

The Chairman: It is common-sense to think that it would have been based on its then value.

Mr. McVeagh: Exactly. It is rather important that we should have it made clear that the claim would have been upon its then value, and not upon its future value.

151. *The Chairman* (to witness).] The butter which is made from your cows—is it largely exported, or is it consumed in the district?—There is a very small percentage of our total output goes to Waihi and the surrounding district. Last year about £800 profit, roughly, was made by our association in the Waihi district. I think the total profit was about £4,000. The chairman of the dairy company will be here to give the correct figures.

152. *Mr. Mitchelson.*] You export to the Old Country?—Yes, the greater portion of it.

153. What is the difference in price between butter that is exported and that which is sold locally?—The chairman of the association will tell you.

154. *Mr. McVeagh.*] I think the method is this: The foreign buyer sends an agent here to buy?—I think the chairman of the company will tell you that most of the butter is sent to London agents.

Mr. McVeagh: I have the figures in my hand.

The Chairman: Why not reserve that examination until you get the right man as a witness?

155. *Mr. McVeagh.*] Very well, sir. (To witness) You have spoken of past floods. I want to know whether you have any records of the rainfall upon which you base your statements?—I have no records of the rainfall, but my diary gives the dates of the largest floods that have occurred within the last nine years.

156. Take the flood of nine years ago: it then rained for three days continuously?—It was a steady, heavy rain.

157. It took three days to flood the river on that occasion nine years ago?—Yes.

Mr. McVeagh: Are you aware that the rainfall before the last flood was compressed into fourteen hours?

The Chairman: The Commission understands that there was practically very little rain here. Therefore any comparison of the rain that fell here with that which fell years ago or in another part of the district, although it is in the same watershed, has no bearing upon the question. The floods may have been due to different causes: there may have been a waterspout at Waihi, or the flood may have been due to another cause.

158. *Mr. McVeagh.*] That is exactly it?—There was very little rain here.

159. You heard of people being taken from the roofs of their houses on the Waihi Plain?—Yes.

160. You never heard of that during any previous flood?—I doubt whether any of the houses were there.

161. You value your land at £40 an acre?—I would not sell it at that. I hope to get some good out of the Commission.

162. What would you sell the land for now?—It is not open for sale at present.

163. You want a fancy price, is that it?—No; it is not for sale at present.

FREDERICK COCK examined. (No. 2.)

1. *Mr. Mueller.*] Your name is Frederick Cock, and you are a settler residing at Paeroa?—Yes, I came to the district thirty-nine years ago.

2. You own land on the banks of the Ohinemuri River?—Yes, 85 acres. It is called Ouerangi, Ngahutoitoi, and Koronae. I have resided on the property during the whole of my stay in this district. It is situated about two miles above the Township of Paeroa.

3. When you went there, what was the depth of the water about your place?—When the tide was in there would be about 7 ft. or 8 ft.

4. The tide would make a difference at that time of about 3 ft. or 4 ft.?—Yes.

5. *The Chairman.*] Was the current fast or slow?—Not particularly fast.

6. *Mr. Mueller.*] Did boats come up to your place?—Yes, boats drawing 7 ft. of water. My place was known as the end of navigation in those days.

7. What type of boat?—Both steamboats and cutters.

8. *The Chairman.*] Why was it the end of navigation: was it because the river became shallower higher up?—Yes, it shallowed very much a little higher up. Then there were several creeks a little above that—the Tarariki Creek.

9. What is the depth of water at your place now?—There is a little bit of a fresh on now. In summer-time it is 7 in. or 8 in.; in some places it is 2 ft., and in no place is it more than 4 ft. Nothing could get up in the shape of a vessel. You can walk across it.

10. What does the tide rise now?—From 2 ft. to 3 ft.

11. At high water you have got from 2 ft. 8 in. to 3 ft. 8 in.?—Yes.

12. *Mr. Mueller.*] What is the cause of this difference in the river?—It has silted up—the silt coming down from the mines. The bed of the river has gone.

13. *The Chairman.*] Do you find any difference in the character of the bottom of the river now to what it was?—In some places it is very hard and in other places it is very soft. There are times when the cattle get bogged in it—bogged in the silt—and you have to dig them out.

14. Before the Proclamation had the river a gravelly bottom or a sandy bottom?—Gravelly.

15. What sort?—Very good for making roads.

16. Boulders?—No, there are no boulders below Karangahake.

17. Half a pound?—Oh, yes, bigger than that. In former days the water was as clear as crystal, and we could get fish in the river.

18. *Mr. Mitchelson.*] What kind?—Whitebait, mullet, and eels.

19. *The Chairman.*] How long ago is it since you lost the fish: since 1895, when the sludge-channel was proclaimed?—It is many years since we lost the fish.