

497A. What is the width of the good land there?—In the Mokau Valley it is about half a mile wide.

498. What is the land rising out of the Mokau Valley?—Good limestone hills.

499. You could not plough it?—No; they are good sheep and cattle hills. A good run could be made there.

500. From the 110th mile?—We then go down into the head of the Waipa.

501. How is the country there?—It is better still. I think it is the best part of it. From 110 to 115 miles there are nice ~~easy~~ spurs, nice little gullies, well watered, and the bush is tawa and rimu, and the country is good till it joins Mr. Rochford's line.

502. Have you taken levels along this line?—Only by the barometer. We had a barometer with us.

503. How close did you take the barometrical readings?—I should not think we would be more than 30ft. or 40ft. out.

504. I mean, how frequently?—Every day.

505. Did you plot this section that has been lithographed [map produced]?—If I did not, it agrees with mine. I plotted one. I think the one produced is Mr. Holmes's. I never sent in a complete one—only to the Tangarakau.

506. Have there ever been any actual levels taken with spirit-levels?—No, nor measurements.

507. Any cross-sections?—No. We had nothing but barometers with us.

508. Were there any cross-sections taken with the barometer?—Not that I am aware of. There were other parties out beside myself afterwards.

509. You have been describing the land you have gone through as good and bad, and so on: can you give us any sort of an idea of the proportion of land that is fit for agriculture?—Near Stratford I did not go far off the line at all; when I got to the bad country I went two and three days' journey off it. There the country is not fit for agriculture at all.

510. You have talked of small valleys here and there being pretty good; are these ploughable now?—No; there is bush on them.

511. You cannot plough that land, then, till it is cleared?—No; there is one small clearing on the Mangaotuku, part of which could be ploughed.

512. Taking an average of five miles on either side of this line, is it fit for settlement?—Out from Stratford, down along the Patea River, a distance of about eighteen or twenty miles from Stratford.

513. And from there northward?—A goat could not live on that land. That would be from the 25th to the 60th mile. It is fit for nothing.

514. On either side of the line?—For eight miles to the westward and right over the Wanganui, about ten miles to the eastward.

515. From the 60th mile, where you describe the land as getting better, what proportion of it is fit for settlement?—Only in the valleys, till you get into the Ohura, about the 63rd or 70th mile. There the hills are low, with tawa bush and pine.

516. From 60 miles to 70 that proportion is fit for settlement?—That is the portion I was not on. I know it is good, for I saw it from the ranges.

517. From the 70th mile upwards you say it is all improving: what proportion of it is agricultural land?—To the eastward a large proportion of it is fit for occupation, but very little for the plough. The hills are covered with fern and scrub, and some very good soil. The valleys are good.

518. But why is it not fit for the plough?—It is too steep. There are flats on the hills occasionally. The hills are clayey and poor soil, but on the slopes it is better.

519. What width of land is there fit for the plough?—I should say about a mile on each side of the Ohura. Of course there are valleys that we may not have seen running through this.

520. And as you go farther up the line?—It continues good all the way from 75 to 80 miles.

521. What land is there northwards of the 80th mile fit for settlement?—Nothing till you get to the 85th mile. Then it improves all the way down; it is all fit for settlement. It is a limestone country.

522. What proportion of the Upper Mokau country do you consider ploughable?—Not a tenth of it.

523. But would it be good grass land?—Yes.

524. Is any of the good land that you describe covered with bush at the present time?—No; it is open flat.

525. *Mr. W. White.*] Can any of these grades [plan produced] be improved?—I could not say, because the distances are not accurately measured with a chain on that line; it is all guess—taken with the aneroid, and the distances guessed.

526. Then, the grades cannot be depended upon?—No.

527. Are they likely to be better or worse?—The chances are that they would be worse, because the hillsides are very steep.

528. They may be worse than 1 in 70?—In the rough part of the country I believe it is quite probable.

529. From the 34th to 35th mile?—There is a very nasty saddle just beyond the 35th; by the barometer I make it 300ft. You ought to get a tunnel through it, because it is a very narrow ridge.

530. From mile 42 to 45½?—That would be very good; it goes up an easy valley.

531. Then, from 47½ to 50½?—The grade might be right as stated; but it is a very rough piece of country.

532. The grade is shown on the plan as 1 in 50. Would it be likely to be worse than that, or better?—No; it is quite possible you could get a grade of that.

533. From mile 57 to 59?—The grade there would most likely be very bad.