for consideration before exercising my election, as I am not without hope that an approved method of dealing with the run more equitable to me as tenant may yet be found by your Board which would justify me in waiving any rights I may have under the determination and offer intimated to me in May.

Yours, &c.,

ROBERT G. BLACK.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands, Napier.

Wellington, 4th September, 1908.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands.

*Small Grazing-run 43, Waingaromia Survey District.*

WITH regard to the notice given to Mr. Black, lessee of this run, offering him 900 acres on a new lease, I have the honour to report as follows:—

On the 18th February, 1908, the Commissioner of Crown Lands forwarded the report of the Ranger on this run (with others), and advised that the Land Board had adopted the report and recommended it for approval. On the 22nd the Commissioner forwarded a copy of the notice which he had given to Mr. Black, stating that the Minister had been recommended to subdivide the run for closer settlement, and to offer Mr. Black a renewal of 900 acres at an increased rental.

On the 5th March I advised the Commissioner that you had decided that Run 43 was to be subdivided for closer settlement, and disposed of under the optional system. When I was in Napier in May last the Commissioner asked if Mr. Black was to be notified of the intended subdivision, one portion of which was recommended by the Board to be re-leased to him, and I authorised him to do so.

However, the Commissioner, on the 20th June, stated that in consequence of Mr. Black's father waiting on the Board and making certain representations, the Board decided to rescind the former resolution and to offer Mr. Black a renewal of his whole lease. He was asked on the 29th idem to give reasons for the Board's change of opinion, and on the 2nd July did so. You then instructed that an independent inspection and report on the land should be obtained, and the District Valuer reported that the run could be subdivided into *three* portions, which you agreed to, and the Board at its August meeting fell in with your views.