

39. Have you taken any soundings or measurements opposite your place?—No, I cannot say that I have. In summer-time I know that where the launch lies she was never aground, but now she is sometimes aground.

40. Do I understand you to say that the channel is coming over towards your side?—Yes.

41. Then it is getting deeper towards your side?—No, I cannot say that.

42. Have you made an examination of the river-bed to see what it is composed of?—No; but I know that the bottom is hard.

43. *Mr. Clendon.*] Is your property leasehold or freehold?—Freehold.

44. Which bank are you on?—On the right bank.

45. When did you acquire the freehold?—Seven or eight years ago.

46. Have you any objection to tell the Commission what you paid for the freehold?—I would rather not.

47. What was the Government valuation last year?—I think it is £1,800.

48. What is the area of the freehold?—One hundred and sixty-three acres.

49. There is a very sharp bend of the river at your property?—Yes.

50. Is it not a fact that near sharp bends in the Ohinemuri River the channels are frequently changing, particularly after heavy floods?—I do not think so; it has never changed since I have been there.

51. When you say you thought the “Waimarie” stuck, was she coming up or going down?—She was coming up. It was about 9 o'clock. The tide was running out.

52. These are particularly low tides, are they not?—They are not very high.

JAMES THOMAS examined. (No. 21.)

1. *Mr. Mueller.*] Your name is James Thomas, and you are a dairy-farmer, residing at Netherton?—Yes; I own 117 acres of freehold land—part of Koronae No. 3 Block and part of Komata North No. 1A No. 5 Block.

2. What river frontage have you?—Twenty chains.

3. You supply milk to the Netherton creamery?—Yes.

4. How much of your 117 acres is affected by floods—at the 1907 flood?—It was practically over the whole of it.

5. Is the bank of the river high or low at your place?—What we term a high bank.

6. Opposite that bank can you state how deep the silt deposits are?—Yes, I put a hole down 5 ft., and got tailings down the whole distance. I am speaking of between high-water mark and low-water mark.

7. Are both banks filling?—Yes.

8. Can cattle walk down further into the river than they were able to walk five years ago?—They can go 30 ft. lower down from my fence than they used to do. I have had to extend the fence there to stop them. That is in summer-time, dead low water. When I put up the fence it was almost on the edge of the bank.

9. Was your land flooded in March last?—Yes.

10. Was there any that was not covered in March?—About 8 acres was not covered. The cattle had to live on that for five days—the rest was under water.

11. At the end of that period, were they in poor condition?—Yes, they began to fall away pretty considerably.

12. Did this same flood damage a 12-acre paddock of yours?—Yes.

13. What was in that 12-acre paddock?—Different sorts of grasses and clover.

14. Had that been recently sown?—It was a paddock I had recently ploughed and sown.

15. Had you to resow that paddock?—I did not plough it a second time—I just went over it. It cost me for grass-seed and labour about £10 to resow that land.

16. Did the rest of the farm suffer from the flood?—Yes, the whole of the farm suffered.

17. How many cows were in milk prior to that flood?—Thirty-one.

18. And what effect did that flood have on your milk cheque?—It blew me out. I have just turned the cows out now. I should have milked them for another two months.

19. How long was it before the grass could be eaten by the cows after the flood receded?—It had a dirty-yellow slime over it when the water receded, and the cows went down considerably in condition in consequence, and I have turned them out two months earlier than I ought to have done.

20. What has been your loss?—It is hard to say. I could not make a definite statement what I did lose.

21. *The Chairman.*] This time last year, were you milking the same number of cows?—No; twenty-six.

22. Do you remember what cheques you were getting last year from the twenty-six cows for this month?—I cannot remember, but I could let you know.

23. *Mr. Mueller.*] During the last three years, did you have three floods in your place?—Yes.

24. January, 1907, last September, and last March?—Yes.

25. Was the effect of the 1907 flood such that you had to go off your farm and work elsewhere?—I had to turn the cows straight out, and go to work and earn wages.

26. You expended your wages in restoring your land?—It was not until the following November that I could afford any expenditure in money on the land.

27. Could you put your loss into figures?—I consider that I lost £100 for the rest of the 1907 season.

28. And, apart from that, I suppose your land was not of such a good carrying-capacity the following season as it ought to have been?—Not until I got it grassed.