

40. And you have not seen it since?—No.
41. *Mr Buchanan.*] You have said the letter was a private letter to you?—Yes.
42. Was it marked "Private"?—It is semi-private in the body of it. I put a note on it and sent it to Mr Whitlock afterwards, to show it to the editor and return it to me.
43. And to the directors?—No.
44. *The Chairman.*] The note says, "You are at liberty to make use of this privately with manager and directors, but not for publication"?—Yes.
45. *Mr Buchanan.*] Did you consider it was private except from the point of view that it was not to be published?—I consider it is an absolute private communication to myself.
46. And yet you passed it over for perusal to two other people?—To the secretary, because I was asked to do so by Mr Symes.
47. *Mr Myers*] If you had been asked by your codirectors to send a letter to Mr Symes, and that letter came in reply, would you still consider it a private letter?—I was not asked by the directors.
48. Mr Anderson's recollection is different from yours?—Mr Whitlock met me in the street, but I was never asked by the directors.
49. Did any one ask you?—The secretary, Mr Whitlock. We were talking in the street, and he said, "You might write to Mr Symes. I cannot do anything through the Department."
50. Do you know whether he had applied to the Department?—We had applied to the Department. I believe the secretary had. Perhaps I might explain that the two papers, the *Egmont Settler* and the *Stratford Post*, were bought out by one company and incorporated into the *Stratford Evening Post*. Previous to that both papers were on the Government list for advertisements, and when they were incorporated they were considered as defunct, and then when we wrote we were told we were not on the list. The secretary will explain that.
51. *The Chairman.*] After receipt of this letter did you alter your leaders so far as dealing with Mr Symes in any way was concerned?—No, it made no difference whatever.
52. *Right Hon Sir J G Ward.*] You have stated, Mr McCluggage, that both papers—that is, the *Egmont Settler* and the *Egmont Post*—were on the Government list for advertisements. Would you contradict me if I said that one of them, the *Egmont Post*, was not on the Government list at the time referred to?—The secretary told me that they were on, Sir Joseph, but I do not know whether they were on or not.

WILLIAM CHARLES WHITLOCK sworn and examined. (No. 8.)

1. *Mr Myers*] You are a journalist?—Yes.
2. And proprietor of a paper in Hastings?—Yes.
3. What is the paper?—The *Hastings Standard*.
4. You were previously living in Stratford, were you not?—Yes.
5. And you were secretary and manager?—No, manager.
6. Of the Stratford Publishing Company?—Yes.
7. Before joining that company were you the editor of some other paper?—No; I was manager of the *Egmont Settler*.
8. We have had a letter put in, Mr Whitlock, which no doubt you will remember [Exhibit Y handed to witness]?—Yes, I remember that.
9. Do you remember coming to Wellington after that letter was received in Stratford?—Yes.
10. Do you happen to know or to have ascertained the date of your visit to Wellington?—It was towards the end of the session.
11. Well, this letter would be towards the end of the session?—It was in October.
12. And what brought you to Wellington?—I came down to see the Colonial Secretary.
13. Did you bring this letter with you?—I believe I did.
14. Was your visit occasioned in consequence of the receipt of the letter?—Yes, certainly.
15. Then you came down to endeavour to get your paper put on the list of those to which Government advertisements were given?—Yes, that was the object of my visit.
16. Did you see Mr Symes when you came down?—No, I did not.
17. You saw the Minister in charge?—I saw Mr Jennings, and he arranged with me to see the Minister in charge on the train. I went up in the same train with the Minister.
18. And did you make your application then?—I made my application to the Minister on the train.
19. Did you have that letter with you?—I would certainly have it with me, because I had shown it to Mr Jennings.
20. Did you show it to the Minister?—I do not think so, I have no recollection of doing so.
21. But you had previously told Mr Jennings?—Yes.
22. Was that when you asked him to obtain the appointment?—I had to do so, because I had to explain my reason for going to him instead of going to the member for the district, Mr Symes.
23. You have no recollection of showing this letter to the Minister?—I have none.
24. Did you explain the position to the Minister?—I explained the position to him. Of course, it is a long time ago, and it is very difficult to remember. I explained the position to him in so far as we had not the advertisements.
25. But you came down in consequence of the receipt of the letter?—Yes.
26. Did the letter or its contents form the subject of conversation between you and the Minister?—I do not think it did.
27. Can you say definitely one way or the other?—It is very difficult to remember five years ago. I should say that I did not show it to him. That is the opinion I have, speaking from recollection.
28. My question went further. I was asking whether you explained to the Minister the reason of your coming down here, and whether you indicated the nature of the contents of the