

just as much as Mr. Souness, and they will admit that a man cannot inspect a property—fences and grasses—at three miles distance, or even one mile. No one expects a valuer to go inch by inch, or acre by acre, or even 20 acres by 20 acres, over a property, but it is surely reasonable that he should be expected to ride across the paddocks.

2. *The Chairman.*] Did Mr. Souness ask you if any difference had taken place in the property between the two valuations?—He asked me my improvements, and I told him what I had put on. I have no complaint to make regarding the allowance he made for them.

3. In order to ascertain the unimproved value, do you consider it necessary to have ridden through the property in the way you suggest?—Yes.

4. Why?—He cannot arrive at the true unimproved value without inspecting the property and seeing the quality of the soil and the prospects of improving it.

5. Would the soil be likely to be altered since the previous valuation in 1907?—In some cases it has been, because hundreds of acres were under scrub in 1907, and the valuer could not tell whether good grass had spread over it or whether the land was capable of carrying grass without going over it, and he did not do so.

6. *Mr. Ryder.*] Your property consists of two or three classes of land?—That is so.

7. Therefore it is absolutely necessary for a man to inspect a property of that kind to arrive at the unimproved value?—Yes.

8. *The Valuer-General.*] What is your idea of the true value of land?—It is rather hard to define the true value. To get the true value from the producer's point of view over the whole county is a uniform value. It is not necessarily the true value from the seller's point of view. No valuer can get that without going all over all the properties.

9. Am I to conclude that your definition of the true value is the producing-value?—You cannot get much nearer it than that.

DUNEDIN, 17TH DECEMBER, 1914.

JAMES McKECHNIE examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—I reside at 43 Stuart Street, Dunedin. I appear on behalf of my wife to complain about the valuation placed on our property, part Section 16, Block XIV, Dunedin, 16 perches; £3,100 capital value, £1,000 unimproved value, and £2,100 improvements. I paid altogether £2,500 for the property. The valuation for the land, I consider, is about double what it is worth just now; £500 would be a good price for it to bring in the market if there were no buildings on it. Properties on each side of me have been sold lately, one for £400 and the other for a little over £300, with small buildings of but little value on them. My property went abegging at the price I gave for it, and when put up to auction only £1,800 was bid for it.

2. What do you say the capital value is just now?—I consider it is worth just the £2,500 I gave for it. I paid enough for it. The building on the land is thirty years old, and I suppose is worth about £2,000.

3. Your valuation of the improvements is very close to the Government valuation?—Yes, but the unimproved value is a long way out. I do not know that the whole place would bring £2,500 in the market now.

4. How long ago is it that you paid £2,500 for it?—A little over four years ago.

5. *Mr. Campbell.*] Have you had this property for sale at all?—No.

6. I suppose you know you can offer it to the Government at your valuation?—I am quite agreeable to sell it for £2,500. I asked for a revaluation, but was told I could not get it unless I paid the expenses.

7. *The Valuer-General.*] Is this the Government valuation you are speaking of or the valuation furnished by the Dunedin City Council?—It is the Government valuation. There has been no revaluation by the Government since I acquired the property.

8. *The Chairman.*] Did you object at the Assessment Court?—No. The Assessment Court, to my knowledge, has not sat since I bought my property.

The Valuer-General. There has been no valuation by the Government of the City of Dunedin for over eight years.

9. *Mr. Campbell.*] Has property in the City of Dunedin increased in value, or has it remained stationary or decreased, in the last four or five years?—Within the city proper I think it is about stationary, but I could not say with regard to the suburbs. This property of mine is in the heart of the city. I dare say it is about stationary.

CHARLES CHRISTIE GRAHAM examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—I am a Stipendiary Magistrate of the Dominion of New Zealand. I beg respectfully to call your attention to what I have reason to consider the excessive valuation put on the three pastoral runs in the Hawea County held in the name of myself and two daughters. The notice of revaluation made at the beginning of the year was unfortunately overlooked by me owing to my absence from home when it was sent to me, and I did not become aware of it until the receipt of a notice to pay the county rates based on the new valuation, when I found that, though the rates had been reduced by $\frac{1}{4}$ d. in the pound, my