

Mr. T. L. Shepherd. own personal observation, that that land was inferior to much of the land included in Cargill and Anderson's purchase. I consider the sale most disastrous to the interests of the Province and the Colony, even although £2 per acre had been realized from the sale, much less 16s., which I believe was about the net price obtained for it.

8th August, 1872.

FRIDAY, 9TH AUGUST, 1872.

- Mr. Anderson,*
9th August, 1872.
- Mr. EDWARD ROBERT ANDERSON in attendance, and examined.
170. *The Chairman.*] I am a member of the firm of Cargill and Anderson, runholders, Otago. My firm were purchasers of a 20,000-acre block of land, being a portion of the lands comprised within Run 199, Teviot district. I am generally acquainted with the land comprising this particular block.
171. What extent of agricultural land is comprised within that block?—There is not more than 200 acres fit for ploughing situated in any one part of the block. In the whole block there may be 1,000 acres of good land—by that I mean level land.
172. Is that all the agricultural land contained in the block?—So far as soil is concerned, fit for cultivation, there is more, but it is not situated on the plains. It is situated on the hill sides, and from its situation, although the soil may be good, it cannot be ploughed.
173. How much do you think of this class of land does the block contain? I mean the land you refer to as having good soil, but not situated so as to be fit for ploughing?—There may be two or three thousand acres of that class of land.
174. Does any portion of this block contain auriferous land?—I am not aware of its being auriferous. I should think not. Since the gold fields first broke out, in 1862, it has been pretty well prospected. At one time there was a pretty large population at work on the banks of the river. When the river got up, they went throughout the run looking for gold. They sunk a great many holes about the gullies and spurs, but I never heard of them getting any prospect sufficient to induce them to continue working the gold out of the land.
175. Are there any water races running through this block?—All the water races are got out of the Teviot. I do not exactly know whether there are any taken through this particular block or not. There may be one running through the block on the south side of the Teviot Stream, but there are no others in the block.
176. Your firm occupies two runs in that district, don't they?—Yes.
177. What extent of acreage do you occupy inclusive of the 20,000 acres; I mean, the acreage of both runs?—In Run 199 we have got 60,000 acres, and in the Mount Benger run, No. 369, we have 35,000 acres.
178. Are these lands adjoining each other?—They are divided by the Clutha River.
179. Is there any difficulty between your firm and the Waste Lands Board about this 20,000 acres?—No, not that I am aware of.
180. Are you willing to have the boundaries of this land so varied as to shut out the 1,000 acres of agricultural land?—That would be an impossibility. There may be 50 acres of it here, and 20 acres there. It is not all situated at the one place.
181. In what proportion is the agricultural land to the situation of the block?—I do not know. I included the whole block when I said that you may find 1,000 acres. I do not indicate any particular spot.
182. Have you been over the whole run?—Yes.
183. Is this 20,000 acres the best portion of your run? Do you consider it the most valuable portion of country contained in it?—Yes, I consider it valuable country, from the fact that it is well sheltered, and also on account of its boundaries.
184. Then you consider it the most valuable portion of the run?—No, I would not like to go the length of saying that.
185. Are its carrying capabilities superior to any other portion?—No, I would not like to say so. I do not think they are. I look upon the Mount Benger run as having quite as good carrying capabilities.
186. Is there any portion of this run, the run in which the block of land is situated, beyond the snow line in winter?—Yes, the snow may lie on it. We call it dangerous country, from the fact that it is subject to snow storms. During a frost the snow does lie on it.
- [Allusion was here made to certain lines shown upon the plan produced by a previous witness (Mr. Donald Reid), but as these lines were not particularized, it is impossible to identify them with the report.]
187. In reply to a question, the witness said, I cannot tell what proportion of the block is situated within the snow line for this reason, that I do not know how far the line goes up. I have an idea that this line goes into the snow line.
188. How many feet is the snow line situated above the level of the sea?—From 1,500 to 2,000 feet. In the Province, however, I have observed that the snow line varies very much.
189. If this block had been sold to any one else, would the run have been as valuable; I mean would the back country have been as valuable?—It would be to the adjoining runs. I have had an offer from the adjoining runholder to buy it.
190. But would it be as valuable for any new runholder to take it up?—It would not be of any use as a separate run.
191. By the purchase of this 20,000 acres, then, you have practically secured right to the back country?—No. It is equally available from the other side; that is, down towards Baldwin's run.
192. Who first opened negotiation for this sale? Was it you or the Waste Land Board?—The proposal first emanated from us. Mr. Cargill was the first to propose the thing.
193. Did you agree to suspend the lease the same day you made application to purchase the block?—I do not remember the particular day.