

78. *Mr. Kerr.*] Are you sure it was Mr. Fisher?—Oh, yes. I do not say it was in 1893 I saw Mr. Fisher, but I did see him. If I said before it was in 1893 I saw him I desire to correct that.

79. *The Chairman.*] Well, what date was it?—I could not say what date it was; it is so long ago.

80. *Mr. Welsh.*] Are you sure it was Mr. Fisher you saw?—Yes.

81. Then, it must have been some time after 1895?—It might have been.

82. *The Chairman.*] How long before you saw Mr. Fisher was it that you became aware of your right of conversion?—I could not say, because I cannot remember the date I saw Mr. Fisher.

83. How long was it before you saw Mr. Fisher that you knew you could convert?—It was some considerable time—I could not say how long.

84. We want to know when you first knew you could convert?—About 1893.

85. *Mr. Welsh.*] Well, I come down to the year 1900. Knowing the difference now between the two tenures of 1892 and the lease under which you held in 1881, if you had been aware of the difference would you have converted in 1900 when you had the opportunity?—Yes, certainly.

86. Now, since the year 1900 have you further improved your land?—Oh, yes. I built a butter-factory for one thing.

87. In what year?—About eleven years since. I could not say the year now. It was about 1901 or 1902.

88. What did the butter-factory cost you?—About £300.

89. Have you done any other improvements since then?—Yes, I have added two rooms on to the house and built a cow-shed. That cost me £130 alone.

90. What did the two rooms cost you?—About £75.

91. In what year were the two rooms added?—The two rooms were built in 1902.

92. Have you done any other improvements to the place since then?—Yes, I have planted a lot of fruit-trees and shelter-trees at different times, and kept on ploughing up and grassing and improving the farm.

93. In what condition is the farm now as a whole? Is there any bush left on it at all?—No, it was not a bush section.

94. Is there any fern left on it, or any gorse?—No.

95. What class of farming do you carry on?—Principally dairying.

96. How many cows do you milk?—About seventy-five, but they are not all on this farm. I have other land as well.

97. The dairy is on this farm?—Yes.

98. What is the total value of your improvements at the present date?—About £8 to £9 an acre.

99. And do you ask still for the right to come in under the Act of 1892?—Yes.

100. You gave evidence before the Lands Committee of the House?—Yes.

101. And you saw the memorandum the Public Trustee produced to the Lands Committee?—Yes.

102. Were you willing, speaking for yourself, to accept the terms on which it was suggested in that memorandum that the lessees might be allowed the right to convert?—Yes, perfectly, because I thought it was fair to both parties.

103. Are you still of the same opinion?—Yes.

104. *Cross-examined by Mr. Bell.*] Now, Mr. Andrews, when you took up your section you told us that you made some inquiries as to the terms?—Yes.

105. Who did you make those inquiries from?—Mr. Rennell.

106. You had not had any experience of taking up land before?—No.

107. So that it is quite possible you misunderstood what Mr. Rennell told you about it?—I might have done, but I do not think I did. I had a friend with me.

108. Have you got a good memory for these things?—A fairly good memory—I forget some things.

109. You will remember you stated in your evidence that you did not get your lease until after you had been in possession for some two or three months?—I could not say it was two or three months, but it was some time after I had been in possession.

110. When you got your lease?—Yes.

111. You read it and came to the conclusion that it was not what you had bargained for?—Yes.

112. Now, you told Mr. Welsh that you gave evidence before the Lands Committee of the House?—Yes.

113. I will read you your evidence there—“*Mr. Anderson.*] Did you know anything about the £5 for improvements?—No.” “You took your lease up originally?—Yes.” “And never read the lease?—No; I simply went by what Mr. Rennell told me.” Which of those two stories is accurate?—At the time I took up the land I did not read the lease, because I had not got it. That is quite right, because I had not seen the lease when I took up the land.

114. Well, you think it is more likely that Mr. Rennell misled you than that you misunderstood Mr. Rennell?—I could not say.

115. Did you see any of those documents prepared for the Public Trust Office explaining the terms of the lease?—None at all. I am speaking of the time I was in conversation with Mr. Rennell. There was nothing of that sort shown to me at the time.

116. Did you ever see one?—Not until I was down in Wellington some two years since.

117. You never saw one before that?—No, I do not think I did.

118. Do you take the *Hawera Star*?—No.

119. Do you take any newspaper at all?—I take the *Daily News* at the present time.

120. Did you take any newspaper at that time?—I do not think I did—I am not sure.