

95. Have they made any prior applications to the Council in regard to a general scheme of roading and drainage?—Not for a general scheme, but they have made several applications. We have made one or two with reference to the continuance of Wilson Street. The trustees gave the Borough Council £35 towards making a portion of Purnell Street.

96. Had you any difficulty with the Borough Council in getting Liverpool Street Extension made?—Yes, a great deal of difficulty. The trustees instructed Mr. Garrett to prepare a plan for the extension of Liverpool Street, and I communicated with Mr. Garrett, and asked him to arrange with the Corporation as to what they required before he prepared the specifications. The Foreman of Works gave him certain information, and he prepared plans, and a tender was let. After it was let, some members of the Council objected to the work that was being done in various ways, and they repudiated the arrangement that was made with the Foreman of Works, and insisted upon certain other work being done before the street was taken over. In the aggregate the 10 chains cost £41 10s. a chain.

97. Did they insist upon drainage being done?—They insisted upon the main drainage.

98. That is the only piece of street that has been made and taken over by the Borough Council?—Yes.

99. How much money have the trustees expended in draining the land?—They have the drains cleaned out every year.

100. What else have they expended money on—fencing and repairs?—The fencing and repairs are all in connection with the College grounds.

101. I suppose it takes the whole income to do that?—Yes. We are in debit now, and they are going on with repairs now.

102. Do you attend the meetings of the trustees?—No.

103. Do they ever hold meetings at Wanganui?—I believe they have held one.

104. Do you think the trustees should live in or near the Town of Wanganui, in order that they may be able to attend the meetings regularly?—They have regular meetings now. No doubt it would be an advantage to have some of the trustees living in Wanganui. I would rather not be pressed to give answers to questions with reference to the trustees. Of course, I agree that it would be more convenient if the trustees lived close to Wanganui.

105. The Rev. Mr. Maclean is, of course, a resident trustee, and he is a business man, having been in commercial life?—That is so; and Mr. Beckett, of Marton, is also a business man.

106. Marton is some little distance away?—It is only an hour's motor drive.

107. Do you know anything about the money that was received from the Government for the railway?—No; that was before my time. I have not seen any record of it.

108. Have you searched the books to find out what became of the money?—No; but I have no doubt it went into the trust account.

109. Can you find out from the trustees how that money was expended?—I will look up Mr. Churton's records, and see if I can find out anything about it.

110. Do you know whether any money has been expended outside the trust—I mean in donations given to other schools, or in paying for the education of children?—A lot of free scholars have been educated at the school; but no money has been paid direct to other schools in my time.

111. There is a high school on the property?—Yes. It occupies 5 acres, and the land is let at a nominal rental.

112. What is the tenure?—A lease of forty-two years.

113. What is the rent?—£5 a year.

114. Do they not pay something for a playground, in addition?—No. They rent another piece adjoining the 5 acres for a caretaker's cottage. That is a separate tenancy at a rent of £10 a year.

115. How many classes of building leases have you?—I cannot very well say. I do not prepare the deeds. I have nothing to do with them. There are several, I know.

116. Is there any clause for valuation in your leases?—No. I might explain that in 1896 considerable difficulty was experienced in letting the sections at all, as the trustees did not wish to let the Avenue frontages for a very long term, as they supposed it might eventually become much more valuable; they offered some of the frontages by tender on twenty-one-year leases. In one or two of these leases alternative clauses were inserted by which the trustees, if they chose to take over the land at the expiration of the twenty-one years, could do so by giving the tenant half valuation for improvements; but if they do not so choose to give half valuation, then the tenant is entitled to another lease of ten years at the same rental.

117. Do the leases contain clauses compelling the tenants to build within a certain time?—Some of them.

118. We have a draft lease in which there is a clause compelling the tenants to erect buildings within two years at their own expense?—Yes.

119. Of a value fixed by the lease?—Yes.

120. That is a compulsory building clause?—Yes.

121. Do you think that clause is calculated to encourage tenants to take up the land?—I do not think so; but it is a clause that has been copied from the Borough Council and Hospital Board leases. It was adopted by the local bodies, and the trustees followed the practice.

122. The borough leases are the same as this?—Yes; the tenants are compelled to build within two years.

123. Are the tenants on Smiley's paddock subject to that clause?—Yes, every one of them. The terms of their leases are—forty-two years, with a 50-per-cent. advance in the rental for the last twenty-one years.

124. The leases all went off like hot pies?—Not all of them.

125. Is not every section let?—Yes, now.