

that date the rents received from the leased lands were paid direct to the Public Trustee. From that date the cash-book and bank account purport to deal only with the station account, though there are numerous payments through this account which really have nothing to do with the station.

As to bushfelling: No copies of the various contracts for bushfelling were retained by Mr. Jackson; they were prepared in Mr. Jackson's office and handed over to Mr. Tait, the station-manager, who saw they were signed. No entries or memoranda were kept in the books as to these contracts. When a contract was completed or a progress-payment was to be made the custom was that an order signed by Mr. Tait was given to the contractor and presented at Mr. Jackson's office for payment. It would appear that no accounts certified by Mr. Tait ever accompanied these orders or were forwarded to the office in Gisborne. Both Mr. Jackson and Mr. Pavitt stated that their confidence in Mr. Tait's knowledge and integrity was such that they took it for granted that the orders were for the correct amounts.

In the original ledger an account was opened for the Waitangirua Station, and bushfelling, scrub-cutting, stores, and purchase of stock were all debited to this. It was not until a new ledger was written up at the request of the auditor, Mr. Beere, that any attempt was made to subdivide this account under its proper headings.

From the evidence before the Commission there is no doubt that the contractors for bushfelling and fencing were at times supplied with stores from the station, and also with meat. There are no entries in the books to support these statements, although Mr. Jackson stated he supposed Mr. Tait deducted sums due for these supplies from the amounts owing to contractors when giving them orders for payment by the trustees. Mr. Pavitt in his evidence stated there was no meat account kept because none was sold on the station, and that he had never made any inquiries from the manager as to whether stores were supplied to the contractors or not. It should also be noted that no evidence was given as to the manager certifying to the receipt by him of supplies purchased for the station. They appear in the current account of the merchant as debited to the station, but no evidence was given as to the same being checked and certified for payment.

As to certain forged orders, amounting in all to £7,468 14s. 2d.: The sum of £903 10s. 4d., being the net amount received from the estate of Mrs. Tait, was paid by the Registrar of the Supreme Court to Messrs. Rees, Bright, and Wauchope, solicitors to the trustees, leaving a net loss to the Waitangirua Station of £6,565 3s. 10d.

Nine orders, amounting in all to £2,454 19s., were produced for the inspection of the Commissioners. These were the particular orders in respect whereof the police proceeded against Mrs. Tait for forgery, and are set out hereunder:—

No. 2054, dated 13th February, 1917, in favour of Otto and Kotialo, for	£	s.	d.
...	198	4	0
No. 2183, dated 27th March, 1917, Johnston and Co.	267	12	0
No. 2183, dated 27th March, 1917, Nyman and Co.	298	0	0
No. 2197, dated 27th March, 1917, Tobisson and Co.	296	14	0
No. 2197, dated 27th March, 1917, Tobisson and Co.	225	0	0
No. 2201, dated 27th March, 1917, B. Herron and Co.	197	14	0
No. 2208, dated 2nd May, 1917, H. R. Johnston and Co.	384	1	0
No. 2205, dated 2nd May, 1917, Tobisson and Co.	298	0	0
No. 2219, dated 2nd May, 1917, H. R. Johnston and Co.	289	14	0
Total	£2,454	19	0