

*Arama Karaka.*

Aug. 4, 1880.

522. You would not recognize a signature signed like that as your own?—I would not.
523. Then you feel perfectly certain somebody else has signed the deposit receipt for you?—I know that somebody else wrote that.
524. Did you keep any record at all of any money that you drew out of your account as trustee?—I never drew any money out of the bank.
525. You signed this cheque for £20?—Yes, but the money was never got.
526. But you signed a cheque for £20 for Mr. Gittos?—Yes; Mr. Gittos asked me, and I signed the cheque.
527. Is that the only cheque that you ever signed for drawing money out of this account?—That is all.
528. Now, here is a cheque which appears to be signed by you on the same day that the money was paid in. It is a cheque for £200. Are you sure you never signed that cheque?—I did not sign it.
529. Were you doing any other business about that time when you were in Auckland about this affair? Were you doing any other business with Mr. Sheehan and Mr. Brissenden?—That was the last time I saw Mr. Sheehan, when we were arranging this business.
530. Do you not think you signed any other papers at all—that you might have signed this without knowing what you were signing?—I did not write that; I did not sign. I was very much displeased with Mr. Sheehan for taking the paper from me at the bank, and I did not do any more business.
531. Is that the signature that you always sign—the signature to the £20? Is that your own signature, and like the signature that you always use?—I do not know that myself. I did not sign a cheque on the bank.
532. But this is a cheque for £20, which was given to Mr. Gittos, and it professes to be signed by Arama Karaka Aututu and John Sheehan, trustees of Wi Apo. Is not that the signature that you signed for the £20?—Is this the cheque to Mr. Gittos?
534. This is a cheque for £20?—I signed a cheque for £20.
535. Can you see well?—Yes, I can see.
536. And you do not say positively whether that is your own signature or not?—The signature on the cheque which I gave to Mr. Gittos is mine.
537. Now, do you think that was the cheque?—If that is for the £20, that is the one.
538. You think it is the cheque that you gave?—Yes.
539. That is your writing, is it not? That is your petition to the Committee?—Yes.
540. And that is your signature?—That is my signature.
541. Do you think this other signature is at all like it—that it is also your signature?—No, this is not like it.
542. This is a cheque for £200, and you feel quite certain that the signature to it is not yours?—It is not mine.
543. Look at your own signature to this petition in front of you. Do you feel quite certain that the signature to this cheque is not your signature?—I did not sign my name to that cheque for £200.
544. I want you to explain. When you find your own signature in front of you do you feel quite certain that this other signature is not yours?—Yes. I am able to say that this signature to the petition is mine, and this to the cheque is not.
545. Then you feel perfectly certain that this signature to the £200 cheque is a forgery?—Yes.
546. Supposing Mr. Brissenden and Mr. Sheehan were to say that they saw you sign that cheque, would you still declare that you never saw it, and that it does not bear your signature?—I would say it was false.
547. I will just ask you a question or two about this £20 cheque. Did Mr. Gittos come and ask you to sign it?—Yes.
548. Did you understand what it was for?—Mr. Gittos told me that if I signed my name to the cheque he would take it to Auckland, get Mr. Sheehan to sign it, and take it to the bank.
549. Did you understand that it was to be paid to Mr. Gittos for food and clothing that he had obtained for Wi Apo's sons?—Yes.
550. And you wished Mr. Gittos to have the money?—Yes. I was willing that Mr. Gittos should get the money and bring it.
551. And you understood that you and Mr. Sheehan were both to sign the cheque, in order that Mr. Gittos might have the money as coming from the trustees of Wi Apo?—Yes.
552. You did not understand that Mr. Sheehan was to have the £20?—No.
553. Did Mr. Gittos come to you afterwards and tell you that he could not get the £20 from Mr. Sheehan?—Yes.
554. Did you speak to Mr. Sheehan about it?—I never saw Mr. Sheehan. As I have stated to the Committee, that was the last time I saw Mr. Sheehan, when we went to the bank.
555. You went to Colonel Haultain, the Commissioner, and asked him what had become of the money?—Yes.
556. And did Colonel Haultain go with you to the bank?—Yes.
557. And did the bank show you this cheque?—Yes; the bank showed us all the cheques.
558. You then, for the first time, learned that Mr. Sheehan had drawn this £20?—Mr. Gittos had told me before, because he had gone down previous to this with the cheque; and he told me before this that the money was gone.
559. You then learned for the first time that £200 had been drawn in your name?—Yes.
560. And what did you do then. Did you not go and see Mr. Sheehan?—No, I did not go and see Mr. Sheehan or Mr. Brissenden.
561. Have you been on good terms with Mr. Sheehan. Have you been on friendly terms with him as trustee?—Yes; we have had no quarrel.
562. Did you ever have any conversation together, or consult as trustees about this money?—No.