

urge you to beg His Excellency's earliest consideration of my accompanying letter on the subject of funds for this purpose, and though I would not willingly obtrude private considerations upon you, I may mention that although I have succeeded in borrowing the sum necessary for my advance towards the purchase on my personal security, and without stating the purpose for which I require it, I shall feel bound on receipt of an unfavourable reply to that letter, to execute mortgages for the amount,—an expense which I would willingly be spared, but as willingly bear if necessary.

I may in conclusion be allowed to mention two things. That the circumstances under which I have made this purchase are unknown to the settlers, who, ascribing it to instructions from the Governor, seem unanimous in their satisfaction at the acquisition.

And that, regarding the adoption of the right course as my own particular duty, I have not sought to divide my responsibility by any previous consultation with my brother Officers, or indeed with any one,—those gentlemen are therefore perfectly blameless and innocent of any complicity in my proceedings.

I have, &c.,

WALTER MANTELL,

Commissioner for the extinguishment of Native claims.

To the Civil Secretary,
&c., &c., &c.,
Wellington.

No. 3.

MR. MANTELL, COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, TO MR. DOMETT, CIVIL SECRETARY.

Otago, 18th August, 1853.

SIR,—

I had yesterday, the honour to announce to you the conclusion of the negotiations for the purchase of the Murihiku Block, and of reporting to you, in a separate communication of this date, the reasons which urged me to conclude these negotiations.

I have now the honor to request that, to meet the first instalment of the purchase money, authority be issued to the Sub-Treasurer of the Province to advance from the Land fund the sum of one thousand pounds (£1,000).

As to the second instalment (£1,000), I would most urgently beg that (as promised in my original instructions) that amount be remitted to me from Wellington by the earliest opportunity, as the Natives will expect the distribution of it at the Bluff before December.

The first instalment will be paid almost exclusively to the claimants of the eastern and western, and the second to those of the centre portion (Taitai to Dusky Bay) of the block.

This was the most favourable arrangement which remained possible after the long delay; and I could not but acknowledge the force of the Natives' complaint, that small instalments gave to each a sum insufficient to purchase anything of permanent value which should in after years represent the land to them.

I do myself the honor to annex a short statement shewing the Government will not lose by this arrangement as compared with that originally contemplated.

Failing in my endeavours to reduce the demands of the Natives below £2,600, and very unwilling to exceed the large amount stated in my instructions as the maximum, and which would have sufficed had the business been concluded at the time originally fixed, I at last made the following arrangement, which was agreed to by the Natives:—

That, whether the further sum of £600 were granted or not, the land was ceded for the amount named in the Deed (£2000).

That the payment or non-payment of the £600 was to be left to the Governor, but that I was most strongly to urge His Excellency in consideration of the delay—of their long boat voyages ending in disappointment, &c.—to award that sum to them, and, when awarded, to direct one-half of it to be distributed at Otago and the other at the Bluff.

I should but imperfectly fulfil my promise did I embrace, for making this recommendation, a time when my own position may be such as to weaken its force. I would, therefore, respectfully beg that the Governor would suspend his decision until I shall have had the honor fully to represent the claim, which I shall do so soon as, by the expression of His Excellency's opinion of my proceedings, I may be relieved from the suspense attending the position in which it is, I trust, evident to you that selfish motives, whether of profit or reputation, could never have placed me.

I have, &c.,

WALTER MANTELL,

Commissioner for the extinguishment
of Native claims.

To the Civil Secretary,
&c., &c., &c.,
Wellington.
