

11. How long did that flood remain on the land?—On the most of my land the flood went off in about twelve hours, but on the low-lying land it stayed a fortnight. It was in the middle of the summer.

12. Can you estimate your loss that was directly caused by the 1907 flood?—I have every confidence that £150 would not repay me for my losses in that one flood. Of course that piece of land was most exceptional land. It is nearly the pick of Ohinemuri. After the water subsided I could do nothing with the low-lying land until the following year, when it was put down in grass again.

13. I suppose you will confirm the evidence that has already been given by other witnesses in regard to the floods of 1907, 1908, and 1910 bringing down silt which used not to be brought down before?—Yes.

14. And you know the evidence that has been given in regard to the silting-up of the river, and you confirm that evidence?—Yes; I came up in 1869 in a big vessel, and she came up as far as Pereniki's Bend.

15. You might tell the Commission the history of the cellar in the Criterion Hotel?—The old place was built in 1875, and it stood until 1896. During that time I had a cellar dug in the ground, and whenever there was a flood the most water I had was about 12 in. on the floor in the winter-time, and it used to stay at the same height with the river. But I was surprised to see in the last flood, which came in March, that the cellar was nearly full of water, and it may be there still. You can see the silt lying on the second step down in the Criterion. I have never seen water in my life there before the last flood.

16. When was that cellar concreted?—In 1897.

17. So that prior to 1910 that cellar had not been flooded?—Not to my knowledge; and I have been in Paeroa the whole time. I might also say that in the early days there used to be a drain to take the water from a creek that ran from the swamp to the domain. When the drain was filled in, a culvert was put in to drain that water off, but now there is no trace of that culvert to be seen. It is quite buried. Also, in the old bridge I used to be able to see certain of the lower bolts at low water, but now they can never be seen because the river has risen at the site of the old bridge.

18. *The Chairman.*] How many feet has it risen there?—Right through from the Junction about nine miles I consider that on an average the river has risen 6 ft.—some places higher, some places lower.

19. You imply that is principally tailings?—Yes. About 1902 a gentleman who had some interest in a silting claim told me he heard from a captain that there were 9 ft. of tailings at the bend. Since then more tailings have been put in, so I do not think 6 ft. is above the mark.

20. *Mr. Mueller.*] In 1901 did you have some correspondence with the Government on this question?—Yes; this is it. [Exhibit No. 21.]

21. *Mr. Myers.*] It comes back to this: that in the 1907 flood you believe you sustained a loss of £150?—Yes.

22. I suppose that every flood which absolutely covers a property means temporary damage, at all events, to that property?—To a certain extent.

23. You have referred to the Criterion Hotel—you own that hotel?—Yes.

24. Is that worth as much now as it was in 1907?—Of course it is not.

25. Do you attribute that to the flood or to the drought?—Of course it has depreciated, as any property of that description must do when a district carries prohibition.

26. *Mr. Glendon.*] As an old resident you are aware that the willow-trees have increased in size and number during the last ten years?—Thank God they did! If it had not been for the willow-trees the whole country would have been ruined.

27. You do not attribute any damage from the floods to the willow-trees?—I do not.

28. Your property that was principally injured was the farm below the railway?—Yes.

29. Are there not a number of drains coming down the Te Aroha Road which rise very rapidly when there is a flood, and the water goes across your property? A big proportion of the water which submerged your lands came down from the hills?—Yes.

30. It did not all come from Waihi?—I should not like to say so, but the silt came from Waihi anyway.

31. Did you take any steps at any time to prevent your land from being flooded?—I think nature has done it for me.

32. Apart from nature, what have you done?—I have drained.

33. You said the water remained on your property: is not a portion of your property an old kahikatea swamp, full of holes and stumps?—No, it is not.

34. This last flood that filled your cellar rose very rapidly?—I was not here, but I saw enough of it when I returned.

35. When did you acquire the freehold of this Junction land?—In 1880-odd.

36. Would you mind telling us what you paid for it per acre?—I paid as much as £40 per acre for some of it. There are 14 acres in the block, and it was acquired at different times. I could hardly tell you now what I paid for the lot.

37. You spoke about the river-bed being raised: you have never personally examined the river-bed?—No.

HAORA TARERANUI examined. (No. 33.)

1. *Mr. Mueller.*] You are a Native chief of Ohinemuri?—I am one of the chiefs of this tribe, and I have large interests in the land here.

2. Has your land or the lands of your tribe been affected by the floods and silt?—Yes.

3. You remember giving evidence in Wellington before the Mines Committee?—Yes.