

48. You said that the North Riding has bad roads: do you know where the riding is?—I do not know the boundaries, but I know where it is.

49. You spoke of some tea-tree land in the East Riding. Mr. Ryder's questions are, of course, pertinent to this. Although you have lumped the rest of the county together for the one purpose of working out the sheep per acre, yet you have given evidence of particular properties in particular ridings. Therefore, Mr. Ryder's question is material?—I know that this better land is in the East Riding, but I do not know where the outside boundaries of the riding are.

50. *Mr. Ryder.*] You are a practical farmer. What is the value of land up here in the South Riding that will carry a sheep to the acre?—That is a very nice question. One man may run two sheep to the acre, while another might run little better than a sheep.

51. Supposing you are owning land in the South Riding, and that land will carry a sheep to the acre, how much is that land worth per acre?—There is always a minimum you would give, but there is a maximum too.

52. I am referring to the South Riding?—You have here to-day men with sheep-and-three-quarter land which is valued at £12.

53. I want your evidence?—It is worth £12 in his case.

54. I want your expert knowledge of what one-sheep-to-the-acre land is worth up here in the South Riding?—There are various qualities of land in the South Riding. Some of it would be worth £3 a sheep.

55. How do you work that out?—I am not going to work it out. That is what I would give. I would give £9 an acre in some other parts of the South Riding.

56. Where?—Some of the rich flats.

57. Do you know Dr. Andrews's country?—I do not know it individually.

58. It is on the Whareama River flats. Do you say it is worth £9 per acre, and carry one sheep?—That would be the case. It must be improved and up to date.

59. One sheep to the acre?—One ewe to the acre. I am basing everything on one ewe to the acre.

60. *The Chairman.*] Can you base it one one sheep of any kind?—No.

*Mr. Ryder:* When we say one sheep to the acre we do not individualize as ewe, or hogget, or wether. When we speak of sheep or sheep-and-a-half country we infer a mixed class of sheep.

*Witness:* This country grows scrub and mixed native grasses. One wants to see the country before valuing it as sheep-to-the-acre land. Where the land is poor and has native grasses the sheep coming from it are not worth so much, nor do you get so much for the wool as is the case with sheep coming off English grass, even though in each case it is only sheep-to-the-acre land.

61. *The Chairman.*] You say you cannot fix the value of land merely by the number of sheep it carries?—That is so.

62. *Mr. Ryder.*] But you are here to give evidence as an expert of the value of land in this district. I have asked you the question, and you have not stated very definitely yet. You say the rich flats are worth £9 an acre for every sheep they carry; if two sheep, £18. You know the Annedale property—it is carrying a sheep to the acre—what is land there worth?—I have not seen the property except to ride through it, and I cannot give an opinion on its value. I have said before that there may be land here worth £3 per sheep and there may be land worth £9 per sheep. I cannot be tied down to anything else.

*Mr. Ryder:* The witness admits he does not know the property sufficiently well to give a value for it. The evidence is of no use to us or to anybody, because he admits he knows nothing about the values in this county. I am not going to ask him any more questions. He admits he knows nothing about it.

*Witness:* There is land here you could value up to £9 an acre, but one wants to see the land and the quality of the land. There is no man here who can tell you the value of land per acre by just being told the number of sheep on the land. I have enough experience to know that.

63. *The Chairman.*] You have given evidence to Mr. Flanagan comparing the South Riding with the rest of the county on the carrying-capacity of sheep. The South Riding, with a sheep and a half to the acre, worked out at £3 3s. 6d. per sheep, and the remainder of the county, at one sheep to the acre, worked out at £3 1s. Do you qualify that in any way?—No. I took that as actual fact. I took it from the Government sheep returns and from the Government valuation of the two classes of land. It is not my opinion; it is just a matter of figures.

64. Would not the same difficulty occur here—that the wool might be better, and so on? Would not that difficulty apply in using these figures as a test?—Hardly, because where more closely settled they may stock harder. There are conditions surrounding the position. Any practical man knows that small holdings may stock harder than big holdings, and it is difficult to arrive at a fair estimate of the thing. I took the sheep from the sheep returns and the figures from the Valuation Department. The only thing one would infer from those figures is that the south has not been valued as highly as it might be.

65. I am not a practical man, and know nothing about these things. Is not this done on the basis of the sheep-carrying capacity?—Yes, on the whole country side.

66. If I understand aright you said to Mr. Ryder that the mere sheep-carrying capacity could not be taken as an infallible test?—That is so. One would require to see the whole country for himself.

67. We cannot take this as a fair test?—It must be a fair average test.

68. You mean that as between two properties one might be one sheep and the other three sheep, but taking the whole of the county and one riding as against the others it might work out as a general average?—That is so.

69. *Mr. Campbell.*] If you allowed £3 per acre for mixed sheep, what would you allow for two sheep?—It would be increased, but not necessarily to £6—perhaps to £7 or £8.