

other between nine and ten. It all depends on the portion of the land the Government would take.

532. Presume the six acres were taken—could you answer the question?—I really could not, it depends so much on the way the works are carried out.

533. Can you say anything of the valuation reference to which is made here. [Referring to Mr. Sperrey's evidence]?—There is only one other undivided block, and that is a block owned by a syndicate. . . . The ten acres valued at £1,000 I have specially mentioned as being less valuable because of its sloping down to the swamp. . . . Mr. Sperrey states that suburban properties about Auckland have enormously increased in value—as much as three and four times: my valuation will show that they are in some instances more than that. The five and a half acres valued in 1882 at £830 are now valued at £950; but it is not described what property it is.

534. You cannot recognize it?—No; unless it was the property I mentioned, of which Professor Thomas has a part. I could not recognize it without referring to my note-book.

535. Then, as to the ten acres valued in 1882 at £590, and now at £1,000?—Those are the ten acres odd that we were speaking of, belonging to Mrs. Burgess. All the properties have increased, but not to the same extent as Mr. Stark's on the other side of the road.

536. His property all through you valued four times as much as Mrs. Burgess's?—Well, nearly four times as much; but the situation is altogether different in every respect.

537. But the average of Stark's, you still think, is worth four times the other?—I do.

538. *Mr. Dargaville.*] You stated just now that a number of people in the neighbourhood strongly objected to Mr. Allison's appointment as a Reviewer?—I was told so.

539. Is that the state of things that you would expect on account of strong party feeling?—Partly on account of that, but more particularly from the amount of property that Allison Brothers own in the district. The feeling was that it would be to Allison's and Stark's interest to maintain the high value.

540. *Mr. Cowan.*] You mentioned yesterday the name of Mr. Quick: is he a land speculator?—No—very little.

541. Does he belong to any of the syndicates?—I think not. He is interesting himself in the establishment of a ferry-service, and it is this which has brought about an estranged feeling between Allison and Stark and Quick. The latter owns the property where he lives, but has very little property besides. He is not connected with Stark at all in land investments.

542. *Dr. Neuman.*] Will you tell the Committee whether there were any other causes why people were dissatisfied with Mr. Allison's appointment as Reviewer beyond the fact of his owning land there?—I think I mentioned yesterday a difference of opinion that existed and animosity that was shown between them in their capacity as directors of the ferry company.

543. When you were discussing the matter of the valuation with Mr. Stark, did no question crop up as to whether the Government required the site for defence purposes?—I had no hint at all till long after that the Government were thinking of it.

544. You saw what was published in Auckland in the papers about the defence works?—It was reading them that brought it to my notice.

545. What was the date of any of them?—I do not know, but it was some time after my valuation.

546. *Mr. Peacock.*] When you made this valuation of £15,600, and knowing that it was very largely in excess of a previous one, had you any idea as to how Mr. Stark would look at the increased valuation—whether he was likely to concur in it or object to it?—I think I mentioned that I thought it probable when I mentioned the amount that he would, if not express surprise, at least refer to the increased value, and ask whether I might not be disposed to reduce it, because that has been frequently the case when I am valuing.

547. Had you any idea that Mr. Stark was entertaining a high opinion of the value of the property?—Not at all, until Mr. Stark told me that he had received the offer referred to. He said, "I cannot object to your valuation, because I have been offered £16,000."

548. Did he at all anticipate a higher valuation of the property than formerly?—I was prepared to believe that he would expect nearly that valuation because of sales that had taken place in the neighbourhood.

549. On what grounds did you come to that belief?—The sales of properties that had taken place.

550. But with regard to Mr. Stark himself, had you any idea that he would be likely to anticipate that the value of the property had advanced?—No other idea than the general increase.

551. The value of property in that neighbourhood was increased in the same ratio?—I have shown that some had increased in the same and some in a greater degree.

552. *Mr. Barron.*] I asked you yesterday whether you had any intimation or knowledge that this property was to be taken for defence purposes, and I understood you to say No?—No, I had not.

553. Can you say on what date you made the valuation?—No, I cannot: it was at the end of October or the beginning of November. It was before I began my work at Devonport. I proposed to do the out-districts first, and afterwards the home-districts, because I knew of the changes that were taking place.

554. Is your land at Devonport near Mr. Stark's?—No.

555. Is it a long distance away?—Yes: it is near Stanley Point.

556. How many miles off is it?—I should say about two miles.

557. *The Chairman.*] Do you remember that Mr. Hurst cut up his property at Takapuna a little time ago, and what price he got for it at auction?—What he cut up was not the valuable part of the property. It was some twenty acres that had fallen into his hands through mortgage. It was cut up, and the price realized was about £70 per acre.

558. Had it a sea-frontage?—No; it was on the northern side of the lake—not the valuable side.