

COMMISSION.

To all to whom these presents shall come, and to WILLIAM LEE REES, Esquire, of Auckland, in the Colony of New Zealand, a member of the House of Representatives for the said colony; JAMES CARROLL, Esquire, of Gisborne, in the said colony, also a member of the said House; and THOMAS MACKAY, Esquire, of Wellington, in the said colony: Greeting.

WHEREAS, for the purpose of affording information to the General Assembly of New Zealand as to the present state of the law affecting the alienation and disposition of interests in Native lands, and for the other objects and purposes hereinafter mentioned, it is expedient a Commission should be issued to make the inquiry and suggestions hereinafter particularly referred to:

Now, therefore, know ye that I, William Hillier, Earl of Onslow, the Governor of the Colony of New Zealand, reposing trust and confidence in your knowledge, ability, and integrity, and by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council of the said colony, do hereby constitute and appoint you, the said

WILLIAM LEE REES,
JAMES CARROLL, and
THOMAS MACKAY,

to be Commissioners for the purpose of making inquiry into and suggestions upon the following matters: that is to say,—

1. The operation of the existing laws relating to the alienation and disposition of interests in Native lands within the colony.
2. The general constitution, practice, and procedure of the Native Land Court, so far as may be necessary to ascertain the operation of the existing laws, and in what respects the constitution, practice, and procedure of the said Court could be simplified, or amended, or whether the same should be reconstituted.
3. What class or classes of cases have arisen which exhibit the defects in the present system of alienating or disposing of interests in Native lands, or in which non-compliance with existing laws has created or complicated defective titles where such lands have been equitably acquired or dealt with after the titles thereto have been investigated by the Native Land Court, and where such complication or defect still exists, and what remedy, if any, should be adopted in respect thereof. Provided that the said Commissioners shall not have power to inquire into any particular case within the terms of this clause unless the parties interested shall consent to such case being brought before the Commission, nor shall the Commissioners inquire into any such matter where the existing title to any such land is directly or indirectly the subject of legal proceedings in any Court or before any authority empowered to deal with or investigate the same.
4. The principles on which interests in Native lands should in future be alienated or disposed of by or on behalf of the Native owners, and the manner, terms, and conditions in which the same can be carried into effect.
5. And generally to inquire into any other matter or thing necessary to elicit full information in the premises.

And for the better enabling you to carry these presents into effect you are hereby authorised and empowered to make and conduct any inquiry at such place or places in the North Island of the colony as you may deem expedient; and to call before you and examine on oath or otherwise, as may be allowed by law, such person or persons as you may think capable of affording you information in the premises. And you are also hereby empowered to call for and examine all such records, books, deeds, instruments, accounts, plans, maps, or other documents, as you shall judge necessary for the purposes aforesaid, or any of them. And, further, that, using all due diligence, and not later than two calendar months from the date hereof, you do report to me, under your hands and seals, your opinion resulting from the said inquiry in respect of the matters hereby referred to you, and stating in such report or annexed thereto what suggestions and recommendations you offer or make for remedy of all or any of such matters as aforesaid, and the manner, terms, and conditions in and upon which the same should, in your opinion, be carried into effect. And it is hereby declared that this Commission shall continue in full force and virtue although the inquiry be not regularly continued from time to time or from place to place by adjournment. And, lastly, that the powers, authorities, and duties hereby conferred and imposed upon you, the said Commissioners, may be exercised and performed by any two of you sitting and acting together.

In witness whereof I, the said William Hillier, Earl of Onslow, the Governor of the Colony of New Zealand, have hereunto set my hand, and have caused these (L.S.) presents to be issued under the seal of the said colony, at Wellington, in the said colony, this eleventh day of February, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-one.

Issued in Executive Council—

ALEX. WILLIS,
Clerk of the Executive Council.

ONSLOW,
Governor