

behalf, to the effect that if the said firm assisted you to purchase the land and paid your instalments, that you would allow them to graze their sheep on the land?—Since I have taken up the land I have made an arrangement.

733. When did you first make an arrangement with them?—About six months after the sale.

734. What arrangement was it?—A verbal one. I have made an agreement in writing about four months ago.

735. Who was present when you signed that agreement?—Mr. Pogson and Mr. Humphreys.

736. Had you any arrangement of any kind before the purchase?—None whatever.

737. Was there any conversation as to running sheep on the land when you gave instructions to purchase?—No.

738. Was there any understanding expressed or implied to that effect?—No.

739. The sheep have been on the land from the time you bought till now?—Yes.

740. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] How long since you took up the land?—About two and a half years.

741. And the agreement was made verbally about six months after the sale.—Yes.

742. And you have been carrying on a verbal agreement till May last?—Yes.

743. *Mr. Stevens.*] Did Pogson buy the land on your authority?—Yes.

744. Then, if so, you must have had a conversation with him before the purchase?—I had about the purchase of the land, but not as regards sheep.

745. How long before the sale did you instruct Pogson to purchase on your behalf?—A month or six weeks.

746. What was your understanding with him then?—That he would assist me.

747. Upon what conditions?—No conditions were mentioned.

748. Do you mean to say you entered into an arrangement to borrow money to pay for the land without stipulating what the conditions were?—Yes; I did so.

749. Was the suggestion to buy the land your own or Pogson's?—My own.

750. Did you go to Pogson and ask him to purchase the land for you?—I asked him if he would assist me.

751. Upon what terms?—No terms were mentioned at the time.

752. Do you mean to say that you, a man able to do clerical work, would enter into an arrangement to borrow money without any understanding as to the terms on which you borrowed that money?—I did so; it was a verbal arrangement.

753. What was the verbal arrangement?—That he was to run his sheep there. That was after the purchase.

754. But there was a verbal agreement, a month before the purchase, that Pogson should advance the money?—Yes.

755. Upon what conditions? Were you to pay 100 per cent., say, for the use of the money?—No conditions at all were named.

756. Then, if the land was bought for you with money borrowed, you were unaware upon what terms; do you consider you had any right or interest in the land?—Yes.

757. If you acquire an interest in something it must be upon some conditions. According to your arrangement he bought the land for you without any restriction whatever?—No terms whatever were made.

758. Do you expect the Committee to believe it when an intelligent man like you makes such a statement as that?—I should imagine so.

759. *The Chairman.*] Did you ever have any conversation with Pogson with regard to a future transfer of your land to the firm?—Never.

760. Quite sure of that now?—Quite sure.

761. Did Pogson advance the money for the fencing put up on the land?—Yes.

762. How much have you had towards the instalments at all?—Nothing of my own money. It was all borrowed from Gellibrand and Co.

763. In fact they paid for you?—Yes.

764. *Mr. J. W. Thomson.*] Have you any understanding with any one as to a transfer of the land at all?—No.

765. *The Chairman.*] You never had any conversation on the subject?—No.

766. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] You read the declaration you made before purchasing?—Yes.

767. Do you know the meaning of it?—Yes.

768. That you declared you bought the land *bonâ fide* for your own exclusive use and benefit?—Yes.

769. Do you consider you have it for your own exclusive use and benefit with the firm's sheep running on it?—I took it for my own benefit.

770. What benefit are you getting from it?—I am getting a living from it.

771. *The Chairman.*] That is by killing rabbits. When you bought the land it was not to breed rabbits on. You do not breed them?—No; they breed themselves.

772. *Mr. J. McKenzie.*] Would you not do just as well killing rabbits anywhere else?—Not unless they were as thick as on my land.

773. *The Chairman.*] Have not Gellibrand and Co. had the use and benefit of that land ever since you bought it?—Yes.

774. Then do you consider in making the declaration you told the truth?—I told the truth in making the declaration. I took it for my own use and benefit.

775. *Major Harris.*] Suppose the rabbits were all killed off by inoculation, would that effect your livelihood?—To a certain extent.

776. Then, you would have no other means of living on the land after that?—No.

777. So it would be a loss to you if the rabbits were destroyed?—Yes.