

1148. But, supposing the Government had thought the quantity excessive; had you power, under the authority you held, to give the Natives 40,000, 50,000, or 100,000 acres, if you thought proper, and would your act have been conclusive?—That I could not say. If I had made a larger reserve I should have made more than I believed to be right, and I should have expected the Government to dispute the reservation. Mr. Dalton had no authority to exceed the quantity I had told him.

1149. The fitness of this reserve would depend very much on the number of people for whom it was intended, and the proportion it would bear to other reserves made for other Natives. From that point of view, is it not an unduly large reserve as compared with the reserves made for the Pakakohe and other tribes?—I think it is slightly in excess of the proportion given to the Pakakohe, but rather under the amount given to the Tangahoe.

1150. Had any of the three *hapus* you have mentioned, the Abitahi, Ngatitupaea, and Ngatitanewai, any reserves made for them elsewhere?—No.

1151. They had been living on the land during the period it was under survey?—Yes.

1152. Now as to the value of the reserve; is it good land?—Some part of it is very good; about 2,000 acres; and would sell for £10 an acre. The rest would not average more than £2 an acre, if that.

1153. Then the value is about £40,000 for the lot?—Yes.

1154. You were saying that the western boundary of the reserve was to be the new line of the Mountain Road, as it will ultimately be laid off?—Yes; as it is at present surveyed by the Chief Surveyor.

1155. Do you know whether any money has been laid out on that deviation?—Nothing has been laid out beyond the expenditure involved in its having been originally surveyed as a railway line, and being now taken as a road line.

1156. Then the line which will ultimately be the Mountain Road is the same as what is known as Boylan's railway line?—Yes.

1157. And it is just outside of that line that the present railway line is to go, is it not?—Yes, between it and the Waingongoro River. The road will afford a frontage to the sections that will be laid off there on one side, as well as to the Native reserve on the other.

1158. Then the Natives will have the advantage of a triple frontage upon Government roads; that is to say, the frontage on both sides of the Mountain Road now made, and the frontage to the new Mountain Road as it is to be; and will also have the railway running close to their land besides. Is that not so?—Yes. I was in hopes that I might be able to take a frontage off the Native reserve on this new line of road, but when I came to examine it on the plan, I could not see how I could do so and keep faith with the Natives in regard to the direction of the boundary of the reserve would take.

1159. Have none of these circumstances been referred to in any communication from you to the Government?—No.

1160. They go far, I presume, to make up your present estimate that some of the land would sell for £10 an acre?—No. I was thinking of the portion already in occupation there, at the seaward portion of the reserve: of which 1,500 acres had been given to the Natives before I took office, and which extended across the railway line.

1161. You mean the 1,500 acres which were originally surveyed near Waingongoro River, where the line was changed by you at Onewaia?—Yes. Onewaia is still the same point; but the line was to go straight inland, instead of at an angle.

1162. What we wish to make clear is, whether we rightly understand you to mean that the most valuable part of the reserve had already been agreed to by the Government, only that it was not shown on any of the maps?—The 1,500 acres were shown on the map: but there were 3,000 acres besides, which I understood from Captain Blake had been agreed to be granted, but had not been surveyed.

1163. Then, if we are to take the 1,500 acres and the 3,000 acres as having both been agreed to before you came into office, the difference between those areas and your 10,000 acres would practically be land of much less value?—Yes. At the same time, the two promises that were brought before the Commission, of 1,000 acres each to Whakataka and Heke Pakeke, I never heard of before. The reserve of 1,500 acres made by Mr. Parris must at any rate have been in satisfaction of one of these claims.

1164. We are to understand that the £800 which was paid as *takoha*, leaving £200 to be still distributed, related to the block of land north of this 10,000-acre reserve, and extending up to Patea River?—Yes; and coming down to Onewaia and the Waingongoro River. It also includes part of Te Ngaere Block.

1165. *Thomas Humphries*, Chief Surveyor for the Provincial District of Taranaki, said: With regard to the survey of the 10,000-acre reserve, Mr. Dalton received his instructions from me, first of all by memorandum. One or two days subsequently I met Major Brown at Hawera, and had a conference with him and some Natives, Mr. Dalton being present. I distinctly remember Major Brown on that occasion telling the Natives that the boundary of the reserve was to go up the Whare-roa, to include Tirotiromoana; from thence in a straight line to Te Roti, and down to Onewaia, where there was a *kahikatea* tree. Those were the instructions Mr. Dalton got from me at the time in Major Brown's presence.

Mr. C. A. WRAY, District Land Officer, further examined.

1166. *The Commissioners.*] We wish to obtain all the particulars you can give relating to the Native reserves and the dealings with the compensation awards in the district under your charge. Will you please take the reserves first?—Yes. The Native reserves in the country comprised between the Waingongoro and Waitotara Rivers may be conveniently classified as follows: (1) Reserves set apart before the second insurrection of 1868, 22,364a. 2r. 9p.; (2) Reserves set apart by Sir D. McLean in 1873, 11,320a. 2r. 18p.; (3) Reserves made for individual Natives, 999a. 0r. 21p.; (4) Reserves leased by Government to Europeans, 505a. 1r. 24p.; (5) Additional reserves made since 1873, 13,313a. 1r. 0p.: total, 48,503a. 0r. 12p. But in this total the reserve is included twice for the Abitahi, Ngatitupaea, and Ngatitanewai; and the area to be deducted depends on the settlement of the