

94. I think you sold the property, or agreed to sell it, a year or two ago?—I have been trying to sell it for several years.

95. What price did you put on it then?—£13 10s. per acre.

96. Can you mention any property in this district the Government valuation of which has gone down since 1907?—I understand the valuation was made in 1907. There has been no valuer round here since then.

97. Was there a valuation last year?—Within the last two years.

98. How did that valuation compare with the previous valuation?—An increase.

99. What percentage?—I suppose there would be an increase of 20 per cent. in our case.

100. Was there any property the valuation of which was not increased?—I have no details of the valuations at all.

101. Within what period was the 20-per-cent. increase?—Between last year and the previous valuation. I consider that any increase is represented by improvements—tilling, draining, and clearing. In some cases we paid as much as £2 per acre to have clearing done. There are four men on the property improving it to-day.

102. Outside the making of drains, have any of the settlers done anything at all to make provision against an overflow of the land by water, except Mr. Bagnall at Turua?—Yes, Mr. Nichols and Mr. Cooper have.

103. Any one else?—I am not aware of any one else.

104. Would not a stop-bank on your property effectually keep back an overflow from the Waihou? Is there an overflow from the Waihou on your property?—The overflow from the Waihou comes in from that creek at Mr. John Thorp's, and I want to stop that; I have to erect a stop-bank to keep the water back on my neighbour's property.

105. You used to go about the district cutting crops: how long ago is it since you ceased generally to do that work?—About nine years.

106. It was about nine years ago that the creamery was established?—Yes.

107. The settlers took to dairying instead of cropping their land?—No; previous to that the New Zealand Dairy Association dealt with the creameries.

108. Since the advent of the dairying industry the cropping of the land has diminished considerably?—Yes.

109. How long were the oats and potatoes submerged?—Twenty-four hours.

110. That would be quite sufficient to ruin the crops?—The potatoes were ripe at the time, and the oats were in stook.

111. What age were you when you left Mangere?—About twenty; but since then I have been all through the North Island, and I have been over some of the best farms.

112. The butter-factory here has never been in such a flourishing condition as it has reached to-day?—The dairy industry throughout the Dominion is in a very good position at present.

113. How does the condition of Paeroa to-day compare financially and otherwise with its condition in 1895?—We had a mining boom at that time—wild-cat mining.

114. *Mr. Mueller.*] You did not cease cropping because of the dairying?—No.

115. How has the price of butter been ruling in London lately compared with ten years ago?—My experience is that we are getting a higher average for our butter in the London market every year.

116. That has a great deal to do with the success or otherwise of the company?—Of course it has.

117. In connection with the stop-bank which it has been suggested you might erect to stop the water flooding your land, have you any idea what length of country would have to be covered to be of any use?—It would have to be miles long—from the railway-line right down to the junction of the Komata Creek, and then it would have to go up the creek.

118. The water from the Waihou and the Komata join about your place, so that you would have to keep them both out?—Yes.

119. To what extent did the land flooded previous to 1895 compare with the floods now?—Formerly the water did not stay on the land for such a length of time.

120. Did it reach such a height?—There was nothing to back it up at that time. The Waihou River water did not come in in those years.

121. Your land has been flooded because of the Waihou backing up?—That is the conclusion we have come to.

122. The Waihou allowed the Komata water to get away?—Yes.

123. If you cut down the willows on the Komata Creek you say that would probably allow the silt to get away. If so, where would that silt go to?—Into the Waihou.

124. Would that improve the draining-capacity of the Waihou?—I do not think so.

125. As regards the felling of bush, has there been much felled on the Komata Creek or in that neighbourhood?—There are hundreds of thousands of acres of virgin bush there at the present time.

TUKUKINO HUNIA examined. (No. 28.)

1. *Mr. Mueller.*] You were born at Ohinemuri, and you have lived at Komata about thirty years?—Yes.

2. What interests have you as regards land in this district?—My ancestors' land, 222 acres, Komata North. The stream is the boundary between Mr. Hubbard's property and my place. Forty acres of my property is below the railway-line. I have 50 acres on the bank of the Waihou, commencing at the mouth of the Komata Stream, and running down the river to opposite McKee's, about 10 chains from Rangiora. I have a son who is interested in 10 acres, portion of the Huhuraumati Block, one part of it touching the Waihou.