

166. *Hon. Mr. Peter.*] Was there a house on it when he bought it?—Yes; the house is worth £400.
167. *Hon. Mr. Hislop.*] What is the acreage?—I think it is 477 acres.
168. *Mr. Peacock.*] That is £9 an acre; without the building it would be £8 5s.?—Yes, without building; although part of it is opposite to this lease it is half a mile nearer to the station.
169. Do you know that lease, and what the tenant (lessee) is paying?—10s. 6d.; but he is not satisfied—a man named Barr—he said he would have to give it up if he could not get a reduction of the rent.
170. How long has he had it?—Eighteen months or two years; I am not at all sure as regards the time.
171. Do you know the tenure of his lease, or whether he has made improvements?—It was improved already; there is bush all through it.
172. What would you value the improvements on that land at?—To begin, at £1 an acre.
173. Apart from that?—About £1 5s. an acre.
174. That is about the same as the other?—Yes.
175. *Dr. Fitchett.*] The costs were £43 11s.; I would ask you whether you think that was reasonable?—I would rather be excused from giving an opinion on that.
176. You know the work that was done?—I do not know all the work that might have been done; I would rather be excused answering the question. To begin with, you will see that my charges were less than theirs; it would not therefore come well from me to give an opinion.
177. *Hon. Captain Kenny.*] You put the profit at 4s. a sheep: is that net or gross?—That is net return.
178. How much do you allow for wool?—About 3s.
179. For sheep sold?—1s. for what you sell; that would be 1s. profit all round on the one-third sold fat; that is, out of a flock of three hundred, one hundred would be sold fat at a profit of £15 over and above the wool.
180. Then in your flock you would expect to get only 4s.: 3s. for wool, and 1s. for sheep?—Yes, speaking roughly; I am not able to speak particularly.

WILLIAM WILLIAMS examined.

181. *Hon. the Chairman.*] What is your name?—William Williams.
182. Where do you live?—At Stratford.
183. Will you state how long you have lived in that district?—I have been in the Patea district for twenty-two years.
184. *Mr. Levi.*] Have you been mixed up at all with Native affairs in the district?—Yes; very considerably.
185. For how long?—Most of the time; I think, for about eighteen years.
186. Will you tell the Committee what were your relations with the Natives?—My relations with the Natives were these: I understood the Native language, and they came to me for advice about business matters.
187. Are you friendly with them?—Yes, we have always been on friendly terms, ever since the war.
188. Have you been mixed up in business transactions with them?—Yes; I have had considerable business with the Natives.
189. What Natives of this district were you most intimate with?—With the Pukekohe Tribe.
190. With any others?—Yes; I was intimate with all of them, but not so much so as with this particular tribe.
191. Is it a hapu or a tribe?—It is a hapu; it was a tribe, but they call it a hapu now.
192. Have you any knowledge of the feelings and conduct generally of the Natives?—Yes; I think I have a fair knowledge of the feelings and general bearing of the Natives.
193. Have you any influence with them?—Yes; I think I have some little influence with them.
194. What is your position now with them?—I am trustee in two estates—those of Taurua and Ngairo, two chiefs that died recently.
195. Who were you appointed by?—I am executor under the will.
196. Have you any interest yourself in Native land in the district?—None whatever.
197. Have you freehold property?—Yes.
198. You hold none from Natives?—None from Natives.
199. Have you at any time held any office under the Government?—Yes; I was land-purchase officer for some time.
200. What were your duties?—My duty was to purchase land for the Government; also, to assist Major Brown, who was then Commissioner on the Coast.
201. To purchase land from the Natives?—Yes.
202. And to assist Major Brown: in what doing?—In settling the Native reserves in his district.
203. When was that?—Eight or nine years ago.
204. Was that before or after Sir William Fox and Sir Dillon Bell went there?—It was either immediately before Sir William Fox and Sir Dillon Bell were appointed or immediately after—during part of the time.
205. Had you anything to do with them when they were acting?—Yes; I was with them at the first.
206. Doing what?—Advising, talking, and giving information to the Natives.
207. Have you been also a licensed interpreter until recently?—Yes.