

Mr. Williams.
March 6, 1879.

15. Did you object to any of these claims that were made at that time, as Registration Officer—in that particular year—I am using the word objection in a technical sense?—I cannot call to mind what I did in that particular year; but I have objected every year to certain numbers of applications sent in.

16. Have you the newspapers containing the publication of your objections—I mean from that period to this? I have tried to get them, and have failed.—I have the list. There were some papers which I have not been able to find since Major Clare held an inquiry here; and I think he must have taken them with him. I have not been able to find them at all.

17. What year was it in which you first made the objection to numerous claims?—In 1874.

18. Do you remember the grounds of your objection?—There were various grounds given—not householders or freeholders according to the requirements of the Act; and insufficiently signed, I think, some were, in that particular year. But I have not been able to find the papers of that year.

19. What took place—I am speaking now of the first year in which you made large objections at the Revision Court?—There was no Revision Court held. The Court fell through in that year. I was here to meet the Revising Officer, but he did not appear. I learnt afterwards that he was at Whangarei, but was unable to come here in consequence of the vessel he was to come by being prevented from calling there in consequence of the weather which prevailed.

20. What, then, in that case became of the claims?—There is no provision made in the Act for any adjournment, and the whole of the claims lapsed—fell through. The roll for the previous year continued as the roll for that year, according to the requirements of the Act.

21. So that not only those you had objected to lapsed, but others you had not objected to?—Certainly—every claim sent in.

22. Were many claims to be placed on the roll made in the following year? Were the same claims repeated?—Many were renewed, but several were not. But there was a great number came in; I think those we have here.

23. Did you object to many of these claims at that time?—I do not think many were objected to.

24. What happened at the Revision Court that year?—All not objected to were passed and placed upon the roll.

25. And all that were objected to?—Lapsed. The objections were held good by the Revising Officer.

26. Did the persons making the claims appear to sustain their applications?—There was no appearance at all that I can remember.

27. You were not yourself called upon to give any proof of the validity of your objections?—Not at all.

28. How far have we got now?—That would be 1875.

29. In 1876 were claims made?—If I remember correctly, there were not many objections. There were two objections raised—not by myself. There was an objection raised by Mr. Carleton in that year.

30. In 1877 a large number were made—is that not so?—No; there were not many in 1877. A great number were objected to. I objected to a great many. I objected to the names that had been on the roll.

31. How many did you object to in that year?—Two hundred and thirty-four Native names.

32. Upon what grounds?—I took up the ruling that the Revising Officer had given the previous sitting. An objection was raised by Mr. Carleton in order to try the question. He objected to a chief named Hone Mohi Tawhai, residing at Hokianga, upon the ground that he claimed as a freeholder and had no individual claim. The Revising Officer ruled the objection as fatal.

33. What was the value of the estate in respect to which the claim was made?—I think he claimed for a block of 11,000 acres.

34. What would be the value of it?—That I could not say.

35. How many people held that land in common with himself?—I am not quite sure of the block. I think that in the block he claims on there are over a hundred claimants.

36. Is the land under Crown grant to these people?—Yes. In that year I objected to all on the roll that I thought I could give a good reason to the Revising Officer, and they were all struck off.

37. I do not quite understand your reason, however, if you were unacquainted with the value of their land?—Simply that they all held the land in common.

38. Was the land of sufficient value to give them £50 each?—No; I should say not, decidedly.

39. I wish you could give me an approximate idea of the value of it?—Might I take the opinion of another?

40. Not very well. I may take the opinion, but I would rather have your own. However, I will allow you to refresh your memory in any way you like?—Then, I should say, according to the price which has been given for land purchased from Maoris, now they would not get more than probably three or four shillings an acre for it, if they were selling it.

41. And you state there were a hundred names on the grant?—I think there are more than a hundred.

42. With respect to the objections taken by you in 1877, did the people objected to generally attend to endeavour to sustain their claims?—None of them attended.

43. Then, in point of fact, Mr. Williams, did you not know that when you made these objections it practically amounted to their names not appearing on the roll?—No; many of the names I objected to were those who lived in the vicinity of the Court, and could have easily attended. When I took up the ruling given by the Revising Officer—when I took up the ruling of 1877—I first of all struck off between forty and fifty names in my own immediate vicinity.

44. That is to say, you noted them as persons you should object to?—Yes. Many of these Natives I knew to be personal friends and supporters of my brother. I could name them. I objected to between thirty and forty of these Natives. After that I went through the roll, taking up names which I thought I could raise objection to upon the same grounds.