

From W. A. BARTON, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Gisborne.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant in reference to pensions being affected by receipts from friendly societies, and in reply to inform you that members of friendly societies have not been penalised in any Court over which I have presided.

From H. W. NORTHCROFT, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Auckland.

Payments by way of sick-allowance or funeral benefit from any registered friendly society would not be treated as income by me. I do not remember any person that has come before me being the recipient of any sick-allowance, &c. If there had been, their pensions would not be affected by such receipt.

From W. G. RIDDELL, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Auckland.

I am in receipt of your circular letter of the 17th instant, asking if in my Court applicants for pension have been affected by the fact that they were in receipt of aid from friendly societies. Section 2 of the original Act is clear on the point, and, so far as I can remember, no applicant for pension in my Court, being in receipt of aid from such a society, has had any deduction made on that account.

From R. W. DYER, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Auckland.

In reply to your circular letter of the 17th instant, I beg to assure you that members of friendly societies have never been penalised by me in respect of any payment by way of sick-allowance or funeral benefit from any registered friendly society.

From W. G. K. KENRICK, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Greymouth.

In reply to your memo of the 17th May, F 23, I am not aware of any case in which members of friendly societies have been penalised when granting pension. There has been no complaint to me on the subject by any one.

From R. S. BUSH, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Thames.

*Re* recipients of benefits from friendly societies: In reply to your circular of 17th instant, I have to state that the Old-age Pensions Act with respect to above is strictly adhered to.

From J. McENNIS, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Naseby.

I beg to inform you that members of friendly societies in my Courts have not been penalised in consequence of payments from such on account of sick-allowance or funeral expenses.

From the DEPUTY CLERK OF COURT, Christchurch.

Replying to your circular letter of the 17th May instant, I am directed by the Stipendiary Magistrate (Mr. Bishop) to inform you that he knows of no instance in which members of friendly societies have been penalised in his Courts under the circumstances stated in your letter.

From Captain WRAY, Stipendiary Magistrate, Timaru.

In reply to your circular letter of the 17th instant, I have the honour to inform you that no pension, to my knowledge, has been affected by receipts from friendly societies.

From G. CRUICKSHANK, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Lawrence.

In reply to your circular letter asking whether any applicant has been penalised by me owing to his receiving aid from a friendly society, I beg to state that I do not know of any such case.

I have never, to the best of my present recollection, had any applicant before me either for a new claim or for renewal where this matter has ever been discussed or mentioned in any way.

If such a thing has been done in my district, it has been done unwittingly and acquiesced in by the applicant, and so passed through unnoticed, but I do not think it has ever been done.

From S. E. MCCARTHY, Stipendiary Magistrate, Invercargill.

*Re* friendly societies and Old-age Pensions Act: I am in receipt of your circular herein. In reply thereto I beg to state that no old-age pensioners have ever been penalised in this district owing to their connection with friendly societies. In fact, Mr. Poynton, the Magistrate in charge when the pensions first came into vogue, publicly mentioned that receipts from friendly societies could not affect the pension.

From JACKSON KEDDELL, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Oamaru.

No members of friendly societies have been penalised, to my knowledge, in the districts under my charge.

From W. P. JAMES, Esq., Stipendiary Magistrate, Masterton.

In reply to your memo of the 17th instant, I beg to inform you that in no instance in my district, extending from Featherston to Dannevirke, has any applicant for old-age pension been penalised owing to being a recipient of benefit from a friendly society.

From the CLERK OF COURT, Hawera.

The Stipendiary Magistrate (Mr. Turnbull) has handed me your circular letter of the 17th instant, with a request that I should answer it. So far as I am aware, only one pensioner in the Hawera district receives money from a friendly society, and he has also the full pension of £26. Certainly no pension in this district has been reduced in amount owing to the pensioner being a member of a friendly society and receiving benefits therefrom.