

6. He made no secret about it?—Not at all.

7. *Mr. Witty.*] I would like to ask, would the Woodward Street section be much more valuable than the derelict section belonging to the Crown?—Certainly.

8. Even at that time?—Even at that time; because you could get at it—because the bad grade started at 136 ft. in from Lambton Quay. The nearest point of Mr. Macdonald's is 137 ft. in from Lambton Quay, or a foot more.

9. Which has improved most relatively?—Mr. Macdonald's land, by the lowering of the grade.

10. *Mr. Fisher.*] Can you give us an estimate of the value of the '45 perch proposed to be given to the city?—No, I could not. I have not gone into it; I would not say offhand.

11. Could you say offhand what difference in value to the 6½ perches the street-widening has made?—No, I could not.

12. Did I understand you to say that when you spoke to Mr. Macdonald on the subject he gave you the impression that he was to give four or five perches or something off his section?—No. What I understood was that he was giving the Corporation a piece about the same size. There was no mention of any particular area.

13. About the same size as what?—As the Crown piece.

14. As the 6½ perches?—Yes.

15. You cannot fix the value?—I would not do it offhand.

16. Do you know that the section on the north side, belonging to Mrs. Williams, is 37 ft. by 45 ft., as compared with 39 ft. 3 in. by 49 ft. 5½ in. of Crown land?—About that. The Crown land has 37 ft. 3 in. frontage, and the same depth as Mrs. Williams; but the boundaries run from 46 ft. 3 in. on the one side to 49 ft. 5 in. on the other side. It has not an even depth, as the front and back lines are not at right angles.

17. You see the plan. Was not part of Mr. Macdonald's land already in the street?—It does not show so on Ward's plan. There may have been a very small portion on the corner.

18. Have you seen the agreement between the City Council and Mr. Macdonald?—No, I do not know anything about it.

19. Have you seen the plan of the land produced before?—No, I never knew anything about the proposal, further than what Mr. Macdonald told me; and I never saw any plans or never had any interest in them until I was advised that I should be required to attend here. As far as I was personally concerned, I was finished with it a year ago.

THURSDAY, 6TH AUGUST, 1908.

ROBERT McNAB examined on oath. (No. 6.)

*Witness:* I am Minister of Lands. I propose, as I have nothing to add in the way of evidence to what has been said by the witnesses for the Department, to tender myself for the cross-examination of any member of the Committee or any person who is present, with the view of giving full information to the members of the Committee on the matters connected with the sale of the Woodward Street property. I am just submitting myself to be cross-examined.

1. *Mr. Fisher.*] From this parliamentary paper (C.—13), Mr. McNab, you seem to have first heard of this matter by a memo. from the Under-Secretary dated the 29th May?—I have no recollection of the first coming-up of the matter, and, so far as I recollect, the receipt of the Under-Secretary's memo. was the first time it came before me.

2. You were not interviewed on the matter by any person at all?—I have no recollection.

3. Would you tell the Committee what you as Minister understood was to be done if you approved of the sale of the land to the Council?—So far as we were concerned, of course, the property would be transferred to the City Corporation—the 6.55 perches. You are referring to what was to take place between the City Council and some person else.

4. I am referring to what you understood from the letter you received from Mr. Macdonald?—I can only state my present understanding, seeing that I do not even recollect the receipt of the communication from the Under-Secretary beyond my memo. thereon. I do not profess to be able to recollect what was in my mind when I received it. I can only recollect events which took place subsequently when the question cropped up. I do not profess to be able to say what passed in my mind unless I happen to recall that particular thing.

5. Did you understand that the city was to apply for the Crown land—the 6.55 perches?—I did not understand.

6. What I mean is, when you made the recommendation to Cabinet to approve of the sale of the Crown land to the city you naturally said the city must apply for the land?—Oh, yes!

7. And you understood the city was to pay the money?—Oh, yes!

8. Can you tell whether the city paid the money?—I could not say. It does not come to me. It goes to the Receiver of Land Revenue, and you would require to call him to know who paid.

9. When you recommended Cabinet to approve of the sale, or when you brought the matter before Cabinet, did you not clearly understand that the Wellington City Council was to apply for 6.55 perches, and that when they had acquired the title to that land they were to hand it over to Mr. Macdonald and receive in exchange an area of about four or five perches?—That is what I understood.

10. An area about equal in size?—As Mr. Macdonald says in his letter. I may mention that one of my colleagues asked me to explain the transaction, and I read Mr. Macdonald's letter. I can recollect reading it and seeing that the two areas were about the same size; otherwise I should not recall that incident.