

241. You were speaking about getting supplies, and complained that you were hampered: do you know that Jackson's mill in Timaru was not in the Flour-millers' Association?—Yes.

242. And you could have got your flour from him, could you not?—No, I could not. I spoke to Jackson about it in Colombo Street one day, and he said he would not send flour to Christchurch.

243. Is it within your knowledge that he supplied flour to storekeepers in Christchurch?—No, I have never seen a sack of Jackson's flour in Christchurch.

244. Take the Wakanui Mill, which sends a large amount to Christchurch: have you applied to Mr. Rollitt?—He is an associated miller.

245. At the time you referred to he was not?—I think he was.

246. I am speaking with a knowledge of the facts, or I would not have put the question to you?—Well, it is a great surprise to me.

247. It is since the date that you were supposed to have been refused flour by the association?—I could have staked my life that he was an associated miller.

248. *Mr. McNab.*] When the market was rising, I presumed you claimed the right of getting in a fairly large supply of flour, the same as any other person?—Yes, the same as millers do with wheat.

249. Is it the case that you wanted to get in 100 tons in order that you would be able to retail that out to some other men when the market rose?—No.

250. Any man who suggested that to this Committee would suggest what was not true?—Yes, quite so.

251. *The Chairman.*] Did you not order that flour as a speculation?—No, I should not call it a speculation. It was rather on a rising market; but, of course, you do not know how the flour-market is going, and it might not last long. It was not above three months' supply.

252. You say that the price of the flour landed from Australia would be about equal to the Christchurch price?—Yes.

253. And then, how much did the price reach?—It would cost about a couple of pounds a ton more.

254. Can you take much more out of a ton of Australian flour than out of a ton of New Zealand flour?—Yes, a great deal.

255. Can you tell us how much?—It would average about four or five 4 lb. loaves.

256. That is about two loaves and a half to 100 lb.?—Yes.

257. How much would that work out at in proportion to the increased cost of £2 per ton? You would get about £1 more in the result from the Australian flour?—No, not quite so much as that. It would depend upon the price of bread.

258. Taking the price of bread at 6d. per loaf?—That would be £1. At 5d. it would be much less.

259. Were you always considered a good mark at paying?—Yes, I always was so.

260. Can you give us a list of the relative paying-prices per loaf with flour at certain prices?—When we were getting 6d. and 7d. for bread, and flour was at £10 10s. per ton, I think we were doing well.

261. If you could make out a list of relative prices at your leisure it would be of value to the Committee. You might take flour at, say, from £8 10s. to £12 10s. per ton?—I think you will find it worked out in the documents I now put in [Exhibit O]. There is the delivery price and the shop price.

262. The bakers' price committee would not agree to have a counter price as well as a delivery price, but wanted to make it one price, and that the delivery price?—Yes, the one price.

THURSDAY, 8TH OCTOBER, 1903.

PETER V. BUCHANAN examined. (No. 3.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your full name?—Peter Vosper Buchanan.

2. What are you?—A commission agent at present.

3. *Mr. Taylor.*] When did you join the staff of the Flour-millers' Association?—Two years ago last March.

4. Would that be from its formation?—Yes.

5. Were you in entire charge of the association's business in Christchurch until Mr. Jameson came up from Timaru?—I was the local agent.

6. At that time Mr. Jameson was resident at Timaru?—At the time I joined Mr. Jameson was not in the association.

7. Who occupied the position he now occupies?—Mr. Meek, of Oamaru.

8. Was Mr. Gardiner, of the Cust, a member of the association when it was formed?—No.

9. Do you remember when he joined?—He did not join until 1902.

10. About March, 1902?—Yes; I would not say the exact date.

11. Did you ever sign letters on behalf of the association?—I always signed my letters as local agent.

12. Are the letter-books produced those you used for your correspondence?—No.

13. Was there any correspondence copied in your letter-books other than what referred to retail sales?—The only copies taken referred to the conduct of my office.

14. Did they refer to produce only?—It was simply correspondence referring to the conduct of the office.

15. Did you have any correspondence at any time with Mr. Gardiner?—I have written to Mr. Gardiner.