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P.S. Let me know if I can address your letters to Tain if so mention what address

For Andrew Anderson

Awhea Station
 Martinborough Wellington N.Z
 February 26th 1896

My dear friend "& Brother Sinner"

I really regret very much my long delay in writing you but yourself was such a long time that I thought you weren't going to write any more. Then I sent an old paper to your Aunt Mary & I was going to write as well but I forget now whether I did or not but it was my intention to tell her to give you a good blowing up. However your letter arrived just before Christmas then I put off writing until after the holiday as I would be able to collect more news & now it is so long since the Christmas that I almost forgot my news again. Now here goes for some sort of jumble. First I must thank you for your long letter & many thousand thanks for the papers. I never thought that I had such a true friend in the world that would be so mindful of me but even if I never hear from you any more I'll never forget your kindness. Och man a letter or a paper from home acts like a charm on a person here & inspires the soul with a new & strange kind of feeling. Oh man it fairly took down my remaining spec of spirit the report that William Bain's people invented & circulated in the parish. I never thought there were any person in the parish of Kincardine that would stoop to such a low mean act which would tend to the immorality of their own souls & cast perhaps an everlasting shade over the character of others which is not over bright at best, but whatsoever it might be I never tried to hide it from the critics. As our noble bard said More pointed still we make ourselves Regret remorse & shame. Man don't you think but that is right; a man does plenty himself to cause shame without that of others thrown on his frail shoulders. However I wrote White & told him what I heard & if he did not stop it that I would take legal

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steps against such slander. Well he wrote back saying that he got enough shame & disgrace through his sister & that he would have nothing to do with it. Well that will suit me as long as they keep their mouth shut. I said quite enough on that subject a really it's too low a thing to write even on paper to one whom I respect so much as you.

I am very pleased to hear of you entering the banking profession it's a grand thing to be among the money. I thought one time that you would come to see Maoriland. Did I tell you that I got my bagpipes long ago. They are very good, they cost £10/10- so you may know how good they are. I started the book music nearly a year ago & I come to find out that I knew nothing about the bagpipes before. They suit the Maories grand, of course the wild sound suits their wild natures, we had three Maories here for a while last November & I could give you any amount of words now but they would only take up useless space here. Did ever I tell you that we have a team of bullocks here always working. There's 12 of them together in a kind of low waggon. They are very amusing to see them working. We had a grand bush fire here nearly a month ago it's burning yet, there's between 30 & 40 sqr miles of bush burnt. Now I must begin to tell you what I saw while on stravaage [Gaelic?] during my fortnight holidays. Well on Christmas day the manager's brother came up from Fernside (he is manager there) also the manager's cousin who is managing a place himself & the Boss has in partnership. It is about 70 miles from here, we had also some of the neighbours although they are 5 miles away from here. One of them served his time in the army as a piper. He took the Gold medal & £25 last year at Napier as the best piper in New Zealand. His name is Fraser he comes from Inverness-shire. Well anyway we had a grand day of it. There were nothing spoken almost but the good old Gaelic the King of Lingos. I may say that there's a society in Dunedin composed

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of nothing but Gaelic speaking people & they managed to get the Gaelic taught in the schools! But to continue my story on the day following Christmas I went into the Valley with the Boss's brother & cousin & another fellow from west of Ross-shire who is here for over 5 years. His name is McDonald. So when we rode to Martinborough 23 miles from here, there were grand horse races on & I enjoyed myself splendid there. Towards night we rode on 14 miles further to Fernside & had a grand night of it there. Of course the bagpipes were going full blast. Well next morning Willie Ross, manager on the next station here, & I went to Wellington & on our arrival there we went straight into Geo Ross's Royal Hotel a brother of Davie Malcolms Strathcarron about as nice a man as you could find anywhere. I think I mentioned him before. Well of course we had a grand yarn about old times. He has I think the grandest hotel in Wellington. I don't know of one so grand north of Inverness. Well I may say I felt quite at home, had full run of the house; there's a very nice girl there a niece of his late wife's I think, Old George told me that if ever I would have any use for money large or small just give him a smeadhow (wink) & it's in my hand as there's always a pound or two stuck to his coat tails. These are his very words. He thought I would stay a week or two with him anyway my Boss & him are very great friends & really I don't think there's a nicer man in New Zealand. Well I stayed in Ross's all night & next day I went up to the Grosvenor Hotel another hotel nearly as big as Ross's. The landlord is Robert Barclay brother of Bill Barclay Strathcarron & he's if I can say so a nicer man than Ross but they are both alike. Well man you could hardly believe the welcome I got from Barclay & he has an exceedingly nice wife. She is a Sydney woman a regularly kind woman. Man I spent a grand day of it with Barclay but had to leave by the evening train to keep an appointment at Fernside.

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Old Barclay enquired very kindly enquired after all your people, both at Bonar & Gledfield. He told me always to consider his house my home & I am sure these fellows could not do more for any of their own relations. When I came away Barclay came along part of the way. He could hardly part with me but enquiring about someone or other. Well it would take me a week to tell you the Wellington news. I would have stayed longer but my promise to be back in Fernside & I always make it a rule to keep all promises & appointments (what a change). I may say I got a present of a silver mounted Mershaum pipe value 32/6d. It's a regular beauty. I am smoking it now while writing this epistle. However after getting back to Fernside that is one of the Boss's own mansions, & that night my own manager from here arrived & we had a grand night of it & on the following day he was going to see his own place where his cousin is 70 miles from here & I was going myself to a place called Masterton 60 miles up country. It's the largest inland town & what do you think I was going to do there; well yes to play the bagpipes at the Caledonian Sports on New Year's day. It was my intention to go by train but my Boss would have me go with him riding up so I got a horse belonging to the owner a real blood & really when galloping (we always gallop here) you would feel yourself as if flying through the air. The first night we stopped at a town called Carterton just half way & I am sure you cannot imagine how grand it was riding first rate horses through a strange country to me. However we stayed for the night there & a nice lively night. Well next morning we started for Masterton & of course we had a refresher in our pockets. At last we arrived & going towards the middle of the town I heard the bagpipes going full blast on the balcony of the Club Hotel.

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Well on arrival we of course had a good few shakes of the hand from some people we knew & some we didn't & after having a glass or two of course then I went & got dressed in my Highland dress which I got the loan of from Mr Stewart landlord of the Royal Hotel Martinborough. So then we all marched to the grounds playing the McKenzies' March. There were six of us pipers but anyway I managed to take first prize. The tunes I played was : March, Portree men it's a tune very much like the Bonnie lass of Bonaccord, the strathspey was Lord Blantyre's Reel (Strathspey time) & the reel was Cullachan na Gurach (or the sheep wife). The man that took second played Marchioness of Tullibarden (march) Maggie Cameron strathspey, & Jenny Dang the weaver reel! All men winning pipes playing & dancing got a ticket which entitled them to any part of the grandstand & all sorts of drinks & a grand dinner. Och man if I didn't enjoy myself. There were between 3 & 4 thousand people there & to see the Highland dresses of the men blending with that of most of the ladies in tartans it was something grand, och man when it was known who was the prize piper if I did not get any amount of compliments & I believe made

the acquaintance of a thousand people. Man but old Scotland is dear to most people when they are far from it whether rich or poor but as I remarked once before there's no gents in this country as far as pride goes. One is as good as another if they carry themselves respectably. Anyway I won't enlarge on that subject or you may think me egotistical & conceited. Well that night both of us went 6 miles further up the valley the finest country you could imagine. We were going to spend New Year's night in the house of a real McKay from near Strathnaver in Sutherlandshire. He owns three properties, one of them

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joins the Boss's place far up the country but it was at his own home we were, a very grand place. They were very nice people indeed. He had a grand party there & a ball until 4 in the morning plenty of music & of course myself was giving a lilt occasionally but och some of the poor craters could not dance to the piob more but I often gave them music such as Lochaber no more, Coming through the Rye, Kelvin Grove & the Flowers of the Forest. Well man there were as nice a selection of young ladies as you could see. There were three daughters of McKay's & 7 sons. As for the rest I don't know where they came from although I have over twenty invitations to different places. Well anyway it was nearly as good as the New Year your uncle & myself had the bottle in the barn. I think this is quite enough of my adventures. Will you tell Maggie Wilson that as far as I can find out her brother is not within a hundred miles of the address I got from Duncan! There was a man named Archie Wilson who was well acquainted in Croick & Oykeell & I believe came from there about. Well he fell dead on the street in Napier 4 months ago. He was well known to be an extraordinary clever man, he had over £250 in his pocket when found. He was a sheep dealer. Perhaps some people round there know who he is. Did you ever know of McLeod the Kincardine Minister having a brother here. Well he's one of the greatest rakes & miserable wretch in the country. He is acting as guide round the hot springs up Rotorua just picking up a few coppers for drink. Also Willie Ross brother of John Ross Post Office Ardgay he is down south. He never writes home & I can hardly blame him when everything is considered. You need not mention what I say about any of these as it would do no good perhaps do harm instead.

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I started this letter a week ago & I am now drawing to a close! But what a pleasant surprise I got yesterday to get your letter & paper. You did manage to write nearly 10 pages. I am afraid I cannot express my gratefulness to you for being so mindful of sending me papers. I thought I had a lot of friends but man they are like the leaves in autumn falling off one by one but yourself we were together friends parted friends & still continue friends although far apart & perhaps never meet again but we shall live in hopes of meeting some day but if ever, I'm afraid it will be a long long time. Now I must glance over your letter to see if there's anything you want to know. And you are clerking like mad counting the money. Man I believe the wild colonial life would suit you well for a time. You asked me if I had any encounters with wild boars. Well really I am always encountering them. Well one day not long ago I met a man going to the doctor. He got all his legs cut & torn about. He was very bad. I was surprised too as he is an old soldier & used to hunt the wild beasts in India but I suppose he was too daring. Of course you know³ what a tame pig is when enraged. Well imagine what a wild boar would be in the bush. Well one day I did climb a tree & had to stop there a long time too. I had no shooting irons but now very few I shot except the very large ones. I kill them with the sheath knife but a fellow must be very wiry & of good nerve & strength. There were a fellow lately & he was kept up in a tree for 2 hours & the boar sitting at the foot of the tree waiting patiently. The Maories in the pictures I sent are not near as wild looking as they generally are. As I mentioned they appear more like half or three quarter caste. We had one of them here not long ago as I mentioned in Mary's letter. His father was brother to the King.

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Well I had an invitation to go & see him at New Year. Him & I were great chums. He was well educated but they don't seem to know how to use education. Well he has a cousin staying with him a daughter of the late King a very pretty nice girl only 18. Well she is the only child left. Well she inherits all the King's possessions which is worth thousands & thousands. Gt Britain left her father's lands with her on condition that she marries a British subject as the British Crown does not interfere with any of the King's possessions which is called Maori Reserve but if this girl dies childless all the lands go to the British

Crown but anyway you can see the trick that in the course of time the lands fall to a British subject therefore liable to British law & then our old Queen steps in with all her force of dues taxes etc. However I put them Maories up to several little dodges as they are so innocent themselves & know not the value of land. If you do the least turn to a Maorie or even give him a glass of whiskey every Maorie for hundreds of miles hears of it & do anything in their power for you for they think it great honour to be acknowledged by a white man. You must come out here until I introduce you to the pretty princess. She is quite ignorant of her position, they think any white man is better & wiser & greater than their greatest chiefs. Oh man the colonial girls are very good looking but they are following very much after the steps of the sterner sex. Well for instance they think nothing of introducing themselves to you & quite forward they appear at first till you get used to it. The greatest ladies in the country do that. There's none of the modest reserve of our home ladies, they seem as if they can hold their own against anyone. I must conclude space getting small. Send me Alick's address in Australia I might go over some time that way. So send as many papers as you can & a big letter. Kindest regards to all.
Your faithful friend D. Ross