

42. Is it all on the one side of the river?—No, it goes across the river and takes in my property up to the main road, and therefore I am rated to keep this bank up to throw the water on to my land.

43. And what proportion of land is there on the near side of the river as compared with that on the west side, where the embankment is?—There is very little on the east side. There are only some six votes on our side of the river.

44. And on the other side?—About eighty votes.

45. So that you have good reason to fear?—Yes.

WILLIAM SHAND examined. (No. 7.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A farmer.

2. And a ratepayer?—Yes, on the East Taieri side. I purchased my land on the 8th October, 1873, and I have lived there ever since. My land is situated between the natural channels of the Silverstream and Owhiro, and it is largely composed of what were old lagoons in the past before the land was reclaimed, and when the river rises the water rushes up the channels the wrong way, and floods my land. The Taieri River runs along the ridge instead of running in the hollow as most rivers do, and that ridge is only about on an average from 150 to 250 yards wide, and it slopes rapidly back. Where the tributaries come in there is only a short distance of the high bank, and then the lagoons begin, so that when the river rises it rushes very fast the wrong way.

3. Then, you are rated for keeping the river in its channel?—Yes. There are no banks on my side, and it is impossible to bank it on my side. On the other side there is a continuous bank from Outram down to Otokia. There are no tributaries emptying into the Taieri on the west side; it is a whole bank all the way down. On my side there are three breaks—the two channels of the Silverstream, one an artificial one and the other a natural one, and then there is the Owhiro also. The water gets through those out of the river when it rises.

4. Then, you wish to be left outside this rating-area for the Board?—Yes, quite so, because by no possibility could they keep the water off my land.

5. And anything they do on the west side will not help you in any way?—It makes the water still deeper.

6. *Mr. Reid.*] Are your lands classified?—I am classified for 800 acres in Class "A," and liable to be rated up to 4s. an acre.

7. Would the purple line on the plan cover the part that is most flooded?—The water overflows mission?—Yes.

8. And you were asked this question: "What boundary would you suggest for the East Taieri"?—I do not remember that question.

9. Well, you remember giving this evidence to the Commission: "My opinion is not worth much about that, as I have not much knowledge of it." Would you be in favour of an embankment being put up between you and the Owhiro?—No, the ground is much too low. To confine the waters of the Owhiro it would take an embankment perhaps 30 ft. high.

10. But could not a bank be put there to keep the waters of the Taieri back?—No, it would be quite impossible in the floods such as I have seen.

11. You put a bank there at one time yourself, did you not?—No. On the Owhiro there is soil that was taken out of the ditch that was put along there.

12. To what height?—Well, 6 ft. or 7 ft. perhaps.

13. When the Royal Commission was starting you sent in an application, I think, which you and some others signed, to Mr. Donald Reid, as follows: "We, the undersigned, learn that the Government have granted a Commission to inquire into and report on a drainage scheme for lands lying on the west side of the Taieri River Plain. We respectfully solicit your assistance to get the Commission at the same time to inquire into and report on the low-lying land on the east side of the Taieri River, which at the present time is in as bad, if not worse, state than what it is on the west side." Do you remember signing that?—I do not remember it.

14. Do you remember signing some document yourself which was also signed by Messrs. Blackie, Renton, Murray, Shand, and others?—I have no doubt I did sign it.

15. At that time you considered it necessary, apparently, that some provision should be made for improving your land by a Board. Was that your opinion then?—Well, my opinion has been that by clearing away the mouths of those tributaries it would do some good to me, but not by embanking.

16. That you would want a Board to do, I suppose?—No, we have done it ourselves.

17. Are you doing it now yourselves?—A little has been done by the present Board.

18. But what was your object in asking that the Commission should include your district?—Well, I thought something would probably require to be done, and they might point out something.

19. And were you asked this question by the Commission, whether it would be right or not that the land on the upper side of the Outram—West Taieri Road should be included in the district?—I do not think so.

JOHN FOWLER examined. (No. 8.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A farmer.

2. With a farm at North Taieri?—On the river-side.

3. Are you a ratepayer?—Yes.

4. In the Taieri Drainage District?—Yes. I have two farms in that district.

5. *Mr. Reid.*] Will you tell the Committee now how you are affected by the embankment—what is your opinion of the Drainage Board and the works they can do for you?—I do not think they can do any good for the river at all, because if they are putting up banks there the water would overflow.