

Will it have any business value?—For business purposes I would not have any land there at all. The land in Church Street is dependent on the railway?—Undoubtedly.

Do you think from £8 to £9 per foot is a fair value?—[No answer.]

*Mr. Myers* : I have listened to my friend Mr. Luckie and I protest against this style of cross-examination. If he is desirous of ascertaining the value of land he should ask him in a proper manner. My friend ought to know that that is not the way to examine witnesses.

*Mr. Luckie* : My friend knows when dealing with land-values there is only one way of getting that information. My friend is aware that the Engineer for the Department stated that the land would be worth £30 per foot, and I have the right to bring evidence here to show that he is wrong. [To witness:] What do you think of the values?—I think they are wrong. I have bought land in better localities, and I could not imagine anybody giving the price they say they will get for it.

What would be the effect on business premises in the Square if the railway-station were shifted a distance of a mile farther away?—It would have a depreciating effect on the values.

The owners would necessarily suffer?—Of course they would.

At the present time the work would cost more than before?—That is in common with everything else.

This is not the time to construct works?—No.

*Mr. Myers*.] How long have you been in business in Palmerston North?—Fourteen years.

During the whole of that time with your father?—Yes.

Are you now a member of the firm—how long have you been a member of the firm?—Five years.

You say your firm has a railway-siding?—Yes.

It is a fact, is it not, that that siding is subject to termination?—Perfectly aware of that.

At three months' notice?—Yes.

How far is your place of business away from Terrace End?—We would be about three-quarters of a mile away.

I suppose you have not thought of inquiring from the Railway Department whether or not your siding would be allowed to remain, or whether those people at Terrace End who have places of business, and who are quite outside the busy area of Palmerston North, would be allowed to retain their siding rights?—We have made inquiries.

From whom?—I believe it came from Mr. MacLean himself.

Did you apply in writing?—No, it was only a general inquiry.

Nor did you make any personal application?—Oh no.

You do not know what the position would be?—We quite understand it is very doubtful if we could maintain our siding right.

Apparently you made no inquiries?—Personally I have made none.

Would you mind telling me how many tons of the 84,000 tons you spoke about belongs to your firm?—I should say, 25,000 tons, in round figures.

Is that all in timber?—No, it would be logs, sawn timber, and manufactured goods.

You said to Mr. Luckie that the cost of carriage of goods to business premises carrying stocks would be increased?—Yes.

Would you be good enough to tell me where most of the business premises are located that carry stocks?—I do not quite understand the question—you mean, carrying the stocks?

Yes?—In Rangitikei Street.

Their premises are not situated in the immediate vicinity of the railway-station?—In some cases, yes.

Speaking generally?—The major portion of their business premises is situate close to the railway at the present time.

Just listen carefully : I am asking you whether it is not a fact that most of the businesses which carry stocks in Palmerston North do not have their premises situate in the immediate vicinity of the railway-station?—Yes, that is so.

What I say is a fact, is it not?—Yes.

You took the photograph that has been referred to?—Yes.

As a matter of fact it is a photograph of Fair's paddock, is it not?—Yes.

In connection with the floods that have been referred to : do you concur with one other witness who gave evidence this afternoon that the flooding is from the Mangaone Stream?—I do not concur because the matter has been discussed by engineers of the Drainage Board, who are much more competent than I am, and they were not able to arrive at a decision.

If the flooding is not from the Mangaone Stream, can you say from where does the water come?—I would suggest that it comes from the Oroua, many miles up country in the neighbourhood of Kimbolton.

Is there any survey of that?—It has been the subject of inquiry by the Borough Council some five or six years ago.

So we may get some light on the facts from the Borough Council authorities?—Yes, no doubt.

JOHN AITCHISON sworn and examined.

*Mr. Luckie*.] You are the manager in Palmerston North of the New Zealand Express Company?—Yes.

I understand you have the biggest carrying business, both for wholesale and retail, as well as for private carriage, in Palmerston North?—Of course a large number of firms have their own conveyance.

You know something about the proposed deviation of the railway-line which is the subject of these proceedings?—Yes.