

Mr. Hardy and Tuiti Macdonald came to make certain proposals to us, and this is what they said: Sell the land, and 2,500 shares in the company would be given to the Natives, in addition to the purchase-money. They also said that all the purchase-money would be paid over to the Natives, no deduction of any sort being made therefrom, the company bearing all costs and expenses. They went on to say that those who still remained obdurate and refused to sell would be called upon to bear very serious and heavy expenses and troubles. That sort of thing startled me. Being ignorant of matters of this kind, I thought it would be better to accept, because the price was increased: the shares in the company were given, in addition to the purchase-money, and no deduction was to be made from the purchase-money. I thought, "Yes, that is a more satisfactory proposal; we had better accept that."

24. And did you accept on behalf of your wife?—Yes.

25. And she received her share of the money?—Yes.

26. What was the amount?—£373 12s., I think.

27. What was your wife getting from the proceeds of that land prior to the sale? Did she receive any portion of the rent?—£2 10s. 3d. per annum, I think it was, she had been receiving before that.

28. Is there anything else you wish to tell the Committee?—I want to point out to the Committee and impress upon them that the old people, who have declined to sell and up to the present time have refused to sell, are still determined not to sell.

29. You must speak on behalf of your wife. She was interested in the block, and she consented to sell and received her money?—Yes.

30. Has she got any interest in the shares in that company?—I could not say.

31. Has she any land at Otaki or any other part of New Zealand?—The only land that I know of is a piece of land at Otaki which she purchased herself. It contains about 1½ acres.

32. Has she any tribal rights?—I cannot say.

33. Is she not interested in other lands at Mohakatino and Tongaporutu by tribal right?—Her interest at Mohakatino was sold to the Government long ago.

34. Have you anything further to add as to what happened after the Te Kuiti meeting?—I think that is all I have to say.

35. *Hon. Sir J. Carroll.*] You were one of the committee that was appointed to act on behalf of the owners in respect of the Mokau Block?—Yes.

36. Was that committee set up under the advice of Mr. Bell, to collect material in order to fight the leases?—Yes.

37. There was no question of sale at that time on their part?—Yes, it had been mentioned before.

38. I mean, so far as they were concerned?—No.

39. They were out to fight the leases?—Yes.

40. Did Mr. Bell advise the committee to subscribe and find money, and to what extent?—Yes, and certain money was collected.

41. How much?—£40 was collected at Mokau.

42. What sum was mentioned that they would require to raise?—£800 was the amount mentioned to be paid to Mr. Bell for undertaking this work.

43. Did the Natives find the £800?—No, because the matter was handed over to Mr. Hardy.

44. Did the Natives undertake to pledge certain lands as security, in order to raise the necessary funds to fight the case?—Yes.

45. And did the Natives sign a document to that purpose?—Yes.

46. Did your wife sign it?—She did not. She had no rights in the lands proposed to be pledged as security.

47. Was it the committee only who signed?—It was the persons who had interests in the blocks which it was proposed to hand over as security for the purpose of raising the money.

48. Was it because they could not raise the money to carry on the case that you, as one of the committee, entertained the proposal for sale?—No, that was not the reason. It was because of the troubles and penalties I have alluded to.

49. Anyhow, they did not raise the money, and you agreed to the sale?—Yes.

50. You said that you were speaking on behalf of the old people who did not agree to the sale?—Yes.

51. How many of them have not taken the money?—One old man has already appeared before you—Te Oro. At the kainga there are about five more.

52. Is that all that you know of?—Those are all I can remember of that place.

53. Did they tell you to come here and give evidence on their behalf?—Yes.

54. Te Oro came here and gave evidence as one of those who did not take the money, I think?—Yes. Well, some of these old people did not know that Te Oro was coming here.

55. When did they authorize you to come?—Te Oro had left Mokau for here on Saturday. I came from Mokau on the Tuesday following.

56. Although you knew your wife had sold, and accepted the money?—Yes.

57. *Mr. Herries.*] You said, I think, that there had been a question of sale before you saw Mr. Bell—before the committee was set up by Mr. Bell?—Yes.

58. Was there any question of sale to the Government?—I cannot say whether it was to the Government or to whom. The proposal to sell was brought by Andrew Eketone.

59. What was the sum that was mentioned?—He did not mention any special sum. What he said was this: "We have been fighting the Mokau case, and we find there is no means of getting out of the trouble. The only thing to do is to sell the land. It is better to have half a loaf than no bread at all."

60. The sum of £22,500 was not mentioned, was it?—I do not remember that. He may have mentioned it and I not heard it.