

146. Did you have any correspondence with any one in reference to your claim?—No, I cannot remember

147. How long ago was this?—Some three years ago, I think.

148. Would it be possible for your brother to have made your application when he made his own, and you to have forgotten that fact?—I do not think so, because our businesses are entirely separate.

149. What newspaper were those letters and account published in—the extracts that you spoke of?—Those letters of Mr Symes were published in the Stratford paper

150. Did you publish them?—No.

151. Who published them?—That I could not say

152. How long previous to the publication did they go out of your possession?—I do not remember how long before the election it was.

153. To whom did you give them?—They were forwarded to Mr Hine's committee.

154. That was actually during the campaign?—Yes, before the election

155. They were forwarded by you during the campaign to Mr Hine's committee?—I do not remember whether it was during the campaign or before the campaign

156. Well, some time before the election. It was to the committee, and therefore, presumably, during the campaign. The committee would only be formed during the campaign?—Well, that I could not say

157. At all events, they were forwarded to Mr Hine's committee before the election?—Yes.

158. For what purpose?—I think, as I said before, I took exception to them.

159. Mr Hine and Mr Symes were the candidates?—Yes.

160. They were not in your electorate?—No.

161. What electorate are you in?—I am in Mr Pearce's electorate.

162. *Mr Myers:*] You told Mr Skerrett that you did not think Mr Symes was entitled to anything?—Yes.

163. Will you say on what grounds you considered he was not entitled to anything?—Well, I thought that as he was a member of Parliament he was not entitled to a commission

WILLIAM WILSON sworn and examined. (No. 3)

1 *Mr Myers*] Where do you live?—At Whenuakura, near Patea.

2 And you are a farmer, are you not?—I was.

3. Do you know a gentleman named Temple Frere?—Yes.

4. Was he in partnership with a brother of yours?—Yes.

5. What is your brother's name?—Percival Wilson

6. Were your brother and Mr Frere at one time in partnership as farmers?—Yes.

7 And were they holders of one of the west coast leases?—Yes.

8. And were they in the same position as some of the other people who were claiming a refund?—I suppose so.

9 At all events, you know that they did claim a refund of expenses incurred in connection with one of those abortive awards?—Yes, they did.

10. Do you know what the amount of their claim was?—I could not say, exactly

11 About what?—Well, I should say it was £198 10s., as near as I can give it.

12. Were Messrs. Wilson and Frere petitioners—that is to say, did they actually sign one of the petitions?—I could not swear to that. They got a refund.

13 Do you know when it was they got the refund?—In 1906, I think.

14. But you do not remember the month?—Yes, in March, 1906, I paid the commission.

15. You are their attorney, are you not?—I was at that time.

16. To what constituency did those two gentlemen belong?—To the Patea Electorate, while in the Dominion.

17 That was not Mr Symes's electorate?—Yes, at that time it was. He was member for Patea.

18. And they were two of his constituents?—Yes.

19 But they were out of the Dominion at the time you recovered the money for them?—Yes.

20. But they seem to have been in the Dominion. Mr William Wilson, at any rate, was in the Dominion at the time the petition was signed?—That is my signature to the petition

21 Then you petitioned for both of them?—Yes.

22. They were not in the colony at the time?—No.

23. How did you come to sign that petition?—I held Frere's power of attorney

24. Who prepared the petition?—I could not say that. My brother was principally interested in getting the petition signed about his own locality—the first one.

25. Which brother?—Percival Wilson.

26. How can that be if he was out of the colony?—I am speaking of the first petition; Mr Hutchison presented it.

27 Then your brother was one of those who took steps to prepare the first petition?—He helped to get it prepared, and to get signatures.

28. And when the second petition was prepared you signed it for them?—Under a power of attorney, yes

29 Did you see Mr Symes in connection with the matter before signing?—I might have done—I could not say that I did. I do not know who took that petition round to get signatures.

30. Well, at all events the petition was put in, and there was a favourable report eventually?—Yes.