

447. You never heard what was being done at Tauranga?—No.  
 448. You left it to him?—Yes; he had his written instructions when he went away.  
 449. You did not interfere with him at Tauranga?—No.  
 450. Did you copy the instructions?—No.  
 451. Who wrote them out?—Mr. Dufaur, proprietor of the *Poverty Bay Herald*.  
 452. *Mr. Shaw.*] Are you connected with Captain Read in these land purchases?—No.

WILLIAM WILFRED WILSON, examined on oath.

453. You are a solicitor, residing at Gisborne?—Yes.  
 454. You were at Gisborne before and at the time of the election at which Captain Read was returned?—I was.  
 455. Were you a candidate yourself?—I was. I was the first candidate in that district.  
 456. Did you issue your address to the electors?—I did.  
 457. Was there a committee at Gisborne for furthering your interest?—There was.  
 458. Do you know how Captain Read came to be a candidate?—First of all there was a meeting of electors to devise the best means of securing a local candidate. I was first asked to stand, and I consented, but told the persons who asked me that I could not afford to go to great expense. They agreed to pay certain expenses; but as I found that the expenses to me were going to be much more heavy than I had anticipated, I declined to go on with the contest. They then asked me if I would retire in favour of any candidate they might select. I said "No." They asked if I would retire in favour of Captain Read. I said, "Yes, because he has a large interest in the district; therefore anything which would benefit him would benefit the district, and whatever might be to his interest would be to the interest of the district." A deputation at once waited on Captain Read, and asked him to come to a meeting of the committee. He came up, and for a long time positively refused to stand, but at last, as they said if he did not stand Kelly would go in, and they did not want Kelly, he said he would stand.  
 459. Was it to your committee that he consented to stand?—They had been acting for me, but I had just retired.  
 460. You were present during the whole time Captain Read was being pressed to stand?—I am pretty sure I was.  
 461. Did you attend any meetings after that?—I believe I attended all. I have no recollection of being absent from any.  
 462. Did you ever see Captain Read there after that?—I never saw him at any I was present at.  
 463. Were you ever chairman of the committee?—Yes; I think I was chairman as often as any one. There was no standing chairman to the committee.  
 464. When the committee resolved upon any course of action, did they communicate with Captain Read to your knowledge?—I think not. They acted quite independently of Captain Read. In fact, I thought the committee was conducted very loosely. Each member seemed to do just as he thought fit, very much against my wish. But so it was. One member would order one thing, and another member would order something else; and so it went on, each member taking upon himself the responsibility of the whole committee. I may say Captain Read very soon repented of standing. He told me a day or two after he had given his consent that he did not know how he could have been such a fool as to have given his consent.  
 465. Do you know whether Captain Read had any agent independently of the committee?—I have heard that he had appointed Mr. Henshaw to go to Tauranga.  
 466. Were you aware that Major Pitt was being sent?—I was aware of the intention to send him, and afterwards I heard he had been sent.  
 467. Did you or any of the committee know at this time that Captain Read had sent Henshaw?—Some of them did know, I think.  
 468. Did you know of it?—I forget exactly the time at which Pitt was sent. I think I knew before that Captain Read had sent an agent; but the Committee did not like Read interfering, because they considered he had sent an injudicious person.  
 469. And so they sent a more injudicious person?—So it turned out.  
 470. Now, was the appointment and sending of Pitt done by Captain Read?—It was done on the motion of the committee, independently of Captain Read. Captain Read, in fact, expressed his dissent at the appointment afterwards.  
 471. Was it done a day or so before the polling day?—Yes; the election took place the second or third day after Pitt had gone away.  
 472. What did Captain Read say about the appointment of Pitt?—He said the committee had no right to have sent Pitt. He had his own agent at Tauranga, and that was sufficient. In fact, he had two agents—Henshaw and Bradley.  
 473. Were either of these appointed by the committee?—No.  
 474. Had Captain Read consulted with his committee before he appointed his agents?—No; Henshaw was sent away on a Sunday. The committee did not sit on Sunday.  
 475. You knew nothing about Henshaw and Bradley being sent?—No.  
 476. And Captain Read knew nothing about Pitt being sent?—No. Captain Read generally leaves town at 4 o'clock, and Pitt was sent about 9 o'clock at night. I think I heard one of the members ask about instructions given to Major Pitt. I may state the instructions were written by Mr. Dufaur, and were written on a sheet of note paper. As far as I recollect, he was instructed to land at Opotiki, or as near to there as he could be landed, and then canvass round to Tauranga, making Tauranga his head-quarters, and doing everything legal and justifiable to secure the return of Captain Read. That was the substance of the instructions.  
 477. What steps did you take to secure the attendance of witnesses here. You are Captain Read's solicitor?—Yes; I telegraphed up to my clerk to make every endeavour to find Major Pitt, telling him that subpoenas were on the way, the subpoenas having been sent up immediately after the last meeting of the committee. I also sent up subpoenas for Messrs. Crawford and Dufaur.