

472. When you valued Stark's property was there any appearance of earthworks or anything of the kind?—No, nothing of the kind.

473. You say that what gave rise to much local bitterness was the fact becoming known of Mr. Stark's intention to oppose Mr. Hurst at the next parliamentary election?—I have been told that—it was generally spoken of.

474. Was that after the valuation?—It was not until after my valuation that Mr. Stark announced his intention.

475. It was between the last and the present sessions?—Yes.

476. You are aware that Sir Julius Vogel and the Minister for Public Works visited Auckland during the recess?—I did not see Mr. Richardson. I heard that he was in Auckland, and had inspected the property.

477. Was this intention of Mr. Stark's to contest the seat at that time known?—I should say it was.

478. *Mr. Peacock.*] You spoke of Professor Thomas's property as a matter of comparison: it is nearer to Auckland than Mr. Stark's property?—It is part of the same block, and a little nearer to Auckland.

479. Has Professor Thomas's property access to the beach?—I think there is access to it.

480. But there is a beach in front of Professor Thomas's property?—Yes; and also in front of Mr. Stark's.

481. The one is an easy descent to the beach, and the other is a high cliff, is it not?—I believe from Professor Thomas's property you must go out into the main road, and then take a path to the beach, but of this am not sure.

482. Professor Thomas's is sheltered, is it not?—Not much more than Mr. Stark's.

483. *The Chairman.*] Do you know what Mr. Stark paid for the land?—I do not know.

484. Do you know if he appealed against the 1882 valuation?—I do not think so.

485. Have you heard of this land being offered to Randerson or any one else with him in Auckland?—No. Now that you mention Randerson's name, I believe he told me that the property was in their hands for sale a little time ago; he said nothing of the price.

486. The Committee are also informed that Mr. Stark was anxious to sell this property. Did you know that?—No, I did not.

487. It is said that he had put it into the hands of several agents?—I cannot say. The only intimation I had of his thought of selling was when he told me of the offer which he had refused, but that he proposed to cut the property up.

488. It is also said that it was offered by Mr. Stark himself for £7,500?—I simply heard that remarked; I am not cognizant of it personally.

489. Are there many notices of objection to the valuations in your district?—No; very few.

490. Can you say where Mr. Stark is now?—I believe he is in England.

491. Do you know who is managing his property now?—No. Most of his other Devonport property had been in connection with Messrs. Allison's. I think most of it has been put into their hands, he having sold his interest therein to them.

492. Do you know if Mr. Allison is his agent now?—I cannot say. I think probably Mr. Stark may have left him to deal with his property, but do not know if such is the case.

493. *Mr. Dargaville.*] Your valuations, I understand, are based on ascertained transactions, as in the Land Registry Office, and not on any rumours of offers for sale or anything of that sort?—Yes, that is so; and also from my attendance at auction sales, or from reliable information received of the results.

494. Do you know the terms of those Mount Cambria sales?—No.

TUESDAY, 13TH JULY, 1886.

Mr. T. SEAMAN further examined.

495. *The Chairman.*] Will you tell the Committee whether you valued the land at the Calliope Dock?—I did.

496. Was any part of it valued as high as £9 per foot?—I can only tell you the total valuation in 1882. One portion, 5 acres 2 roods 28 perches, was valued at £1,175. Not expecting examination again this morning, I have not my note-book with me, but will furnish details if desired.

497. What was the valuation in 1885?—It was very much increased—I believe, nearly trebled.

498. Was there any of it valued at £9 per foot?—I believe some of it was valued nearly as high as that.

499. Can you say from your knowledge as assessor what that is worth now?—I should not say that it had decreased in value at all in the neighbourhood of the new dock. I believe that Allison Brothers bought an allotment at the cost of £9 per foot, but it included a building.

500. *Hon. Major Atkinson.*] Was it of any size?—It was a very small one. I do not remember the exact size, but I believe I valued the land without the building at about £7 per foot.

501. *The Chairman.*] Can you say if there were any other sales there?—I do not know if there were any other sales in that particular spot. There have been sales in the same allotment, but not so near the dock, and these were valued as high as £10 per foot. £10 was offered for them at the sale, but the offer was not accepted; and subsequently to this Allison Brothers erected a number of houses on the land.

502. Did they pay £10 per foot for it?—No: it was then their own property. They had bought it from several owners. They then cut it up and offered it for sale, and £10 per foot was offered for front sections and refused.

503. Have they been sold since?—No; they remain in the hands of Allison Brothers, who have, as I said before, built houses on them.