

2. Where is this property?—Within a hundred years of this building [Old Provincial Buildings], in Gloucester Street West; 26 perches.

3. How many years ago was the last valuation made which placed you at £400?—That was made in 1907, and the last one was made in 1913, and came into operation on the 1st April, 1914.

4. We are not concerned with the rates, because the City Council may have struck a new rate or increased the rates. We are concerned about the value of the land. Can you tell us what was the capital value?—The unimproved value in March, 1913, was £400, and the capital value £860. For the present year the capital value is £990.

5. Between 1907 and 1913 were any new improvements made on the property?—No. All the improvements made on the property were made before I came up from Lyttelton. Before I bought the property a spade had never been put into it for seventeen years.

6. I see that the improvements were valued the same in 1907 and 1913—in each case £460?—I could not show you a shilling's worth of improvements, except that I have kept the land and a little garden in a nice state for a person to live in.

7. Is there a building on the place?—Yes. I live there.

8. What is the building insured for?—I could not say.

9. What do you value the building at?—The last repairs I made to the building six years ago cost me £370. I had to tear down a good deal of the old building and rearrange it altogether.

10. What is the building worth, do you think?—Not more than £400 or £500, if it is worth that.

11. What is your idea of the value of the whole property?—£900 to £1,000.

12. Do you complain of the capital value—that is, land and buildings—at £990?—No. What I am complaining about is the value on which I pay taxes—an increase from £400 to £530 in one year.

13. On your own figures the valuation seems pretty close?—That is so.

14. *Mr. Murray* (representing the district office of the Valuation Department).] Do you know of any sales near you?—No.

15. Did you know that the Masonic body had bought a part of Mr. Graham's property?—No.

HENRY MURRAY examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—I am district valuer for Christchurch. The valuations of these properties are all based upon the sales of property in the locality. On the opposite side of Mr. Murphy the Masonic people bought a section, 66 ft. by $2\frac{1}{2}$ chains, for £850; and Mr. Dawson, the brewer, has got a section opposite Mr. Murphy's and adjoining the Masonic property, for which he paid over £800, and he has recently built a house on it. Then, a little farther down Mr. Craddock has bought a section for £800, and adjoining him a person has bought at £800. These are all sales within the last two years, and the last two mentioned within the last six or seven months. On those sales the valuations are based.

2. They were unimproved?—Absolutely. There was nothing on them at all.

3. What is the frontage of Mr. Murphy's section?—About 40 ft.

4. What do you value the building at?—£460, and it is high at that. The increase is in the land-value.

5. Has there been an increase in the land-value since 1907?—Yes; it has gone up considerably.

6. *Mr. Murphy.*] Do you know the money that has been spent in repairs on the building next to me, which is valued at £600?—The repairs have been made since the valuation was made.

7. I am 14 perches short of a quarter-acre?—You have 44 ft. frontage.

8. *The Chairman.*] Is there any price per foot?—In the residential area all sales are at per quarter-acre or portion of a quarter-acre.

9. *Mr. Murphy.*] What is the value of Dr. Simes's allotment next to me?—Whatever you are valued at; it is in proportion to all the others.

10. When did you visit my property to value it?—Some time last year.

11. Perhaps you took the opportunity to go there while I was away?—Perhaps you happened to be away when I called.

ARCHIBALD EARSHAMAN examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—I am a sheep-farmer, of Hurunui. I object to the way my land has been valued. I have 3,337 acres in the Hurunui Riding of the Waipara County. My unimproved value is £12,750, and improvements £600. I would like to go back to the valuation before this one. That valuation refers to what is known as Blackhills, originally sold on deferred payment. The Government valuation was from £2 down to £1. My section, with the adjoining one, was valued at £1 10s. an acre. The adjoining section sold for £2 3s. 6d. The section I possess now was valued at £1 10s., and bought for £1 19s. That was thirty-one years ago. Another section that cost £2 6s. was converted into a small grazing-run at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the capital value. During this time the unimproved value of the section was £3,200, and the improvements were valued at £1,700. The capital value of the land was less than 10s. an acre. There were five sections which were converted into small grazing-runs. They were valued at £1, and we were paying road rates on £1 10s.

2. How long ago is this?—Twenty-two or twenty-three years ago. My land is now valued at £4 an acre, and I have not room on it to make a garden, whilst on the adjoining section there are 200 acres on which the plough can be put. I can scarcely get a buggy on to my place because of the rocks. And the adjoining place is valued the same as mine.