

served, say, two, three, or four years, by the repeal of the Act which guaranteed the land, lost their claim altogether. This, we thought, was a hardship. We thought some consideration should be shown to them.

42. For the time for which they had served?—Yes.

43. Though they had not complied with the Act?—They had complied with the Act as far as they were able to; but the Act was repealed. The men would have complied with the Act if they had been allowed to do so; but the Act was repealed in 1876, and the men who served after 1871 lost their claims.

44. But are you not aware that the claims have been renewed by special Act?—No; I am not aware that they have been renewed. Not up to two or three years ago.

45. I think they are on two distinct occasions?—Not subsequent to 1883, I am quite certain they were not.

46. Then, I take it that where people appeared before you the evidence was taken down, and is on record, so that if a petition is presented now we should be able to have the evidence that was before the Commission?—Yes.

47. And is it stated on what ground you rejected the claims?—Yes, in some cases; in other cases No. For instance, many men who sent in applications took their discharges at a period subsequent to the repeal of the Act. The Act was repealed in different provinces at different times.

48. Did you not think old soldiers would have rights before getting their discharges?—None whatever. The colony said to them, If you will take your discharge for the purpose of settling in this country, and remain four out of five years, so that we may have your military services if we require them, we will give you a certain grant of land. The land was not given for any past services, but as an inducement to settle in the particular district.

48A. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Were you present as Chairman of the Commission at each of the meetings which resulted in claims being rejected?—No; I was not.

49. How many claims were rejected at the meetings at which you were present?—I could not tell you. The Commission did not sit as a whole at Napier. The Napier claims were inquired into by one of the Commissioners, Mr. Fulton, whilst others went round the West Coast. These claims were inquired into by Mr. Fulton, who handed them to the whole of the Commission, who then considered them. It was the same way at Dunedin and at Christchurch—only one of the Commissioners went down there.

50. *Mr. Fulton.*] Two at Dunedin?—Yes; Mr. Fulton and Mr. Bunny went down to Dunedin.

51. *Mr. Macandrew.*] Then, the decisions of the Commission were arrived at by the evidence taken by individual members?—Yes; in some cases.

52. Then, if it could be shown that non-appearance of claimants was owing to ignorance of the existence of the Commission, would that, in your opinion, be a good ground for reconsideration?—I do not think so. We had the notice inserted in every newspaper in the colony, I believe.

53. Well, but I am assuming that they could prove that they had had no notice—that they had no opportunity of seeing newspapers or receiving any notice?—I think such cases are very very few.

54. You say that a large number of claims were reported against, although the claimants did not appear. How did these claims come before the Commission?—Each man was required to send in an application, in which the circumstances under which he claimed were to be set forth.

55. Then, you did not deal with any cases unless there was a written application or personal appearance?—With none whatever. In all cases, assuming that the printed form had been filled in, there was sufficient evidence to guide the Commissioners as to their judgments.

56. *Mr. Brown.*] You state that 1,582 claims were dealt with?—Yes.

57. Did you know the names of these people?—We had their names.

58. Did you take any steps to let them know with regard to the work of the Commission?—We did.

59. You advertised in all the papers?—Yes.

60. And only 119 claims were admitted?—Yes.

61. Out of 1,582?—Yes.

62. Did it not occur to the Commission that these people whose claims you were considering, and whose names you knew, and possibly their residences, had not had sufficient notice, or were not aware of the existence of the Commission?—The men in every case were furnished with the printed claims.

63. Then, 1,582 forms were sent to persons who had claims?—The forms were distributed all over the districts.

64. How?—They were sent to the officers in command of the Militia and Volunteers in each district. Then notices were inserted in the papers that claimants were to make their claims, and would get forms from the officers in command. They were not necessarily required to fill in that particular form, but to send certain information.

65. What steps were taken by the officers to inform the claimants?—They furnished application-forms to men applying.

66. Then, no one got a form who did not apply?—How could we know the different claimants if they did not apply? 1,582 men sent in forms.

67. How many appeared before you?—I could not tell you.

68. One-half?—I could not say. The Commission sat in all places in which it had given notice of its intention to sit. They sat in Wellington, Auckland, New Plymouth, Thames, Wanganui, Napier, Oamaru, Christchurch, and Blenheim.

69. Then, 1,582 did send in claims for land?—Yes.

70. Were any other claims adjudicated upon except these?—No.

71. We have had before us a petition in which the husband has died and the widow has