

£2,700 unimproved value, which is practically £600 an acre. Mr. Murphy uses the ground to grow potatoes on. Mr. Shepherd's land alongside is valued at £440 and £475 an acre. I do not know why there should be any difference in the valuation. The only difference between Shepherd's and Murphy's land is that Murphy has an additional frontage.

40. *The Chairman.*] Is there no extra road frontage in Shepherd's two acres?—No.

41. *Mr. McVeagh.*] What would be a fair value for Murphy's place?—It is one of the best areas in Otahuhu, and I consider he should be valued at £450 per acre as against his valuation of nearly £600. Mr. Murphy was increased in three years nearly £1,000.

42. Did you examine the properties of Mr. F. Lippiatt and Mr. James Thoms?—Yes. Mr. Lippiatt has a property of 12 acres down towards Mr. Hayward's. He has a frontage of 671 ft. His unimproved value at the beginning of the year was £1,570. The neighbour at the back, Mr. James Thoms, has 5 acres of land with a frontage of 679 ft., and he was valued at £650. Mr. Lippiatt was reduced £50 and Mr. Thoms £75, making Lippiatt £1,520 and Thoms £575. We see no reason why Mr. Lippiatt's land, which is the larger area, should be valued at a less price per acre.

43. You made a personal inspection of these properties we have mentioned?—Yes.

44. That covers the cases you wish to submit to the Commission?—Yes.

45. *The Chairman.*] With regard to your last observation, you say that the smaller block of land has the larger frontage by a few feet: is there any other difference?—Mr. Lippiatt's is broken, and it has a gully through it which he has done a great deal to in the way of levelling and draining. In its original state it was not nearly so nice a piece of land as Mr. Thom's.

46. Supposing there are two blocks of land of equal value, except that one block is considerably larger than the other: have you any views as to whether both should be valued the same or one more than the other?—In my opinion, the smaller area should be valued at a higher value than the larger block. There is a more limited demand for larger blocks than for smaller blocks.

47. It is easier to dispose of?—Yes.

48. If the smaller block had to be cut up under the Public Works Act there would be a larger proportion taken off in roads than in the case of the larger block?—That depends on the frontage. It is not necessary that more should be taken off one than off another for roading.

49. More in proportion would be taken off an acre than off a larger section?—You will not find many acres that cannot be subdivided without roading.

50. You said the smaller block should be valued higher because it is easier to dispose of?—Yes.

51. *Mr. Campbell.*] When was the last valuation made?—This year, 1914.

52. And the former?—In 1911, three years previously.

53. *The Valuer-General.*] You are engaged in the business of a land agent?—Yes.

54. In order to arrive at the value of a property, what course would you pursue?—It greatly depends on the property itself, whether it is farming land or residential sites.

55. If you were called on to make a valuation of lands in Otahuhu you would consider the purpose for which the land is used?—Yes; or the purpose for which it is adapted.

56. If you were called on to value a property used for growing potatoes, would you value it on the basis of growing potatoes?—Not if it was more adapted for shops and dwellings.

57. Supposing this property which is used for growing potatoes has come into use as suburban property, you would fix its value as suburban property?—I should fix its value by supply and demand.

58. Admitting supply and demand, how would you fix its value per foot?—Simply by supply and demand.

59. Supposing a property is used for agricultural purposes and has a utility for suburban purposes—it is worth, say, £20 an acre for agricultural purposes—what guide would you take as to its value as suburban land?—I should go on the nearest that people would be likely to buy it at, and what amount of interest they could pay for it.

60. Would you not have to take the price realized for such property?—To a certain extent, but I do not think you are right in valuing land not sold as if it were sold. Supposing a man had 100 acres, and some one came along and bought 3 acres and paid £200 an acre; I do not think because of that that the whole land is to be valued at that price.

61. Supposing forty sections are cut up and twenty sold at a certain price per foot, and there is a demand for the rest, would you not consider the remaining sections equal in value to those that had been sold?—If there was a brisk demand for the rest, yes.

62. It is admitted there has been a brisk demand for homes in Otahuhu?—There has been, but it has fallen off lately.

63. There was a demand when the valuation was made in 1911–12?—Yes; but there was very little when the last valuation was made.

*The Valuer-General:* The valuation was made in December previous to the 31st March, 1914.

*The Chairman:* When was the poll carried?

*Mr. McVeagh:* In the early part of this year. It is in force now.

*The Chairman:* A special valuation was made then.

*The Valuer-General:* Not in this case. The valuation was made in December, 1913, and the poll was taken before the Assessment Court sat. No special valuation is made in the case of a change in the system of rating unless it is asked for.

*The Chairman:* The Government valuation was made when, approximately?

*The Valuer-General:* I can only give it officially that it came into force in March, 1914. It was started in September, 1913, and was practically finished by the end of December, and the time between the finishing of the valuation and the sitting of the Court was taken up in issuing notices, &c.

64. *The Valuer-General* (to witness).] You being a land agent will have a knowledge of the sales effected in the borough since the valuation was made?—Yes.