

67. You are giving your evidence on this question of land, is that not so?—There is papa a short distance from Waiouru.

68. Are you not aware that there is papa in this soil where the wheat is grown?—I cannot say there is papa.

69. You would not deny there is papa?—I would not deny it. There is papa in the cuttings, because the railway has proved that.

70. Is Waiouru the only place round about there where wheat is grown?—I think so.

71. Why is wheat not grown elsewhere?—I cannot tell you.

72. Do you consider that the Waiouru soil is about the best there?—Yes, at that place.

73. They do not grow any wheat in the Karioi locality?—No, they grow oats and turnips.

74. Do they grow oats to any extent?—Probably 100 acres every season; there might be a little more.

75. Whereabouts?—On Duncan's block, between Karioi Railway-station and the Wangaehu River. You can see it from the line.

76. At Rangitaiki, you say, oats were grown for thirteen years?—Yes, by ourselves.

77. How much?—Perhaps 10 acres, sometimes a little less and sometimes more. I dare say there are 30 acres altogether fenced in.

78. Any manure?—Yes, the stable manure; no artificial manure.

79. Had you enough stable manure?—It was not enough, but as far as it went we put it on.

80. Did you spread it over all the land you had got?—Yes.

81. You were able to cover it?—In the first instance part of it was a paddock where sheep camped. Afterwards that sheep trade stopped, and during the latter part we had no sheep there.

82. Large numbers of sheep were taken there?—Yes, originally.

83. For several years?—Yes.

84. And this land you cropped was used for a paddock?—Yes.

85. At Opepe?—At Opepe it was the same.

86. And Taupo?—Sometimes at Taupo.

87. Could you give us any idea as to how many bushels per acre the crop yielded?—I could not give you that because we cut it for chaff.

88. You say that on the western side the land was as good as the land at Rangitaiki?—Yes, perhaps better on the western side.

89. Were any crops grown there?—Not that I know of. I never saw any crops grown. They used to have cattle and sheep running there.

90. Supposing there was no help to the crop from the sheep camp?—If there had been no manure on the land you would have got no crop. I saw one crop only 12 in. high.

91. You said something about the cost of carriage: can you give the Committee any idea of what it would cost by contract to carry 4 or 5 tons at per ton over twenty miles—I mean locally about the Taupo district?—I should say about £2 at the very outside. They could put on 3½ tons on the pumice roads.

92. What would they use to do that?—They would have to use horses.

93. Have you known bullock teams to be used?—Yes, but bullocks are no good unless you have a good grass paddock or bush on which to feed them.

94. You think it would cost £2 a ton for twenty miles?—Yes. There are no hills within twenty miles, or anything to speak of.

95. Being connected with coaching and work of that description, you would have every opportunity of knowing what the cost of carriage would be?—I could give you the cost of carriage right through from Napier to Taupo at one time, but I could not say what it is now.

96. I am speaking of the district surrounding Lake Taupo which would be affected by this tramway or railway?—Up to twenty miles I say £2 would be near enough.

97. Do you know Putaruru?—Yes, I have been there a good number of years before the road or railway was made.

98. Do you know Mr. Barnett there?—No.

99. Was the country at all hilly in the neighbourhood of Putaruru?—Yes, it is downy country.

100. But not rough country?—Not extra rough. Most of it was open country.

101. Supposing you had cartage to do from Putaruru into the country where they are doing some farming, would the rate of carriage be something like what you are mentioning?—I could not say. It depends entirely on the roads.

102. You do not know the country particularly well around Putaruru?—No. I have been there often, but not for twenty-odd years.

103. Are they cropping much there?—I do not know. I have not been down that way except by train.

104. *Mr. Dickie.*] You say wheat was grown on pumice lands forty years ago?—Yes.

105. Was it a good sample?—Yes.

106. Was it threshed?—Yes.

107. What did it go per acre?—I could not tell you. There was no manure.

108. In growing oats for chaff what, per ton, would it be to the acre?—A ton and a half, I should say.

109. If you had not had manure you would have got nothing at all?—I saw some not 10 in. high.

110. Do you think the country would be suitable to put poor men on to make a living?—They would want a bit of money.

111. The land would need a lot of manuring?—Yes, you could do nothing without manure.

112. *Mr. Buick.*] You saw forty years ago wheat growing at Tokaanu?—Yes, by the Natives.