

cut up in the neighbourhood of Otahuhu Station, and it sold as low as £80 an acre. It was within easy distance of the Otahuhu Station. Then, again, there is the Mossman land: that sold at as high as £100 an acre. That is particularly good land; it is on the waterside and is handy to the station and also to Onehunga. But land further back in Mangere is worth now, I suppose, from £40 to £60 an acre.

37. You say you would sooner have a 5-acre section in Mangere than a 5-acre section at New Lynn at the same price?—I do not think there is any comparison.

38. And the value at Mangere is up to £60 an acre?—Yes.

39. *Mr. Anderson.*] Do you know of any leasehold sections being sold by the lessees—that is, did they get any goodwill?—Some of the sections have been sold from one to another.

40. How much goodwill did they get?—I could not say, because the sections which have been sold have all had improvements on them, and, of course, the purchase-money has purchased the improvements.

41. You do not know?—I could not say. I have not got any record showing what the goodwill would average on the land itself.

42. *Mr. Witty.*] This land that you were telling us about as having been sold at various prices—I think you said from £25 to £38 an acre—how does it compare with Hetana in point of quality and locality, nearness to the railway-station, &c.?—Taking the sales which I quoted, at from £17 to £95, I should say the average would compare about evenly.

43. And how about the average distance?—I am including that. I am taking not only the average quality but the average distance.

44. What about the average quality?—There is not much to pick and choose. There is no rich land out there. There is a little variation in the workableness.

45. *Hon. Mr. Massey.*] Is the road metalled out to New Lynn—the whole of the road?—Yes.

46. *Mr. Witty.*] When did these sales take place?—They were in the records of 1912. They were the only records available at the time I made the valuation.

47. That would mean that the lands in question were sold prior to that?—They were sold prior to that, because I had the records of them.

48. It might have been twelve months prior?—Some of them were, and some were more recent. I adopted the same principle that I always adopt in endeavouring to find out what the selling-value is in reference to these sections: I took the sales.

THURSDAY, 28TH AUGUST, 1913.

FREDERICK GEORGE EWINGTON examined. (No. 4.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—A land and estate agent.

2. Would you make a statement to the Committee with regard to this matter?—I received a notice from the clerk to the Committee that I was required to be here at 10 o'clock this morning to speak as to the paper *re* New Lynn lands. The only paper I know of is the one taken out of an Auckland paper. It states in this paper that the freehold land in New Lynn is valued at £300 per acre. That is the first statement which I would like to explain. I think, sir, that that statement is very incorrect and is very misleading. For instance, any one on reading that paper would think that all freehold land in New Lynn is valued at £300 per acre. Now, it is just possible that a small section or two near the station may have been sold at that rate, but it is absolutely incorrect to make such a statement as that. That statement was made on the 5th July, 1913, and then a statement analogous to that was published on the 8th of the same month in the same paper alluding to Mr. Tyres, an accountant in the south, who was asked to assume that land at New Lynn was valued at £300 per acre. Now, since that date land has been sold—some of the best land in the Hetana Settlement—for £40 per acre. That was on the 11th July, 1913. That 39 acres and 22 perches, with the improvements, were sold to Mr. Thornton Jackson and Franklin Saunders for £1,976 5s. 2d. That is one thing which goes to show that that statement is very much exaggerated. I went and saw this property before I knew about that sale, and I value that same property at £2,000. I value the land at £1,565 5s., which is £40 an acre, and the house and buildings at £434 15s. per acre. Another statement in that paper says that at the present time there is no land within one mile and a half of New Lynn Railway-station which is not worth £50 an acre section. Well, I very much doubt that, and one proof of it is the fact that a piece of land with four frontages owned by a man who had been living in the district and who knew all that was going on sold his interest, as I have stated, on the 11th July. It was registered on the 15th July, and he sold that land for £40 an acre. Then appears this statement in the paper: "It is rather a peculiar anomaly to find the Government is paying £300 an acre at Ellerslie for land whereupon to build workers' homes, and at the same time is valuing that land which is more suitable at New Lynn at £30 an acre." In my opinion there is no comparison between the situation of Ellerslie and the situation of New Lynn. There is closer settlement at Ellerslie, and there is more work to be found for men who can settle there; it is easier of access, and a more popular place. The land is better, and I think if any working-men had their choice between Ellerslie and New Lynn they would all choose Ellerslie—that is, taking area for area. I do not say that if you offered a man the choice of an ordinary section of land of, say, 66 ft. by 132 ft. at Ellerslie as against 2 or 3 acres at New Lynn that he would not choose the 2 or 3 acres. I might say that when I knew I had to come here I went carefully through that district and made a valuation of twenty-nine properties out there, and I am prepared to give my opinion that the value of several of those properties is £30 per acre, although there are two or three instances where they go very much higher than that.