

21. On that basis how do the values compare? Land at Ellerslie would, in your opinion, be worth very much more, and if so how would it compare?—I think that many a man would prefer to have a quarter-acre section, say, at Ellerslie, because of the conveniences and better facilities for work, than 2 or 3 acres at New Lynn. But there are some men who would prefer to go out to New Lynn on the larger area.

22. Does that, in your opinion, indicate that the land is very much more valuable at Ellerslie?—We know it is more valuable at Ellerslie because it is selling at bigger prices, and there is a greater demand for it than there is at New Lynn. A different class of people go out to Ellerslie.

23. How many times as valuable is Ellerslie land, on an average?—I should think that the land at Ellerslie in some cases is worth ten times as much as the land at Hetana.

24. On the average would it be that?—I should think that would be about the average.

25. How do the means of access compare?—The means of access to Ellerslie I consider a very great deal better than to New Lynn.

26. Is the service much more frequent?—The trains are more frequent, and at a pinch people could take the Remuera train and come through to the station.

27. How would the distance compare?—It is a little bit nearer to Ellerslie. I suppose it would be about ten miles to Hetana.

28. And Ellerslie?—I suppose Ellerslie would be about five miles.

29. Hetana is nearly twice as far?—About that, and is more difficult to get at.

30. It is probably three times as difficult to reach?—I would look upon it as three times as difficult to get to.

31. You know Auckland very well, do you not?—Yes.

32. And therefore are in a position to give an opinion. You have seen the Government values generally of these Hetana lands?—Yes.

33. Do you think they are fair or unfair?—My opinion is that the gentleman who made that valuation for the Government has been pretty near the mark. I have given instances where my valuation is above his in some cases, and where I am below him in others, and where I agree with him in others. Looking at his valuation as an attempt to do what is fair as between man and man, I believe that the Government valuer has pretty nearly hit the bull's-eye.

34. You think that the price at which the different people have acquired their sections is a fair one as between the individual and the State?—Yes, I do. I worked the figures out in one case and I found this: that if the money which has been paid is allowed to remain for thirty years that money will accumulate to such a sum as would require that the land which you have sold should go up to about £105 an acre to be equal with it. I believe that one reason why the statements have been made in the papers is that the people have not realized the difference between leasehold values and freehold values.

35. In other words, they have not known what they were talking about, whereas you, understanding the business, do?—With us it is a matter of business. They do not realize it.

36. Are there any indications of a prospective rise in New Lynn values in the near future?—I think there is a reasonable promise of things going steadily ahead there. I think that development will go on steadily there.

37. Equal to most other districts around Auckland?—It may not be equal to the development in some of the popular districts like Ellerslie, but there will be a steady improvement, I believe.

38. Do you think it will be equal to the average in and around Auckland?—Yes.

39. You have had very large experience in connection with these matters?—I have been in the business now for forty-six years. I was employed by the Ward Government to value the City of Auckland in conjunction with the City Valuer, and I was also employed by the Ward Government to value the lands along the Kaipara line and settle the claims. It was on my valuations and recommendations that those claims were finally settled.

40. You have also acted in a similar capacity for almost every local body in the Auckland District?—I have also been associated with the Government valuers to value the Epsom, One Tree Hill, and Mount Roskill Road Districts. I do scarcely anything else than value for loans and for purchases.

41. And also, I think, in connection with compensation claims?—Yes; I am generally a witness on one side or the other in connection with compensation claims.

42. *Mr. Guthrie.*] You have seen the Government valuation of the Hetana sections?—Yes.

43. And you have made a separate valuation of your own?—I made an independent valuation.

44. When did you make that valuation?—About twelve days ago. When I heard that I was likely to be required here I at once went up and put in a whole day, and the next day I carefully worked out everything.

45. You consider that the valuation upon which certain sections have been sold as the present-day value is a fair one?—I think it is, looking at it as a whole.

46. You referred also to the investment of that money, and you said that if it was invested it would produce more than you would expect to be the value of the land at the end of the term?—I think so.

47. Therefore your evidence goes to show that the Government have got full value for the sections at the present day?—That is my firm belief.

48. *Hon. Mr. Buddo.*] Is there any case in which your value differs materially from the valuation of the Government?—Yes, Elmore's case. The Government valuer has valued Elmore's land at £30 an acre. I think that is £4 an acre too much. I value it at £26.

49. Did you find that discrepancy occur in other sections—that you were higher or lower, as the case might be?—I took twenty-nine properties, and I did not know what they would come out at. Some came out at more and some at less. It struck me as I went on with the work that this man had tried to do what was reasonable and fair and that the Government were protected.