

16. Does the Hetana Hamlet come between it and the station?—Not exactly, because you go down a road which leads from a point of the hamlet and go to the station.

17. How far is Hetana Hamlet from the station?—The nearest point is within 15 or 20 chains.

18. And the average of the block?—The average would be about a mile from the station.

19. Had you any knowledge of the block at the time it was purchased by the Government?—No; but very soon after I had, because I began to travel over the block soon after the first tenants were in occupation. I have a very good knowledge of the condition of the land at the time it was purchased.

20. Do you know whether it was readily taken up?—No, it was not.

21. Can you tell us the length of time that elapsed between its being made available for settlement and its being taken up?—The first sections that were taken up were in the most accessible part. The land was then under lease in perpetuity, and there were a number of sections taken up, I think, soon after it was opened under lease in perpetuity.

22. What about the balance?—The balance remained unoccupied and uncalled-for. It was originally surveyed into sections averaging about $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres. The Lands Department were evidently under the impression that the areas were too small, and responding, I believe, to a petition that the areas be made larger, they put two sections together, making most of them 5 acres.

23. How long ago is that?—About three to four years ago, speaking from memory.

24. Have all the sections been taken up since then?—There are two sections—I do not know whether they are open for selection, but I understand all of them available are now taken up.

25. Can you tell us how long ago it was that the last available section was taken up?—The Crown fixed various rentals for them, and they have been taken up and forfeited, and in some cases the rentals were increased. That will account for the apparent erratic capital values on which the rents are based. The last, I believe, was taken up about eighteen months ago. I am trusting to my memory about that.

26. Apparently there was not a keen demand for this land on the part of intending settlers?—There was not at the time.

27. You made the valuations?—Yes.

28. You think that from the point of view of selling-value the valuations were fair?—I think so.

29. Reference has been made in some articles that have appeared in the Press to what has been going on at Ellerslie. Do you think there is any parallel between land at Ellerslie and land at New Lynn, from the point of view of residence sites or any other point of view?—Not at all. New Lynn is clay land, and the principal industry there is brickmaking. There are two establishments quite close to the station engaged in that industry, and there are several others a little distance away, down the creek, which have also been engaged, and are more or less now. The appearance of New Lynn when you approach it is rather repellant on account of these brick-kilns and the dug-out places where they get the clay. So there is no attraction there compared with what there is on the Ellerslie side. Furthermore, the distance to travel into town is very much greater. It is twice the distance by rail, and the service, although fairly frequent, is slower. Then again, the land about Ellerslie is volcanic, and the land about New Lynn is clay, and an ordinary person in buying a small area for a home would prefer to give very much more for volcanic land than he would for clay.

30. As a matter of fact, you think Ellerslie is a very attractive suburb: is that your opinion?—It is apparently so, judging by the number of people who settle there. It can only be indicated by the building which goes on.

31. From what you have said, you consider that New Lynn is not exactly attractive?—That is so.

32. You have seen these articles, have you not, that have appeared in one of the Auckland papers and some of the southern papers on the New Lynn transactions?—Yes.

33. Would you consider that a comparison between Ellerslie and New Lynn was misleading or otherwise?—I remember seeing something in an article about the Government selling land at New Lynn and purchasing it at Ellerslie. I am not in a position to state whether I think the Ellerslie land is cheap, because I do not know the particular block which the Government have purchased.

34. Do you know that they have purchased any block?—I do not.

35. As a matter of fact, they have purchased none. I want to call your attention to this paragraph: "It is rather a peculiar anomaly to find that the Government is paying £300 per acre at Ellerslie for land whereon to build workers' homes, and at the same time is parting with land even better suited for the purpose at New Lynn for £30 an acre." Would you think that land was as cheap at Ellerslie at £300 an acre as at New Lynn at £30 an acre?—That would depend entirely on the particular part of each district. I could pick out land that I think would be dearer at New Lynn at £30 than other land at Ellerslie at £300. I would not like to make a comparison of values without knowing the particular pieces of land.

36. Do you think that the paragraph I have just read sets up an unfair comparison as between Ellerslie and New Lynn? Is it possible to compare the two places?—No, it is not. I think the article is misleading.

37. You see the *Auckland Star* occasionally, I suppose?—I see it occasionally, not regularly.

38. Do you recollect seeing the *Auckland Star* of the 2nd July—that was the paper in which the first of these articles appeared?—I saw the *Auckland Star* in which the first article appeared.

39. Did you at the same time notice this advertisement in the same issue of the paper: "New Lynn. £50 per acre. 5 acres level land, only 12 minutes station. Cheap. Easy terms"?—I do not remember seeing that. The prices asked in many cases, of course, are no indication of the value. It is not a question of what a man is asking for a property: it is a question of what he can get.