

It now appears that the Board, after deciding to rescind their former recommendation of February, 1908, omitted to notify Mr. Black thereof, as should have been done. When in Napier in May I instructed the Commissioner (as above stated) to carry out the necessary steps to give effect to the Board's recommendation and your decision with regard thereto, but next month, the Board having altered its views, the former instructions thereupon fell to the ground, and the Commissioner should have written to the lessee informing him to this end. As you will see by the Commissioner's letter of the 1st instant (below), he apparently did nothing, and allowed Mr. Black to continue thinking that he was to obtain a lease in accordance with the Board's recommendations of February and subsequently rescinded.

WM. C. KENSINGTON, Under-Secretary.

Office of the Minister of Lands, Wellington, 8th September, 1908.

Memo. for Under-Secretary for Lands.

THE accompanying paper came to hand to-day without any letter. It evidently relates to Mr. Black's statement that he received notice of the Ministerial approval to his grant of 900 acres. If this is a correct copy of the letter sent he certainly has done so. Please call on the Commissioner to show the authority for his statement that the Minister approves of the recommendation of the Land Board. You might suspend further action that will endanger the carrying-out of this promise, which has been cast upon the Government by the action of the Commissioner.

ROBERT McNAB.

Enclosure.

Department of Lands, Napier, 14th May, 1908.

Mr. Robert G. Black, care of Land Officer, Gisborne.

*Lots 1 and 2, Run No. 43, Blocks XII and XVI, Waingaromia Survey District.*

REFERRING to my memo. to you of the 18th February last, I have to inform you that the Hon. the Minister of Lands has approved the recommendation of the Land Board that a lease of portion of the above holding, containing about 900 acres, be offered to you for a further term of twenty-one years on the same conditions as your present lease, and at an annual rental of about £79. I should be glad to hear at your early convenience if you will accept this.

It has been decided that the balance is to be subdivided for closer settlement and offered under the provisions of "The Land Act, 1892." Due notice, fixing the date of opening of same for selection, areas, prices, rental, &c., will be given in the local newspapers.

You are required to give up possession of the area to be subdivided on the 28th February, 1909.

The improvements on the whole of the run as on the 30th November last were valued at £13,743 7s. 6d., and this is the sum, subject to any necessary deductions or additions at the end of your lease, to which you are entitled in the event of not accepting the above offer.

H. G. PRICE.

For Commissioner of Crown Lands.

S.G.R. 27/17.

(Telegram.)

To Commissioner of Crown Lands, Napier.

10th September, 1908.

PLEASE refer to your S.G.R. 27/8 of fourteenth May, 1908, written by Mr. Price for you to Robert G. Black. Please show me your authority for the statement that Minister approved of the recommendation of the Land Board, or that the Minister gave any approval to a grant to him of nine hundred acres. Please send me your full explanation, as the matter is very serious. Nowhere in your recommendation do you recommend that Mr. Black should get nine hundred acres, and nowhere have I informed you that the Minister approved of it. If you remember, on the twentieth June you wrote stating that in consequence of Mr. Black's father waiting on the Board the Board decided to rescind the former resolution, and to offer to Mr. Black a renewal of his whole lease; therefore on your own showing the first proposal was cancelled by the Land Board's subsequent resolution. Your explanation must be very full, and no detail must be kept back.

WILLIAM KENSINGTON, Under-Secretary.

S.G.R. 27/18. Run 43, Waingaromia S.D.

Department of Lands and Survey, District Office, Napier, 10th September, 1908.

The Under-Secretary for Lands, Wellington.

*Re Small Grazing-run No. 43, Waingaromia Survey District (R. G. Black, lessee).*

In reply to your telegram of this date, with reference to the above subject, I have the honour to place the following statement of the case before you:—

On the 18th February, 1908, with letter 2459/114, the Valuer's reports and tracings of a number of small grazing-runs were sent to you, including the above, and therein I stated the Land Board had in each instance adopted the reports, and had decided to recommend same for the favourable consideration of the Minister. In the report upon No. 43 the Valuer says, "I would suggest that about 900 acres, starting from the back boundary on the north side of the road, be cut out and be put into a small grazing-run at £3 10s. per acre, unimproved value, and offered to the present tenant for another term of twenty-one years, the balance of both sides of the road be cut up and offered under the optional system. It could be cut up in six sections, giving each section a road frontage and homestead-site." On the 18th of the same month I notified the lessee as to the Board's recommendation, a copy of which accompanied my memo. 2459/115A to you