

purpose of getting the names. As a resident of Wanganui, I have frequently subscribed to send persons round to get people to sign their names. I want to know whether in this case it was an organization, or spontaneous on the part of the Natives?—I have been told it was an organization.

379. Do you know, Mr. Williams, whether the bulk of the people who sent in new claims were likely to be supporters or opponents of your brother?—I could only form an idea upon the question; because the bulk of them are strangers to me. I know nothing whatever of them. I may say that, with the exception of the Whangaroa Natives, they are all perfect strangers to me.

380. You produced yesterday, Mr. Williams, a document from Mr. White, the Resident Magistrate at Mongonui, giving you certain information upon which you acted?—Yes.

381. You relied so fully upon this document that you founded a very serious official act upon it—namely, an objection to people voting. I see that Mr. White, in one part of that memorandum, makes a statement in these words: “Patrick Lundon’s special mission to the north for about six weeks last summer to collect the above list, being supposed to be Lundon’s special friends.” Did not that convey to you an idea whether these men were likely to be supporters or opponents of your brother?—Certainly. If they were Lundon’s friends the probability is that none of them would vote for my brother.

382. This memorandum was, I presume, made officially to you, or semi-officially?—I had permission to make use of it.

383. Was it your opinion, upon the receipt of this memorandum, that this was a decorous paragraph, seeing you were brother of Mr. Williams the member?—I do not see there was anything wrong in his mentioning that.

384. It must be mentioned—or else it has no meaning—for the purpose of satisfying you in some way that these men really had not a claim, or to strengthen the general objection he made. Is it not so?—My object in asking Mr. White’s advice upon these names was, not to ascertain whether they were friends or opponents of my brother, but whether they really had any claims to be placed on the roll.

385. Then, if I understand you, he supplemented the information you really desired by this gratuitous statement?—It was a gratuitous statement of Mr. White’s, not sought by me.

386. Mr. White says, in another portion of the memorandum, “Every one of the remainder are either owners in common of native lands having no individual right, minors, and vagabonds. Households scarcely house a dog of the commonest Maori description.” Do you believe that with regard to the houses?—Yes, with regard to many of them. I would not say it exactly in those words; but they are of the commonest description throughout the district—mere hovels.

387. You do not consider that exaggerated language, Mr. Williams?—No; not with regard to some of these hovels which they call houses.

388. It has been broadly alleged, Mr. Williams, in petitions to the House, that you favoured some claimants because you knew them to be favourable to your brother, and objected to others because you knew them to be unfavourable. Is there any truth in that assertion?—No. I think I called your attention yesterday to the fact that after Mr. Lawlor’s ruling, when I objected to over two hundred names, I first of all selected over forty names in my own immediate district—Natives whom I knew personally—and I could not help knowing they had been supporters of my brother, and would continue to be so; and had I been disposed to manifest any partiality, it would have been easy to have passed these names over.

389. You were kind enough yesterday to offer a list. Perhaps you would give it now?—I could mention two or three names who would not only feel annoyed at being struck off, but would use their influence against my brother. One Native, the strongest supporter of my brother, was objected to—Wi Piriongo.

390. On what grounds was he objected to?—Because I had doubts as to his qualifications—holding in common. He was struck off the roll by Mr. Lawlor in 1877. Out of these forty-four struck out, not one of them reappeared the following year—not one of them renewed his claim. But of the other lot, there were between fifty and sixty struck off in 1877, and they reappeared in the new claims. My object was to act without partiality. It could scarcely be supposed I would break into my brother’s stronghold and object to names I knew were his supporters, and would continue to be his supporters, if I intended to act with partiality. Every name I found on the rolls which I had my doubts upon, I objected to. When Mr. Lawlor held his Revision Court, none of these Natives appeared, although, as I said yesterday, these forty-four were all within twenty miles of the Courthouse. Some of them were less distances, some within ten or twelve miles; and they might have appeared if they had chosen to do so.

391. Am I right in understanding it in this way: that your brother’s friends to whom you objected were living so near that they could have appeared without inconvenience, while those on the other side were living at a distance, and could not have appeared without inconvenience?—Most of them could not attend without inconvenience.

392. Did you allow similar claims to remain upon the roll to those which you objected to?—There are some similar to those that I objected to, that I passed over.

393. Why allow them to remain?—Because I had my doubts. I believe there are many names I ought to have objected to in that year.

394. You use the same expression in two different senses. You say, because you had doubts you objected, and again, because you had doubts, you did not object?—I would not say that, because I could not gain sufficient information. I was ignorant of them, and could gain no information. I could advance no information; and I left them.

395. Did you take any part in circulating for signature petitions to the House for last session?—None whatever.

396. Has it come to your knowledge directly that such petitions were circulated? Have you seen such petitions in the hands of any person?—No, I never saw a petition.

*Mr. Williams.*

March 7, 1879.