

115. You have a head-shepherd named Patterson?—Yes.

116. Had you any conversation with him about getting the men to apply for land?—No; certainly not.

117. Then, if Patterson asked the men to become purchasers, it was without your authority?—Without my authority. I notice that a man named Williamson stated this in evidence before the Land Board, but the evidence was not true.

118. Are you aware of the fact that your partner, Mr. Gellibrand, arranged with Mr. Bradshaw to purchase for Thomas Johnston?—Yes; that was the fact.

119. Was any security taken from Johnston for the large advance made to him on that occasion?—No security whatever.

120. In making these advances you had in view the occupying of the country yourself?—It belongs to the man to do what he likes with it. He has not turned me off because he has not got his license yet. Whether he will when he does get it I do not know.

121. Had you any conversation with Mr. Bradshaw in regard to this purchase of Johnston's?—No; I do not think so.

122. Any conversation with him with regard to the purchase by Pearsall?—No; I do not think I saw Mr. Bradshaw at all in connection with this matter. I spoke to Mr. Bradshaw before the sale.

123. Had you any conversation with him with regard to transferring to Johnston?—Certainly not.

124. Then, if it was so stated by Mr. Bradshaw, would you contradict it?—Yes; I should have to if he said that I said it. I heard that Pearsall did wish to transfer his land to some one else, and was advised by Mr. Bradshaw not to do it.

125. Do you know a cadet on Roberts's station in the Strath-Taieri who became a purchaser of some land?—I do not know whom you mean.

126. Did you sign a declaration for a cadet on that station?—Yes; for a man named Scott.

127. Did you tell him it was no use his applying for land on your side of the river?—No; certainly not.

128. Did you not say to him that you had arranged for the whole of the land on your side of the river to be taken up, and that he would have a better chance on the other side?—I have no recollection of it. I remember I did say to him that there was one section on Deepdell he wanted to get, and, as there was an idea at that time of being able to take up deferred land on partnership, I told him it was not a bit of use going into that, as I knew some one who was going into it, and I did not want to see him waste his time.

129. Have you made any difference in your station in regard to the arrangement entered into with these men?—I sold 9,000 more sheep this year than last.

130. Was that through the sale of the land?—I made arrangements not to be over-stocked when the land was sold. I notice that in the evidence given by Williamson before the Land Board he said I sold 15,000 sheep, I think, last year and 15,000 this, but the fact is that last year I sold 11,000 and this year 22,000.

131. What number of sheep have you got now?—About 56,000, I think.

132. What is about your usual number?—I sheared last year 65,000 odd. Of course, I have some more sales to make yet.

133. Were you summoned to attend the Waste Lands Board?—Yes.

134. Why did you not attend?—I was advised that the summons was illegal—that the Board had no jurisdiction; and I did not wish to satisfy the curiosity of people who asked questions.

135. Did you advise your shepherds not to attend?—Yes; and guaranteed them any loss through not attending.

136. Where these men still under your control?—They were not under my control, but they take my advice in various matters. My shepherds are under my control, but some of the other men summoned are not under my control at all.

137. As to the Silver Peak Block, you have stated that you have sheep running on Watson's, the Higginses', and Francis's country?—Yes.

138. How much do the instalments you pay come to per sheep?—It is impossible to say. If you tell me how many sheep run on their land I could reckon it, but it was so infested with rabbits that I put on fewer sheep on that account.

139. Are the sheep put backward and forward?—Yes. I cannot say that there are any sheep there now at all, but I think there should be about three thousand.

140. How much at per acre does each instalment come to?—1s. 4d. They got it at the upset price of £1 per acre.

141. How many sheep per acre can that country keep?—About one to three and four acres at the present time. It depends very much upon the rabbits. It was swarming with rabbits, but is cleaner now.

142. That would be about 5s. per sheep?—I cannot say exactly. It is a very losing concern, if you wish to ascertain that.

143. I should have thought it to be something very paying, else you would not have entered into the arrangement. Are either of these men in your employment at the present time? Do you pay them for labour?—I buy some of their rabbitskins, and during their three months' leave of absence some of them come and shear for me. Francis is doing clerking work, and the others go to work for whom they like. It depends on the work there is to do. They got a contract for building houses and other work. I also find them in rations and whatever they want in keeping them going.

144. The consequence is the men are mostly employed on your station in one way or another?—Of course you are aware that they live nine months of the year on their own land, and during that time they mostly kill rabbits, I think,