

85. *The Chairman.*] You stated that the water was around your house for about nine days?—For five days.

86. You are quite clear that was in 1907?—I was not living at Netherton at that time.

87. *Mr. Tunks.*] Do I understand that you do not remember anything at all about the 1897 flood?—I cannot say that I do.

88. Were you not in occupation of your land then?—No, I was mining at the time.

89. Have you had any experience of cattle having been killed by eating this grass?—No, I cannot say that I had any cattle which died by eating it.

90. Have you any stock on your property now?—About twenty-seven.

91. Are you making butter still?—Yes, a little. I send it to Paeroa to the local storekeepers.

92. Does very much silt come down the Komata Creek?—Yes, it is nearly full of what I call tailings.

93. Can you say whether the tailings on your banks come from the Komata or the Ohinemuri River?—No, I could not.

94. It might just as well come from the Komata as from the Ohinemuri River?—Yes.

95. Then the closing of the Ohinemuri channel, if the Komata is left open, would not help you?—I do not suppose there would be so much coming down.

96. *Mr. McVeagh.*] You got your land about 1894?—Yes.

97. How much land was taken up at Netherton about that time?—It was all taken up round about where I live.

98. How many settlers were there, approximately?—Really I could not tell you without a little time to go into it.

99. You had no dairy factories here at that time?—No.

100. What were they subsisting on then?—Cropping, making butter, and so forth.

101. Have you any objection to say what you paid for your land then?—It is a little bit private, but I have nothing to hide. It cost me about £3 per acre.

102. What do you estimate its value now?—The front portion is valued at £6 per acre, Government valuation; the back part of the farm, £4 an acre.

103. Can you give the area at £4 and the area at £6?—Forty-two acres at £6 an acre, and 165 acres at £4.

104. I suppose your land when you took it up was as good as any of the land in the immediate locality?—Yes.

105. Your land might be taken as a fair sample of Netherton land at that time?—I did not see much difference along the river.

106. I understood you to say that you were well acquainted with the Waihou River above the Junction?—I have been on it.

107. Have you been on it frequently, and, if so, when?—I think it is three months ago that I was up there in a yacht.

108. How far did you go up the river then?—I went up to where it overflowed into Netherton.

109. How far is that up the river?—By land it might be about three miles from the Junction. It would be a little further from Netherton.

110. Did you go up as far as the Awaitei country, where the flax-mill is?—Yes.

111. You know that the source of the Waihou River is up in the Patetere Plains?—Yes.

112. That is heavy siliceous country, and the river flows through that class of country for a considerable distance?—Yes.

113. You have noticed the willow-trees growing on both banks of the Waihou from the Junction up to as far as you have been in the habit of going?—Yes.

114. Have you never been beyond the Awaitei?—A little bit, but not very far.

115. You found a very thick growth of willows on both banks of the river for that distance?—Yes, in places very thick.

116. I think to such an extent that the willows almost meet in some places?—They overhang the banks very much.

117. The banks are low, and the left bank especially is a very low one?—I do not know that it is much lower than the other one.

118. Is not the average height of the bank throughout the distance you traversed from 3 ft. to 4 ft.?—I should say that the bank is about 4 ft. at ordinary high tide.

119. Is that the summer level or the winter level?—I have not taken that much notice. I noticed the banks to be about 4 ft.

120. What difference would there be in the height of the bank at spring tides?—I could not tell the height there, because I never measured it; but the tide rises about 4 ft. opposite my own place—from 2 ft. 9 in. to 4 ft.

121. Can you say whether there is any tidal influence at Te Awaitei flax-mill?—I could not say.

122. The effect of these willows must be to impede the progress of the flood-waters?—I should say they do harm, certainly.

123. Taking into consideration the willows, a flood in the Waihou, and tidal influence, is it not a very easy matter for the waters of the Waihou to overflow the left bank?—I could not say.

124. Do you not know, as a matter of fact, that before tailings were put into the Ohinemuri River the Waihou used to overflow that country on its left bank?—It may have done so, but not to the extent it is doing now. At least, I never heard any one complaining about it.

125. Because, I suppose, there was not very much settlement there then?—Yes, there have been people living at Netherton for considerably over five years.

125a. Are you not aware that long before the Proclamation people have been in the habit of protecting themselves from the waters there?—No.