

the process began seriously within the last fifteen years. It was not applied very extensively before that. I should say it would average about 3 cwt. to the acre over a period of fifteen years. Even then the question of consolidation comes in. I believe also that there was better land there to start with.

284. Your estimate would amount to about 2½ tons to the acre. Do you think it was poor land with no manure?—I know the constituency of the land in the Waikato. You should also consider the lack of water in the Taupo country. You cannot compare Waikato with Taupo.

*Mr. Vaile*: With regard to the personal attack that has been made upon myself, I want to say that that I consider it to be an outrage and an impertinence.

*The Chairman*: I was not aware that any attack had been made on you.

285. *Mr. Vaile* (to witness).] You think I have done very little with my place?—You have jumped to the conclusion that my statement is a personal attack upon you. What I emphasize is the difficulty for an unfinancial man going into the country. I am making no aspersions upon you. You have had money at your disposal, and if the country is so fertile it is a wonder you have not done more with your money.

286. You have been to the trouble of searching my title from the beginning?—Any one can search a title. I do not say I personally did it.

287. You have given evidence as to the large sums of money I have received from the sale of land: will you say how much of that money I have had?—I have here the result of the search. I do not know how much you have had.

288. What deposit did I get on the sale of the 5,000 acres?—I do not know.

289. If I tell you I got £230 on the 5,000 acres, is that a great sum? I got £1 10s. an acre for the land. Do you know what I got on the sale of the 25,000 acres?—It does not matter how much you got.

290. When did I sell these lands?—According to the document you bought the land in May, 1897, and you sold 13,102 acres on the 3rd April, 1913, for £6,551, and on the 17th July, 1925, 25,185 acres.

291. Give the dates only?—Well, April, 1913, July, 1925, and August, 1925.

292. So the deposits on these considerable sales have not been paid very long. Have you any idea of the expense of bringing in the country? When I went out there were there any improvements on it?—Seeing that that was thirty years ago, there should be good improvements done.

293. Have you any idea of the expense of the fencing?—I suppose your improvements would cost you to-day at least £12 an acre—probably £15 an acre.

294. If that is so, 1,700 acres at £15 an acre is quite a respectable sum of money?—Quite true.

295. Do you allow anything for the steading?—Yes. A point is that productive revenue should be coming from the place all the time. I am only going on the land, and what you have told us about your improvements.

296. Ploughing 1,700 acres twice, and some of it four times, is some work?—That is what I have been trying to emphasize. There has been such a succession of ploughing. Probably you cannot measure it in pounds shillings and pence.

297. And you say that all this work that I have done is only “window-dressing” for the sake of taking some one in?—I do not say that as an attack at all. If I have anything to sell, I want to put my best wares in the window. No man can be criticized for trying to get the best results.

298. Then why did you criticize?—I did not criticize. I say that your ability as a salesman does perhaps overshadow other sentiments. I have read the papers, and also read your “Story of a Great Crime.”

299. Was that an advertisement of my land for sale?—I think it was a very good advertisement. The amount that your country was offered to the Government at was £3 10s. an acre.

300. I did not offer it. I was away in England at the time, and my brother offered it at £3 10s. an acre. As soon as I came back I withdrew the offer?—Your brother was acting as your attorney. Your own statement is what I went on.

301. You think, then, that what I have done is simply for the sake of trying to take in some unsuspecting person who does not know what the country is like?—You are exaggerating my statement by making it an attack upon yourself.

302. I must again protest against the personal attacks that have been made upon me?—I say that no personal attack has been intended.

*The Chairman*: I have not noticed any personal attack.

*Mr. Kyle*: You have evidently had the title to Mr. Vaile's property searched. Does that come within your duties as an Inspector of the Field Division of the Lands and Survey Department?—It was my duty to come here before the Committee.

On a point of order.

*The Chairman* ruled that the witness was entitled to give evidence upon the document and put it in [Exhibit 5].

303. *The Chairman*.—Do you know Karioi?—Yes.

304. Is it a similar class of country to the Rotorua-Taupo country?—Much the same, but Karioi is at a much higher altitude.

305. Is there much settlement in that district?—It has been heavy birch land, and is not pumice land.

306. As to Waiouru, is there much close settlement there?—No.

307. In each of these places, is there not a railway running close by?—The Main Trunk Railway runs right past them.

308. Do you think that a railway in itself would bring the Taupo land into closer settlement, seeing that it does not in Karioi and Waiouru?—I do not,