

64. What else?—There are three sheds I have to pave and concrete, which is very necessary under the Dairy Regulations. Those will cost me £100 each.

65. Of course, you have twenty-one years to run?—Yes, or eighteen years now. To prove my statement in this matter, I would invite the members of the Commission and all concerned in the matter to come out on to the farm, and I will personally demonstrate that my statements are perfectly correct. The bush land is absolutely run out, and the place has got to be stumped and renewed.

66. Is there anything further for improvements?—I should lay down two rams, which would cost about £150.

67. Did you ever have any advance made to you by any of the Government lending departments?—Yes.

68. What amount did you receive from them?—My father died at the end of 1905, and I had to lift my guaranteed account, and I went to the Advances to Settlers Department and raised £2,000 on my lease.

69. On what security?—The lease.

70. Any other security?—No.

71. Can you speak of your own knowledge of any lands owned by the Natives under lease by them from the Public Trustee?—Yes, plenty.

72. What areas can you speak of?—I know one white man who has got just about 2,000 acres.

73. Can you speak of your own knowledge of the farming done by Natives on the land in your district?—Yes, some Natives are on the land. There are a few supplying milk to the Kaupokonui Dairy Company.

74. How are they farming their lands? Have you been on their lands?—No, I have not, but I have frequently passed their lands. Most of their lands are farmed by Europeans.

75. But I am speaking of the lands farmed by Natives themselves?—There are two or three on the Glen Road opposite to me who are farming their lands fairly well, although they are not particular in regard to noxious weeds. I am alluding to land which has been individualized, and they are living on it. The Native land which has not been individualized and on which they are not living is absolutely covered with noxious weeds.

76. What land is that you are speaking of?—The Pa land.

77. And how much of that land is there?—There is not a big quantity of it. It is generally leased to Europeans.

78. I am speaking of land that is harbouring noxious weeds: what quantity is there of that?—There are different areas in different places. They have got the Pa lands partly individualized now, and they are fencing them off.

79. Since 1897 have you resided on this land of yours?—Yes.

80. It has been your home?—Yes; I got married after I got the place, and my wife and family are still there.

81. You sublet portions of it?—Yes, but I have kept part of it for my home.

82. Since your new lease?—Yes.

83. *Cross-examined by Mr. Bell.*] And why did you sublet?—I have sublet purely and simply to get out of the position I am in at the present time—to get under the Act of 1892, so that I can give it all my time.

84. So as to employ your time in what?—In converting the lessees out of the position they are in at the present time, which we are prepared to pay for.

85. For agitating on behalf of the lessees?—I am not agitating.

86. What word would you suggest?—I refer to an agitator as one who goes to the newspaper; that is one thing we have not done.

87. I think you said you purchased the lease from Mr. Milne?—Yes.

88. Do you know that Mr. Milne had applied to convert?—I know now.

89. Did you know then?—No.

90. I do not know whether you are aware that the reason he did not convert was for the same reason as that given by the lessees this morning—that the rent was too high?—No.

91. I think you appeared and gave evidence before the Lands Committee?—I did.

92. You and a Mr. Poole represented the lessees. You have been a most active person?—For the reason that my lease was the second that fell in, Mr. Tinkler's being the first.

93. All your representations before the Lands Committee were based on the fact that the lessees had been misled by the form of their leases?—Yes, that is so.

94. And you never saw your lease at all?—I saw my lease the day it came out of the bank in 1897, when my father and I went into Hawera to pay over the money.

95. And you took the lease out then, in 1897?—I saw the lease then for the first time.

96. *The Chairman.*] Will you distinguish between seeing the lease and perusing it: did you simply see the lease or did you peruse it?—I saw the lease.

97. Then you did not peruse it?—No.

98. *Mr. Bell.*] Then you were not misled by it at that time?—I was misled by the lease.

99. You did not see it till 1897, and then you did not read it?—If you will kindly permit me to answer that, my father was bidding for this land for me, and the lease was produced and then went back into the bank again.

100. *The Chairman.*] Did you peruse that lease?—No, I did not.

101. *Mr. Bell.*] Then, you were not misled by it then?—No. If you put it that way I was not misled by the lease in 1897.

102. You had not seen it before then?—No, I had not got the place.

103. Some time after 1897 you had not been misled by the lease?—I bought my place in February, 1897.