

pencil?—You showed me that; I said we cannot possibly go beyond that; you showed me these other addenda but I said that was as far as I would go.

164. Wherein consisted my deceit in your opinion?—In leading me to believe the Premier wished me to draft that clause.

165. Which clause?—The clause I drafted, which you have in manuscript.

166. That was in the session of 1894. Will you look at this Bill [put in and marked "J"]; I am going to swear that I sent this to the Premier and he sent it on to you, and before you answer I will read his letter [produced and marked "L"]. Was not that the Bill which was then referred to you by Mr. Seddon?—No, it was not.

167. Do you state that this Bill was never referred to you by Mr Seddon as stated in his letter?—I did not make any report on it.

168. This is my letter to Mr. Seddon [produced and marked "R"]. This is the Bill [exhibit "J"]. This is Mr. Seddon's letter [exhibit "L?"].—On the 21st June, 1894, Mr. Seddon referred a Bill to me, which is on the file, and there is a great deal more in the Bill read than in the original Bill.

169. Is not this the Bill to which you referred in your evidence?—Unquestionably not; it is not the Bill which Mr. Seddon minuted to me—"Mr. Sheridan. R. J. S."

170. Wherein does this Bill differ?—There are five clauses in this Bill.

171. Are there not five in this? Did you follow it as I read it?—I think so; the two Bills can be compared by the Commission.

172. You remember Mr. Seddon referring to you, as from me, a Bill substantially the same as the one I read, except the schedules?—I cannot say it was substantially the same.

173. A Bill was referred to you by Mr. Seddon as from me?—Not as from anybody; he did not say from you. He did not send the covering letter; there is nothing on the face of it to show where it came from.

174. But you admit that on the 21st you did receive from Mr. Seddon the Bill you have on the file?—His minute is dated the 21st.

175. In the Bill you have on the file there is a reference to the Native Lands Act of 1891, under which a Proclamation had been issued by the Governor. Do you remember the Proclamation?—Yes; I have already said so. The Commission will remember I spoke of a Proclamation as having been sent to me and an order prepared in connection with a memorandum which Sir W. Buller brought me from Mr. Carroll.

176. Was not that Proclamation, which you prepared in pursuance of the memorandum from Mr. Carroll, a Proclamation under the Native Lands Purchase Act of 1892, which had not then received the Governor's assent?—I do not know anything about the Governor's assent at all.

177. Was the Proclamation one under the Native Lands Purchase Act of 1892?—I have already said so.

178. Now you ask the Commission to believe that the Proclamation I have asked you about is the same Proclamation as a Proclamation issued under the Native Land Act of 1891?—I am not aware of any such Act. The title is, "The Native Lands Court Act Amendment Act, of 1891."

179. Is it not a fact that, under "The Native Lands Court Act Amendment Act, 1891," a Proclamation was issued by the Governor over the block, to have effect till the close of the session of 1892?—No, it is not; I do not think there is any power in the Act to issue a Proclamation.

180. Was it a notice in the *Gazette*?—I do not know of it; I do not know of any notice under the provisions of that Act. It would be done by the Native Office—not by my department.

181. You stated that you did not communicate to any Minister your opinion that this Proclamation was a work of supererogation?—No, I never stated to any Minister that the Proclamation under the Act of 1892 was unnecessary.

182. Were you consulted by the Government in 1891 as to the necessity for this prohibition in the Native Land Court Act of 1891, for, if there was a Proclamation in force then, there was no necessity for an Act preventing dealings?—I was not consulted about it at all; it was all done in the lobbies up at the Parliament Buildings.

183. By whom?—I do not know.

184. Could you explain the necessity for such an Act as the Native Land Court Amendment Act of 1891?—No, I cannot explain any reason for it. It was a bit of string-pulling, I think; but I cannot assign any reason for it. I think it was passed without any departmental advice at all. The departmental officers knew very little about it.

185. You say that my visits to your office ceased in consequence, you think, of Mr. Seddon not adopting my Bill or the clause?—I do not know; they were not so frequent then or of so official a character. You might have called in because we were on friendly terms.

186. Did you ever say a word to me about what you allege now—that I deceived you?—No; I might not have said it now only I got a little heated.

187. Will you withdraw it?—Yes.

188. Do you withdraw it on the merits?—Yes.

189. You remember my coming to see you during last session about some correspondence you had with Mr. Edwards over Mr. Bartholomew's timber lease?—I never had any correspondence with Mr. Edwards. You came to see me about some conversation I had with Mr. Bartholomew.

190. I read you the correspondence I had with Mr. Edwards?—Yes.

191. I have never been to your office since?—I think once.

191A. Did you show me during last session the old Horowhenua Bill that you were putting into shape?—I certainly never did.

192. You helped to draft a Bill?—Yes; I drafted the Horowhenua Block Bill.

193. That came out of Committee all cut out but two clauses?—Yes.

194. The Bill as you drafted it is the one which bears the Premier's memorandum to me?—I made the first draft, but the Law Officers licked it into shape.